

**Foundation Phase
- Post 16**



Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

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Foreword

This document sets out the revised Agreed Syllabus for religious education in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Implementation dates

This Agreed Syllabus is a statutory document for pupils and schools as outlined on the following pages and comes into effect on:

- 1 August 2008 for 3 to 5 year-olds in the Foundation Phase
- 1 August 2009 for 5 to 6 year-olds in the Foundation Phase
- 1 August 2010 for 6 to 7 year-olds in the Foundation Phase

- 1 August 2008 for Years 3, 4 and 5 and Years 7 and 8
- 1 August 2009 for Year 6 and Year 9

- 1 August 2008 for Years 10, 11, 12 and 13.

From these dates the existing Agreed Syllabus is superseded. However, schools may implement this Agreed Syllabus earlier than the dates specified if this suits the school's planning and curriculum organisation.

Vale of Glamorgan Council
January 2008

Introduction

Religious education in the twenty-first century encourages pupils to explore a range of philosophical, theological, ethical, and spiritual questions in a reflective, analytical, balanced way that stimulates questioning and debate. It also focuses on understanding humanity's quest for meaning, the positive aspects of multi-faith/multicultural understanding and pupils' own understanding and responses to life and religion. Religious education in the twenty-first century consists of an open, objective, exploratory approach which aims to promote an understanding and respect for all whilst acknowledging similarities and differences and recognising shared values.

This Agreed Syllabus provides schools with a statutory framework which supports the above principles.

Statutory Requirements

The section below summarises the statutory requirements that apply to locally agreed syllabuses.

Spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development

'(1) The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly based curriculum which:

- (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

(2) The curriculum for any funded nursery education provided otherwise than at a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly based curriculum which:

- (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils for whom the funded nursery education is provided and of society, and
- (b) prepares those pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.'

(Education Act 2002, Section 99 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b))

Religious education along with other subjects in the curriculum, should promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils. These are essential aspects of religious education which are incorporated into the programmes of study and should be reflected in schemes of work developed by schools.

Religious education in the basic curriculum – requirements for different groups of pupils

'(1) The curriculum for every maintained school in Wales shall comprise a basic curriculum which includes:

(a) provision for religious education for all registered pupils at school (in accordance with such of the provisions of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (c.31) as apply in relation to the school)...

(b) a curriculum for all registered pupils at a school who have attained the age of three but are not over compulsory school age (known as the "National Curriculum for Wales")'

'(2) Subsection (1)(a) does not apply:

(a) in relation to a nursery class in a primary school, or

(b) in the case of a maintained special school (provision as to religious education in special schools being made by regulations under section 71(7) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (c.31)).'

(Education Act 2002, Section 101 (1)(a)(2)(a)(b))

Religious education forms part of the Basic Curriculum entitlement for pupils and must be provided alongside the National Curriculum.

Religious education must be provided for all registered pupils at a school including those in reception classes and sixth forms.

For children in non-maintained settings and LEA nurseries this Agreed Syllabus provides non-statutory entitlement to an exploration of people, beliefs and questions.

Religious education is a statutory requirement for all Key Stage 4 and post-16 pupils. For pupils at Key Stage 4 and post-16 the Agreed Syllabus provides programmes of study. Alternatively a course offering accreditation may be followed in order to fulfil the statutory entitlement to religious education at these Key Stages.

Special Schools should provide religious education for pupils in line with the Agreed Syllabus as far as is practicable.

Religious education requirements for different schools:

Community schools and foundation and voluntary schools *without* a religious character:

'the required provision for religious education in the case of pupils at the school is the provision for religious education in accordance with an agreed syllabus adopted for the school...'

(School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19 paragraph 2(2))

Schools without a religious character must provide religious education in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus.

Foundation and voluntary controlled schools *with* a religious character:

'(2) the required provision for religious education in the case of pupils at the school is the provision for religious education

- (a) in accordance with any arrangements made under sub-paragraph (3), or
- (b) subject to any such arrangements, in accordance with an agreed syllabus adopted for the school ...'

'(3) Where the parents of any pupils at the school request that they may receive religious education

- (a) in accordance with any provisions of the trust deed relating to the school, or
- (b) where provision for that purpose is not made by such a deed, in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination specified in relation to the school under section 69 (4), the governors shall (unless they are satisfied that because of any special circumstances it would be unreasonable to do so) make arrangements for securing that such religious education is given to those pupils in the school during not more than two periods in each week.'

(School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19 paragraph 3)

Voluntary controlled schools with a religious character must provide religious education in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus. However, if a parent so requests, arrangements should be made for religious education to be provided for their child(ren) in accordance with any trust deed or the religious tenets of the school unless the foundation governors feel it is unreasonable to do so. This denominational religious education should be provided for those pupils during not more than two periods in each week and should be taught by reserved teachers who have been specifically appointed to do so (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Chapter V 58 (2)).

Voluntary aided schools with a religious character:

'(2) the required provision for religious education in the case of pupils at the school is the provision for religious education

- (a) in accordance with any provisions of the trust deed relating to the school
- (b) where provision for that purpose is not made by such a deed, in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination specified in relation to the school under section 69(4), or
- (c) in accordance with any arrangements made under sub-section (3).

(3) Where the parents of any pupils at the school

- (a) desire them to receive religious education in accordance with an agreed syllabus adopted by the local education authority, and
- (b) cannot with reasonable convenience cause those pupils to attend a school at which the syllabus is in use, the governing body shall (unless they are satisfied that because of any special circumstances it would be unreasonable to do so) make arrangements for religious education in accordance with that syllabus to be given to those pupils in the school.'

(School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19 paragraph 4)

Voluntary aided schools with a religious character must provide religious education which is determined by the governors in accordance with the trust deed or the religious tenets of the school. However, provision in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus may be made where a parent requests it, if their child(ren) cannot conveniently attend a school where the syllabus is in use, unless the Authority is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to make such a provision.

Christianity and World Religions

'Every agreed syllabus shall 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.'

(Education Act 1996, Section 375 (3))

This Agreed Syllabus requires Christianity to be studied at each phase / key stage. It requires aspects of a range of other world religions and belief systems to be explored at each phase / key stage. As the emphasis of this Agreed Syllabus is to promote an understanding of faith adherents and their beliefs and practices, it does not specify the knowledge (specific religions) that should be studied. In order to gain understanding of religious beliefs, pupils should explore a range of concepts through a skills approach.

Non-denominational teaching

'No agreed syllabus shall provide for religious education to be given to pupils at a school to which this paragraph applies by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination (but this is not to be taken as prohibiting provision in such a syllabus for the study of such catechisms or formularies).'

(Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Schedule 19: paragraph 2(5))

Teaching from this Agreed Syllabus must be non-denominational but teaching about a particular catechism or formulary is not prohibited. Teachers may identify differences in beliefs, teachings and practices of the religious traditions studied, but must avoid promoting denominational views. Language used by teachers must be objective and not promote a particular belief or assume that pupils hold a common belief.

Right of Withdrawal

Pupils:

'(1) If the parent of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school requests that he be wholly or partly excused

- a) from receiving religious education given in the school in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- b) ...
- c)...

the pupil shall be so excused until such time as the request is withdrawn.'

(Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 71)

Whilst parents continue to have the right to withdraw their children from religious education the principles of religious education in the twenty first century as outlined on page 5 and page 11 of this Agreed Syllabus should be fully considered in making any such decisions.

Teachers:

'59 Staff at community, secular foundation or voluntary, or special school

(3) No teacher at the school shall be required to give religious education

60 Staff at foundation or voluntary school with religious character

(2) If the school is a foundation or voluntary controlled school, then (subject to subsections (3) and (4) below) section 59(2) to (4) shall apply to the school as they apply to a foundation or voluntary controlled school which does not have a religious character.

(3) Section 59(2) to (4) shall not so apply in relation to a reserved teacher at the school; and instead subsection (5) below shall apply in relation to such a teacher as it applies in relation to a teacher at a voluntary aided school.

...

(8) In this section "reserved teacher", in relation to a foundation or voluntary controlled school, means a person employed at the school in pursuance of section 58(2).'

(Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Chapter V)

Teachers should be fully aware of the aims and principles of religious education as outlined in this Agreed Syllabus. The teaching of religious education should not compromise individual life stances or beliefs. However, legislation provides that teachers cannot be required to teach religious education except where legislation provides otherwise in relation to some (reserved) teachers in voluntary schools. Teachers with concerns about teaching religious education should endeavour to resolve any such concerns through discussion with the subject leader and Headteacher of the school.

Planning for religious education

The 2008 national curriculum orders and frameworks allow schools to adopt a variety of different ways to organise the curriculum. For instance, there is no requirement to work to a rigid hourly timetable and schools can choose to develop more imaginative and innovative ways of delivering the statutory curriculum.

It is essential that schools carefully consider the most effective way to deliver fully the programmes of study for religious education at each phase, including the statutory provision at Key Stage 4 and post-16. *

Schools should also consider any guidance offered by the LEA in relation to this aspect of the Agreed Syllabus.

In the Foundation Phase, schools must ensure that religious education is an integral part of the curriculum and therefore include religious education in the plans for continuous, enhanced and focused provision.

For later phases, approaches might include:

- combining the teaching of one or more subjects in a thematic way using the Range sections from different subjects that complement one another;
- using a series of whole days – in or out of school – to focus on a particular topic; and
- using the Skills framework and / or the Skills section of any of the subject orders or Agreed Syllabus as a starting point.

At Key Stage 4 and post -16, religious education needs to be integrated into the Learning Core. It should contribute as widely as possible to the four aspects of learning.

Religious education will lend itself well to these approaches. However, schools must ensure that religious education is a **clearly identifiable** aspect of the curriculum, that **sufficient time** is allocated to fulfil the programmes of study and that continuity and progression are built into learning plans.

In planning and organising the whole curriculum, equal weighting must be given to religious education and other non-core subjects in order to fulfil statutory requirements.

'In all phases, a whole school approach is crucial so that there is a shared and coherent vision across the school.' (*Making the Most of Learning - Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, 2008*)

* Religious education is a statutory requirement for all registered pupils from reception to post-16. At Key Stage 4 and post -16 all pupils must be provided with religious education. Additionally some pupils may opt for religious studies examination courses.

Including all learners

Responsibilities of schools

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Welsh Assembly Government's overarching strategy document Rights to Action, all children and young people must be provided with an education that develops their personality and talents to the full. The Education Act 2002 further strengthens schools' duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people.

The equal opportunities legislation which covers age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation further places a duty on schools in Wales towards present and prospective learners to eliminate discrimination and harassment, to promote positive attitudes and equal opportunities and encourage participation in all areas of school life.

Schools should develop in every learner a sense of personal and cultural identity that is receptive and respectful towards others. Schools should plan across the curriculum to develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, values and attitudes that will enable learners to participate in our multi-ethnic society in Wales. Schools should develop approaches that support the ethnic and cultural identities of all learners and reflect a range of perspectives, to engage learners and prepare them for life as global citizens.

Schools must work to reduce environmental and social barriers to inclusion and offer opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential in preparation for further learning and life. Where appropriate, schools will need to plan and work with specialist services to ensure relevant and accessible learning experiences.

For learners with disabilities in particular, they should:

- improve access to the curriculum
- make physical improvements to increase participation in education
- provide information in appropriate formats.

Schools should seek advice regarding reasonable adjustments, alternative/adapted activities and appropriate equipment and resources, which may be used to support the full participation of all learners including those who use a means of communication other than speech.

For learners whose first language is neither English nor Welsh, schools should take specific action to help them learn both English and Welsh through the curriculum. Schools should provide learners with material that is appropriate to their ability, previous education and experience, and which extends their language development. Schools should also encourage the use of learners' home languages for learning.

Learner entitlement

Schools in Wales should ensure that all learners are engaged as full members of their school communities, accessing the wider curriculum and all school activities and working wherever possible alongside their peers. Schools should teach all programmes of study and frameworks in ways appropriate to learners' developing maturities and abilities and ensure that learners are able to use fully their preferred means of communication to access the curriculum. In order to extend their learning, learners should experience a variety of learning and teaching styles.

To enable all learners to access relevant skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level, schools may use content from earlier phases or key stages within the curriculum. Schools should use material in ways suitable for the learners' age, experience, understanding and prior achievement to engage them in the learning process.

For learners working significantly below the expected levels at any key stage, schools should use the needs of the learner as a starting point and adapt the programmes of study accordingly. Sufficient flexibility exists within the curriculum to meet the needs of learners without the need for disapplication. In exceptional cases, individual learners may be disapplied, usually on a temporary basis, but group or large-scale disapplications should not be used.

Where it is not possible to cover the content of all of the programmes of study for each key stage, the statutory requirement to provide a broad, balanced curriculum can be met by selecting appropriate topics/themes from the curriculum as contexts for learning.

For more-able and talented learners working at higher levels, schools should provide greater challenge by using material in ways that extend breadth and depth of study and opportunities for independent learning. The level of demand may also be increased through the development and application of thinking, and communication, ICT and number skills across the curriculum.

Schools should choose material that will:

- provide a meaningful, relevant and motivating curriculum for their learners
- meet the specific needs of their learners and further their all-round development.

Learners of all abilities should have access to appropriate assessment and accreditation.

Skills across the curriculum

A non-statutory *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* has been developed in order to provide guidance about continuity and progression in developing thinking, communication, ICT and number for learners from 3–19.

At Key Stages 2 and 3, learners should be given opportunities to build on skills they have started to acquire and develop during the Foundation Phase. Learners should continue to acquire, develop, practise, apply and refine these skills through group and individual tasks in a variety of contexts across the curriculum. Progress can be seen in terms of the refinement of these skills and by their application to tasks that move from: concrete to abstract; simple to complex; personal to the 'big picture'; familiar to unfamiliar; and supported to independent and interdependent.

For 14–19 learners, the framework should provide the basis for effective progress in attaining an appropriate range of qualifications, including Key Skills.



Developing thinking

Learners develop their thinking across the curriculum through the processes of **planning, developing** and **reflecting**.

In **religious education**, learners develop thinking skills through a range of activities. Learners ask fundamental questions which are raised by human experience, the world and aspects of religion. They explore and make links between the religious beliefs, teachings and practices that they study. They plan investigations by gathering and utilising a range of religious and non-religious sources and use these to evaluate and justify their personal responses. They use a range of critical and creative problem solving techniques in order to develop ideas and explore and challenge interpretations, preconceptions and possibilities.



Developing communication

Learners develop their communication skills across the curriculum through the skills of **oracy, reading, writing** and **wider communication**.

In **religious education**, learners develop skills in oracy, reading and writing, and wider communication skills through a range of activities. Learners ask questions, communicate ideas and express their own feelings and opinions using different forms as appropriate to the audience and purpose of the activity. They listen carefully to others, noting the strengths and weaknesses of viewpoints or lines of reasoning. They use different reading/writing strategies depending on the investigation or activity they are undertaking and show increasing understanding of religious/symbolic language with a growing awareness of the range of possible interpretation.



Developing ICT

Learners develop their ICT skills across the curriculum by **creating, presenting, finding and developing information and ideas** and by using a wide range of equipment and software.

In **religious education**, learners use ICT to communicate and share information (using, for example, e-mails and PowerPoint); to present information in a variety of formats using word processing and graphics; to find and develop information on the internet and other sources including CD-ROMs, etc., and to support oral presentations and the creation of ideas and strategies to improve the impact of their work.



Developing number

Learners develop their number skills across the curriculum by **using mathematical information, calculating, and interpreting and presenting findings**.

In **religious education**, learners develop skills in the application of number by using information such as ordering events in time, by measuring time through the calendars of various religions, by calculating percentages of giving, and by considering the significance of number within religions. They interpret results/data and present findings from questionnaires, graphs and other forms of data in order to draw conclusions and ask further questions about issues relating to religion and the world.

Learning across the curriculum

At Key Stages 2 and 3, learners should be given opportunities to build on the experiences gained during the Foundation Phase, and to promote their knowledge and understanding of Wales, their personal and social development and well-being, and their awareness of the world of work.

At Key Stage 4 and post-16, learners' knowledge and understanding should be developed and applied within the contexts of their individual 14–19 pathways including the Learning Core.



Curriculum Cymreig (7–14) and Wales, Europe and the World (14–19)

Learners aged 7–14 should be given opportunities to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales. Learners aged 14–19 should have opportunities for active engagement in understanding the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of Wales as part of the world as a whole. For 14–19 learners, this is a part of their Learning Core entitlement and is a requirement at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

Religious education contributes to the Curriculum Cymreig by allowing learners to appreciate the significance, value and impact of the rich Christian heritage and dynamic multi-faith composition of Wales past and present. By using a range of stimulating resources from the locality learners are challenged to ask fundamental questions about meaning and the purpose of life, and the significance and impact of religion and religious thinking on twenty-first century society. Such insight supports social cohesion, cultural/religious awareness and cooperation within society and individual communities.

Religious education contributes to Wales, Europe and the World by raising challenging questions from religious and non-religious perspectives: questions relating to political decision making, exploitation and justice, social freedom and responsibility, human rights issues, economic affluence and Wales' responsibility to, and relationship with, its own citizens and those in other parts of the world. Religious education helps learners develop positive attitudes to help them deal with challenging moral and religious issues with sensitivity, thus providing common ground for collaboration and exploration of common values and beliefs within Wales, Europe and the World.



Personal and social education

Learners should be given opportunities to promote their health and well-being and moral and spiritual development; to become active citizens and promote sustainable development and global citizenship; and to prepare for lifelong learning. For 14–19 learners, this is a part of their Learning Core entitlement and is a requirement at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

Religious education contributes to personal and social education through exploration of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions. Learners develop understanding of and respect for various world religions and explore how religion impacts on decisions made, and lifestyles adopted by individuals and societies within various cultures around the world. Learners focus on the desire of many religions to foster values and aspirations such as equality, justice, responsibility, peace and morality through such things as social action, sustainability and global citizenship. Learners will also be encouraged to question the values and aspirations of their own lives, the lives of others and of society.



Careers and the world of work

Learners aged 11–19 should be given opportunities to develop their awareness of careers and the world of work and how their studies contribute to their readiness for a working life. For 14–19 learners, this is a part of their Learning Core entitlement and is a requirement at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

Religious education contributes to careers and the world of work by providing insight into how religion influences believers in their choice of career and the standards expected of them in their working lives. Community cohesion and understanding in the work place can be enhanced through knowledge of essential religious, cultural and ethical beliefs and practices (e.g. dress codes, festivals, death rituals, etc.). These are essential knowledge for occupations such as medicine, politics, law and education, as well as for occupations relating to travel, entertainment, media and the armed forces, and in fact for all citizens in our multicultural world. In the drive to create a just and equitable society learners can evaluate various religious and moral perspectives relating to, for example, employment rights, ethical entrepreneurship, business ethics, money lending/borrowing, and promoting sustainable green industrial processes and practices. In addition, religious education contributes a variety of transferable skills such as insight, problem solving, critical thinking, the ability to evaluate differing perspectives and weigh up consequences, etc. All of these skills underpin many of the qualities needed in today's challenging, complex and ever changing world of work.

Aspects of religious education

The spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils should be promoted throughout the school curriculum (1988 Education Reform Act).

Whilst not holding sole responsibility for pupils' development in these areas, religious education should make a significant contribution as illustrated below.

In this Agreed Syllabus

The spiritual focuses on:

- the quest for meaning, which goes beyond the physical and material aspects of life, and explores responses to God/Ultimate Reality and truth
- the essence of what it means to be human, which explores shared values, identity, personal worth, creativity, imagination, love, faithfulness and goodness
- the growth of an 'inner life', which focuses on the development of intellectual curiosity, open-mindedness, emotion, reflection, intuition and beliefs, including a relationship with God

The moral focuses on:

- the exploration of shared values and attitudes, which highlights religious/cultural origins and contemporary social/political activities that influence and challenge our understanding
- the ability of human beings to make moral choices for good or evil, which focuses on understanding moral codes, relationships, responsibility, respect for diversity, temptation, the power of self-sacrifice and love
- a personal response to moral issues, which focuses on the development of personal integrity, conscience, challenging personal/social norms and 'learning what is worthy of respect and what is not' (Hans Küng)

The cultural focuses on:

- the ways in which culture/religion has influenced local and world history and human experience in both positive and negative ways, investigating the difference between official and personal standpoints
- the need for human beings to have a sense of cultural identity, belonging and purpose, which in Wales has been evident by the way in which religion and culture have been interwoven
- pupils' personal response to multicultural/multi-faith Wales, Europe and the World

The mental focuses on:

- the intellectual challenges of carrying out research, evaluating evidence, critical thinking, justifying opinions and theories, developing and interpreting alternative explanations
- the ability to discern, to challenge bias and to make value judgements and the skill of synthesising and analysing complex and often conflicting information
- clarity of thought, reflection, intuitive thinking, symbolic understanding and interpretative skills

The physical focuses on:

- physical activity that responds practically to the needs of others and demonstrates responsible (social) action and positive lifestyle
- physical activities that are creative, responsive and help people relate to and deal with the challenges of life, for example ritual, religious dance and prayer
- physical activities that promote well-being and equilibrium, help clarify thought processes, and inspire, for example, meditation, stilling and yoga.

Progression in religious education

Religious education in the Foundation Phase

Within the Foundation Phase children are inquisitive and naturally ask questions about life and the world around them. Children are fascinated by themselves, their families, other people and the wonders of the world. This fascination relates directly to their spiritual, moral and cultural development and can be fostered through experiences concerned with 'People, beliefs and questions'. This natural interest and enthusiasm makes children want to access, during the Foundation Phase, appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding which provide the essential underpinnings for Key Stage 2 religious education. Through engaging, practical, integrated activities children can learn more about themselves, other people and the world around them and develop an understanding of the rich cultural and religious heritage of Wales. Knowledge of their own heritage and traditions (through stories and role play) enables them to understand more about themselves and help them to develop understanding of the viewpoints of others, which develops respect and attitudes of responsibility. Through play, children develop their ideas, opinions and feelings with imagination, creativity and sensitivity which can help inform their view of the world, their hopes, and their dreams. When expressing their own feelings and opinions they can identify how their actions may affect others, recognise that other people's viewpoints may be similar to or differ from their own and reflect on and revise their own perspectives on life as appropriate.

Religious education at Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, religious education fosters learners' interest and wonder in the world and human experience. This stimulates them into raising and investigating deep questions that relate to their personal experiences, religion and life in general, thus building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the Foundation Phase. Through practical stimulating activities and exploration of religion in their locality in Wales, in Britain and the wider world learners will develop skills and gather information that will help them think creatively about fundamental religious and moral questions and share ideas through discussion. Knowledge of religion(s) and a recognition of the importance that religion plays in people's lives will help to develop tolerance and respect, and should foster responsible attitudes in local and global society. Through active participation learners will explore the spiritual and moral dimensions in order to inform their own search for meaning and purpose. Learners will express their own feelings and opinions, identify how their actions may affect others, recognise that other people's viewpoints may be similar to or differ from their own and reflect on and revise their own perspectives on life as appropriate.

Religious education at Key Stage 3

At Key Stage 3, religious education stimulates learners to think for themselves in order to develop an understanding of life, the world, and search for meaning that inspires them to bring about transformation personally, socially and globally, thus building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired at Key Stage 2. By engaging in practical activities, stimulating discussion and personal investigations of religion in their locality in Wales, in Britain and globally, learners will apply and evaluate their insights concerned with fundamental religious and moral questions; in doing so, they will be given opportunities to think creatively and ask deeper and more challenging questions. Knowledge of religion(s) and the impact that religion and religious ideas have locally, nationally and globally will foster greater understanding of the significance of religion and its importance in promoting social cohesion, stability, global citizenship and sustainability. Through stimulating experiences learners will reflect on the spiritual and moral dimensions of life, recognising the importance of the non-material for both religious and non-religious people. Learners will be given opportunities to express and justify their own feelings and opinions about their search for meaning with sufficient stimuli to inspire and promote openness to new ideas.

Religious education at Key Stage 4 and Post-16

At Key Stage 4 and post-16, religious education stimulates learners to engage with fundamental questions and issues that relate to their individual needs, meet the demands of the modern world and motivate and challenge their own and others' thinking, thus building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in the previous key stages. Through active participation and involvement, challenging debate and in-depth investigations of religion and religious/non-religious ideas evident in their locality in Wales, in Britain and globally, learners should use and apply their knowledge to present theories and create hypotheses, thus stimulating deeper and more challenging questions. An in-depth and extensive knowledge and understanding of religion and religious ideas will foster cultural sensitivity and respect, the valuing of diversity, greater social cohesion and responsibility locally, nationally and globally. Religious education crystallizes spiritual and moral development, and can stimulate expressive personal responses when learners discover a wide range of world views and values beyond the mundane and material, and when they become illuminated by newly understood connections or awareness. Through their exploration learners should begin to understand that conclusions drawn regarding fundamental and personal questions are partial, inconclusive and open to different interpretations.

Summary of Requirements for Religious Education across the Foundation Phase/Key Stages

This section outlines the requirements in relation to an exploration of Christianity and other world religions. It is the explicit intention of this Agreed Syllabus to be non prescriptive in this respect. However, it is expected that Christianity will be explored at every phase / key stage and that each phase and key stage will also explore aspects from a range of other world faiths. Schools will need to take account of prior and future learning opportunities to ensure that by the end of their schooling pupils will have had opportunity to engage with aspects of all principal world faiths represented in Britain. Schools should also consider any guidance offered by the LEA in relation to this aspect of the Agreed Syllabus.

At Foundation Phase:

children should be introduced to aspects of religion which are enjoyed and celebrated by faith adherents in everyday life and consider how aspects of their own lives may be similar or different. Examples of religious beliefs teachings and practices should be selected from Christianity and a range of other religions. Emphasis should be placed on developing an understanding of people and their beliefs through active experiential learning opportunities.

At Key Stage 2:

pupils should become familiar with the outline life stories of the key figures that have shaped the major world faiths. They should explore a variety of concepts beliefs and attitudes associated with their own lives and those of faith adherents. They should consider how these ideas beliefs and attitudes affect one's lifestyle. Examples should be drawn from Christianity and a range of other world faiths.

At Key Stage 3:

pupils should draw together and build on the strands of their previous learning to develop a coherent knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Through an exploration of concepts, attitudes and current issues linked to their own lives and those of faith adherents they should consider the implications of following a faith in present day society. Examples should be drawn from Christianity and a range of other world faiths.

At Key Stage 4:

pupils should explore religious and moral issues and dilemmas that face individuals and communities in the 21st century. They should consider the influences that impact on people's beliefs and attitudes and consider their own and others' responses to these issues. Examples should be drawn from Christianity and other world religions. Alternatively, a religious studies / religious education course offering accreditation may be followed in order to fulfil the statutory requirement to provide religious education at this key stage.

Post 16:

students should explore and consider the relevance and value of an acquired knowledge and understanding of people's religious beliefs and attitudes and how this will support them in their present and future adult lives and the world of work. Examples should be drawn from Christianity and other world religions. Alternatively, a religious studies / religious education course offering accreditation may be followed in order to fulfil the statutory requirement to provide religious education at this key stage.

People Beliefs and Questions

People Beliefs and Questions provides non-statutory entitlement for children in nursery schools and classes and statutory provision for children in the rest of the Foundation Phase.

Children in the Foundation Phase should learn about themselves, their family, local community, culture and beliefs. They should be given experiences that help them to increase their curiosity and understanding of the cultures and beliefs of other people in the locality, the wider context of Wales, Britain and the world. Through indoor and outdoor experiential activities they should develop their understanding of how people express their beliefs in everyday life. They should develop an understanding that people can have similar and different lifestyles and beliefs. Using all their senses, they should be encouraged to enjoy learning by exploration, enquiry, asking questions and trying to find answers. They should learn to express their own ideas, opinions and feelings with imagination, creativity and sensitivity. They should develop and communicate an increasing range of appropriate vocabulary. The children's skills should be developed across all areas of learning, through participation in experiential learning activities using sources such as visitors, places of worship, the natural world and artefacts and resources such as books, stories, photographs, video/ DVD and CD ROMS.

The area of People Beliefs and Questions should be explored within an integrated curriculum and alongside the other areas of the Foundation Phase. Natural links are particularly evident with the areas of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity and with Creative Development.

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity

Personal Development

Many of the skills identified for Personal Development within the Foundation Phase can also be related to religious education. Some of these skills are:

- express and communicate different feelings and emotions – their own and those of other people
- show curiosity and develop positive attitudes to new experiences and learning
- become independent thinkers and learners by using well-considered ideas and strategies
- value the learning, success and achievements of themselves and other people

Social Development

All of the skills identified for Social Development within the Foundation Phase can also be related to religious education. Some of these skills are:

- develop a positive self image and a sense of belonging as part of different communities and have an understanding of their own identity
- develop an awareness of different cultures and the differing needs, views and beliefs of other people in their own and in other cultures
- treat people from all cultural backgrounds in a manner that shows respect and understanding
- develop an understanding of the diversity of roles that people play in different groups and communities
- begin to question stereotyping

Moral and Spiritual Development

All of the skills identified for Moral and Spiritual Development within the Foundation Phase can also be related to religious education. These skills are:

- respond to ideas and questions enthusiastically, sensitively, creatively, and intuitively
- communicate about what is good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair, caring and inconsiderate
- communicate and reflect on the decisions made in stories, situations or personally, suggesting alternative responses
- respond personally to simple imaginary moral situations giving reasons for decisions made
- use stories or situations to raise questions about why some things are special
- express ideas and feelings creatively, explaining why they are significant
- talk about the choices available to individuals and discuss whether the choices available make a decision easier or more complex
- ask questions about how and why special things should be treated with respect and respond personally
- ask questions about what is important in life from a personal perspective and from the perspective of others.

Well-being

Some of the skills identified for Well-being within the Foundation Phase can also be related to religious education. These skills are:

- value and contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of others
- be aware of their own feelings and develop the ability to express them in an appropriate way
- understand the relationship between feelings and actions and that other people have feelings
- demonstrate care, respect and affection for other children, adults and their environment
- develop a growing interest in the world around them and understand what their environment has to offer when playing alone and with others

Creative Development

Two elements of the range for Creative Development within the Foundation Phase have close links with religious education. These are:

- Experience traditions and celebrations from different cultures
- Experience art, design, music and dance from Wales and other cultures.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Many of the skills for developing Knowledge and Understanding of the World within the Foundation Phase relate closely to the skills for religious education within the Foundation Phase.

People, Beliefs and Questions

Skills

Children should have opportunity to develop curiosity and understanding by:

- exploring and experimenting with new learning opportunities, including role play, visiting special/religious places, making and using artefacts and foods and using ICT
- thinking about and asking questions about themselves, other people and living things, and listening to the answers
- responding to their own ideas and the ideas of others, including their hopes, dreams, opinions, rules and ways in which they approach happy and sad times
- becoming aware of human achievements including influential religious people past and present and the 'big ideas' that have shaped the world
- making comparisons and identifying similarities and differences of identity, lifestyle, community and tradition
- investigating sources and issues raised through stories, holy books, festivals, celebrations and rites of passage
- thinking creatively and imaginatively about important human and religious questions

Range

Throughout the Foundation Phase children should have opportunities to:

- explore a wide range of stimuli
- engage with resources from a variety of contexts including interactive forms
- investigate indoor and outdoor learning environments including natural conditions as they arise
- participate in different types of play and a range of planned activities, including those that build on previous experiences
- work on their own and in small and large groups

Questions, Meaning and Responses

- Children should be given opportunities to question, understand meaning and consider responses
- ask questions about their own and other people's beliefs, actions and viewpoints
- explore the meaning of stories, signs, symbols, rituals, artefacts and imagery
- consider their own and others' responses to personal, religious and moral questions and ideas

- describing what they have found out about people, beliefs and questions and offering simple explanations
- expressing their own opinions and feelings, and making decisions while considering the viewpoints of others
- using and becoming familiar with common words and phrases for their world and the ways in which people express ideas, beliefs and meaning
- showing curiosity and developing positive attitudes to new experiences when learning about people from religions and cultures
- recognising the relationship between feelings, beliefs and actions
- recognising that other people have feelings and beliefs that affect the way they think and behave

Myself

Children should be given opportunities to consider their

- homes, families and experiences in order to explore their identity
- role and place within the family and community
- likes, dislikes, feelings and personal responses to different experiences and ideas
- choices and decisions and the consequences

Other People

Children should be given opportunities through stories, activities and experiences, to explore

- similarities and differences of lifestyle and traditions (e.g. *other people's homes, families, dress, food, festivals*)
- special people from the past, their influence and why they are remembered (e.g. *Jesus, Muhammad, Mary Jones*)

- people's roles and place within the community and how and why they help others (e.g. *religious leaders, Sunday School teachers, charity workers, lay helpers*)
- what influences other people's choices and decisions (e.g. *moral codes of conduct, religious teachings and rules*)
- what happens in places of worship and meditation in the local area and wider world and why people go to these places

Living Things

Children should be given opportunities to explore

- the ways in which and reasons why they and others show care, concern, responsibility and respect for living things, the environment and the natural world
- religious and secular stories and their messages about the natural world
- the awe, wonder, mystery and spirituality of the world in which we live

Outcomes for religious education

The following outcomes for religious education are non-statutory.

Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 have been written to recognise the attainment of pupils working below Level 1.

Religious Education Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 align with the Foundation Phase Outcomes 1, 2 and 3. Religious Education Outcomes 4, 5 and 6 align with the Agreed Syllabus Levels 1, 2, and 3.

Foundation Phase

Foundation Phase Outcome 1

Foundation Phase Outcome 2

Foundation Phase Outcome 3

Foundation Phase Outcome 4

Foundation Phase Outcome 5

Foundation Phase Outcome 6

Religious Education

Religious Education Outcome 1

Religious Education Outcome 2

Religious Education Outcome 3

Religious Education Outcome 4 links with Level 1

Religious Education Outcome 5 links with Level 2

Religious Education Outcome 6 links with Level 3

The religious education outcomes describe the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular outcome should characteristically demonstrate. In deciding on a pupil's outcome of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. Each description should be considered in conjunction with the description for adjacent outcomes.

Outcome 1

Pupils recognise themselves, familiar people, places and objects in pictures/stories and show knowledge of daily routines. Pupils use words, signs or symbols to communicate observations about familiar religious stories and artefacts. With encouragement, pupils begin to communicate how they feel and about experiences such as visits to special buildings, festivals and celebrations.

Outcome 2

Pupils respond to open questions about their feelings and experiences ('what?', 'where?'). They offer their own ideas, sometimes making connections/predictions. Pupils handle and explore artefacts and show some knowledge of special people, books, and places of worship. They respond to stories and events, past and present. They begin to identify with the feelings of others as portrayed in religious stories and events past and present.

Outcome 3

Pupils can remember significant events in the past and anticipate events in the future. Pupils offer independent ideas and observations about things that concern them in their lives. Pupils communicate their developing knowledge of religious stories, events and objects and show some appreciation that these are special. Pupils are increasingly aware of and are sensitive to the needs of others and understand that living things should be treated with respect and shown concern.

Outcome 4

Pupils talk about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion. They recall and respond to some basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They show some awareness that these aspects of religion are special. They recognise that their feelings, actions and opinions may be similar to or different from those of other people. On occasion, they use simple religious vocabulary appropriately to express their ideas.

Outcome 5

Pupils ask questions about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, and suggest some answers. They recall and communicate simply some of the basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They suggest, in simple terms, why these aspects of religion are important to some people. They talk in simple terms about their own feelings, actions and opinions and those of other people. They use simple religious vocabulary appropriately.

Outcome 6

Pupils discuss the questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, giving their own opinions. They describe some of the basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They describe how some of these aspects of religion affect believers' lives. They describe their own feelings, actions and opinions, and in simple terms comment on the viewpoints of others. They begin to recognise that religious symbols carry meaning, and use religious vocabulary appropriately.



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, and their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions, and use these to raise and respond to fundamental human and religious questions. This should be carried out through the **interrelationship of the three core skills** of the subject.

- **Engaging with fundamental questions** – fundamental questions are human and religious questions that focus on the search for meaning, significance and value in life. They have a profundity and intensity that underpins any aspect of study in religious education.
- **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)** – this includes exploring religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyle, rituals and symbolism, which provide insight regarding these fundamental questions and raise further religious and human questions.
- **Expressing personal responses** – this includes relating the issues raised during study to pupils' own experiences and allowing the development of personal responses to, and evaluations of, beliefs, teachings and practice(s) and fundamental questions.

These core skills inform one another and all three should be applied appropriately to the range studied.

Skills

Engaging with fundamental questions

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- ask, discuss and respond to fundamental questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion
- interrogate a range of evidence from religious and non-religious sources, including other disciplines, in order to consider the issues raised
- use evidence from a range of sources effectively in order to present and support arguments and opinions
- develop alternative explanations and suggest new possibilities
- carry out investigation in an open-minded way and be prepared to accept challenge in the light of new information or evidence.

Range

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills by focussing on the following contexts for study. These should not be regarded as discrete topics but rather as interwoven areas of study that provide opportunities for pupils to engage, explore, and express ideas and responses. During the course of a whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to have been embraced.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop skills through engaging with:

The world

- **the origin and purpose of life** – how interpretations of the origins of the world and life influence people's views, e.g. *meaning and values*
- **the natural world and living things** – how religions show concern and responsibility, e.g. *stewardship; sustainability*

Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- recall, describe and begin to explain religious beliefs, teachings and practices
- explore and make links between religious beliefs, teachings and practices
- describe and begin to explain the impact that religion has on the lives of believers
- identify the similarities and differences within and across religions
- recognise and begin to interpret layers of meaning/ symbolism within religious stories, rituals, art, dance and music.

Expressing personal responses

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- express and begin to justify their own feelings and opinions in different ways, e.g. *orally, in writing, and through creative arts*
- demonstrate how what they have learned has impacted on their own views/ideas
- consider, appreciate, empathise with and respect the viewpoints of others
- recognise, explore and reflect on the spiritual side of life
- use a range of religious language appropriately
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information and to communicate religious concepts.



Human experience

- **human identity** – the ways in which religions understand human existence, e.g. *the image of God; uniqueness; spirituality*
- **meaning and purpose of life** – how religious ideas, values and beliefs influence people's responses to life and death
- **belonging** – how local believers, through home/community celebrations, share a sense of identity and commitment
- **authority and influence** – how different forms of authority such as sacred texts, religious leaders and codes guide and influence people's lives
- **relationships and responsibility** – how the importance of personal relationships and responsibility to others is demonstrated by religions



- **the journey of life** – how the various stages of life and natural occurrences are acknowledged, responded to and celebrated in religion, e.g. *rites of passage; challenging and inspiring experiences*

Search for meaning

- **non-material/spiritual** – how religions indicate (through stories, celebrations and activities) that life is spiritual (more than material/physical)
- **knowledge and experience regarding the non-material/spiritual** – how religious/spiritual experience is developed and understood, e.g. *relationship with God; lifestyle, commitment, worship, prayer, music, dance, meditation and fasting.*



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, and their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions, and use these to raise and respond to fundamental human and religious questions. This should be carried out through the **interrelationship of the three core skills** of the subject.

- **Engaging with fundamental questions** – fundamental questions are human and religious questions that focus on the search for meaning, significance and value in life. They have a profundity and intensity that underpins any aspect of study in religious education.
- **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)** – this includes exploring religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyle, rituals and symbolism, which provide insight regarding these fundamental questions and raise further religious and human questions.
- **Expressing personal responses** – this includes relating the issues raised during study to pupils' own experiences and allowing the development of personal responses to, and evaluations of, beliefs, teachings and practice(s) and fundamental questions.

These core skills inform one another and all three should be applied appropriately to the range studied.

Skills

Engaging with fundamental questions

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- ask, discuss and respond to fundamental questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion
- draw on their own experiences and on a variety of informed religious and non-religious sources, including other disciplines, in order to gather evidence and develop appropriate arguments
- use problem-solving techniques, critical, creative and intuitive thinking to explore preconceptions, possibilities/explanations
- formulate arguments and justify points of view while recognising that the conclusions are only partial, inconclusive and are open to different interpretations.

Range

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills by focussing on the following contexts for study. These should not be regarded as discrete topics but rather as interwoven areas of study that provide opportunities for pupils to engage, explore, and express ideas and responses. During the course of a whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to have been embraced.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop skills through engaging with:

The world

- **the origin and purpose of life** – why religions value living things and hold positive views regarding the natural world: through contemporary debates about the origin, purpose and sanctity of life and the relationship between the natural world, human beings and God.
- **the natural world and living things** – why individual religions acknowledge the importance of taking responsibility for the natural world and living things and implement their beliefs through action, e.g. *life as a gift; sustainability*

Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- recall, describe, and explain the religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated
- make and investigate the links between religious beliefs, teachings and practices to demonstrate understanding of a range of religious ideas/concepts
- describe and give explanations for the similarities and differences within and across religions
- explain how religion impacts on the lives of individuals, local communities and wider society, using a range of interpretations
- analyse and interpret the layers of meaning/ symbolism within religious stories, rituals, art, dance and music.



Expressing personal responses

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- express and begin to justify their own feelings and opinions in different ways, e.g. *orally, in writing, and through creative arts*
- demonstrate how what they have learned has impacted on their own views/ideas
- consider, appreciate, empathise with and respect the viewpoints of others
- recognise, explore and reflect on the spiritual side of life
- use a range of religious language appropriately
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information and to communicate religious concepts.



Human experience

• **human identity** – why religions believe humans have a unique status amongst living things and the implications of this belief on human behaviour, values, freedom, responsibility and consciousness, e.g. *image of God*

• **meaning and purpose of life** – how and why religion is considered to provide insight into questions of truth, meaning, purpose and value, e.g. *life/death/life after death; good/evil/suffering/hope, etc.*

• **belonging** – how and why individuals, local communities and society express religious identity and demonstrate commitment through worship, celebration, lifestyle, etc.



• **authority and influence** – how religious authority conveys ideas regarding revelation, wisdom and truth/interpretation and why this influences believers, e.g. *through sacred texts and religious founders, and historical and contemporary leaders*

• **relationships and responsibility** – how religions demonstrate rules for living, advise on making difficult

moral decisions, recommend ways to develop and retain relationships and provide reasons why these are important, e.g. *right/wrong; justice/equality; tolerance/respect; conflict/reconciliation*

• **the journey of life** – how and why religious people take on different roles, responsibilities and commitments at different stages of life, e.g. *becoming an adult/parent/ascetic; participating in pilgrimage, etc.*

Search for meaning

• **non-material/spiritual** – how people explore and express issues, ideas and experiences of a transcendent/spiritual nature and why this spiritual side of life is important to them, e.g. *the nature of God/the soul; religious experience/spiritual dimensions of human experience and truth/meaning/interpretation*

• **knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual** – how and why people develop, interpret and act on their religious/spiritual experience, e.g. *relationship with and responses to God; lifestyle/sacrifice; impact of religion/religious commitment on individuals, communities and society; identity/diversity within and across religion.*

Level descriptions for religious education

The following level descriptions describe the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate. In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. Each description should be considered in conjunction with the descriptions for adjacent levels.

By the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of the great majority of pupils should be within the range of Levels 2 to 5, and by the end of Key Stage 3 within the range 3 to 7. Level 8 is available for very able pupils and, to help teachers differentiate Exceptional Performance at Key Stage 3, a description above Level 8 is provided.

All statements made within the levels should be read as they relate to Christianity and the other principal religions explored.

Level 1

Pupils talk about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion. They recall and respond to some basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They show some awareness that these aspects of religion are special. They recognise that their feelings, actions and opinions may be similar to or different from those of other people. On occasion, they use simple religious vocabulary appropriately to express their ideas.

Level 2

Pupils ask questions about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, and suggest some answers. They recall and communicate simply some of the basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They suggest, in simple terms, why these aspects of religion are important to some people. They talk in simple terms about their own feelings, actions and opinions and those of other people. They use simple religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 3

Pupils discuss the questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, giving their own opinions. They describe some of the basic religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They describe how some of these aspects of religion affect believers' lives. They describe their own feelings, actions and opinions, and in simple terms comment on the viewpoints of others. They begin to recognise that religious symbols carry meaning, and use religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 4

Pupils discuss their own and others' responses to questions about life, the world around them and religion. They describe and begin to explain the religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated. They give specific examples of the ways in which these aspects affect believers' lives and begin to identify the similarities and differences within religions. They explain in simple terms how their own feelings, actions and opinions differ from those of others. They recognise some religious symbols and use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 5

Pupils express and justify ideas and opinions about fundamental questions in the light of their investigations and experiences. They make links between the religious beliefs, teachings and practices studied, describing the impact on believers' lives and identify the similarities and differences within and across religion. They explain how their own feelings, actions and opinions affect their own lives, and describe how those of others similarly affect their lives. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a basic understanding of symbolic language.

Level 6

Pupils draw on a variety of informed sources and their own experiences in order to present evidence and develop appropriate responses to fundamental questions. They use their understanding of the links between the religious beliefs, teachings and practices investigated to consolidate their understanding of religion and to explain differing religious viewpoints. They explain the relationship between their own beliefs and actions. They also explain the relationship between other people's beliefs and actions. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate an understanding of symbolism and symbolic language.

Level 7

Pupils investigate fundamental religious and moral questions from a variety of religious perspectives and begin to draw reasoned conclusions. They apply a wide range of religious concepts to a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices. They accurately explain and justify the reasons for the range of viewpoints held by religious people. They consider the implications of their own beliefs and actions, compare these to other people and draw balanced conclusions. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and are able to explain the symbolic meaning of religious objects, actions and/or language.

Level 8

Pupils investigate fundamental religious and moral questions, evaluate a range of possibilities and draw rational conclusions based on evidence gathered. They demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of religious concepts, including various perspectives on beliefs, values and traditions within the religions studied. They evaluate the various aspects of religion and explain how these affect the lives of individuals, communities and society. They investigate the religious concepts studied, evaluating their own and other people's viewpoints through reasoned argument and evidence. They use a wide range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a developed understanding of symbolic language.

Exceptional Performance

Pupils acknowledge that fundamental religious questions are often complex and that answers are often partial and inconclusive. They analyse and give reasons for the different perspectives held concerning the beliefs, values and traditions of the religions studied, recognising the differences between religions and appreciating the tension of unity and plurality within each religion. They have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the behaviour and beliefs of adherents of various faith systems. In relation to the religious and moral concepts studied, they express well-considered opinions of the viewpoints of others based on in-depth investigation. They use an extensive range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a well-developed understanding of symbolic language.

Religious education at Key Stage 4 and Post-16

Learning Pathways 14–19

For learners at Key Stage 4 and post-16, religious education will be part of each individual's statutory learning pathway. The course of study followed should be designed to encourage both the abilities of young people as learners and their desire to access future learning opportunities. In particular, the course should contribute as widely as possible to the four aspects of learning as identified in the 14 – 19 Learning Core.

The Agreed Syllabus provides a Key Stage 4 and post-16 Programme of Study.

The skills at Key Stage 4 and post-16 are the same, but the range is different.

A religious studies / religious education course offering accreditation may be followed as an alternative to these programmes of study.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, the Agreed Syllabus provides a programme of study that relates to the requirements of current GCSE qualifications, but also provides opportunity for innovative school-based enrichment courses that relate to the 14–19 Learning Core and/or other appropriate qualifications (e.g. Key Skills/Welsh Baccalaureate). Assessment for such studies would either be carried out formally through the procedures adopted by an awarding body or by setting school-specific outcomes guided by the Agreed Syllabus level descriptions for religious education.

Post-16

The wide-ranging programme of study for pupils at post-16 can be implemented in a variety of innovative ways as part of a school enrichment programme. They relate to the 14–19 Learning Core and/or other appropriate qualifications (e.g. Key Skills/Welsh Baccalaureate), allowing schools to meet their statutory obligations for pupils up to the age of 19.

Assessment for such studies would either be carried out formally through the procedures adopted by an awarding body or by setting school-specific outcomes guided by the Agreed Syllabus level descriptions for religious education.



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions, and use these to raise and respond to fundamental human and religious questions. This should be carried out through the **interrelationship of the three core skills** of the subject.

- **Engaging with fundamental questions** – fundamental questions are human and religious questions that focus on the search for meaning, significance and value in life. They have a profundity and intensity that underpins any aspect of study in religious education.
- **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)** – this includes exploring religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyle, rituals and symbolism, which provide insight regarding these fundamental questions and raise further religious and human questions.
- **Expressing personal responses** – this includes relating the issues raised during study to pupils' own experiences and allowing the development of personal responses to, and evaluations of, beliefs, teachings and practice(s) and fundamental questions.

These core skills inform one another and all three should be applied appropriately to the range studied.

Skills

Engaging with fundamental questions

Pupils should be given opportunities to:



- ask, discuss and respond to fundamental questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion
- investigate fundamental questions from a variety of informed religious and non-religious sources to evaluate a range of possibilities and begin to draw reasoned conclusions based on the evidence gathered
- work alone and with others to create hypotheses, using problem-solving techniques, critical, creative, intuitive thinking and developed metacognition to evaluate a range of preconceptions, possibilities and explanations
- evaluate and justify arguments and points of view while recognising that the conclusions are only partial, inconclusive and are open to different interpretations.

Range

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills by focusing on the following contexts for study. These should not be regarded as discrete topics but rather as interwoven areas of study that provide opportunities for pupils to engage, explore, and express ideas and responses. During the course of a whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to have been embraced.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop skills through engaging with:

The world

- **the place, purpose and value of life** – the reciprocal influence and impact of religion on relationships, communities and cultures in Wales, Europe and the World, e.g. *the challenges of relationships (human/Divine); the future of community; diversity of culture and religion* 
- **the natural world and living things** – ways in which religion inspires people to take action within the local and global community, e.g. *local, national and global aid agencies; the influence of religion on citizenship; stewardship; sustainability; animal welfare; sanctity of life* 

Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- recall, describe, and explain the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions investigated
- make and investigate the links between beliefs, teachings and practices to demonstrate a coherent understanding of religious ideas/concepts
- apply a wide range of religious concepts to present arguments for and against a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices and accurately explain a range of viewpoints held by religious people
- consider evidence on how religion impacts on the lives of individuals, communities and society, evaluating a range of interpretations
- analyse, interpret and evaluate the layers of meaning/symbolism within religious stories, rituals, art, dance and music.

Expressing personal responses

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- communicate religious ideas and concepts using reasoned argument, personal opinions and ideas in a variety of creative ways, e.g. *orally, in writing, and through creative arts*
- evaluate how learning about the varieties of religious/spiritual experience and moral decisions might impact on their own and other people's lives
- appreciate, respect, empathise with and evaluate the viewpoints of others so that they may draw their own reasoned conclusions and develop positive attitudes
- reflect on interpretations of the spiritual side of life
- use a wide range of religious vocabulary and demonstrate a developed understanding of symbolic language
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information, to communicate religious concepts.



Human experience

• **human identity** – ways in which human nature and identity is perceived and valued in religion and culture in the twenty-first century, e.g. *human attitudes and values; selfishness and selflessness; fairness, justice and equality*

• **meaning and purpose of life** – issues of truth, meaning, purpose and value in religion, such as good, evil, free will, fate, suffering, innocence, hope, life/death/life after death and issues arising from religious and non-religious interpretations of contemporary events and phenomena, e.g. *political decision making; public expenditure; natural disasters; individual, national and global debt*

• **belonging** – ways in which religion inspires commitment, engagement, dedication, reflection and aspiration, e.g. *parallels between sport and religion; use and abuse of leisure time; expressions of faith through study, action, meditation and worship*

• **authority and influence** – the impact that religion has in the decision making process of individuals and communities in Wales, Europe and the World, e.g. *challenges to religious freedom; freedom of speech/information/movement; sacred/secular laws; human/civil rights; conscience, justice, liberation, war, peace; reconciliation*



• **relationships and responsibility** – the impact that religion has on the personal, social and moral development of oneself and others, e.g. *rules for living; rights and duties; embracing diversity; attitudes towards and use of resources; challenges to religion in the work place/careers choices/vocation; human dignity, equality, integrity, tolerance; responsibility*

• **the journey of life** – ways in which religion influences and challenges personal and collective identity, e.g. *fashion, sport, leisure time; worship and celebration; upbringing; local community*

Search for meaning

• **non-material/spiritual** – traditional and contemporary expressions of religious experience and spirituality, e.g. *the nature of God; symbolism/imagery; experience of God; reasons for belief in God; faith and doubt*

• **knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual** – the strength of religious/spiritual conviction that enables people to dare to be different and to take a stand to instigate positive change, e.g. *relationship with and responses to God; impact of religion/religious commitment on individuals, communities and society; identity/diversity within and across religion.*

Post 16 Religious Education

Religious education is a statutory subject for all registered pupils in the sixth form of schools. Schools may follow the Agreed Syllabus programmes of study or alternatively use a religious studies / religious education course offering accreditation to fulfil the statutory requirements.

Schools will need to allocate funding for the effective provision of religious education. A wide range of methods of delivery can be employed. Students should take increasing responsibility for their own learning and this could include methodology that encourages thinking skills and collaborative working, personal research or the use of supported self-study units.

Teachers should be aware that exploration of moral, ethical and social issues must also include religious perspectives in order to meet the requirements of this Agreed Syllabus.

Approaches to the delivery of religious education could include a combination of the following:

- part of a General Studies Course;
- links with PSE and Citizenship;
- links with Key Skills;
- a guest speaker and subsequent debate;
- supported self-study following initial input;
- visits to places with religious significance;
- vocational links including work experience, and
- focussed RE day or half day conferences.

In all cases, religious education must be clearly identifiable and must be approached with sufficient rigour to address fully the Skills section of this Agreed Syllabus.



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions, and use these to raise and respond to fundamental human and religious questions. This should be carried out through the **interrelationship of the three core skills** of the subject.

- **Engaging with fundamental questions** – fundamental questions are human and religious questions that focus on the search for meaning, significance and value in life. They have a profundity and intensity that underpins any aspect of study in religious education.
- **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)** – this includes exploring religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyle, rituals and symbolism, which provide insight regarding these fundamental questions and raise further religious and human questions.
- **Expressing personal responses** – this includes relating the issues raised during study to pupils' own experiences and allowing the development of personal responses to, and evaluations of, beliefs, teachings and practice(s) and fundamental questions.

These core skills inform one another and all three should be applied appropriately to the range studied.

Skills

Engaging with fundamental questions

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- ask, discuss and respond to fundamental questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion
- investigate fundamental questions from a variety of informed religious and non-religious sources to evaluate a range of possibilities and begin to draw reasoned conclusions based on the evidence gathered
- work alone and with others to create hypotheses, using problem-solving techniques, critical, creative, intuitive thinking and developed metacognition to evaluate a range of preconceptions, possibilities and explanations
- evaluate and justify arguments and points of view while recognising that the conclusions are only partial, inconclusive and are open to different interpretations.

Range

Students should explore and consider the relevance and value of an acquired knowledge and understanding of people's religious beliefs and attitudes and how this will support them in their present and future adult lives and the world of work.

Examples should be drawn from Christianity and other world religions. These should be based on the local area, the wider context of Wales, Britain and the world.



Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- recall, describe, and explain the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions investigated
- make and investigate the links between beliefs, teachings and practices to demonstrate a coherent understanding of religious ideas/concepts
- apply a wide range of religious concepts to present arguments for and against a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices and accurately explain a range of viewpoints held by religious people
- consider evidence on how religion impacts on the lives of individuals, communities and society, evaluating a range of interpretations
- analyse, interpret and evaluate the layers of meaning/symbolism within religious stories, rituals, art, dance and music.

Expressing personal responses

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- communicate religious ideas and concepts using reasoned argument, personal opinions and ideas in a variety of creative ways, e.g. *orally, in writing, and through creative arts*
- evaluate how learning about the varieties of religious/spiritual experience and moral decisions might impact on their own and other people's lives
- appreciate, respect, empathise with and evaluate the viewpoints of others so that they may draw their own reasoned conclusions and develop positive attitudes
- reflect on interpretations of the spiritual side of life
- use a wide range of religious vocabulary and demonstrate a developed understanding of symbolic language
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information, to communicate religious concepts.



Students should be given the opportunity to develop skills through the exploration of a range of stimulating and challenging topics which could include:

- The significance of diversity of culture and religion in British society;
- The challenge of social cohesion and racial harmony in the 21st century;
- Religion as a cause of conflict and conciliation;
- Religions, sects, movements and communities;
- Science and religion;
- Medical ethics;
- Gender and religion;
- Religion and philosophy;
- Religious perspectives on a particular ethical, moral, or social issue;
- Religious awareness needed in the work place e.g. medical, police, law, catering;
- Religion in the media;
- Religion and literature;
- Religion and art;
- Organisations that respond to religious and moral issues;
- Religion and politics;
- Human rights and responsibilities;
- Religious experiences and spirituality, and
- Religious leaders, reformers and radicals.

