



Section 3

The Diocesan Syllabus Structure

The diocesan syllabus sets out what pupils should study at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

It is based on the structure of the National Framework for Religious Education¹ and reflects the guidance offered in Excellence and Distinctiveness².

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding in Religious Education: Learning about and from Religion

The knowledge, skills and understanding identify the key aspects of learning in religious education. These are described as 'learning about religion' (attainment target 1) and 'learning from religion' (attainment target 2).

Learning about religion includes:

- enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression;
- developing pupils' skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation.
- Pupils learning to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary;
- identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues;
- knowledge and understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion.

Learning from religion is concerned with

- developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own and others' experiences in the light of their learning about religion.
- developing pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion.
- pupils learning to develop and communicate their own ideas, particularly in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments.

¹ *Religious Education The non-statutory national framework*, QCA, 2004

² *Excellence and Distinctiveness*, The Church of England Education Division with The National Society, October 2005.

Principles Underpinning the Syllabus

The diocesan syllabus is committed to an approach to teaching RE in which **skills are developed through knowledge and understanding** and that **pupils understand how their learning in RE is progressing** and **what they need to do to improve it**.

Religious education in a voluntary aided church school will be predominantly Christian to reflect the school's Trust Deed. Following advice from the Church of England Education Division's publication *Excellence and Distinctiveness*³,

- the amount of Christianity taught in VA schools should form $\frac{2}{3}$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ of the syllabus for RE.

The Diocese recommends that **Christianity should be taught alongside other world religions and world views** as follows;

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity including the Anglican dimension• At least one other principal religion• A religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate.
Key Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity including the Anglican dimension• At least two other principal religions• A religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate.• A secular world view, where appropriate

The Diocese recommends that **schools follow guidance in the Local Agreed Syllabus when teaching other world religions and world views**.

The diocesan syllabus offers...

- units of work detailing what pupils should study about Christianity at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2;
- for each year group, a unit of work that reflects the Anglican dimension of Christianity. (This will also be a useful resource for VC schools.)
- flexibility of structure to complement the various agreed syllabuses used by schools in different parts of the Diocese.

³ Ibid

Programmes of Study

The following programmes of study have been taken from *The Non-Statutory Framework: Religious Education* and outline the knowledge skills and understanding and breadth of study that underpin this diocesan syllabus and the agreed syllabuses devised by Local Authorities in the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The Foundation Stage and RE

Introduction

The Foundation Stage (FS) describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of Reception at the age of 5. Religious Education (RE) is statutory for all pupils registered on the school roll. The statutory requirement for RE does not extend to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the FS. It will, however, form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage.

Characteristics of learning

During the FS, children will ...

- explore the world of religion in terms of special people, places, books, times and objects and by visiting places of worship.
- listen to and talk about stories.
- be introduced to some religious words
- use their senses in exploring religious beliefs, practices and forms of expression.
- reflect on their own feelings and experiences.
- use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

The contribution of RE to the Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the FS. RE can make an active contribution to all of the areas of learning but has a particular contribution to make to:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- creative development

Early learning goals:

Personal, social and emotional development

Self-confidence and self-esteem

- respond to significant experiences showing a range of feelings when appropriate
- have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others
- have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Making relationships

- work as part of a group or class, taking turns, sharing fairly, understanding that there need to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups of people including adults and children, to work together harmoniously.

Behaviour and self-control

- understand what is right, what is wrong and why
- consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others.

Sense of community

- understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect
- understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect.

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- Children use stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways.
- Using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. They learn about the story and its meaning through activity and play.
- Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
- Children think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'growing' or 'the natural world', children encounter the parable of the mustard seed. They look at and talk about some tiny seeds and the teacher tells the parable, putting it into context as a story Jesus told. The teacher emphasises how, in the story, the tree that grew from the little seed became a safe home for birds. Children talk about what helps them to feel safe. They take a walk to look at trees and touch trees. They think about how they should look after trees. They talk about what it would be like to fly up into the branches. They plant seeds and role-play the growth of the seed in dance. They produce shared or independent writing on what they would like to grow into. Through these experiences children become more aware of themselves, for example of the concepts 'I am growing' 'I need to feel safe'. They respond to the significant experiences of exploring a story and wonder at the growth of seeds. They learn to understand their responsibility to the natural world and begin to consider beliefs about Jesus.

Language for communication

- listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems
- extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words.

Language for thinking

- use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.

Reading

- retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories.

Exploration and investigation

1. investigate objects and materials by using all their senses as appropriate
2. find out about and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe.

Information and communication technology

- use information and communication technology to support their learning.

A sense of time

- find out about past and present events in their

Communication, language and literacy

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- Children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences.
- Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration
- Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'books' or 'favourite stories', children look at a child's Haggadah and are encouraged to ask questions about it. The children are told that the book belongs to a Jewish child who is celebrating Passover. The story of Passover is briefly told. Children are invited to think about their favourite books. The teacher talks about the child learning Hebrew and having an important job to do at the celebration meal. Children think about where and how they learn and how it feels to do something really well. They learn the words 'Jewish' and 'Hebrew'. They use language in role-playing a family meal. They look at and talk about a variety of dual-language books, share other old stories from both oral and written traditions and make a class book based on a favourite story or a celebration they have shared. A questions board is set up for children to record any questions that come into their heads. Through these experiences, they learn about the importance of story and sacred texts in religion, develop respect for the beliefs and values of others and extend their vocabulary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- Children ask and answer questions about religion and culture, as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences.
- Children visit places of worship.
- They listen to and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups.
- They handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
- Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'buildings' or 'special places', children are shown a selection of pictures. They then learn about three different places children go with their families to worship God: a church, the Golden Temple and a mosque. Children are invited to talk about the

own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know.

A sense of place

- find out about their environment and talk about those features they like and dislike.

Cultures and beliefs

- begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

pictures of places of worship, looking for common and distinctive features. Children talk about somewhere they have been that they will remember. They go out and photograph significant places (and people) in the local area and display their pictures in school. They visit a place of worship and record what they see. They talk about building materials and how they are used. They look at patterns. They sort collections of photographs of buildings and they compare buildings in their local environment and far away, talking particularly about the local church, the Golden Temple and the mosque. Through these experiences, children learn the importance of places of worship, relating this to their own special places. They begin to be aware of their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Imagination

- use their imagination in art and design, music, dance, imaginative play, role-play and stories.

Responding to experiences, and expressing and communicating ideas

- respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel.

Creative development

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with the artefact. Children share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with 'water', 'journeys' or 'the natural world', children look at a sealed pot that has water from the Ganges river inside it. Once they know that the pot contains water, they are encouraged to imagine a wide, flowing river. They look at photographs or videos of rivers and waterfalls and talk about how water moves. They hear the story of the birth of the river Ganges (regarded by Hindus as sacred). The teacher emphasises that it is a story that helps some people imagine what God might be like. They look at photographs of Hindus bathing in the Ganges and talk about why the river is important to them. They are invited to think about their ideas about heaven. In response to the story, they explore water through play. They create a great river collage, using a variety of media. They make a river dance, using lengths of coloured fabric and accompany it with percussion music. Through these experiences, children develop their imagination through a variety of creative and expressive arts. They begin to think about the importance of water as a symbol in religion and why some people regard particular places as sacred.

Key stage 1

Throughout key stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

1. Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. explore a range of religious stories and sacred writings and talk about their meanings
 - b. name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities where appropriate
 - c. identify the importance, for some people, of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives
 - d. explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts and communicate their responses
 - e. identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words.

Learning from religion

2. Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. reflect on and consider religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness
 - b. ask and respond imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
 - c. identify what matters to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
 - d. reflect on how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
 - e. recognise that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

Breadth of study

3. During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- a. Christianity
- b. at least one other principal religion
- c. a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- d. a secular world view, where appropriate

Themes

- e. believing: what people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- f. story: how and why some stories are sacred and important in religion
- g. celebrations: how and why celebrations are important in religion
- h. symbols: how and why symbols express religious meaning
- i. leaders and teachers: figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion
- j. belonging: where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- k. myself: who I am and my uniqueness as a person in a family and community

Experiences and opportunities

- l. visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings
- m. listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities
- n. using their senses and having times of quiet reflection
- o. using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination
- p. sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values and talking about their feelings and experiences
- q. beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in local and wider community.

1a Links to other subjects

This builds on En1/1b, where pupils in drama activities present stories to others and En1/2c-e, where pupils make relevant comments, listen to others' reactions and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

1a-b ICT opportunity

Pupils could use the internet or CD-ROMs to obtain a wide range of stories about religious beliefs and teachings.

1c Attitudes

Pupils have the opportunity to develop respect for all.

2a Links to other subjects

This builds on Gg1c and 3a, where pupils express their own views about places and environments, which can lead to reflection on spiritual experiences and concepts.

2a Attitudes

Pupils have the opportunity to develop appreciation and wonder.

2c-d Links to other subjects

These build on PSHE/Ci1a-b, 2c and 2e, where pupils are taught about what is fair and unfair, right and wrong, to share their opinion on things that matter to them, to recognise choices they make and to realise that people and other living things have needs and they have responsibilities to meet them.

3i Links to other subjects

This builds on Hi6c, where pupils are taught about the lives of significant men, women and children drawn from the history of Britain and the wider world.

3l ICT opportunity

Pupils could use digital recording equipment to enhance their learning about places of worship.

3m ICT opportunity

Pupils could record their work using digital video and use ICT painting, desktop publishing or multimedia authoring packages.

Key stage 2

Throughout key stage 2, pupils learn about Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression. They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary. They recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true. They communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints. They consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

1. Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others
 - b. describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with, beliefs and teachings
 - c. identify and begin to describe the similarities and differences within and between religions
 - d. investigate the significance of religion in the local, national and global communities
 - e. consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expression, understand why they are important in religion and note links between them
 - f. describe and begin to understand religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
 - g. use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding
 - h. use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources.

Learning from religion

2. Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. reflect on what it means to belong to a faith community, communicating their own and others' responses
 - b. respond to the challenges of commitment both in their own lives and within religious traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion is shown in a variety of ways
 - c. discuss their own and others' views of religious truth and belief, expressing their own ideas
 - d. reflect on ideas of right and wrong and their own and others' responses to them
 - e. reflect on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives.

Breadth of study

3. During the key stage, pupils should be taught the Knowledge, skills and understanding through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- a. Christianity
- b. at least two other principal religions
- c. a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- d. a secular world view, where appropriate

Themes

- e. beliefs and questions: how people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives
- f. teachings and authority: what sacred texts and other sources say about god, the world and human life
- g. worship, pilgrimage and sacred places: where, how and why people worship, including at particular sites
- h. the journey of life and death: why some occasions are sacred to believers, and what people think about life after death
- i. symbols and religious expression: how religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
- j. inspirational people: figures from whom believers find inspiration
- k. religion and the individual: what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief
- l. religion, family and community: how religious families and communities practise their faith, and the contributions this makes to local life
- m. beliefs in action in the world: how religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment

Experiences and opportunities

- n. encountering religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community
- o. discussing religions and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- p. considering a range of human experiences and feelings
- q. reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning
- r. expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT
- s. developing the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

1a-b Links to other subjects

These build on PSHE/Ci4b, where pupils are taught about the lives of people in other places and times, and people with different values and customs.

1a-d ICT opportunity

Pupils can use ICT to find information on a variety of subjects and use ICT tools to present their findings.

1b Links to other subjects

This builds on Hi2b, where pupils learn about the social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of societies in Britain and the wider world.

1d Attitudes

Pupils have the opportunity to develop open-mindedness.

1e Links to other subjects

This requirement builds on Mu5e, where pupils develop their skills through a range of live and recorded music from different times and cultures.

1g Links to other subjects

This requirement builds on En2 and 5a, where pupils are taught to identify the use and effect of specialist vocabulary.

2d Attitudes

Pupils have the opportunity to develop self-awareness.

3e-m ICT opportunity

Pupils could find information on the internet and CD-ROMs and could use email, particularly to share their views on global issues of human rights, social justice and the importance of the environment.

3I Links to other subjects

This requirement builds on Gg6a-b, where pupils investigate a locality in the UK and a locality in a country that is less economically developed. They can consider the contribution of religion to local life.