



Hill Top Church of England Primary School 'Faith in Our Community'

Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

2011 - 2016

Foreword to the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2011 – 2016

We are pleased to commend this revised syllabus for religious education for Bradford schools. The syllabus re-enforces the importance of religious education as an academic discipline which fosters an understanding of concepts and a range of skills and attitudes which enable pupils to explore wider issues in a considered and informed way. This syllabus prepares the children and young people of Bradford for active citizenship in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

This syllabus continues in the tradition of ensuring that RE is responsive to the changing nature of schools and education. The syllabus enables schools to respond effectively to the Government's Prevent Strategy and to the Ofsted Framework for Inspection which requires schools to '*..ensure high standards of achievement, learning and behaviour for their pupils, as well as contributing to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*'.

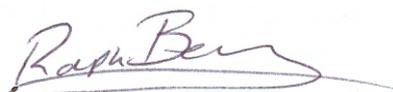
Consultation with teachers indicated that they wanted a syllabus which would give greater flexibility in the ways that RE can be taught but maintained the thematic approach valued by many schools. The syllabus offers both flexibility and structure. Skills and concepts are clearly defined in the context of two attainment targets enabling teachers to use their professional judgement to incorporate RE into a thematic curriculum or they may choose to utilise the non-statutory units which are available as support materials.

The electronic publication of the syllabus will enable easy access to a range of support materials which will grow in response to the needs of teachers and their pupils. The Interfaith Education Centre, as part of Diversity and Cohesion, will continue to support effective teaching and learning in RE and in promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

We are grateful to the many people who have contributed to this document, especially the members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference and the supporting officers from Education Bradford. In particular we would like to thank Dr Joyce Miller who has brought her considerable knowledge and expertise to the revision of the syllabus and who is the Chair of both SACRE and the Agreed Syllabus Conference.



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Introduction to the agreed syllabus for religious education

This revised syllabus for religious education (RE) for schools in Bradford builds on the strengths of previous syllabuses and provides a vision of, and the basis for, the development of RE over the next five years, 2011-2016.

Bradford's Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), is the statutory body that must be convened every five years to determine the nature of RE in its schools. The ASC is committed to providing the structures and support systems that will enable the teaching of RE in a manner that is coherent, progressive, pedagogically and philosophically sound, and that will promote the cognitive, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners.

This syllabus, like its predecessors, has been structured around themes and issues (an approach strongly endorsed by leading RE academics, such as Michael Grimmitt). It enables teachers to explore both commonality and difference with their pupils which is essential in our multi-faith and multi-ethnic community.



In the most recent update of the Agreed syllabus the shared heritages between world faiths and beliefs is explored more deeply and we will be providing guidance on how that can best be done. We want learners to understand religious and belief systems' commitment to morality and social justice, to responsible stewardship of the environment and to deepening the experience of being human.

Promoting social and ethnic harmony is a moral imperative for Bradford schools and RE has a significant contribution to make to this. Through the exploration of multiple identities and local communities, through visits to places of worship and meeting people from religious and belief

communities, and through a deepening understanding of beliefs and practices, our aim is for young people to come to an informed and empathetic understanding of different groups which will help promote cohesion and integration.

It is the intention of the ASC that this syllabus will ask more of schools in relation to the social and political dimensions of religion. Religion has a major position in public life so it is crucial that young people are educated to understand and to engage critically with religions and beliefs, and their representation in the media.

Another development in this syllabus is that the phrase 'religion and religions' has been replaced by 'religion and beliefs', encouraging teachers to explore a range of belief systems, including Humanism.

Breadth and balance are essential in RE, as in the whole curriculum. There are greater possibilities in this syllabus and its accompanying materials for creative cross-curricular development, as well as for high standards within RE when taught as a discrete subject. Schools can, within the statutory requirements of this syllabus, construct a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs, ages and ability of their learners.

Examination results in Bradford have shown a significant improvement since the beginning of the decade. We are proud that RE has contributed to schools' success: results at GCSE, for example, have often been among the highest across the curriculum. A small research project suggested reasons for this phenomenon: young people enjoyed RE because their teachers chose what was of interest and relevance to them; they enjoyed the teaching and learning methods employed in RE, including enquiry-based learning and discussion; and they had good relationships with their RE teachers. In other words, they were highly motivated because of the appropriateness of the course content and the selected methodologies.

We want to encourage teachers to bring academic rigour into the study of religion and beliefs. They are complex and controversial, they demand multi-disciplinary study and they require understanding of difficult language and concepts. Such learning is rewarding at all levels. But this is not just a dispassionate approach to study. Both teachers and learners can develop personally through learning about and from religion and beliefs, challenging pre-conceptions, asking for justification of opinions, re-assessing their own stance on issues and recognising that the world is vast, fascinating and a source of deep enrichment for us all.

We want RE in Bradford schools to be challenging, inspiring, difficult and fun.

We want pupils to develop their levels of religious literacy and conceptual understanding.

We want them to be able to articulate, with confidence, their ideas about religion, beliefs and spirituality – and then to change their minds, if they choose to do so.

We want them to be able to reflect on some of the fundamental questions about being human and to be open to change, appreciation and challenge.



RE can be an exciting subject which makes an inestimable contribution to learners' lives and therefore to their communities and to society. We hope that this new syllabus, and its accompanying support materials, will help teachers to fulfil their pupils' potential.

The statutory basis of the agreed syllabus

Religious Education is, by law, locally determined and the syllabus is agreed by an Agreed Syllabus conference. This document is the basis on which all work in RE should be planned in Bradford's community and voluntary controlled schools.

It is a requirement on schools and governing bodies to ensure that all learners gain their statutory entitlement to RE throughout all years of compulsory education and in the sixth form. This has been part of statute since 1944, it was reinforced in the 1988 Education Reform Act and it remains so today.

The requirement to teach RE does not apply to nursery classes but does to those pupils of statutory school age.

Collective Worship is **not part** of the taught curriculum and cannot be considered as part of the recommended time for teaching RE.

RE should not seek to convert or urge a particular religion or belief on pupils.

It is the head teacher's duty to ensure that:

- RE is provided in accordance with this Agreed Syllabus for all registered pupils at the school;
- parents receive an annual written report on their child(ren)'s progress in RE;
- requests from parents for the withdrawal of their child(ren) from RE are responded to and alternative arrangements made, so long as it does not incur any additional cost to the school or the local authority.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that:

- RE is included in the curriculum;
- sufficient time and resources are devoted to RE to enable the school to meet its legal obligations and to deliver an RE curriculum of quality.

Religions and Beliefs to be taught



By the end of their primary school education pupils will have studied all six major religions in some depth: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

The teaching of Christianity must predominate in all years and all phases of learners' school experience.

All six of these religions will be re-visited in the secondary school, along with the teaching of Humanism and other belief systems.

Professional support for primary teachers and curriculum developers is available in the supplementary materials and guidance that accompany this syllabus.

Minimum time requirements

Key stages 1 – 4 5% of curriculum time.

This may be a lesson a week or it may be used flexibly to enable deeper or cross-curricular work. All curriculum models must ensure that there is continuity, coherence and progression in all school years.

Post-16 2.5% of curriculum time per year

Aims of religious education

These aims are relevant to all learners, at all stages of compulsory education, at a level that is appropriate to their age, aptitude and experience.

- to develop learners' conceptual understanding and informed appreciation of religion and beliefs so they can engage in learning, discussion and reflection with enjoyment and openness
- to contribute to the development of learners' worldviews through their knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs in order to enrich their spiritual and moral development, and to prepare them to contribute to a just and civil society
- to develop awareness and understanding of the richness of religion and beliefs, their contributions to society and their significance in the lives of individuals and communities
- to appreciate both commonality and distinctiveness within and between religion and beliefs in order to help learners to engage with existential issues and ultimate questions with critical discernment and empathy.



Religious education as an academic discipline

The study of religion and beliefs is multi-disciplinary, combining a range of methods and skills. These include theology, philosophy, textual study, history and sociology. It is important that teaching methods employed in classrooms reflect this and that teachers enable not only a breadth of learning in terms of content but also in a variety of approaches to learning. (All of these can be found in the examples of **study units** that accompany this syllabus.) It is expected that teachers will also be sensitive to the range of learning styles that exist in their classrooms.

This syllabus has been carefully constructed to provide breadth and balance. It draws from a range of pedagogies of RE in order to enable effective learning for all pupils.

In particular, this syllabus supports:

- experiential and interpretive approaches to learning.
- pupils' first-hand experience of religions and beliefs through **learning outside the classroom** and visitors to schools
- understanding concepts through engagement and comparison
- critical engagement with the subject matter, including doctrine and text
- the development of oracy and religious literacy through informed discussion and debate, not least about the political and social dimensions of religion and beliefs

- reflection and spiritual development, including through the arts.

Learning in religious education



The approaches to teaching and learning that underpinned previous Agreed Syllabuses are continued in this new syllabus for RE for Bradford schools.

We re-emphasise our commitment to enquiry based learning, to promoting informed engagement with religious and philosophical questions, and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

We believe that good religious and beliefs education is more about questions than answers, more about understanding than knowledge, more about depth and breadth than meeting short-term targets.

We want RE classrooms to be busy, active, reflective, safe and stimulating environments in which children can learn, engage in dialogue and develop empathy and discernment in their approaches to matters of belief and behaviour.

We recognise that many issues and areas of learning will be revisited during pupils' school lives. We encourage progression and coherence through this syllabus and its level descriptors of pupils' attainment..

The **support materials** that accompany this syllabus will help curriculum managers to do this.

This syllabus recognises that approaches to learning and the organisation of the curriculum have changed since the last Agreed Syllabus was published in 2006. This syllabus, rather than offering detailed worked models of how learning in RE can be delivered in the classroom, focuses on the fundamental principles and structures that will enable depth of study and understanding within a flexible framework so that RE can be taught as a discrete subject or within a variety of cross-curricular models.

The revised attainment targets for this 2011 Bradford agreed syllabus for RE are:

- AT1 Learning about religion and beliefs
- AT2 Learning from religion and beliefs.

Both attainment targets now include the word 'belief'. There is a growing acceptance that RE must incorporate a wide range of beliefs, including humanist and secular philosophies, not least because many of our pupils subscribe to these worldviews so it is important that they are taken seriously in the classroom.

If effective RE is to take place the two attainment targets must be treated with equal importance and must be inter-related.

In this section each of the strands is defined and linked to key skills and concepts to help teachers plan learning. The lists are not exhaustive nor are the strands separate from each other: there is overlap between them which can be built on to deepen and broaden learners' experience and understanding of religion and beliefs.

AT1 Learning about religion and beliefs

S1. Beliefs, teachings and sources

This is about key religious, philosophical and theological concepts; authority(ies); teachings from sacred texts; doctrines, ethical and social teachings.

Key skills include: interpretation, analysis, evaluation

Key concepts include: God, gods, life after death, soul, salvation, sacred text, revelation, authority, truth

S2 Practices and ways of life

This is about the impact of religion and belief on people's lives and behaviour, recognising that there is diversity within and between religions and belief systems, that they change over time and are influenced by culture

Key skills include: enquiry, exploration, synthesis

Key concepts include: worship, meditation, celebration, ritual, morality, charity, commitment, faith, responsibility, tradition

S3 Expressing meaning

This is about the wide varieties of ways in which doctrines and beliefs are expressed and interpreted, through, for example, art and symbolism

Key skills include: aesthetic appreciation, communication

Key concepts include: symbolism, imagery, parable, myth, remembrance, sacredness.



AT2 Learning from religion and beliefs

S4 Identity, diversity and belonging

This is about the ways in which religions and beliefs impact not only on individual identity but on whole communities and societies. This contributes to learners' social and cultural development

Key skills include: reflection

Key concepts include: identity (ies), community (ies), spiritual friendship, values, spiritual awareness, religious experience, conversion, conflict, reconciliation,

S5 Meaning, purpose and truth

This is about theological, moral and philosophical questions, truth claims, analyses of the human condition, rights and responsibilities. This contributes to learners' spiritual and moral development.

Key skills include: asking and exploring theological and philosophical questions

Key concepts include: life and death, doubt, suffering, change, rights and responsibilities, justice

S6 Values and commitments

This is about the links between religion, belief and behaviour and enabling informed choices. This promotes learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Key skills include: reflection on values, evaluation

Key concepts include: right and wrong, obligation, duty, love

Assessment



In the assessment of pupils' attainment, it is important to remember that not all of religious education is assessable - for example learners' own beliefs. However it is essential to measure pupils' attainment in order to ensure that learning objectives are met and to plan future learning.

Teachers should make separate judgements about pupils' attainment in both of the attainment targets. Results should not be aggregated since pupils can have marked differences in their levels of performance in the two targets.

These levels of attainment must be reported annually to parents.

At the end of KS1, 2 and 3, levels for AT1 and AT2 must be collated by schools and sent to SACRE annually on the [proforma](#) supplied.

Performance description for mainstream pupils

There are eight levels, plus exceptional performance, for mainstream achievement.

By the end of a key stage the majority of pupils would reach:

Key Stage 1	Levels 1 – 3
Key Stage 2	Levels 2 – 5
Key Stage 3	Levels 3 – 7
Key Stage 4	Levels 5 – EP

Attainment Target 1 - Learning About Religion And Beliefs

S1	S2	S3
Beliefs, teachings and sources	Practices and ways of life	Expressing meaning
This is about key religious, philosophical and theological concepts; authority(ies); teachings from sacred texts; doctrines, ethical and social teachings.	This is about the impact of religion and belief on people's lives and behaviour, recognising that there is diversity within and between religions and belief systems, that they change over time and are influenced by culture.	This is about the wide varieties of ways in which doctrines and beliefs are expressed and interpreted, through, for example, art and symbolism.
L1	Identify special books and know some key teachings.	Identify special places, days and objects.
L2	Identify special places, days and objects.	Recount some religious stories and recognise some symbols.
L3	Talk or write about some key teachings in two religions.	Show some understanding of the meaning of stories and symbols.
L4	Talk or write about special places, days and objects.	Understand that symbolic meaning and significance can be expressed in a variety of ways.
L5	Use some correct terminology when talking or writing about key beliefs and teachings and recall the details of some stories.	Understand and make connections between key teachings and religious practice in at least two religions.
L6	Understand the significance of key writings and teachings; understand that they possess authority for believers.	Understand some of the ways in which believers interpret story and symbolism and use language and ritual to convey meaning.
L7	Understand the significance of key writings and teachings for the followers of religions.	Explain how believers give meaning to symbols, story, language etc and make some links between beliefs, practices and ways of expressing meaning
L8	Identify and explain the principal teachings and beliefs in the religion and beliefs studied and make some comparisons between different standpoints.	Explain the meanings of texts, language and symbols in relation to the key beliefs studied.
L9	Identify and explain, using correct technical vocabulary, the significant practices, people, places and objects of the religion and beliefs studied to form an understanding of each religion and belief as a whole and the diversity that exists within it.	Explain the meanings of a variety of texts, language, symbols in relation to key beliefs and practices, using appropriate religious vocabulary.
L10	Understand key teachings and beliefs in relation to the sources of authority within religions and make contrasts and comparisons between them.	Recognise ways of expressing meaning within religion and beliefs and recognise and explain varieties of interpretation of textual and other sources.
L11	Demonstrate a coherent understanding of teachings and beliefs and how these relate to people's experiences.	Compare and contrast a range of practices and lifestyles, recognising patterns, similarities and differences.
L12	Explain the unity and diversity which exists within and between religions and understand the contemporary relevance of religion and beliefs in the lives of individuals and communities.	Understand the diversity of expressions of meaning and significance, make links, form coherent patterns and draw comparisons.
EP	Have an informed understanding of teachings and beliefs in relation to a religion as a whole and in the context of other religious, ethical and philosophical standpoints.	

Attainment Target 2 - Learning From Religion and Beliefs		
S4	S5	S6
Identity, diversity and belonging	Meaning, purpose and truth	Values and Commitments
This is about the ways in which religions and beliefs impact not only on individual identity but on whole communities and societies. This contributes to learners' social and cultural development	This is about theological, moral and philosophical questions, truth claims, analyses of the human condition, rights and responsibilities. This contributes to learners' spiritual and moral development.	This is about the links between religion, belief and behaviour and enabling informed choices. This promotes learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
L1	Reflect on their own identity and experiences.	Recognise that some questions are about meaning and purpose.
L2	Respond to others' identity and experiences.	Respond to questions about meaning and purpose.
L3	Make connections between their own identity and experience and those of others.	Reflect on what is special and significant in their own lives and/or realise that there are puzzling and difficult questions.
L4	Reflect on links and comparisons between their own and others' identity and experience.	Formulate questions on meaning and purpose.
L5	Formulate questions on their own and others' experiences and suggest some possible responses.	Reflect on some questions of meaning and purpose in their own lives and suggest some possible responses.
L6	Reflect on the relevance of religion and beliefs in developing their understanding of themselves and their experiences.	Formulate questions and give answers on meaning and significance in relation to teachings and practices.
L7	Evaluate the relevance of religious teachings and practices in developing an informed understanding of themselves, their communities and the world in which they live.	Articulate the ways in which religion and beliefs affect understanding of life and its significance and give their own standpoint.
L8	Reflect on the ways in which religion and beliefs provide a holistic basis for interpreting questions of identity and experience for their followers.	Articulate in-depth questions about the meaning and significance of life.
EP	Reflect on and articulate clearly differences and similarities between and within religion and beliefs in relation to the student's understanding of self and the world.	Articulate their own standpoints and develop further questions on moral issues, based on a range of sources and belief systems.

Membership List

Chair of SACRE Dr Joyce Miller

Committee A

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Artwork throughout the syllabus from Bradford schools 'Faith in Our Community' Art Exhibition