

This agreed syllabus was written by RE Today on behalf of Leicestershire Council and published by Leicestershire SACRE.

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Forewords

Leicestershire SACRE is pleased to present this RE syllabus to all schools. This syllabus represents our vision for excellent RE in schools, regardless of governance or funding routes. The advice of experienced teachers on Leicestershire SACRE and nationally recognised experts has informed the pattern and structure of the syllabus and ensures that it will support teachers in the planning, resourcing and delivery of engaging learning activities. Its breadth of focus will offer learners opportunities to explore and begin to understand a range of religions and worldviews. This is their entitlement and our challenge. It gives us great pleasure to present this syllabus to you as a powerful tool in the promotion of excellent RE throughout our school communities. This is also powerful learning for all our children and young people to take forward in their lives as members of a diverse society.

SACRE is grateful to RE Today for their support in producing this new agreed syllabus which will enable pupils to examine with rigour the wide range of beliefs held in our community. The syllabus offers teachers the opportunity to plan and to deliver lessons which are informative, engaging and challenging and which will allow pupils to gain a developing understanding of the range of religious and non-religious world views studied, over a period of time. We are confident in the knowledge that it will be a useful guide in promoting excellent RE across the county. We look forward to working with you and supporting you in the coming years.

Tina Newton, Chair of Leicestershire SACRE

World events in the 21st century draw attention to the continuing power and significance of religious belief and other beliefs and philosophies in shaping human minds and communities.

Children and young people's understanding of the world, different faiths and beliefs is important in promoting understanding between all people.

I am pleased to commend this revised syllabus for religious education for Leicestershire schools. The syllabus reinforces the importance of religious education as an academic discipline.

It will enable understanding of concepts and the development of skills and attitudes so that our pupils can explore wider issues of religion and belief in religiously literate ways. This syllabus prepares the children and young people of Leicestershire for active citizenship in a diverse and rapidly changing world, promoting values of openness, appropriate questioning, understanding and tolerance.

This syllabus makes space for all pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and traditions, and those of others, in engaged and engaging ways. RE taught using the new RE Agreed Syllabus aims to support children to develop positive attitudes of respect towards people from all religions and worldviews.

I have every confidence that Leicestershire's teachers and children across Leicestershire schools will benefit greatly from this excellent resource.

Jane Moore
Director of Children and Family Services, Leicestershire County Council

Religious Education (RE) has an integral place in the curriculum of all schools. In our Church schools we believe it makes a vital contribution to a school's Christian character, enabling all to flourish in line with each school's unique vision. RE provides a safe space for children and young people to develop their understanding of people, cultures, faiths and relationships. To be curious; to ask big questions and to wonder.

This agreed syllabus sets out detailed and extensive programmes that will enable pupils to gain a coherent understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews, preparing them for life in twenty-first century Britain. It gives teachers clear guidance on how to approach the teaching of RE across all key stages, taking an innovative and rigorous approach that will promote high standards of RE in our schools.

This syllabus incorporates Understanding Christianity, a major resource developed by the Church of England, with a tried and tested methodology and a wealth of excellent material. Understanding Christianity is used in Church of England and many community schools in the County, so they can now adopt this syllabus without adaptation.

No matter how brilliant a syllabus might be, ultimately the quality of education depends upon the people who deliver it: the teachers. In Leicestershire we are blessed with many professional educators dedicated to supporting our children to flourish.

Canon Carolyn Lewis
Diocesan Director of Education

Introduction

The 2021 Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus has been created for Leicestershire SACRE and approved by Leicestershire County Council. It provides a syllabus for religious education (RE) for Leicestershire schools. Since 1944, all schools have been required to teach RE to all pupils on roll (except those withdrawn by their parents, see p. 9). RE remains part of the basic curriculum for all pupils.

This syllabus explains the value and purposes of RE for all pupils and specifies for teachers what shall be taught in each age group. It provides a coherent framework for setting high standards of learning in RE and enabling pupils to reach their potential in the subject. It builds on the good practice established in the previous Leicestershire syllabus. These elements will be familiar to teachers:

Continuity:

Religions and worldviews: The 2021 syllabus maintains the required study of religious and non-religious worldviews in each key stage, as in the 2016 syllabus, with scope for including worldviews represented locally, both religious and non-religious. Teachers are still free to teach RE flexibly, through weekly timetabled lessons, RE days or RE weeks, for example, or a combination of different models.

RE and personal development: The 2021 syllabus retains its emphasis on RE contributing to the personal development of pupils. RE helps pupils to gain rich knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious worldviews. It also helps pupils to develop their own understanding of the world and how to live, in the light of the knowledge studied, so they develop their understanding, skills and attitudes. It makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as offering important opportunities for exploring British values.

Open, enquiring RE: The 2021 syllabus continues to offer open, enquiring, exploratory RE, suitable for pupils who have a religious faith of their own as well as for those who have no religious background – the latter form a substantial proportion of pupils in many of our classrooms, often the majority (note the local census statistics on p. 146).

Planning process: The planning process that was integral to the 2016 syllabus has been retained. It encourages and empowers teachers to develop their own excellent RE lessons, taking them through the steps of using the syllabus to underpin their planning of a coherent curriculum and creative classroom practice. It supports careful sequencing of lessons for pupils to retain their knowledge and understanding.

New emphasis:

Coherent understanding: There is an increased emphasis on helping pupils to develop a coherent understanding of several religions, by studying one religion at a time (systematic study) before bringing together and comparing different traditions (thematic study). The thematic study allows pupils to draw together their learning each year, as well as offering planned opportunities for retrieval and recall (see sample long-term plan p. 147).

Core concepts: Clarity about identifiable core concepts of religions and beliefs helps teachers and pupils to understand how beliefs and practices connect, so that pupils are able to build effectively on prior learning as they progress through the school (see key question overview pp. 16–17 and concept outlines on pp. 137–145). The syllabus forms a 'spiral curriculum', so that pupils encounter and engage with the core concepts on a number of occasions, embedding their learning.

Planning process: The syllabus integrates a planning process. It encourages and empowers teachers to develop their own excellent RE lessons, taking them through the steps of using the syllabus to underpin their planning (long-, medium- and short-term) and creative classroom practice.

Teaching and learning approach: There is a clear teaching and learning approach at the heart of the 2021 syllabus, whereby all units enable pupils to 'make sense' of the religions and non-religious worldviews studied, 'understand the impact' of these beliefs in people's lives, and to 'make connections' in their own learning and with their wider experience of the world (see p. 13–14).

Assessment: Flexible assessment opportunities are given, based on end-of-phase outcomes, linked to the teaching and learning approach. Each unit has specific outcomes that help pupils to achieve the end-of-phase outcomes (see pp. 18–19).

Understanding Christianity: The 2016 resource from RE Today is being used in many schools in Leicestershire. This syllabus incorporates the *Understanding Christianity* approach, as well as a number of units, so that schools who are using that resource can be confident that they are meeting the requirements of the agreed syllabus with regard to the teaching of Christianity.

Teaching and learning requirements

The purpose of religious education

The Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus 2021 asserts the importance and value of religious education (RE) for all pupils, with on-going benefits for an open, articulate and understanding society.

The following purpose statements underpin the syllabus,¹ which is constructed to support pupils and teachers in fulfilling them:

- Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.
- In RE pupils learn about religions and beliefs in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions.
- Pupils learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully.
- Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and beliefs, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities.
- RE should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society, with its diverse religions and beliefs.
- Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They should learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

The purpose of RE is captured in the principal aim, which is intended to be a shorthand version for day-to-day use. It should be considered as a doorway into the wider purpose articulated above.

Principal aim

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Schools should make use of this principal aim throughout their planning to ensure that all teaching and learning contributes to enabling pupils to achieve this aim. Schools and RE departments will find that discussing how the principal aim relates to the purpose of RE, and talking about how classroom RE can contribute to the aim, will be helpful for teachers in clarifying what RE is for in their school and classroom.

¹ These purpose statements are taken from *A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England* (REC 2013).

The aims of RE

The threefold aim of RE elaborates the principal aim.

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. make sense of a range of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- identify, describe, explain and analyse beliefs and concepts in the context of living religions, using appropriate vocabulary
- explain how and why these beliefs are understood in different ways, by individuals and within communities
- recognise how and why sources of authority (e.g. texts, teachings, traditions, leaders) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, developing skills of interpretation

2. understand the impact and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs, so that they can:

- examine and explain how and why people express their beliefs in diverse ways
- recognise and account for ways in which people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, in their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world
- appreciate and appraise the significance of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning

3. make connections between religious and non-religious beliefs, concepts, practices and ideas studied, so that they can:

- evaluate, reflect on and enquire into key concepts and questions studied, responding thoughtfully and creatively, giving good reasons for their responses
- challenge the ideas studied, and allow the ideas studied to challenge their own thinking, articulating beliefs, values and commitments clearly in response
- discern possible connections between the ideas studied and their own ways of understanding the world, expressing their critical responses and personal reflections with increasing clarity and understanding

Throughout schooling, teachers should consider how their teaching contributes towards the principal aim of RE in Leicestershire, and how they help pupils to achieve the threefold aims above.

Notes:

These aims incorporate the former attainment targets of ‘learning about religion’ and ‘learning from religion’.

This agreed syllabus builds on the good practice from the 2004 *Non-statutory Framework for RE*, produced by the then Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and also the core ideas in the RE Council’s non-statutory framework from 2013.²

² *A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England* (REC 2013).

Legal requirements: what does the legislation in England say?

RE is for all pupils:

- Every pupil has an entitlement to religious education (RE).
- RE is a necessary part of a ‘broad and balanced curriculum’ and must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England, including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over).³
- This requirement does not apply for children below compulsory school age (although there are many examples of good practice of RE in nursery classes).
- Special schools should ensure that every pupil receives RE ‘as far as is practicable’.⁴
- The ‘basic’ school curriculum includes the national curriculum, RE and relationships and sex education.

RE is determined locally, not nationally:

- A locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus for RE recommended by an Agreed Syllabus Conference for adoption by a local authority.⁵
- Local authority maintained schools without a religious character must follow the locally agreed syllabus.
- Voluntary aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school, unless parents request the locally agreed syllabus.
- Foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the locally agreed syllabus, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.
- Religious education is also compulsory in academies and free schools, as set out in their funding agreements. Academies may use the local agreed syllabus, or a different locally

agreed syllabus (with permission of the SACRE concerned) or devise their own curriculum. This agreed syllabus has been written to support academies in Leicestershire to meet the requirements of their funding agreement.

RE is plural:

- The RE curriculum drawn up by a SACRE, or by an academy or free school ‘shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’.⁶
- According to case law, the agreed syllabus has a duty ‘to take care that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in a pluralistic manner’ and ‘must accord equal respect to different religious convictions, and to non-religious belief’.⁷ Note that the term ‘religion’ encompasses both religious and non-religious beliefs.⁸

As education policy changes, the legal requirement for RE for all registered pupils remains unchanged. RE is an entitlement for all pupils, unless they have been withdrawn by their parents from some or all of the RE curriculum.

Right of withdrawal

This was first granted when RE was actually religious *instruction* and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different now – open, broad, exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. However, parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE lessons or any part of the RE curriculum⁹ and the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Where the pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parents want the pupil to receive. These arrangements will be made by the parents; the school is not expected to make these arrangements. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or by another school in the locality. If neither approach is practicable, the pupil may receive

³ School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19; Education Act 2002, section 80.

⁴ The Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 Regulation 5A.

⁵ Education Act 1996 Schedule 31.

⁶ Education Act 1996 section 375.

⁷ www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/r-fox-v-ssfe.pdf. ‘Equal respect’ does not entail equal time.

⁸ In accordance with Human Rights Act 1988.

⁹ School Standards and Framework Act 1998 S71 (3).

external RE teaching as long as the withdrawal does not have a significant impact on the pupil's attendance. Schools should have a policy setting out their approach to provision and withdrawal. However, it is good practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of RE before honouring this right. Students aged 18 or over have the right to withdraw themselves from RE. More guidance on withdrawal can be found in *Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010*, available online at www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010

RE, academies and free schools

Free schools are academies in law and have the same requirement to provide RE and collective worship. In this document, any reference to academies includes free schools.

As set out in their funding agreements, all academies are required to provide RE for all pupils, from Reception to Sixth Form, except those whose parents exercise their right to withdrawal.

An academy must adopt a syllabus for RE. There is no requirement for an academy to adopt a locally agreed syllabus, as long as its own RE syllabus meets the requirements for a locally agreed syllabus, set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

RE is not subject to nationally prescribed purposes of study, aims, attainment targets and assessment arrangements, but it is subject to inspection. Where schools are not using an agreed syllabus, standards will be judged in relation to the expectations set out in the RE Council's *Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England* (2013).

The Leicestershire Agreed Syllabus 2021–2026 fulfils the legal requirements set out above, and builds upon the REC's curriculum framework (2013). It is written to support academies in meeting the requirements of their funding agreements. Academies are encouraged to adopt the syllabus, taking advantage of the resources and support that it offers.

Time for religious education

Schools have a statutory responsibility to deliver religious education to all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents (see p.9).

Schools must ensure that sufficient time is given in order to enable pupils to meet the expectations set out in this agreed syllabus, ensuring that the curriculum is coherent and shows progression, particularly across transitions between key stages.

There is no single correct way of making appropriate provision for RE as long as the outcomes are met.

In order to deliver the aims and expected standards of the syllabus effectively, the expectation is that there is **a minimum allocation of five per cent of curriculum time for RE**. This is set out in the table below, and based on the most recent national guidance.

4–5s	36 hours of RE per year (e.g. 50 minutes a week or some short sessions implemented through continuous provision)
5–7s	36 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or less than an hour a week plus a series of RE days)
7–11s	45 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week, or a series of RE days or weeks amounting to 45+ hours of RE)
11–14s	45 hours of tuition per year (e.g. an hour a week)
14–16s	5% of curriculum time, or 70 hours of tuition across the key stage (e.g. an hour a week for 5 terms, or 50 minutes per week, supplemented with off-timetable RE days)
16–19s	Allocation of time for RE for all should be clearly identifiable

Important notes:

- **RE is legally required for all pupils.** Plural RE that conveys and accords equal respect to different religions and non-religious worldviews (e.g. humanism) is a core subject and an entitlement for all pupils throughout their schooling, from Reception year up to and including Key Stage 5. For schools offering GCSE short course RE in Y9 and Y10, there is still a requirement that there is identifiable RE in Y11. (Note that teachers should ensure that KS4 accords equal respect to religious and non-religious worldviews. Following a GCSE course does not automatically fulfil this requirement.)
- **RE is different from assembly/collective worship.** Curriculum time for RE is distinct from the time spent on collective worship or school assembly, even though making links between the collective worship and the purposes and themes of RE would be good practice. The times given above are for RE.
- **Flexible delivery of RE.** An RE themed day, or week of study can complement (but not usually replace) the regular programme of timetabled lessons.
- **RE should be taught in clearly identifiable time.** There is a common frontier between RE and such subjects as literacy, citizenship or PSHE. However, the times given above are explicitly for the clearly identifiable teaching of religious education. Where creative curriculum planning is used, schools must ensure that RE objectives are clear. In EYFS, teachers should be able to indicate the opportunities they are providing to integrate RE into children's learning.
- **Coherence and progression.** Any school in which head teachers and governors do not plan to allocate sufficient curriculum time for RE is unlikely to enable pupils to achieve the standards set out in this syllabus. While schools are expected to make their own decisions about how to divide up curriculum time, schools must ensure that sufficient time is given to RE so that pupils can meet the expectations set out in this agreed syllabus to provide coherence and progression in RE learning.

What religions are to be taught?

This agreed syllabus requires that all pupils develop understanding of Christianity in each key stage. In addition, across the age range, pupils will develop understanding of the principal religions represented in the UK, in line with the law. These are Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism. Furthermore, children from families where non-religious worldviews are held are represented in almost all of our classrooms. These worldviews, including for example Humanism, will also be the focus for study in thematic units.

Pupils are to study in depth the religious traditions of the following:

4–5s Reception	Children will encounter Christianity and other faiths, as part of their growing sense of self, their own community and their place within it.	Consideration of other religions and non-religious worldviews can occur at any key stage, as appropriate to the school context.
5–7s Key Stage 1	Christians, Jews and Muslims.	
7–11s Key Stage 2	Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Jews.	
11–14s Key Stage 3	Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Buddhists.	
14–16s Key Stage 4	Two religions are required, usually including Christianity. This will be through a course in Religious Studies or Religious Education leading to a qualification approved under Section 96. ⁸	
16–19s RE for all	Religions and worldviews to be selected by schools and colleges as appropriate.	

Important notes:

This is the **minimum requirement**. Many schools may wish to go beyond the minimum.

- **The range of religious groups in the UK.** Groups such as Quakers, the Bahá'í faith, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or the Jains are not excluded from study in this scheme for RE. Schools are always advised to make space for the worldviews of the local community, which is why the table above expresses minimum requirements.
- **Notice the language.** 'Christians' rather than 'Christianity', 'Hindus' rather than 'Hinduism'. This is to reflect the fact that RE starts with encounters with living faiths rather than the history and belief structures of traditions. This also recognises the diversity within and between people of the same and different religions.
- **Non-religious worldviews.** Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE should be inclusive of both religious and non-religious worldviews. Schools should ensure that the content and delivery of the RE curriculum are inclusive in this respect.
- This syllabus requires that, in addition to the religions required for study at each key stage, non-religious worldviews should also be explored in such a way as to ensure that pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This is enabled through the following units: F4, 1.9, 1.10, L2.11, L2.12, U2.10, U2.11, U2.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16 and 3.17.
- **Depth rather than breadth.** Learning from four religions across a key stage is demanding: the syllabus does not recommend tackling six religions in a key stage. Depth is more important than overstretched breadth.
- **Flexible thematic units.** The thematic units offered in this syllabus allow for schools to draw in different traditions, where they fit the theme and question, and where there are representatives of those traditions in the school and local community.

¹⁰ Section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. This requires maintained schools to provide only qualifications approved by the Secretary of State. See www.dfes.gov.uk/section96/uploads/download_records_full.xls

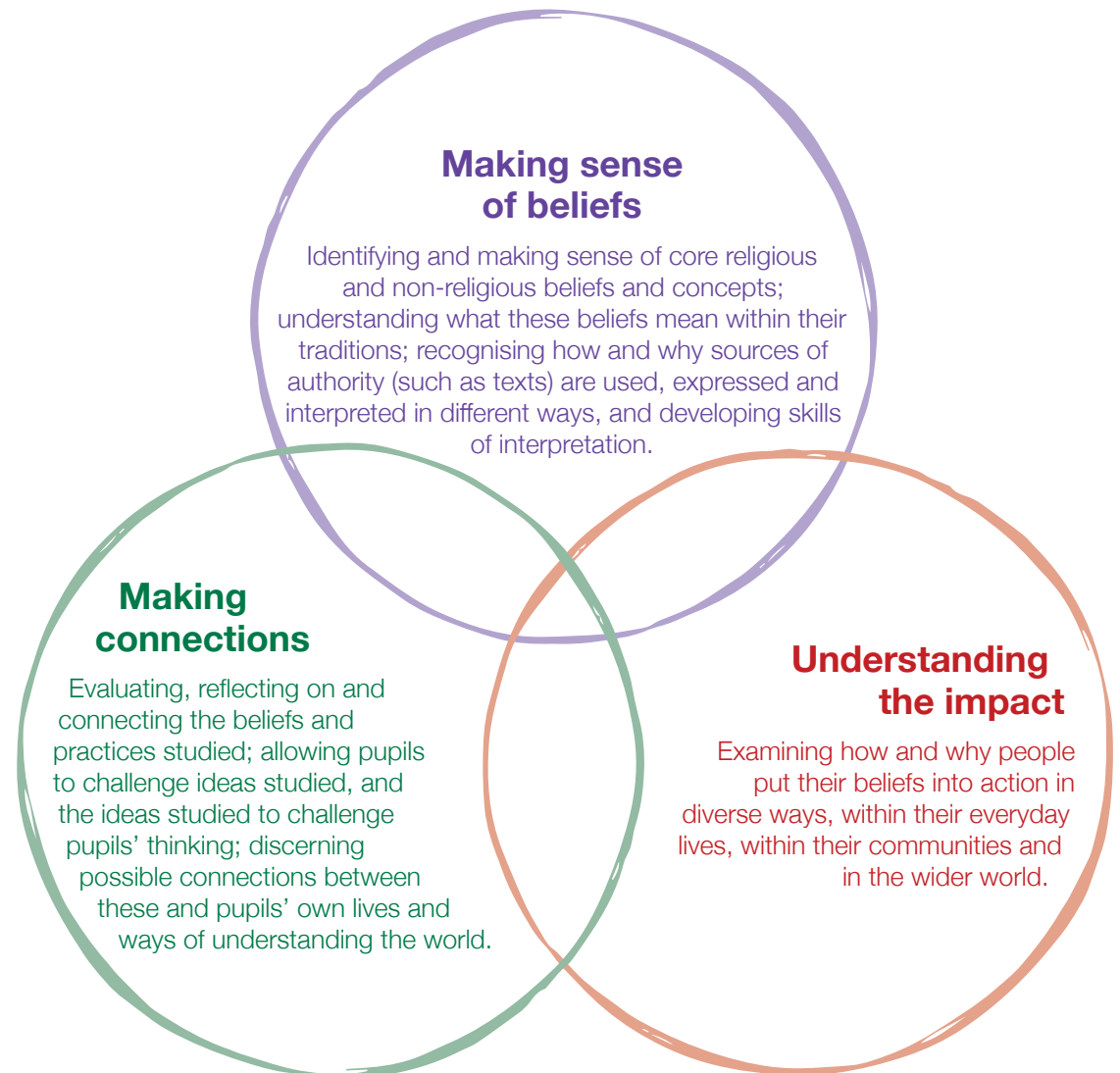
The RE teaching and learning approach in Leicestershire

This syllabus is designed to support schools in developing and delivering excellence in RE. It responds to national calls for deepening pupils’ knowledge about religions and for developing their ‘religious literacy’.¹¹ It does this by studying one religion at a time (‘systematic’ units), and then including ‘thematic’ units, which build on learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied.

In order to support teachers in exploring the selected beliefs, this syllabus sets out an underlying teaching and learning approach, whereby pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to handle questions of religion and belief.

The teaching and learning approach has three core elements, which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs, underpinning the aims of RE outlined on p.8. Teaching and learning in the classroom will encompass all three elements, allowing for overlap between elements as suits the religion, concept and question being explored.

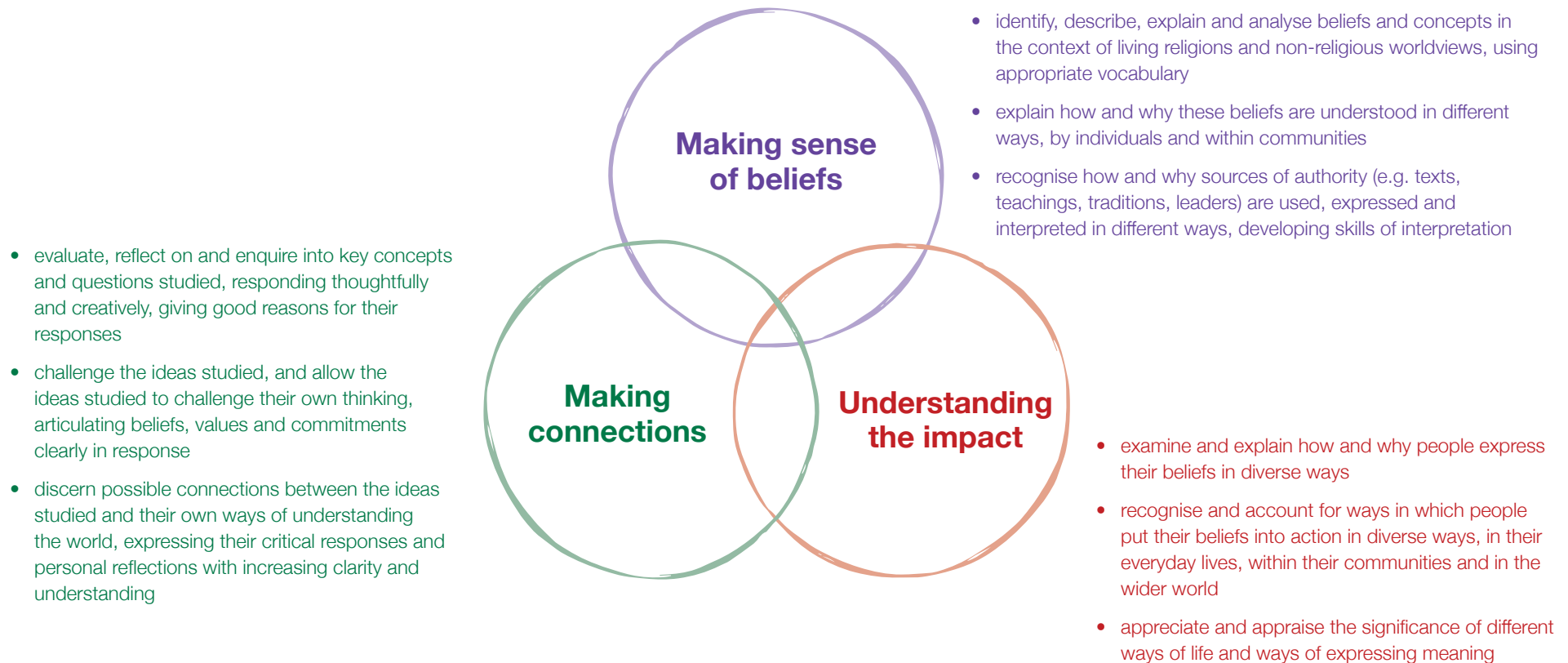
These elements set the context for open exploration of religion and belief. They offer a structure through which pupils can encounter diverse religious traditions alongside non-religious worldviews – which reflect the backgrounds of many pupils in our schools. The elements present a broad and flexible strategy that allows for different traditions to be treated with integrity. These elements offer a route through each unit while also allowing for a range of questions reflecting different approaches, for example, from religious studies, philosophy, sociology, ethics and theology.



¹¹ e.g. OFSTED (2013) *Religious Education: Realising the Potential*; Clarke, C. and Woodhead, L. (2015) *A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools*, London, Westminster Faith Debates; Dinham, A. and Shaw, M. (2015) *RE for REal: The future of teaching and learning about religion and belief*, London, Goldsmiths University of London/Culham St. Gabriel’s; Commission of Religion and Belief (2015) *Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the Common Good*, The Woolf Institute.

Teaching and learning approach and the aims for RE in Leicestershire

This diagram shows how the three elements of the teaching and learning approach in this syllabus reflect the aims for RE set out on p.8. Units of study offer content and ideas for enabling pupils to achieve these aims.



Note: The three elements of this teaching and learning approach also incorporate the elements of the teaching resource, *Understanding Christianity: Text Impact Connections* (RE Today 2016) which is being used in a significant number of local schools. Schools that are using *Understanding Christianity* will find that they are delivering the Christianity sections of this agreed syllabus.

How to use this agreed syllabus: 12 steps

1. Key to implementing this revised syllabus is to take time to **understand the purpose and principal aim**, p.6. Is this the understanding of what RE is in your school? Does RE in your school currently deliver this aim? If teachers are to teach RE effectively, it is vital that they understand what they are doing RE *for*. Reflect on how fulfilling the principal aim will contribute to SMSC and wider school priorities.
2. For each key stage, get to know the **Programme of Study** pages (EYFS p.23; KS1 p.37; KS2 p.55; KS3 p.89.). These give the statutory requirements of the syllabus. Note that the syllabus is structured around the three aims (see p.8) and the three elements: *Making sense of beliefs*, *Understanding the impact* and *Making connections* (see p.13). The three aims/elements form the basis of the end of key stage outcomes, and the progressive 'learning outcomes' in each unit of study. The overview of questions (pp.16–17) shows how questions are based on core concepts in a spiral curriculum.
3. Review the **legal requirements** (see p.9–10) and **curriculum time** for RE (see p.11). Are you fulfilling the legal requirements for RE for all pupils? Are you giving sufficient time to allow pupils to make good progress in understanding and skills?
4. Review the **religions and beliefs** studied at each key stage (see p.12 for overview). Are you following the syllabus requirements? Are you meeting the needs of your children and young people in terms of worldviews studied?
5. The syllabus is based around a **key question approach**, where the questions open up the content to be studied. The syllabus gives **key questions** to help you to deliver the statutory Programmes of Study. All of the questions are found on pp.16–17, with EYFS p.23; KS1 p.37; KS2 p.55; KS3 p.89. These are followed by detailed unit outlines for each question. These are designed to support you in delivering high-quality RE that enables coherence and progression. The unit outlines give structured support in terms of learning outcomes and suggested content, to enable good planning and progression.
6. **Audit the topics you already cover** in your existing long-term plan. There may well be overlap with your current RE, but you will still need to go through and adjust/rewrite schemes of work to ensure that RE **meets the principal aim, reflects the key question approach** and **secures progression in relation to the end of phase outcomes**. To this end, use the planning steps.
7. The **planning process** is at the heart of the syllabus (p.39, 53, 91). The five steps are designed to help teachers to make best use of the units and plan excellent RE. As a staff/department, go through the planning process, following the steps and one example of a unit key question. Note that there is flexibility in terms of choosing content, but that all steps need to be followed.
8. Take the opportunity of the new syllabus to audit your schemes of work to consider the **styles of teaching and learning** that pupils are encountering. Is RE engaging and encouraging enquiry? How is RE delivered? Does it link to other subjects? Is it taught in blocks or on a once-a-week model? What is best for learning in RE? (Guidance p.156 for more on this.) Do you deliberately build in opportunities for recall and retrieval of previous learning?
9. Work to create a coherent **long-term plan** to begin in September 2021. Make sure you can explain why you are doing units in the order you have chosen, so that pupils' understanding is built up in a coherent way. The syllabus is flexible enough to allow RE to be taught in a variety of ways – RE days or weeks, linking with other subjects and discretely. Ensure RE is true to the principal aim and the Programmes of Study.
10. If you are a special school or have significant numbers of SEND pupils, read pp.119–121. There is freedom in the syllabus to adapt your RE to meet the needs of SEND pupils.
11. Share the positive adaptations and changes in RE with the governing body and other interested parties. This is an ideal chance to raise the profile of RE.
12. Use September 2021–July 2022 to implement the syllabus gradually. Adapt what works well and create a scheme of work that fits with your methods of curriculum delivery and delivers the principal aim of the syllabus. Use the year to train staff who teach RE, improve and review.

Upper KS2 units of study

Unit U2.1 What does it mean for Christians to believe that God is holy and loving? [God]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ideas and some content for learning: Teachers can select content from these examples , and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.
<p>Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:</p> <p>Make sense of belief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify some different types of biblical texts, using technical terms accurately Explain connections between biblical texts and Christian ideas of God, using theological terms <p>Understand the impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make clear connections between Bible texts studied and what Christians believe about God; for example, through how cathedrals are designed Show how Christians put their beliefs into practice in worship <p>Make connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weigh up how biblical ideas and teachings about God as holy and loving might make a difference in the world today, developing insights of their own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask pupils to put together some words to describe a divine being, a god. If such a being existed, what would this god be like? Collect their ideas from their previous study of religions in RE, naming specific ideas from different traditions where they can. Explore what Christians believe about God, using a selection of Bible texts, e.g. Psalm 103 (a prayer of King David); Isaiah 6:1–5 (where a prophet has a religious experience); and 1 John 4:7–13 (where one of the followers of Jesus writes a letter about what God is like). Gather all the words and ideas describing what Christians believe about God and compare with pupils' ideas from the first section. Explore which parts of the texts talk about God being holy and which are about God being loving. Examine the difference between these ideas, coming up with good definitions of both terms. Listen to some Christian worship songs, both traditional and contemporary. Find some that talk about God and look closely to work out how much they emphasise the idea of God's holiness and/or love. (Modern songs can be found here: www.praisecharts.com/song-lists/top-100-worship-songs-of-all-time and a list of more traditional hymns from BBC Songs of Praise here: bbc.in/1PSm10Q). Medieval Christians built cathedrals 'to the glory of God'. Talk about what kind of God cathedrals suggest the builders had in mind. Investigate how different parts of cathedrals express ideas about God as holy and loving, connecting with the ideas about God learned earlier in the unit. Ask pupils to express creatively the Christian ideas they have learned about God in this unit. They should use symbols, images, signs and colours to represent the qualities and attributes explored. (Bear in mind the prohibition on depicting God in Judaism and Islam, and teach appropriately for the pupils in your class. Writing poems might be an acceptable alternative for classes with Jewish and Muslim pupils.) Set a short writing task where pupils explain why it is important for Christians that the God they believe in and worship is not only holy, and not only loving, but holy <i>and</i> loving. Many people do not believe in God, so what kinds of guidelines for living might they draw up? Compare with Humanist ideas. Consider whether these guidelines reflect more of a 'holy' or a 'loving' response to humanity: i.e. do they balance justice and mercy, are they more strict or relaxed, stern or forgiving? Discuss how far it is good that there are strict rules and laws in the UK, and how far it is good that people can be forgiven. Compare their own experiences: what are the advantages/disadvantages of having strict rules in a school (for example) or of being in a place where forgiveness is offered? What could the world do with more of?

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Unit U2.7 Why do Hindus try to be good? [Karma/dharma/samsara/moksha]

The principal aim of religious education is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that pupils can gain the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes):	Ideas and some content for learning: Teachers can select content from these examples , and add more of their own to enable pupils to achieve the outcomes.
<p>Teachers will enable pupils to achieve these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage, so that they can:</p> <p>Make sense of belief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and explain Hindu beliefs, e.g. <i>dharma</i>, <i>karma</i>, <i>samsara</i>, <i>moksha</i>, using technical terms accurately Give meanings for the story of the man in the well and explain how it relates to Hindu beliefs about <i>samsara</i>, <i>moksha</i>, etc. <p>Understand the impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make clear connections between Hindu beliefs about <i>dharma</i>, <i>karma</i>, <i>samsara</i> and <i>moksha</i> and ways in which Hindus live Connect the four Hindu aims of life and the four stages of life with beliefs about <i>dharma</i>, <i>karma</i>, <i>moksha</i>, etc. Give evidence and examples to show how Hindus put their beliefs into practice in different ways <p>Make connections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections between Hindu beliefs studied (e.g. <i>karma</i> and <i>dharma</i>), and explain how and why they are important to Hindus Reflect on and articulate what impact belief in <i>karma</i> and <i>dharma</i> might have on individuals and the world, recognising different points of view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall learning about Brahman (God, Ultimate Reality) and <i>atman</i> (eternal self) in Unit L2.7. Remember that Hinduism is very diverse, and so there is hardly anything that we can say ‘all Hindus believe ...’ However, the ideas of <i>dharma</i>, <i>karma</i>, <i>samsara</i> and <i>moksha</i> are commonly held, although described in a range of ways. Explore the Hindu story from the Mahabharata, the ‘man in the well’ (www.indianetzone.com/50/man_well.htm) in a creative way; this presents one picture of the way the world is for a Hindu worldview: the <i>atman</i> is trapped in the physical body and wants to escape the terrible dangers, but the man is distracted by the trivial pleasures instead of trying to get out. This is a warning to Hindus that they should pay attention to finding the way to escape the cycle of life, death and rebirth. Use this to set the scene for learning about <i>karma</i>, <i>samsara</i>, etc. below. Explore Hindu ideas of <i>karma</i> – the law of cause and effect, and how actions bring good or bad <i>karma</i>. Connect this with Hindu beliefs about <i>samsara</i> – the cycle of life death and rebirth travelled by the <i>atman</i> through various reincarnations, to achieve <i>moksha</i> (release from the cycle of <i>samsara</i>, and union with Brahman). Find out how and why the game of ‘snakes and ladders’ links with Hindu ideas of <i>karma</i> and <i>moksha</i>. Reflect on how these beliefs offer reasons why a Hindu might try to be good – to gain good <i>karma</i> and a better reincarnation, and ultimately release from <i>samsara</i>. Explore Hindu ideas about the four aims of life (<i>purusharthas</i>): <i>dharma</i>: religious or moral duty; <i>artha</i>: economic development, providing for family and society by honest means; <i>kama</i>: regulated enjoyment of the pleasures and beauty of life; <i>moksha</i>: liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth/reincarnation. Compare these with pupils’ goals for living. Connect with the idea of <i>karma</i> – pursuing these aims contribute to good <i>karma</i>; doing things selfishly or in ways that harm others brings bad <i>karma</i>. Hindus might describe life as a journey towards <i>moksha</i>; Hindu life is also part of a journey through different stages (<i>ashramas</i>), each with different duties. Look at the different <i>dharma</i>/duties Hindus have at the four ashramas: student, householder, retired person, renouncer. How does the <i>dharma</i> for these stages help Hindus to be good? Compare with the duties pupils have now, and ones they think they will have at later stages of life. Consider some Hindu values and how they make a difference to Hindu life, individually and in community, e.g. <i>ahimsa</i> (non-violence) and <i>satya</i> (truthfulness). Connect these with ideas of <i>atman/karma</i> (all living beings have an eternal self/atman and so deserve to be treated well; learning the truth and speaking truthfully are ways of worshipping God). Find out about some ways in which Hindus make a difference in the world-wide community. How does a Hindu way of life guide them in how they live? E.g. Mahatma Gandhi, Pandurang Shastri Athavale. Consider the value of the idea of <i>karma</i> and reincarnation: what difference would it make to the way people live if everything they did carries good or bad <i>karma</i>, affecting future rebirths? If no one escapes from this law of justice, how does that change how we view injustice now? Talk about how different people respond to this idea, including non-religious responses and the ideas of pupils themselves. What difference would it make to how they live? Why?