



**THE AGREED SYLLABUS
FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

2018

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1. Introduction

“The ability to understand the faith or belief of individuals and communities, and how these may shape their culture and behaviour, is an invaluable asset for children in modern day Britain. Explaining religious and non-religious worldviews in an academic way allows young people to engage with the complexities of belief, avoid stereotyping and contribute to an informed debate” – Why RE Matters -The RE Council

“Every child and young person who goes to school is entitled to an experience of religious education (RE) that is both academically challenging and personally inspiring” - A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England -The Religious Education Council of England and Wales -October 2013)

“RE is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and it also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion” - Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010

A review of the National Curriculum for schools in England was made by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2013. RE was not part of the DfE review because it is statutory as Basic Curriculum alongside the National Curriculum subjects. The RE curriculum is set locally where the local authority Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is responsible for producing the locally agreed syllabus for RE.

As a result of the DfE review, the Religious Education Council for England and Wales (REC) concluded that a review of RE was needed for reasons of equity with other subjects. Teachers with responsibility for RE in schools in England are expected to plan lessons, assess pupil progress, and have their performance held to account, as other teachers do. School leaders expect them to use the same or similar criteria to those deployed in other subjects in the curriculum. In October 2013 the REC published “A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England” to support those teachers and schools.

Taking our lead from the REC and following the lay out and style of the documents for the National Curriculum, you will find that the new syllabus for the teaching of RE in schools in the Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland local authority areas, set out here is shorter and less prescriptive as to content than in earlier years. Schools have the flexibility to provide more coherent and integrated cross curricular learning experiences to complement discrete subject teaching tailored to the needs of their pupils and community.

2. The Legal Requirements

– What schools must do

Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based, and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

and all state schools... must teach religious education... all schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online. 'The national curriculum in England: Framework document', September 2013, p.4

All maintained schools must follow the legal requirement to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. All maintained schools therefore have a statutory duty to teach RE. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE.

In brief, legislation requires that:

- in maintained community, foundation or voluntary schools without a religious character, RE is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus;
- 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';
- academies and free schools must teach RE within 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.
- for foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the Agreed Syllabus unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school; and
- in voluntary aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

RE must be included in the curriculum for all registered pupils, including all pupils in reception classes and sixth form, but excluding:

- pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools;
- any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school;
- any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education. Based on NATRE website -National Association of Teachers of Religious Education

3. Aims and purpose (statutory)

The aims of the syllabus are for pupils:

- to develop religious literacy;
- to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and world views represented in the United Kingdom;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- to develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- to develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

Religions deal with some of the most profound and difficult questions in human life, questions such as:

- What is the purpose of life?
- How should people treat each other?
- How do we explain and cope with death and suffering?

Religions approach these issues in complex ways, in ways of life, culture and action, as well as ritual, tradition, story, symbol and belief. Religious Education must take account of this depth and complexity, helping pupils to an understanding appropriate to their age and aptitude.

To do this RE needs:

- to develop pupils' skills;
- to enable them to ask questions;
- to discover information, to approach new material with empathy;
- to reflect on their learning. Pupils should not only acquire knowledge but also be able to use their knowledge to understand their world, build community, and develop their personal position.

Throughout the RE curriculum pupils should be encouraged to **explore** religions, **engage** with their knowledge, and **reflect** on their learning and their lives.

4. Religious Literacy

Religious literacy is the knowledge of, and ability to understand, religion, beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views. It plays an important part in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Its importance is increasing as globalisation has created greater links and migration between societies of different faiths and cultures. Someone who is religiously literate is able to talk with fluency and understanding about religion and belief. It is firmly rooted within educational practice. A crucial aspect of religious literacy is through school RE.

5. What to teach (statutory)

All content in the WHAT TO TEACH column is statutory and therefore must be taught.

Each Key Stage builds upon the one before, so by the time pupils reach the end of KS3, they should have had the opportunity to receive a broad, inclusive religious education.

Teachers should consider the religious experience of the pupils in the classroom and the whole school when planning which religions to look at and in which order.

- Christianity will be studied in all Key Stages.
- The choice of which other religion(s) to study in KS1 should be relevant to the experience of the pupils in the class and local demographic. Where Christianity is the only religion present the school will choose the other religion to be studied.
- However, by the end of KS2 all major religions (Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism) and a secular world view (humanism) must have been studied.
- In KS3, building on KS2, all major religions and a secular world view must have been studied in greater depth.

It is desirable that all pupils visit a church or other Christian place of worship and the school should make all efforts to plan visits to religious buildings of other faiths. Visitors from different faiths and world views should be encouraged to visit all schools. When neither visits nor visitors are possible then the use of virtual tours and resources are recommended.

RE and Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

RE is a statutory part of the core curriculum for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties. Pupils with SEND are found in all contexts and all teachers are teachers of SEND. Good quality teaching in RE will tailor the planning of the syllabus carefully to the special needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs will not always meet the same expectations in RE as other pupils and therefore appropriate assessment materials will need to be used, (exemplars are indicated within the support materials). All programmes of study that are planned for pupils with special educational needs should take account of the targets and recommendations in their Individual Educational Programmes. A multi-sensory approach can be helpful in planning RE for children with special needs.

For the small number of pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from materials used in earlier or later key stages, to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age. In making decisions about adjusting the content of the key stage, teachers should take into account the previous experience of the pupil as well as the necessity to communicate to subsequent teachers a specific differentiated approach to entitlement.

In Special Schools there is no recommended time allocation for RE but it should be part of the main curriculum.

6. Teaching (statutory)

	What to teach	Approach	Entitlement
EYFS	Will follow EYFS framework. Minimum 30hrs teacher-led activities		
KS1	Christianity. Schools should also draw on the background of the pupils to choose one or more other faiths.	Experiential and enquiry approach. Starting with family, neighbourhood and special times. Concentrating on the similarities of religions	Minimum of 36hrs in a school year
KS2	Christianity, five other world religions, humanism and an acknowledgement of other world views.	Experiential and enquiry approach. Moving from the local to the national and international examples of religion. Exploring diversity, similarities and differences within and between religions, humanism and other world views.	Minimum of 45hrs in a school year
KS3	Christianity and five other world religions, humanism and an acknowledgement of other world views and other religions found in the locality.	Experiential and enquiry approach. With doctrinal and philosophical aspects of religion.	Equivalent of 45hrs in a school year
KS4	Students will follow a course which may lead to a public examination in RE or explore (in specific curriculum time) topic based learning relating to local and international issues paying attention to their religious dimensions. Explore the connections between RE and other subject areas.	Experiential and enquiry approach. With doctrinal and philosophical aspects of religion	5% curriculum time
KS5	Some students will follow a course which may lead to a public examination in RE and others will explore a RE specific enrichment project or equivalent (e.g. a religious text, concept or view point) supporting them in their further education.	Examinations, enrichment curriculum time and individual projects including EPQs.	Flexible programs which, whilst avoiding tokenism, may include units of study, day conferences and work integrated with other subjects

7. Attainment Targets (statutory)

There are two attainment targets in RE; good and outstanding RE will achieve a close relationship and a balance between these targets over a unit of work.

AT1 - LEARNING ABOUT RELIGION AND BELIEF

Enquiring into, investigating and understanding religions and beliefs. This includes thinking about and interpreting religious beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and ways of expressing meaning with reference to the specific beliefs and religions studied.

AT2 - LEARNING FROM RELIGION AND BELIEF

Questioning, exploring, reflecting upon and interpreting human experience in the light of religions and beliefs studied. This includes communicating reflections, responses and evaluations about questions of identity, belonging, diversity, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, making increasingly insightful links to the specific religions studied.

Schedules for measuring assessment (statements) are in the supporting materials.

8. RE and the wider school curriculum

An holistic approach to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC), British Values, and Community Cohesion focuses on preparing pupils for life in the 21st century, engaging pupils in a contemporary and relevant context. RE develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other religious traditions and secular world views and explores their responses to life's challenges. Reference is constantly made to those who live out their beliefs, insights and values in their daily lives and within their own communities. This gives pupils the knowledge and skills to flourish both within their own community and as members of a diverse and global society.

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for their future, for employment and lifelong learning. It enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions and other belief systems, relating them to their own understanding and experience
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values and experiences in the light of their study.

Although RE contributes to other subjects it must not be defined by or confined to them.

Similarly, although RE and Collective Worship can enrich each other, RE cannot be replaced by or delivered through Collective Worship.

9. Non-statutory Guidance

The aims of this syllabus are supported by non-statutory guidance including progression documents on individual religions and world views, exemplar lesson plans and relevant topics for Key Stages, and Assessment Criteria written by your local SACRE, together with teacher training sessions, RE newsletters, other online resources such as the Cambridgeshire Knowledge Hub, together with links to other web based materials.

Notes:

Links to progression documents in alphabetical order

10. Humanism

a. Key Stage 1

Key vocabulary	Knowledge and belief	Meaning and purpose (happiness)	Celebrations and ceremonies	Humanist ethics
<p>Q: What are the key words/phrases?</p> <p>Celebrant Happy Human Humanism Humanist Science The Golden Rule</p>	<p>Q: Why humanists believe human beings are special?</p> <p>What human beings share with other animals and what makes us unique</p> <p>Our ability to question and reason, to empathise with other humans and animals, and our creativity</p> <p>How human beings have improved and can further improve our quality of life and our understanding of the world, including human achievements in science, medicine, art, and society</p>	<p>Q: How can we be happy?</p> <p>The Happy Human as a symbol of Humanism</p> <p>Happiness as a worthwhile aim; the importance of relationships, exploration, and achieving goals</p> <p>Many ways of finding happiness; there is no one recipe for happiness</p> <p>One way to be happy is to make other people happy (Robert Ingersoll)</p>	<p>Q: What are the special ways Humanists celebrate in their lives?</p> <p>Valuing and celebrating human life by marking key moments in people’s lives such as births, weddings and deaths</p> <p>Humanist naming ceremonies: celebrating the arrival of a new baby; promises of love and support from family and friends</p> <p>The importance of human relationships; the need for love and support from other people in our lives; including the need to offer support as well as accepting it</p> <p>No special Humanist festivals but many humanists celebrate traditional festivals such as Christmas as a time to recognise the importance of family, friendship and kindness</p>	<p>Q: Why do Humanists think we should be good to each other?</p> <p>Reasons to be good to each other; promoting happiness and avoiding doing harm</p> <p>Thinking about the consequences of our actions</p> <p>The Golden Rule</p> <p>Taking care of other living creatures and the natural world</p>

8.2. Key Stage 2

Key vocabulary	Knowledge and belief (Atheism and agnosticism)	Meaning and purpose (happiness)	Celebrations and ceremonies	Humanist ethics
<p>Q: What are the key words/phrases?</p> <p>Agnosticism Atheism Celebrant Compassion Curiosity Dignity Empathy Evidence Evolution Flourishing Happy Human Human rights Humanism Humanist Humanity Natural selection Reason Respect Responsibility Science The Big Bang The Golden Rule</p>	<p>Q: How do Humanists decide what to believe?</p> <p>The material world as the only one we can know exists</p> <p>Rejection of sacred texts and divine authority; mistrust of faith and revelation</p> <p>Science as the best method to understand the universe; evidence for the universe being billions of years old; evidence that all life on earth, including humans, evolved from a common ancestor</p> <p>Humanist responses to claims of pseudoscience: astrology, mediums, alternative medicine, etc.</p> <p>Willingness to adapt or change beliefs when faced with new evidence</p>	<p>Q: What are Humanists' views on happiness?</p> <p>Happiness as a worthwhile goal; living a flourishing and fulfilling life;</p> <p>Diverse ways of finding happiness; respecting different people's ways of finding happiness as long as they cause no harm to others</p> <p>The absence of the need for religion or the belief in a god or gods to be happy</p> <p>The absence of any belief in an afterlife means 'the time to be happy is now', while we are alive</p> <p>Human beings' responsibility for their own destiny</p>	<p>Q: What do humanist celebrations tell us about the things humanists value?</p> <p>Celebrating human life; marking key moments in people's lives such as births, weddings, and deaths</p> <p>The importance of human relationships</p> <p>The need for love and support from other people in our lives (particularly given the absence of belief in a god or gods); the need to offer support as well as accept it</p> <p>Humanist weddings: celebrating when two people, of any sex, agree to spend the rest of their lives together; making a wedding personal and meaningful to the couple</p>	<p>Q: What do humanists value in life?</p> <p>Humanity, the human spirit and human attributes, including our ability to question and reason</p> <p>Human creativity and achievement: intellectual, technological and artistic</p> <p>The natural world and other living things; the environment in which we all live</p> <p>Human relationships and companionship; our ability to empathise with other humans and animals</p> <p>Our shared human moral values: kindness, compassion, fairness, justice, honesty</p> <p>Our ability to improve our quality of life and make the world a better place for everyone</p>

Key Stage 2 cont/d.

Key vocabulary	Knowledge and belief (Atheism and agnosticism)	Meaning and purpose (happiness)	Celebrations and ceremonies	Humanist ethics
	<p>Q: Why don't Humanists believe in a god or gods?</p> <p>Atheism: the absence of belief in a god or gods</p> <p>Agnosticism: the belief that we can't know whether a god or gods exist or not</p> <p>Absence of convincing evidence for a god or gods</p> <p>Consequences of atheism/agnosticism for how humanists live</p> <p>Humanism as a positive philosophy; living good and happy lives without the need for a god or gods</p>			<p>Q: How do humanists believe we can lead a morally good life?</p> <p>The rejection of sacred texts, divine rules, or unquestionable authorities to follow; accepting individual responsibility for our actions</p> <p>The importance of reason, empathy, compassion, and respect for the dignity of all persons</p> <p>Following the Golden Rule as a naturally evolved ethical principle, present in many cultures</p> <p>Reward and punishment as insufficient motivations to do good; thinking about the consequences of our actions on others and what would happen if everyone acted the same way</p> <p>Valuing general moral principles while considering the particular situation, the need for flexibility and the opportunity to question rule</p>

8.4. Key Stage 3

Key vocabulary	Knowledge and belief (Atheism and agnosticism)	Meaning and purpose (happiness)	Celebrations and ceremonies	Humanist values and ethics
<p>Q: What are the key words/phrases?</p> <p>Agnosticism Altruism Atheism Celebrant Compassion Critical thinking Curiosity Dignity Empathy Empirical Eudaimonia Evidence Evolution Flourishing Happy Human Human rights Humanism Humanist Humanity Materialism Mortality Natural selection Naturalism Pastoral support Rationalism Reason Relativism Respect Responsibility Scepticism Science Secularism The Big Bang The Golden Rule The Good Life The problem of evil</p>	<p>Q: What do humanists believe about the claims of religion? Q: How does the absence of belief in a god affect the way humanists live their lives?</p> <p>The absence of convincing evidence for a god or gods; alternative explanations of suggested evidence (Occam’s razor); the burden of proof (Bertrand Russell’s teapot)</p> <p>Responses to religious arguments for the existence of a god; the problem of evil (Epicurus)</p> <p>Attitudes towards claims about miracles and revelation; the absence of evidence for the power of prayer; preference for action over prayer</p> <p>Humanist views on the origins of religion, and on why religion is so important to many people</p> <p>Consequences of atheism/agnosticism for how humanists live</p> <p>Positive Humanism: more than just not believing in a god</p>	<p>Q: How do humanists find meaning in a purposeless universe?</p> <p>The absence of any discernible ‘ultimate’ or external meaning to life or the universe</p> <p>The experience of living life in a purposeless universe; giving meaning to our own lives</p> <p>Our responsibility for our own destiny; making the most of the one life we know we have</p> <p>Elements and varieties of ‘the Good Life’: the importance of relationships, connections, exploration, contributing to human knowledge, achieving our goals, and acting to benefit humankind</p> <p>Personal development and living a flourishing and fulfilling life: the whole person</p> <p>Optimism about human potential</p>	<p>Q: How do humanists understand and approach the challenge of death?</p> <p>Death as the end of personal existence; the absence of evidence for an afterlife; responses to religious arguments; reasons why people want to believe in an afterlife</p> <p>Reasons not to believe in an afterlife: the absence of identity in dreamless sleep, the importance of the physical brain to our personality (the effect of brain damage on a person)</p> <p>Attitudes towards death and mortality; avoiding overwhelming fear of death (Epicurus’ arguments)</p> <p>Valuing human life and making the most of it: ‘For the one life we have’</p> <p>Something of us survives our death: genes, ideas, actions, and works; living in the others’ memories</p> <p>Humanist funerals as a celebration of a life and an occasion for those still living</p>	<p>Q: How do humanists find value in their lives?</p> <p>Recognising that we are part of something bigger than ourselves: humanity and the natural world</p> <p>Human relationships and companionship; our ability to empathise with other humans and animals</p> <p>Our shared human moral values: kindness, compassion, fairness, justice, honesty</p> <p>Human creativity and achievement: intellectual, technological, and creative/artistic</p> <p>The humanist attitude in art (e.g. Renaissance artists’ painting of personalities as opposed to undifferentiated human worshippers) and literature (George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Philip Pullman)</p> <p>Valuing sensory pleasures; contrast with some religious attitudes</p>

Key Stage 3 cont/d

Key vocabulary	Knowledge and belief (Atheism and agnosticism)	Meaning and purpose (happiness)	Celebrations and ceremonies	Humanist values and ethics
	<p>Q: How do humanists decide what is true? Rationalism: basing beliefs on reason and evidence, not on religious belief or emotional responses</p> <p>Scepticism: applying critical thinking to judge whether something is true; subjecting ideas to logical and empirical challenge</p> <p>Rejection of superstition and pseudoscience; the scientific revolution and the historical tension between science and religion: the god of the gaps (Copernicus, Galileo)</p> <p>The scientific method: hypotheses, predictions, experiments, conclusions, and further testing (Karl Popper); relying on evidence</p> <p>Recognition of the limits of science and the imperfect knowledge it provides; accepting uncertainty as an unavoidable feature of life; being ready to adapt/change beliefs when new evidence emerges</p> <p>Non-scientific questions: science can inform but not answer questions of meaning and value</p>			<p>Q: Where does morality come from? Q: How do humanists work out what is good?</p> <p>The rejection of sacred texts, divine rules, or unquestionable authorities</p> <p>Morality as a naturally evolved, human construct (Peter Singer); morality as a project or journey</p> <p>Improving human welfare in this life as the aim of morality (rather than any divine purpose)</p> <p>Following the Golden Rule as a naturally evolved ethical principle, present in many cultures</p> <p>Obligations to contribute to the common good; the balance between individual autonomy and social responsibility; tolerance of different ways of living</p> <p>Respecting people as persons; human rights (UN Declaration of Human Rights, UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child)</p>