

Building Progression through your RE Agreed Syllabus

The new OFSTED Framework, published in May 2019 for inspections from September 2019, and the research reports leading to this Framework show the importance of the ‘intent’ of the curriculum. This refers to ‘the extent to which the school’s curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each key stage’ (paragraph 168).

We know that when leading RE, within the context of the whole school intent, you need to be clear about the intention of RE. This means being clear about the knowledge and skills your pupils will gain at each key stage in RE, but also how this contributes to the wider school intent and ethos. It also links to the overall purpose of RE in your school, a conversation which has been going on in the RE community for some time. The principal aim for RE in your Agreed Syllabus is:

To engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religions and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as developing responses of their own (Syllabus p. 6).

Beyond this, it should be clear how RE will contribute to ‘the knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life’ (OFSTED, paragraph 170). The contribution that RE can make to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain will be significant.

This document has been written as an accompaniment to your locally Agreed Syllabus and should be used in conjunction with your Agreed Syllabus when planning the progression of knowledge acquisition and build-up of understanding within a year group, key stage and across a pupil’s study of RE.

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Principles for curriculum design: key ideas to bear in mind when you think about your curriculum intent

Your RE curriculum needs to be structured so that it...

...makes sense to pupils

- Offer a clear structure for learning: in this syllabus, units are based around the three strands of Believing, Expressing, Living (see syllabus p.16-17). Make sure that you enable pupils to connect their learning with these three strands. All religious and non-religious worldviews involve these three strands and while questions may focus on one, they also connect to the other strands. Help pupils to see these connections.
- Use a good grounding of systematic study of individual religions to prepare pupils for thematic study, where they compare religions. For example, you will find that studying two religions separately in the first two terms and then comparing them in the summer term will help pupils to make sense of and build on their learning through the year.

...focuses on core concepts

- Select key ideas and concepts at the heart of religion and worldviews (see suggested content)
- Explore these from different perspectives to enrich understanding (e.g. asking how a religious believer or a non-religious person might respond to a key question or idea, or how believers from different places, times or denominations may respond).
- In general, going deeper is preferable to going broader, given the time constraints. Don't focus on coverage – focus on understanding.

...allows pupils to encounter diverse examples of religion and worldviews

- Offer pupils contemporary, contextual accounts, rather than implying that there is a generic Christianity, Islam or atheism that applies to all followers at all times.
- Show something of the diversity of religion/ worldviews (across time and place; within and between traditions) by using examples and case studies.
- Get pupils into texts, not just short quotes, developing skills of reading and interpretation.
- Show connections and differences across religions and beliefs.
- Explore religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Note that 'worldviews' can be personal and institutional, with overlaps and fuzzy edges. (The religions we have traditionally studied in RE may be seen as 'institutional' worldviews, but individual believers within those traditions will have 'personal' worldviews that have common features but are not identical.)

...enables pupils to embed learning in their long-term memory

- Clarify technical terms and check pupil understanding regularly.
- Find creative ways to enable pupils to handle and absorb core knowledge.
- Give pupils repeated opportunities to engage with content.
- Give pupils a chance to revisit and recall knowledge – in thoughtful and engaging ways (i.e. not just quizzing!). For example, through presenting images or texts from previous units for pupils to label, describe, annotate and explain.

...makes space for pupils' own beliefs/worldviews

- Allow pupils to articulate ideas, with reasons, arguments, rebuttals and responses – but leaving space for ambiguity and contradiction.
- Recognise the huge majority of non-religious pupils in RE – and make space for them as a focus for study. What do they believe, why, and how do they live?

...encourages pupils' personal development, applying their learning to living

- Enable pupils to disagree respectfully.
- Engage pupils in handling and applying their learning.
- Give opportunities for pupils to make connections between the ideas studied, the world around them, and within their own worldviews.

Strands and religions

This syllabus has units that fall into three strands. These strands are: Believing, Expressing and Living. The religions suggested for the units are noted under the units. This information can also be found on pages 33, 47 and 71. The units in each strand are:

	Believing	Expressing	Living
FS	F1 Which stories are special and why? F2 Which people are special and why?	F3 What places are special and why? F4 What times are special and why?	F5 Being special: where do we belong? F6 What is special about our world?
KS1	1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? (Christians) 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (Muslims) 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? (Jewish) 1.4 What can we learn from sacred books? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)	1.5 What makes some places sacred? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people) 1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)	1.7 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people) 1.8 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)
Lower KS2	L2.1 What do different people believe about God? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims) L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians today? (Christians) L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? (Christians)	L2.4 Why do people pray? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims) L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims and/or Jewish people) L2.6 Why do some people think that life is a journey and what significant experiences mark this? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people and/or non-religious people)	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? (Christian) L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Hindu) L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people and/or non-religious people)
Upper KS2	U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? (Christian and non-religious) U2.2 What would Jesus do? Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century? (Christians) U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? (Christians, Hindus and non-religious)	U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people) U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? (Christians, Muslims and non-religious)	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Muslim) U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists? (Christian and non-religious) U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa, grace, and/or Ummah? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims)
KS3	3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence? (Christian, Buddhist and/or Muslim, non-religious worldviews) 3.2 Does living biblically mean obeying the whole Bible? (Christian) 3.3 What is so radical about Jesus? (Christian) 3.4 Is death the end? Does it matter? (Christian, Buddhist, non-religious worldviews) 3.5 Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions? (Christian and Buddhist)	3.6 Should religious buildings be sold to feed the starving? (Christians, Muslims and/or Sikhs) 3.7 How can people express the spiritual through the arts? (Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh)	3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Sikh or Buddhist or Muslim in Britain today? (Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim) 3.9 Should happiness be the purpose of life? (Christian, Buddhist, and non-religious) 3.10 Does religion help people to be good? (Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and non-religious) 3.11 What difference does it make to believe in...? (Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and Jewish) 3.12 Is religion a power for peace or a cause of conflict in the world today? (Christian, Muslim, non-religious)

Religious Education key questions: an overview

Note the progression of the units through the key stages as the questions get more demanding. The questions set up the choice of content required to address them.

	FS (Discovering)	KS1 (Exploring)	Lower KS2 (Connecting)	Upper KS2 (Connecting)	KS3 (Applying/interpreting)
Believing (Religious beliefs, teachings, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth)		1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? (Christian) 1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (Muslim) 1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? (Jewish)	L2.1 What do different people believe about God? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims)	U2.1 Why do some people believe God exists? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims)	3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence? (Christian, Buddhist and/or Muslim, non-religious worldviews)
	F1 Which stories are special and why?	1.4 What can we learn from sacred books? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish)	L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians today? (Christian)		3.2 Does living biblically mean obeying the whole Bible? (Christian)
	F2 Which people are special and why?		L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? (Christian)	U2.2 What would Jesus do? Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century? (Christian)	3.3 What is so radical about Jesus? (Christian)
				U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? (Christians, Hindus and non-religious)	3.4 Is death the end? Does it matter? (Christian, Buddhist, non-religious worldviews) 3.5 Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions? (Christian and Buddhist)
Expressing (Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity)	F3. What places are special and why?	1.5 What makes some places sacred? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish)	L2.4 Why do people pray? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims)	U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish)	3.6 Should religious buildings be sold to feed the starving? (Christians, Muslims and or Sikhs)
	F4. What times are special and why?	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims and/or Jewish people)		
			L2.6 Why do some people think that life is a journey and what significant experiences mark this? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people and/or non-religious people)	U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? (Christians, Muslims and non-religious)	3.7 How can people express the spiritual through the arts? (Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh)

	FS (Discovering)	KS1 (Exploring)	Lower KS2 (Connecting)	Upper KS2 (Connecting)	KS3 (Applying/interpreting)
Living (Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments)	F5. Being special: where do we belong?	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? (Christian) L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (Hindu)	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (Muslim)	3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Sikh or Buddhist or Muslim in Britain today? (Sikh, Buddhist, Muslim)
					3.9 Should happiness be the purpose of life? (Christian, Buddhist, and non-religious)
		1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter? (Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people)	L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong? (Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people and/or non-religious people)	U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists? (Christian and non-religious)	3.10 Does religion help people to be good? (Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and non-religious)
	F6. What is special about our world?			U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in ahimsa (harmlessness), grace, and/or Ummah (community)? (Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims)	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in...?(Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and Jewish)
					3.12 Is religion a power for peace or a cause of conflict in the world today? (Christian, Muslim, non-religious)

Principles of progression in this syllabus

Please look at these pages within the syllabus for support with planning for progression:

Page 7

The aims of RE: pupil progress should be assessed in relation to each of these aims. The aims are broken down further into age-related outcomes further on in the syllabus.

Page 13

Religions to be taught to pupils aged 4-5, 5-7, 7-11, 11-14, 14-16 and 16-19. Please note that these are minimum requirements. If schools add any religion or worldview that is not one of those listed within a Key Stage, please ensure that the work fits into the long-term plan.

Pages 16-18

The three strands that run through this syllabus (believing, expressing and living), ensure that there is adequate exploration for each of these three strands in the syllabus. This will guarantee that there is not over-emphasis or exclusion of any of these strands.

Note that Strand 1 (*believing*) incorporates beliefs, teachings, sources of authority, and questions of meaning, purpose and truth.

Strand 2 (*expressing*) incorporates religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity.

Strand 3 (*living*) incorporates religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments

Note how the units in each strand build across the key stages showing progression and building of knowledge

e.g. in the expressing strand F3 What places are special and why?- 1.5 What makes some places sacred? (*Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people*)- L2.4 Why do people pray? (*Christians, Hindus and/or Muslims*) - U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? (*Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people*) - 3.6 Should religious buildings be sold to feed the starving? (*Christians, Muslims and or Sikhs*)

Please note, not all schools will choose to teach all of the units suggested for the key stage of pupils for which they cater. However, it is important to choose a balance of units across the three strands, and make sure that if units are missed out, the subject leader ensures there are no gaps in pupils' knowledge and progression of learning.

In mixed-age classes, RE may be arranged on a rolling programme. Units can be combined or split to suit the age range that are being taught, based upon pupils' prior and future learning. For example, a mixed Y2/3 class teacher might plan a unit of work that combines unit 1.5 'What makes some places sacred?' and L2.4 'Why do people pray?'

Syllabus units are either systematic or thematic. Systematic units focus on only one religion or worldview e.g. L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people? (*Christian*) or thematic where two or more religions or worldviews are looked at e.g. U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? (*Christians, Hindus and non-religious*)

Pages 20-22

Requirements for pupils in EYFS and how RE should link to the EYFS profile.

Ideas for RE in the nursery and a list of general themes that lend themselves to opportunities for work in RE.

Suggested units to be explored in reception and the theme to which each unit relates.

Pages 32, 46 and 70

Outcomes for pupils aged 7, 11 and 14. Teachers should plan RE so that pupils aged 7, 11 and 14 are able to meet these outcomes.

Pages 33, 47 and 71

Suggested units to be explored for KS1, KS2 and KS3, alongside the theme to which each unit relates.

Pages 94-100

Assessment, achievement and attainment. This includes a progression overview of outcomes for 5-14 year olds and progress steps in RE for 5-14 year olds

Using a planning page

Key Question U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?

The principal aim of RE is to engage pupils in systematic enquiry into significant human questions which religion and worldviews address, so that they can develop the understanding and skills needed to appreciate and appraise varied responses to these questions, as well as develop responses of their own.

Strand / Questions / Religions	Learning outcomes (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes) :	Suggested content for learning: <small>Teachers can select content from these examples, and add more of their own.</small>
<p>Strand: Living</p> <p>Recommended Y5</p> <p>Questions in this thread: F5: Where do we belong? 1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? 3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Buddhist, Sikh or Muslim in Britain today?</p> <p>Religions and worldviews: Muslims</p>	<p>Teachers will enable pupils to be able to achieve some of these outcomes, as appropriate to their age and stage:</p> <p>Emerging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the Five Pillars of Islam and give examples of how these affect the everyday lives of Muslims (A1). Identify three reasons why the Holy Qur'an is important to Muslims, and how it makes a difference to how they live (B1). <p>Expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make connections between Muslim practice of the Five Pillars and their beliefs about God and the Prophet Muhammad (A2). Describe and reflect on the significance of the Qur'an to Muslims (B1). Describe the forms of guidance a Muslim uses and compare them to forms of guidance experienced by the pupils (A2). Make connections between the key functions of the mosque and the beliefs of Muslims (A2). <p>Exceeding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare thoughtfully on the value and purpose of religious practices and rituals in a Muslim life (B1). Answer a key question from different perspectives, including their own (C1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out what pupils already know about Islam (e.g. from key question 1.2); how many Muslims do they think there are in Britain and in your local area? Find out and talk about the information from the 2011 Census. Explore the practice, meaning and significance of the Five Pillars of Islam as an expression of ibadah (worship and belief in action). Shahadah (belief in one God and his Prophet); salat (daily prayer); sawm (fasting); zakat (alms giving); hajj (pilgrimage). How do these affect the lives of Muslims, moment by moment, daily, annually, in a lifetime? Think about and discuss the value and challenge for Muslims of following the Five Pillars, and how they might make a difference to individual Muslims and to the Muslim community (Ummah). Investigate how they are practised by Muslims in Britain today. Consider what beliefs, practices and values are significant in pupils' lives. Talk about the Shahadah ('There is no god except Allah') and use the 99 names of Allah to explore the attributes of God. Make links with belief in tawhid. Explore Islamic art, looking at shape, pattern, colour and calligraphy. Ask: what is their significance for Muslims, in the context of tawhid? (NB link with Key Question L2.1.) Consider the importance of the Holy Qur'an for Muslims: how it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, how it is used, treated, learnt. Share examples of stories and teachings: Surah 1, Al-Fatihah (The Opening); Surah 17 (the Prophet's Night Journey) about people who memorise the Qur'an and why (hafiz, hafiza). Find the difference between the authority of the Qur'an and other forms of guidance: Sunnah (practices, customs and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad); Hadith (sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad). Reflect on the guidance pupils turn to when they need guidance or advice, and consider how these are different from the Qur'an for Muslims. Investigate the purpose of a mosque/masjid and explain how and why the architecture is such as preparing for prayer, reflect Muslim beliefs.

When planning a unit look to see what pupils have learnt previously in units in this thread, and where they will go next. Use this to build on previous learning and to do retrieval practice.

This unit is a 'systematic' unit – it focuses on just one religion. Look back to previous learning in systematic and thematic units to check previous learning on Muslims. Use this to build on previous learning and to do retrieval practice.

These are an adaptation of the end of key stage outcomes. They are specific to this unit and its content and should be used when planning and when considering how far pupils have achieved in this unit. These outcomes lead towards the end of key stage outcomes.

The content is selected by the teacher to meet the outcomes in column 2. Through the lessons in this unit ensure that you use strategies to support pupils to remember the content such as retrieval practice and expecting the pupils to use their knowledge in different contexts. Full units of work are available to support these planning pages that give more detailed lesson ideas for teachers from which to plan learning.

Ensure the RE you are teaching meets the aim/purpose/intent of the subject

Sample long term plans with commentary

Notice that we use systematic units to look at individual religions but enable pupils to build on that learning later in the year in thematic units, comparing more than one religion.

These two thematic units (1.7 and 1.5) in the second half of the year revisit and build on learning about these religions earlier in the year. This allows for similarity and difference work.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Reception	F5: Where do we belong?	F4 Which times are special and why?	F6. What is special about our world?	F2 Which people are special and why?	F3 Which places are special and why?	F1 What stories are special and why?
	Christians, Hindus, Muslims	Christians, Hindus and Jewish people	Christians, Muslims and Jewish people	Christians, Muslims and Jewish people	Christians and Muslims	Christians, Hindus and Muslims
Year 1	1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? (part 1)	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? (Part 1)	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (part 1)	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community?	1.5 What makes some places sacred? <i>This could be an RE week or fit into a cross curricular unit of study.</i>	
	Christians	Christians, Muslims or Jewish people	Muslims	Christians, Muslims, Jewish people	Christians, Muslims and/or Jewish people	
Year 2	1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe?	1.6 How and why do we celebrate special and sacred times? (Part 2)	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (part 2)	1.1 Who is a Christian and what do they believe? (part 2)	1.4 How can we learn from sacred books?	1.8 How should we care for others and the world, and why does it matter?
	Jewish people	Christians, Muslims or Jewish people	Muslims	Christians	Christians, Muslims and Jewish people	Christians and Jewish people

Notice that the unit on Christians is split across year 1 and 2 to allow learning to be built on and retrieved.

Although the syllabus suggests focusing on two religions in depth as a minimum in KS1, this school has chosen to add in a minor focus on a third religion. This prepares for learning in KS2.

The second half of what was studied in year 1, allowing time to check knowledge and build on learning.

Building on learning about Christians from KS1.

Introduction of an in-depth focus on Hindu people – not studied in depth in KS1 but mentioned in some thematic units. This unit is then built on in another systematic unit in Year 4.

The learning about Christians is built on in the unit focusing on the Bible... opportunity for more retrieval practice.

The three thematic units (L2.5,2.1,2.4) allow pupils to build on learning about Hindu and Christian people but also bring in, practise and build on learning about Muslim and Jewish people .from Year 2.

Year 3	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? (part 1)	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (part 1)	L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians today?	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? <i>Easter focus possibly an RE week</i>	L2.1 What do different people believe about God? <i>Christian focus and either or both Hindus and Muslims</i>	L2.4 Why do people pray?
	Christians	Hindus	Christians	Christians and Hindu/Jewish people/Muslims	Hindus, Christians, Muslims	Christians, Hindus or Muslims

Year 4	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (part 2)	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? (Part 2)	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? <i>Eid focus possibly an RE week</i>	L2.3 Why is Jesus inspiring to some people?	L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong?	L2.6 Why do some people think that life is like a journey and what significant experiences mark this?
	Hindus	Christians	Christians and Hindu/Jewish people/Muslims	Christians	Christians, Jewish people, non-religious people (Humanism)	Christians, Hindus and/or Jewish people

Building on learning in the year 3 systematic unit, an opportunity for more retrieval practice but see how this also shows spaced learning.

Continues to build up knowledge and understanding of Christians. Preparation for a focus on Jesus in the second half of spring term.

Choose festivals to focus on that build pupils' knowledge and understanding. As Muslims have not been studied in a systematic unit since Year 2 you may choose to focus on them here.

In these two thematic units at the end of year 4 there is an opportunity to compare and contrast but also to revisit and build on learning in earlier units. Notice that non-religious beliefs are explicitly brought in here. It is expected that these will have been discussed in units earlier e.g. 1.8 How should we care for others and the world ?and 2.1 What do different people believe about God

How do you think knowledge and understanding builds in this Year 5 and 6 long-term plan?

Year 5	U2.1 Why do some people think God exists?	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (part 1)	U2.7 What matters most to Christians and Humanists?	U2.2 What would Jesus do? (Can we live by the values of Jesus in the twenty-first century?)	U2.4 If God is everywhere, why go to a place of worship? <i>Possible RE week or fortnight with a focus on a visit to the church and the mandir</i>
	Christians, non-religious (Humanists)	Muslims	Christians and non-religious (Humanists)	Christians	Christians, Hindus and Jewish people
Year 6	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? (part 2)	U2.8 What difference does it make to believe in Ahimsa, Grace and/or Ummah?	U2.5 Is it better to express your beliefs in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? <i>Please note this unit allows for some whole class or project work that recalls past study</i>	U2.3 What do religions say to us when life gets hard? <i>Please note this unit allows for some whole class or project work that recalls past study about being Christian, Hindu etc</i>	
	Muslims	Christians, Muslims and Hindus (recap)	Christians, Muslims and non-religious (Humanists)		Christians, Hindus and non-religious responses

Sample KS3 long-term plan

Notice that we start with a unit that is engaging, and which will allow teaching of foundational knowledge as well as diagnostic assessment of what has been learnt prior to transition.

Having spent three half terms building on learning about religions taught at earlier Key Stages, in unit 3.11 and 3.8 moving on to study a religion not previously taught will enable pupils to apply thinking to a new context. Unit 3.11 is re-visited throughout Key Stage 3 to enable meaningful encounters with all religions focused on in the syllabus, teaching foundational knowledge, with a focus on lived religion.

The syllabus recommends unit 3.11 for Year 9, but this school has chosen to place 3.11, focusing on different religions at different stages of every year to ensure good encounter with the religions in the syllabus. Here, it was felt necessary to study lived Christianity before dealing with issues of biblical interpretation.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	3.3 What is so radical about Jesus?	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in Islam?	3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Muslim?	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in Sikhism/Buddhism?	3.8 What is good and what is challenging about being a teenage Sikh/Buddhist?	3.6 Should religious buildings be sold to feed the starving?
Religions/worldviews	Christians	Muslims	Muslims	Sikhs or Buddhists	Sikhs or Buddhists	Muslims, Sikhs, Christians
	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in Christianity?	3.2 Does living biblically mean obeying the whole Bible?	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in Judaism?	3.10 Does religion help people to be good?	3.4 Is death the end? Does it matter?	3.7 How can people express the spirit through music/art?
Religions/worldviews	Christians	Christians	Jewish people	Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, non-religious worldviews	Christians, Buddhists, non-religious worldviews, e.g. Humanists	Choose 2 or 3: Buddhists, Christians, Jewish, Muslims, Sikhs
Year 9	3.11 What difference does it make to believe in... and...	3.5 Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions?	3.9 Should happiness be the purpose of life?	3.1 Do we need to prove God's existence?	3.12 Is religion a power for peace or a cause of conflict in the world today?	3.10 Does religion help people to be good?
Religions/worldviews	Choose two that have not been previously studied in 3.11 Hindus, plus Buddhists or Sikhs	Christians, Buddhists	Buddhists, Christians, non-religious worldviews such as Humanists	Christian, Buddhist and/or Muslim, non-religious worldviews	Christians, Muslims, Humanists/non-religious worldviews	Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, non-religious worldviews

Note that there are lots of opportunities in unit 3.7 to draw on unit 3.6 (Year 7, Summer 2) revisiting debates about material expressions of faith in places of worship to spending on and responding to artworks.

Note that this unit is split between Year 8 and 9, allowing time to develop authentic viewpoints through further study of religions and after having considered the related unit questioning whether religion promotes peace or conflict.

Notice how begin the final year of Key Stage 3 with a unit that enables pupils to apply thinking to Hinduism plus a new religion, developing this thinking with comparison and consolidating prior knowledge and understanding. The foundational knowledge will be useful in later units studied.

Another way of considering knowledge progression

This style of expressing knowledge progression builds from the work of Christine Counsell (@Counsell_C), as shared with the Princes Trust and in other places.

Year 3	Unit title	Substantive RE content	Recurring substantive content: religions and worldviews, concepts, vocabulary and themes	Why are pupils studying this? What later work is this preparing them for?	Disciplinary aspects of RE
Autumn 1	L2.7 What does it mean to be a Christian in Britain today? (part 1)	How do Christians show their beliefs in the home and the family? What practices happen e.g. grace, church attendance, Sunday school, prayer: what artefacts are used, why, when e.g. bible, cross, crucifix, church notice sheet.	This focuses pupils on a religious worldview in Christianity that shapes aspects of Britain and the wider world. Christians, God, worship, belief, prayer	This work will prepare pupils for further work on Christians and how and why they choose to live their lives in certain ways. This prepares pupils to study the Bible and the overarching narrative of the Bible in more depth and for a closer study of prayer. This enables them to note similarity and difference with practice in other religions and worldviews.	Living: Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments Human and social sciences
		What do Christians do to show their beliefs at Church? (e.g. Anglican and Baptist church.) Use church noticeboard to explore activities such as supporting the local community, sung worship, prayer. How do these activities connect to quotes from the Bible?			
		How and why do different Christians use music in worship? Different musical genres used at different times and occasions. Which beliefs to the words relate to?			
Autumn 2	L2.8 What does it mean to be a Hindu in Britain today? (part 1)	How do Hindus show their faith? Importance of worship, puja, and beliefs about Hindu deities; murtis	This focuses pupils on a religious worldview in the Hindu religious tradition or Sanatan Dharma that shapes aspects of Britain and the wider world. Hindus, worship, deities, prayer, duty.	This work offers a comparison to the Abrahamic religions studied in depth previously. This worldview is very different but has similar themes to study e.g. worship, supreme authority, religious practice	Living: Religious practices and ways of living; questions about values and commitments Human and social sciences
		Aspects of Hindu worship: aarti and bhajans (worship songs) at home and in the mandir			
		The journey of life for a member of the Hindu community; aims and duties, dharma, karma and moksha			

Spring 1	L2.2 Why is the Bible so important for Christians	How Christians use wisdom from the Bible; sacred words, a guide to life.	Knowledge about the Bible allows pupil to explore questions about what the Bible says and how it is used and valued in Christian communities today. God, Creation and Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation, Kingdom of God	This work builds on previous work on Christianity preparing for more specific work on prayer, ideas of Jesus as an incarnation of God and ways that Christians might be inspired to behave. Knowledge of the Bible also has a role unlocking art, text and culture.	Believing: Religious beliefs, teaching, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth Theology
		An overarching narrative of the Bible (God, Creation and Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation, Kingdom of God)			
		The Bible gives Christians a picture of God.			
		Ideas about the creation of the world, dealing with temptation (creation and fall)			
		Ideas from stories about and told by Jesus showing forgiveness and reconciliation.			
Spring 2	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities?	Aspects of celebration (remembering story, celebrated by everyone, raise money, share food, exchange gifts, remind people of beliefs and values).	A focus on Easter and Diwali. Rejoicing, sacrifice, hope, forgiveness, Last supper, Good Friday, Easter Sunday; Good evil, good fortune, prosperity	Considering how celebration reminds believers of key beliefs and gives time to focus on beliefs and commitments and celebrating as a believing community. The focus is on the key elements of festival – shared values, story, belief and hopes and commitments. Preparing pupils for an understanding of celebration in the country, world and wider culture.	Expressing: Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity Philosophy and human and social sciences
		Specific parts of Holy Week and symbols and actions used to remember. Themes of rejoicing and weeping, hope, sacrifice and forgiveness.			
		Stories related to Diwali; Rama and Sita, good and evil; Lakshmi and good fortune. Contemporary celebrations in a British setting.			
Summer 1	L2.1 What do different people believe about God?	Christian metaphors and similes to understand God; Concepts of trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), prayer.	Diverse beliefs about God using examples from the Christian, Muslim and Hindu community. Similarities and differences Trinity, Allah, Deity, Supreme being, Trimurti	This builds on learning about Muslim people and beliefs in KS1 and on learning on Christians and Hindus earlier in Year 3. It prepares pupils to consider further ideas about those who believe or don't believe in God and how they choose to live their lives in relation to their ideas about the existence of God.	Believing: Religious beliefs, teaching, sources; questions about meaning, purpose and truth) Theology
		Stories from the Bible showing characteristics of God; Moses and the Burning bush, Baptism of Jesus, Pentecost, Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-20)			
		Muslim beliefs about Allah; 99 names, prayer, Shahadah, Allah in creation			
		Hindu beliefs about God; murtis, Supreme being, Trimurti (Brahman, Vishnu, Shiva			
		People who don't believe in god – e.g Atheists.			

Summer 2	L2.4 Why do people pray?	The metaphor of prayer as a conversation; why some people pray.	Prayer in Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities and the absence of prayer for others. Prayer as a metaphor for conversation.	This builds on learning about Muslim people and beliefs in KS1 and on learning on Christians and Hindus earlier in Year 3. A study of different religious and spiritual ways of life using prayer: the practice, symbols, words and significance of prayer are studied alongside some key beliefs about prayer. Later units on specific religions will study prayer and the use of prayer in times of difficulty and rejoicing.	Expressing: Religious and spiritual forms of expression; questions about identity and diversity Philosophy and Human and social sciences (e.g. sociology)
		Learning about different aspects of prayer in Islam, types, timing, words, prayer positions, reasons for prayer.			
		Types of prayer in Christianity; intercession, Lord's prayer.			
		Hindu prayer at home and in the Mandir.			
		Comparison of three key prayers; Gayatri Mantra, First Surah of the Qur'an (the opener), Lord's Prayer.			

Appendix A: Incorporating the Understanding Christianity resource with your agreed syllabus

Some schools (with and without a religious designation) use the Understanding Christianity resource to help to meet the outcomes of their syllabus and ensure progression and to build knowledge and understanding of Christian concepts. The sample long term plan shows one way of putting these into a long-term plan.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
FS2	F5 Being special: where do we belong? Christians, Hindus, Muslims	UC F2 Why do Christians perform nativity plays at Christmas? Incarnation/Christians	UC F1 Why is the word God so important to Christians? Creation/Christians	UC F3 Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter garden? Salvation/ Christians	F3 What places are special and why? Christians, Muslims	F1 What times/stories are special and why? Christians, Hindus, Muslims
Y1	1.7 What does it mean to belong to a faith community? Christians, Muslims, Jewish	UC 1.1 What do Christians believe God is like? God/Christians	1.3 Who is Jewish and what do they believe? Or Who is Muslim and what do they believe? Jewish, Muslim		UC 1.2 Who do Christians say made the world? Creation/Christians	1.7 How should we care for the world and for others, and why does it matter? (C, J, NR) Christians, Jewish, non-religious
Y2	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? Muslims	UC 1.3 Why does Christmas matter to Christians? Incarnation/Christians	1.2 Who is a Muslim and what do they believe? (part 2) Muslims	UC 1.4 What is the 'good news' Christians believe Jesus brings? Gospel/ Christians	UC 1.5 Why does Easter matter to Christians? Salvation/Christians	1.5 What makes some places sacred? Christians, Muslims
Y3	UC L2.1 What do Christians learn from the Creation story? UC L2.2 What is it like for someone to follow God? Creation/People of God/Christians		L2.4 Why do people pray? Muslims, Christians	L2.5 Why are festivals important to religious communities? Jewish, Muslim	L2.4 What kind of world did Jesus want? Gospel/Christians	L2.9 What can we learn from religions about deciding what is right and wrong? Christians, Muslims or Jewish, Non-religious
Y4	L2.8 What does it mean to be Hindu in Britain today? Hindus		UC L2.3 What is the 'Trinity' and why is it important for Christians? Incarnation/Christians	UC L2.5 Why do Christians call the day Jesus died 'Good Friday'? Salvation/ Christians	UC L2.6 For Christians, when Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? Kingdom of God/Christians	L2.6 Why do some people think that life is a journey and what significant experiences mark this? Christians, Hindus, non-religious
Y5	UC U2.1 What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving? God/Christians	UC U2.4 Why do Christians believe Jesus was the Messiah? Incarnation/Christians	U2.6 What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today? Muslims		UC U2.5 Christians and how to live: 'What would Jesus do?' Gospel/Christians	U2.7 What matters most to Humanists and Christians? Christians, Humanists
Y6	U2.1 Why do some people believe in God and some people not? Christians, Non-religious	UC U2.2 Creation and science: conflicting or complementary? Creation/Christians	U2.5 Is it better to express your belief in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity? Christians, Muslims, Non-religious	UC U2.6 What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people? Salvation/ Christians	UC U2.8 For Christians, what kind of King is Jesus? Kingdom of God/Christians	U2.3 What do religions say to people when life gets hard? Christians, Hindus, non-religious

KS1 replacing units 1.4 (Sacred Books) and 1.6 (Sacred Times);

Yr3/4 replacing units L2.1 (God), L2.2 (Bible) and L2.3 (Jesus); Year 5/6 replacing U2.2 (Jesus in 2nd C), U2.4 (places of worship) and U2.8 (ahimsa, grace and ummah)