

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

Statutory Requirements from 2016



Acknowledgments

The Working Group

Rev Preb Michael Metcalf, SACRE Chair
Sam Kirwan, St Dominics Brewood
Rosemary Woodward, Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education
Mary Gale, Associate Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE and CEO to MGC consultancy
Emma Jardine-Phillips, Religious Education Adviser to Staffordshire SACRE
Staffordshire NATRE group

Agreed Syllabus Conference and SACRE Members

Committee A: Christian & other religious denominations

Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal
Muhammad Parekh
G. Devadason
Pramaha Laow Panyasiri
Sam Phillips
Margaret Crossland
Ann Hewetson
Tajinder Singh
Diane Cutler
Paul Lewis
Paul Moseley
Susan Devereux

Committee B: Church of England

Sue Blackmore
Colin Hopkins
Michael Metcalf
Jayne Grundy
Rosemary Woodward

Committee C: Teacher Associations

Sonia Andjelkovic
Mick Dwyer

Sam Kirwan

Committee D: Local Authority

Terry Finn
Peter Davies
Ian Lawson
David Williams
Caroline Wood

Co-opted members of Staffordshire SACRE:

Julie Thompson
Julia Almond

Preface

All registered pupils in all maintained schools, (including those in reception settings) up to the age of 19 years, are entitled to receive Religious Education. This Religious Education is required to be taught in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education that is determined locally through the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

This revised syllabus supersedes all previous versions and is issued for implementation in all relevant Staffordshire schools from September 2016. (see 'Ensuring Your School is Compliant' Page 23)

It takes account of the new National Curriculum Programmes of Study (2013) and the 2013 non- statutory National Curriculum Framework for RE (NCFRE) published by the Religious Education Council.

This document sets out the statutory requirements for religious education in Staffordshire.

Staffordshire SACRE is confident that this syllabus provides firm foundations for high quality teaching and learning experiences.

For further information and guidance contact Staffordshire SACRE.



Foreword



Twenty five years ago or so, I had the considerable pleasure and privilege of being involved in the drawing up and adoption of a completely new Agreed Syllabus in RE for Staffordshire. This was the first such syllabus after the major 1988 Education Reform Act, which had re-defined the content and purpose of RE. It is now an even greater pleasure and privilege to be introducing this latest Agreed Syllabus in RE, as Chair of Staffordshire's SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference.

The County's Agreed Syllabus had undergone several reviews and revisions down the years; it has served the County's schools and pupils well. However, in view of significant changes more recently in the educational and social contexts, we judged that we should engage in a more radical rewriting of the Syllabus. The new Agreed Syllabus does have some elements of continuity with the former syllabus, and has been designed to ease the transition from the former one, but it also has some key new features.

Chief among these is the emphasis on promoting religious literacy among all pupils, as the undergirding principle of the Syllabus. "Religious Literacy" hardly needs to be justified or explained as an aspiration; indeed, the healthy development of our religiously diverse society demands that we all learn how to live well together. Religious Education in schools is uniquely placed to take the lead in preparing pupils for the realities and implications of the plural adult world, and in embodying in an exemplary fashion what it means to be religiously literate today.

Achieving religious literacy is sub-divided into three aims in the Syllabus. The first two of these roughly correspond to the familiar themes of "learning about" and "learning from" religion. The third aim, of grappling with the fact of religious diversity, and with the challenges this brings, is new. Also new is the framework of age-related expectations, as a means of assessing pupils' progress, in place of the now obsolete eight levels of attainment. A "steer" is given as to which religions and beliefs should be chosen for fuller study alongside Christianity.

Remarkably, the rewriting of the Agreed Syllabus has been achieved in less than half a year. In this endeavour, we owe a considerable debt to the hard work and professional expertise of Emma Jardine-Phillips, RE Adviser to SACRE, and Mary Gale, Consultant with Entrust, who have shared with me in the writing of the Syllabus. The Agreed Syllabus Conference thanks them very warmly, and also thanks members of the Working Group and others who have contributed advice and comment.

We, the members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, engaged with our statutory task in a pleasing spirit of goodwill and positive consensus. Our desire is that the new Agreed Syllabus in RE for Staffordshire schools will similarly help to engender goodwill, meaningful insights and constructive attitudes as pupils grow in religious literacy and in their understanding and awareness of the world they live in and of their future in it.

Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf

Chair, Staffordshire SACRE and Agreed Syllabus Conference

Contents

Curriculum Aims	6
Teaching and Learning	8
Key Dimensions	
Planning your Religious Education	
Inclusion	
Programmes of Study	10
Early Years Foundation Stage	
Reception/Key Stage 1	
Key Stage 2	
Key Stage 3	
Key Stage 4	
Post 16	
A Framework for Assessment	17
Age Related Expectations for Religious Education	
Legal Framework	21
Ensuring your setting is compliant	23

Curriculum Aims

The role of Religious Education in schools is to help prepare and equip all pupils for life and citizenship in today's diverse and plural Britain, through fostering in each pupil an increasing level of religious literacy.

What does it mean to be 'religiously literate'?

A religiously literate person would have an established and growing knowledge and understanding of beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views. In the context of their own considered standpoint they would also be open to engaging with the views of others in a plural world.

In consequence, the aims of RE within the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus are that pupils should acquire:

- (1) an increasing core of insightful knowledge concerning religions and beliefs, both in Britain and in more global terms;

By exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practices – so acquiring knowledge and understanding of religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyles, rituals and symbolism that offer insight into religious experience and living within a faith community.

- (2) a developing capacity to engage with ultimate questions and to formulate their own sense of identity and values;

By engaging with fundamental questions – so appreciating the human and religious questions that are raised by life and its experiences, and through which meaning, significance and value are forged, and by expressing and evaluating their personal responses to such questions- so gaining skills to be able to relate the things studied and discussed, to their own experience.

- (3) a growing range of the social, spiritual and emotional skills and dispositions appropriate to living well in a religiously plural and open society;

By reflecting on the reality of religious diversity and on the issues raised by living in a diverse world - so developing skills of analysis and discernment in relation to prejudice, discrimination and bias, together with skills of self-awareness, moral judgement and responsible choice.

Exploring Engaging Reflecting

These aims underpin the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.

The Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. [Section 375 Education Act 1996]

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage** pupils should have the opportunity to encounter the diversity of faiths represented in their own community and in Great Britain. Giving young children familiarity with the presence of major faiths and a wide religious vocabulary raises awareness of the diverse nature of the world around us and provides a structure in which to develop their learning. Schools should build upon this foundation in subsequent key stages.

At Key Stage One schools should focus on Christianity and one other faith. At Key Stage Two and beyond schools should focus on Christianity and two other faiths to illustrate the key dimensions being studied. In each key stage, programmes of study should involve an in-depth study of the narrative, beliefs and practices at the heart of Christianity. Alongside Christianity, Islam should feature throughout a school's RE curriculum.

Other principal faiths found in the United Kingdom are Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism. In choosing their focus faiths, schools should take account of the religious profile of the school and the local community as well as national and international factors. Schools may also draw on examples from other major faiths where examples of belief and practice better illustrate the dimension being explored.

At some point in each key stage pupils should have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and their additional focus faiths in a systematic way. They should take time to review their learning about the other major faiths in a similar way.

Pupils should also develop awareness of secular world views as appropriate, for example Humanism and atheism.

Schools may, if they choose, draw examples from other faith perspectives to raise awareness of the diversity of religion, for example Baha'i faith, Jainism, Rastafari, Spiritualism and Zoroastrianism (Parsis).

Teaching and Learning

Key Dimensions

The development of a religiously literate person has to take place in a context, using dimensions and content to explore the three curriculum aims.

An exploration of key religious dimensions will give pupils the building blocks with which to construct their understanding of belief systems, and the context in which to develop the attributes of the religiously literate person.

The three curriculum aims are supported by six broad dimensions:

- Beliefs, teachings and sources
- Practices and ways of life
- Expressing meaning
- Identity, diversity and belonging
- Meaning, purpose and truth
- Values and commitments

The programmes of study that follow identify a number of curriculum opportunities in relation to each of these broad dimensions to give structure to the planning process. Each statement should be approached in the context of the syllabus aims.

Pupils are entitled to experience these curriculum opportunities and they should be the starting point for planning across a key stage. They do not significantly prescribe content, this is a matter for schools to decide for themselves, however they provide the basis for formulating challenging and stimulating questions which support enquiry and engage pupils in the study of religion.

The curriculum opportunities in the programmes of study focus on religious experience. To support good learning and skill development through the curriculum opportunities pupils should also, as appropriate:

- encounter people from different religious and philosophical groups who can express a range of convictions on religious and moral issues
- visit places of religious significance
- use ICT to enhance understanding
- discuss, question and evaluate important issues in religion and philosophy including ultimate questions and ethical issues
- reflect upon and carefully evaluate their own and others' beliefs and values using reasoned and balanced arguments
- use a range of forms of expression to communicate their arguments
- explore the connection between RE and other curriculum areas

Planning your Religious Education

Units of work should be planned to develop the three curriculum aims and to allow for regular review of pupils' progress.

This would normally, but not exclusively, mean that pupils should be guided through the curriculum aims as follows:

- Exploring the issue or dimension, encountering the context, following up questions and establishing new knowledge concerning religion and belief (**Exploring**)
- Investigating the impact of beliefs and practices on lifestyles, attitudes and action and considering the ways in which beliefs, spiritual insights and ideas are expressed, engaging with fundamental questions to understand why people respond to life as they do (**Engaging**)
- Reflecting on diversity within the dimension, and on personal responses to this diversity to develop their own standpoints and self understanding (**Reflecting**)

This process is designed to support and promote the qualities identified as characteristic of a religiously literate person. Using this process, teachers and pupils can identify the progress they have made against the age related expectations.

Teachers should exemplify this process in every unit of work. The three aims will therefore be revisited in every RE experience, giving pupils the opportunity to practise and make progress on a regular basis.

Inclusion

A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, some of whom also have disabilities. A proportion of these pupils will be taught in special schools. Units of work should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that these pupils will be able to study fully the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. (see p 23 for further guidance on compliance in special schools.)

Exploring Engaging Reflecting

Programmes of Study

Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception/Key Stage 1

Key Stage 2

Key Stage 3

Key Stage 4

Post 16



Early Years Foundation Stage

Religious education is an entitlement for all registered pupils, aged 4 to 19.

Children in Nursery classes and other early years' settings are not subject to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus but they are required to cover the religious and spiritual aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage through Understanding the World and Personal, Social, Emotional Development in the Areas of Learning. Practitioners will find much in the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus which supports them in enabling children to meet these sections of the early learning goals.

In Reception classes both the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and the Early Years Foundation Stage apply. Criteria for both can be integrated.

Reception/Key Stage 1

Dimension Curriculum Opportunities			
Pupils should have the opportunity to...			
Beliefs teachings and sources	Engage with stories and extracts from religious literature and talk about their meanings 1.1a	Explore stories about the lives and teachings of key religious figures 1.1b	Find out about ways in which sacred texts are regarded, read and handled by believers 1.1c
Practices and ways of life	Find out about how and when people worship and ask questions about why this is important to believers 1.2a	Explore the preparations for and find out about the celebration of festivals 1.2b	Identify the importance for some people of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives 1.2c
Expressing meaning	Explore as appropriate the special nature of artefacts used in worship 1.3a	Identify symbolic actions, gestures and rituals and talk about how they are used as part of worship and ceremonies 1.3b	Engage with religious beliefs and ideas expressed through story, symbol and other visual forms of expression 1.3c
Identity diversity and belonging	Reflect and respond to stories about belonging and relating to religious communities 1.4a	Identify and ask questions about customs associated with particular religious communities 1.4b	Find out about ceremonies in which special moments in the life cycle are marked 1.4c
Meaning purpose and truth	Ask and respond imaginatively to questions about things that are interesting or puzzling in the world 1.5a	Listen to and ask questions about stories of individuals and their relationship with God 1.5b	Explore a range of stories and extracts from sacred writings and talk about meaning they have for believers 1.5c
Values and commitments	Reflect and respond to stories highlighting the morals and values of believers in practice 1.6a	Reflect on examples of care and concern shown by believers and religious communities and explore reasons for these actions 1.6b	Explore stories from religious traditions and find out about attitudes to the natural world 1.6c

Key Stage 2

Dimension Curriculum Opportunities				
dimension	Curriculum Opportunities			
	Pupils should have the opportunity to...			
Beliefs, teachings and sources	consider their importance for believers today 2.1a	found in sacred books and investigate a range of religious teachings 2.1b	and make links with teachings and practices of special significance to followers 2.1c	stories about the beginnings of the world and reflect upon their importance for believers 2.1d
Practices and ways of life	Compare and contrast the practice of religion in the home in different religious communities 2.2a	Identify the main features and patterns of an act of worship and talk about the importance of worship for believers 2.2b	Investigate some features of key religious festivals and celebrations and identify similarities and differences 2.2c	Investigate the life of a person who has been inspired by their faith and make links between belief and action 2.2d
Expressing meaning	Explore the symbolic use of a wide range of objects, sounds, visual images, actions and gestures and make suggestions as to the intended meaning they might have for believers 2.3a	Explore the meaning of stories drawn from religious sources and reflect on the significance of key words, phrases or expressions 2.3b	Compare and contrast the use of symbols, actions and gestures used in worship by different communities 2.3c	Identify some of the ways in which religions name and describe attributes of God and make links with belief and practice 2.3d
Identity diversity and belonging	Explore the diversity of a range of religious traditions and identify and reflect on similarities and differences 2.4a	Find out about the activities of a local religious community and make links with key religious teachings 2.4b	Research some key events in the development of a religious tradition and explain the impact on believers today 2.4c	Investigate the importance for believers of ceremonies in which special moments in the life cycle are marked 2.4d
Meaning purpose and truth	Raise questions about issues which cause people to wonder and investigate some answers to be found in religious writings and teachings 2.5a	Investigate and reflect on a range of religious responses to suffering, hardship and death 2.5b	Investigate stories about God's relationship with people and suggest how, for some people, this helps them to make sense of life 2.5c	Make links between beliefs and action and reflect on how this might have local, national and international impact 2.5d
Values and commitments	Explore rules for living found in sacred writings and teachings and ask questions about their impact on the lives of believers 2.6a	Investigate ceremonies associated with joining or belonging to a faith community and talk about the meaning of commitment 2.6b	Engage with a variety of people about their beliefs and values and ask questions about the way commitment affects their lives 2.6c	Explore religious stories and teachings about the environment and identify and reflect on their impact on behaviour 2.6d

Key Stage 3

Beliefs teachings and sources	Explore different possible interpretations for a range of sacred writings and religious teachings and reflect on their impact on individuals and communities 3.1a	Evaluate the contribution made to communities and societies by different religious leaders 3.1b	Apply the teachings of key religious figures to contemporary moral and ethical issues 3.1c
Practices and ways of life	Analyse and reflect on the significance of shared activities for individual believers and religious communities 3.2a	Explore celebrations and commemorations which can both unite and divide believers and reflect on the reasons for this 3.2b	Evaluate the impact of beliefs on behaviour and explore the consequences for individuals and communities 3.2c
Expressing meaning	Compare and contrast the use of symbolism in worship and analyse its effectiveness for believers 3.3a	Investigate the symbolism of celebration and commemoration and evaluate its effectiveness in expressing what is important to religious communities 3.3b	Identify a range of key sources for religious communities and make connections between interpretation and action 3.3c
Identity diversity and belonging	Explore why people belong to religions and analyse the impact this has on individuals and communities 3.4a	Compare and contrast key religious practices and reflect on why there is diversity within and between faiths 3.4b	Explore the impact of religious diversity on communities and apply religious teaching to issues of tolerance and harmony 3.4c
Meaning purpose and truth	Demonstrate how believers use religious sources to provide answers when engaging with questions of meaning, purpose and truth 3.5a	Analyse and compare the evidence and arguments used when engaging with questions about the nature and existence of God 3.5b	Evaluate the relationship between science and religion 3.5c
Values and commitments	Investigate the responsibility and explain the challenge of carrying on a religious tradition 3.6a	Make clear connections between religious beliefs, teachings and actions 3.6b	Apply a range of beliefs and values to current issues and questions and analyse the impact on choices and behaviour 3.6c

At Key Stage 4 all pupils should fulfil their entitlement by following as a basis an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools should provide reasonable time for pupils to complete this and if appropriate, to attain an external qualification.

This may be Full Course, or Entry Level Religious Studies. Schools wishing to base this provision on any other specification, for example Humanities or Citizenship, must take advice from SACRE.

In keeping with the aims of religious education and the underlying principles of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus **pupils must have the opportunity to study Christianity and to draw examples from at least one other faith or secular world view.**

The decision to enter pupils for an examination at the end of the course is at the schools' discretion.

A programme of study is included here for students who are not pursuing an examination course in religious studies. Schools are encouraged to use a variety of approaches to entitlement Religious Education for example student conferences.

Dimension Curriculum Opportunities Pupils should have the opportunity to...		
Beliefs teachings and sources	Critically evaluate the influence and authority of sacred literature for believers today 5.1a	Explain the impact of belief on the achievements of significant religious figures and evaluate their influence on historical and contemporary issues 5.1b
Practices and ways of life	Explore and reflect on the way in which belief and practice support and sustain individuals and communities using contemporary examples 5.2a	Present evidence for differing interpretations of religious sources and analyse and reflect the impact on individual conscience and social change 5.2b
Expressing meaning	Explore and interpret the significance and function of a variety of forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression 5.3a	Present a detailed analysis of key religious sources and evaluate a range of interpretations 5.3b
Identity diversity and belonging	Reflect critically on the advantages and disadvantages of inheriting a religious tradition and reflect on the changing impact of religion and beliefs on community and society over time 5.4a	Reflect critically on the variety of practice within and between faith groups and reflect on issues which unite and divide religious traditions 5.4b
Meaning purpose and truth	Engage with and analyse responses to philosophical and paradoxical questions from a range of faith perspectives 5.5a	Investigate and interpret a variety of religious and spiritual experience and reflect on differing responses and impact 5.5b
Values and commitments	Explore ways in which religious communities help their members respond positively to life's dilemmas 5.6a	Raise questions about contemporary personal, moral and social issues and analyse the variety of religious response 5.6b

Assessing achievement in religious education?

Pupils have an entitlement to religious education throughout their school career. This entitlement should include the opportunities, experiences and challenges which engage young people in the learning process.

As part of that learning process, pupils should have clear goals to aim for. They should also be supported on their learning journey by a **framework** which indicates progress. Here, the framework takes the form of age related expectations. The framework supports and promotes the development of the three syllabus aims which identify a religiously literate person, and is consistent with those used in other subject areas.

The framework provides a statement of age related expectations for each year group. It should be used by teachers as a tool to determine the extent to which pupils have met the expectations. Pupils are assessed as:

Working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS): pupils who are exceeding the expectations for their age group

Working at the expected standard (EXS): pupils who are meeting the expectations for their age group in full

Working towards the expected standard (WTS): pupils who have yet to meet the expectations for their age group

Teachers will be expected to comply with current legislation with regard to the reporting of progress and attainment in religious education.

The Performance Description (P) levels and advice on differentiating the RE curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties are to be found in the Department for Education supplementary document: Performance - P Scale - attainment targets for pupils with special educational needs June 2014. Reference: DFE-00484-2014

The Religious Education Framework




Age related expectations for RE

Assessment




GDS
EXS
WTS

The age related expectations can be used as a whole to provide an overview of reasonable expectations of achievement across the three aims of religious education for each year group. For each statement a pupil can be assessed as working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS), working at the expected standard (EXS) or working towards the expected standard (WTS):




By the end of Reception

-  Pupils talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They talk about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things including faith buildings e.g. the church.
-  Pupils can talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another and what makes them special.
-  Pupils can talk about how other children do not always enjoy the same things and are sensitive to this. They can talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.




By the end of Year 1

-  Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice valued by believers. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression which have meaning for believers.
-  Pupils can talk about their experience of the world around them and in particular what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.
-  Pupils can demonstrate awareness that there is more than one religious tradition or faith community.

By the end of Year 2

-  Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions, including key questions raised by believers. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.
-  Pupils can recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. They are able to share ideas about right and wrong.
-  Pupils are able to name more than one religious tradition or faith community, and can talk about some of the distinctive features of each such religious tradition/faith community.

By the end of Year 3

-  Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs, practices and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.
-  Pupils ask important questions about values, commitments and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses, attitudes and behaviour.
-  Pupils can identify and distinguish between the faiths being explored and can express some awareness of their identity within or outside these faiths. They understand the importance and reality of existing in a plural context.

By the end of Year 4



Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They explore and explain meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.



Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, recognising the implications and consequences of making moral choices.



They apply their ideas about identity and commitment in a diverse world to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others, especially their commitments, values and choices. They are able to recognise in themselves and others some reactions to living alongside others who have a different faith or stance.

By the end of Year 5



Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They show a developing insight into why people belong to religions. They demonstrate that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ethical issues.



Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives and making clear connections between personal viewpoints and action.



Pupils explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the opportunities and challenges of commitment in a diverse world. They identify the consequences for themselves and for others of holding particular beliefs and values.

By the end of Year 6



Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.



Pupils use reasoning and examples to explore the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on fundamental questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth.



Focusing on values and commitments, pupils consider their own responses to the opportunities and challenges of living in a diverse world whilst taking account of the views and experiences of others. They are able to talk about examples of religious cooperation, and why this is sometimes difficult.

By the end of KS3



Pupils use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs by analysing issues in a faith context. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. They use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression.






Pupils identify, and articulate critical responses to, fundamental questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues. They are able to express a clear sense of their own identity.






Pupils evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging, identity, society, values and commitments appropriate to living well in a diverse world. They identify interfaith opportunities and successes as well as instances of religious prejudice and discrimination on religious grounds using evidence and examples and in the context of their own experience.

By the end of KS4

-  Pupils use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. They contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied.
-  Pupils coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on fundamental questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They can give an account of and justification for their personal standpoints.
-  Pupils synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples on the challenges raised by living in a diverse world. They are able to discuss coherently strategies for living well in a religiously plural and open society, developing skills for countering prejudice, discrimination and bias, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.

By the end of Post 16

-  Pupils use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs. They clearly recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time. They provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality and ethics are studied. They synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.
-  Pupils analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments relating this both to themselves and others.
-  Pupils evaluate in depth the significance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. They give independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues raised by living in a diverse world, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.

Legal Framework

Religious education in Staffordshire schools

The Education Reform Act 2002 sets out the central aims for the school curriculum. These are:

- to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners at the school and within society
- to prepare learners at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

Religious education makes an important contribution to these key aspects of the curriculum



The Legal Framework

The position of religious education in the school curriculum has been consolidated through a succession of primary legislation, from the Education Act of 1944 through to the Education Act of 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act of 1998.

Key points in the legislation are:

- Religious education is part of the basic curriculum which all maintained schools are required to provide for their registered pupils. It is the duty of the headteacher to ensure that this is the case. [The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Schedule 19]
- Religious education is an entitlement for all pupils, including pupils in reception and sixth forms. [The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Schedule 19]
- The Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. [Section 375 Education Act 1996]
- All LAs are required to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). This Council has the duty of advising the LA on such aspects of Religious Education as methods of teaching, choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers. It may also require a review of an Agreed Syllabus. [Section 390 Education Act 1996]
- The SACRE may, in certain instances, be delegated the duty of considering and disposing of any complaints that an LA or school governing body is in default of its duties with respect to the provision of religious education. [Section 409 Education Act 1996]
- Parents retain the right to withdraw their children from religious education [Section 386 Education Act 1996]

Legal Framework

In Staffordshire, schools that are required to follow the Agreed Syllabus are deemed to be meeting their statutory duties when:

- Religious Education is planned and taught in such a way as to ensure pupils' entitlement to the learning experiences set out in the programme of learning for each key stage
- The age related expectations are used to plan for learning, assessment and progression.
- Reasonable time is made available for the study of RE. The guidelines can be found below:
- Pupils at Key Stage 4 study Christianity and at least one other faith
- At all other key stages schools focus on the teaching of Christianity whilst making pupils aware of the existence and, where possible, the broad perspectives and features of other faiths and secular world views as appropriate.

In addition, although not part of the legal requirement, the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) strongly recommends that:

- The table below is used as a guideline for time allocation for religious education.

Reception/Key Stage 1	36 hours per year
Key Stage 2	45 hours per year
Key Stage 3	45 hours per year
Key Stage 4	40 hours per year
Post 16	sufficient time to ensure pupils' entitlement to study at least four of the concepts in the Programme of Learning

- sufficient evidence of pupils' achievement is recorded to allow for an overall 'best fit' standard of achievement to be assigned to each pupil at the end of each year
- on transfer from key stage to key stage or school to school, teachers are able to provide the following information:

a long term plan identifying how the programme of study has been delivered during the key stage and a best fit standard of achievement for each pupil

Ensuring Your Setting is Compliant

Legal requirements

RE should be provided as part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils attending a maintained school. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of RE, and are not obliged to state their reasons for withdrawal. The 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (the 1998 Act) defined new categories of maintained schools; the rules about the provision of RE differ in some categories, as follows:

Community/Maintained Schools are controlled by the local authority (LA). RE should be taught according to the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus of the LA.

Foundation Schools. RE is taught according to the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, unless the schools are of a religious character, in which case their RE is characterised by their Trust Deed.

Voluntary Aided Schools are those schools originally founded by voluntary bodies, but aided from public funds. RE should be taught according to their Trust Deed.

Voluntary Controlled Schools were originally founded by voluntary bodies, but are now controlled and entirely funded and maintained/controlled by the LA. RE should be taught according to the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus, but parents may request that RE should be provided in accordance with the Trust Deed.

Special Schools should provide RE for all their pupils as far as practicable, according to the status of the school.

Schools with Sixth Forms should provide RE for all pupils in the sixth form in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus.

Academies are independent schools. Pupils' entitlement to RE should be provided as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses.

Free Schools are independent schools; however, as a condition of their grant, they should make provision for pupils' entitlement to RE in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses.

Sixth Form Colleges and **Further Education Colleges** should provide RE for all students who wish to receive it.

Staffordshire SACRE recognises the independence of Academies and Free Schools. However, it commends this Agreed Syllabus to them as a constructive and collaborative way to meet their legal requirements in Religious Education.

Notes

