

Bradford Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2016 – 2020

Contents

1. Foreword.....	3
2. Purpose of Study	4
3. Aims.....	5
4. RE in the School Curriculum.....	5
5. Parental Right to Withdraw Pupils From Religious Education.....	7
6. The Wider Contribution of RE	7
7. Attainment Target*	8
8. Religions and Beliefs to be Taught.	8
RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage	8
Primary school.....	8
Secondary school	9
9. Recommended Minimum Time	9
10. Concepts.....	10
Table 1	11
11. Programmes of Study	11
12. Assessment in RE	13

1. Foreword

We are pleased to introduce you to Bradford's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2016 to 2020. Bradford has a proud tradition of being a diverse city and district where all religions and many worldviews are represented and therefore religious education and philosophical thought are a major part of local discourse which should begin with very young children and continue into adult life.

When well-taught, RE is an exciting and stimulating subject that enables pupils to bring their own experiences of life, to explore their identity and to develop an understanding of others. RE also makes a significant contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to community cohesion. By providing the space for discussion of challenging moral and philosophical issues it can play a part in the prevention of extremism. Therefore, this syllabus aims to support teachers in helping children and young people to explore the commonalities and differences between and within faiths and other worldviews as well as developing an understanding of their own beliefs and those of others.

In common with other subjects in the new national curriculum this syllabus has a single attainment target and an approach to assessment which is based on end of year expectations. This is intended to support schools, particularly primary schools, in planning for and assessing RE within the context of their new arrangements for measuring progress in other subjects.

The Agreed Syllabus is statutory for maintained community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools in the Bradford District. While academies and free schools without a religious foundation have a choice of which Agreed Syllabus to follow, we hope that they will choose Bradford's which has been developed with all community schools in the District in mind. This also gives Academies and Free Schools an opportunity to contribute to mutual understanding and cohesion across the District as a whole.

We would like to thank all contributors to the discussions which have led to the development of this syllabus. These include The Agreed Syllabus Conference and its working group, officers of the Council and Bradford teachers.

Michael Jameson
Strategic Director Children's Services

Cllr Imran Khan
Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment and Skills

2. Purpose of Study

Religious education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by posing challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

In RE pupils learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response and to agree or disagree respectfully. RE enables pupils to understand and explain the human values which are shared between religious and other worldviews¹.

Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. In Bradford we want our pupils to develop an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other types of evidence.

Religious education, which should not be confused with religious instruction, develops the religious literacy which enables pupils to deploy the knowledge and practical skills for encountering diversity². In Bradford we believe that it is the entitlement of every child to understand the significance of religious and non-religious worldviews through religious education. Pupils learn to understand both similarities and differences by being able to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the rights of others.

¹ Other worldviews is taken to mean beliefs, arguments or philosophies that approach questions of meaning and purpose without reference to belief in a deity. This may include a structured, named philosophy such as Humanism, or a more general argument or approach relevant to the questions studied.

² Adam Dinham, 'Religious literacy: contesting and idea practice' RE today Autumn 2015

3. Aims

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
- identify, investigate and respond to questions posed and responses offered by sources of authority and wisdom found in religions and worldviews;
- appreciate and evaluate the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and how these are expressed.

Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues;
- explain their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
- appreciate and evaluate varied dimensions of religion or a worldview.

Develop and use the skills needed to engage with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding with increasing understanding;
- investigate how different individuals and communities live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all;
- articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly, in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

4. RE in the School Curriculum

The national curriculum states the legal requirement that 'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences

of later life'. All state schools must teach religious education. All schools must publish their curriculum by subject and academic year online³

At the time of writing there is not a national curriculum for RE. However, all maintained schools must follow the national curriculum requirements to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes RE. All maintained schools therefore have a statutory duty to teach RE to all pupils of statutory school age from Reception to Year 13 and to ensure that RE is provided in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus. This also applies to voluntary controlled and foundation schools. Academies and free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE and may choose to adopt the Bradford or another Agreed Syllabus. RE lessons should offer a structured and safe space for reflection, discussion, dialogue and debate as part of the school's curriculum.

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

RE must not seek to convert, urge or promote a particular religion or belief on pupils.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that:

- RE is included in the curriculum
- reference is made to teaching and learning in RE in curriculum policy documents;
- sufficient time and resources are devoted to RE to enable the school to meet its legal obligations;
- the school publishes and delivers a high quality RE curriculum.

It is, for maintained schools, the head teacher's duty to ensure that:

- RE, in community, maintained, VC and foundation schools, 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. These arrangements are not expected to incur any additional cost to the school or the local authority.

³ National Curriculum in England: Framework Document, DfE, September 2013, p.4

5. Parental Right to Withdraw Pupils from Religious Education

Section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended, provides for the right of withdrawal from Religious Education or collective worship in local authority maintained schools. There is no requirement to provide a reason and the school must comply with parents' and carers' requests. Academies and free schools are bound by their funding agreements. Generally speaking, the DfE's model funding agreements include clauses that reflect the statutory provisions relating to religious education and collective worship. In independent schools, the school's policy on such issues determines whether parents or pupils have a similar opt-out.

The right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.ⁱ

6. The Wider Contribution of RE

RE has intrinsic academic value, developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society. While recognising and maintaining the distinctiveness of RE as a subject it can also make significant contributions to other parts of the school curriculum. It is important that teachers and pupils understand the major contribution that the subject makes to children and young people's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) as well as personal development and citizenship. RE enables pupils to understand their place in a diverse society where people have differing ways of seeing and appreciating the world. Through exploration of their own beliefs and values and study of those of others, pupils learn respect for a range of religious and cultural views and are therefore able to play an active role in developing a cohesive and compassionate society.

Bradford's concept-based syllabus for RE enables pupils to understand the commonalities of different religions and worldviews as well as their differences. It provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It also develops the ability to respond to religions and worldviews in an informed and thoughtful way. It is a key subject for the teaching and learning of compassion, empathy, reflection, philosophical thinking, the ability to articulate difficult concepts and profound values and to explore answers to life's deep questions. By examining issues relating to both the positive outcomes of faiths and beliefs and the way in which conflicts and misconceptions can have their roots in religious ideas, pupils develop their understanding of the wider world and the power of faiths and beliefs within contemporary society. RE, when taught well, can

contribute to the prevention of extremism. Extremist behaviour may arise from hostility to people with different faiths and worldviews, from different perspectives within any faith or from radicalism based on a particular interpretation of a faith.

In the teaching of RE teachers will draw upon other worldviews as well as Christianity, Islam and the other major faiths.

7. Attainment Target*

By the end of each key stage students are expected to know, apply and understand the concepts, skills and processes specified in the Bradford Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

This is in accordance with the decision to adopt the single generic attainment target following the non-statutory national framework for RE.

8. Religions and Beliefs to be Taught.

RE in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils should encounter religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories. Pupils should be introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They should ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They should use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live.

Primary school

In order to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of religious belief and the way that it is lived by believers today, pupils will be taught Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism, as well as other religious and non-religious worldviews, in order to develop the conceptual understanding to enable them to answer the deep questions of the syllabus. Christianity and Islam will be studied in greater depth by all primary schools.

Effective RE teaching embraces the personal experience of the pupils and the intake of each school will therefore to some extent determine the emphasis placed on particular religions and worldviews.

Secondary school

In their time at secondary school students will further develop their understanding of all six major world faiths and non-religious worldviews.

At Key Stage 3, the concept-based curriculum for RE will give all pupils opportunities to see how key concepts are shared within the six major world faiths and other worldviews and where there are distinct concepts within each tradition. Pupils will gain skills of evaluation, critical thinking and a deepening understanding of concepts within the religions studied as teachers draw from the teachings of Christianity, Islam and other major world faiths, along with secular worldviews.

At Key Stage 4 many pupils will study GCSE Religious Studies. For those not taking a public examination in Religious Studies teaching and learning opportunities must be provided to meet the statutory requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This will give all students the opportunity to continue to develop the skills of evaluation and critical thinking as well as deepening their understanding of the key concepts of the religions that are studied. In addition, they should continue to consider non-religious worldviews.

Post 16, all students continue to have a statutory entitlement to religious education. Some students will study A Level Religious Studies. For other students, schools may incorporate RE into a General Studies curriculum or other programme of study, or may continue to teach RE as a discrete subject. All students should have the benefit of continuing to tackle 'deep questions'. The Agreed Syllabus provides guidance on concepts suitable for more mature learning and reflection.

9. Recommended Minimum Time

In order to deliver RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum the minimum time recommended is the equivalent of one hour per week in key stages 1 to 4.

Post-16, it is recommended that the time allocated to RE is the equivalent of one hour per fortnight.

These are minimum allocations of time in which to meet the core requirements of the Bradford Agreed syllabus for RE. This may be through subject-specific lessons or the time may be used flexibly to enable deeper or cross-curricular work. All curriculum models must ensure that there is continuity, coherence and progression within and across school years.

10. Concepts

The study of RE should develop the understanding of the spiritual aspects of faith traditions facilitated through the exploration of concepts which are specific to particular traditions and those that are shared across faiths and other worldviews.

Within the context of religious education teachers will focus on how spirituality is understood within specific faith traditions and worldviews as well as the individual search for meaning and truth.

These concepts will enable pupils to meet the aims of RE as defined in the Bradford Agreed Syllabus:

- know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews;
- express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews;
- develop and use the skills needed to engage with religions and worldviews.

Spirituality		
Beliefs	Practices	Forms of Expression
Peace Hope God/gods Life after death Cycle of Life Suffering Sacrifice Soul Sacredness Salvation Revelation Wisdom Authority Truth Journey	Celebration Family Worship Meditation Ritual Sacrifice Morality Charity Justice Forgiveness Commitment Loyalty Belonging Journey Faith Responsibility Tradition (remembering)	Symbolism Imagery Parable Myth Remembrance Sacred text Identity Community

Table 1

11. Programmes of Study

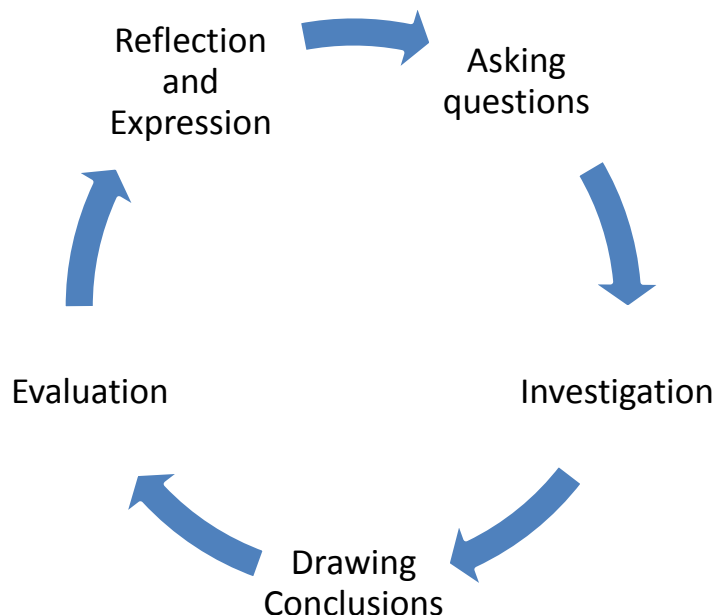
Knowledge and understanding of RE will be gained through the exploration of ‘deep questions’ which will enable pupils to develop skills of enquiry and critical thinking.

	Foundation Stage	Key stage 1	Lower key stage 2	Upper key stage 2
Beliefs	What does special mean to me?	Can you tell what somebody believes by what they look like?	What do different people believe about God?	Why are there different beliefs about God?
Practices	What is special to us?	What is special to faith communities?	How do faith communities demonstrate what is sacred?	Why are certain people, places and times sacred?
Forms of expression	How do we show what is special to us?	How does what believers do show what they believe?	How do believers use symbolism to show their beliefs?	Why do people need to express their beliefs?

	Key stage 3	Key Stage 4	Post 16
Beliefs	Where do beliefs about God come from?	Do beliefs change in accordance with time and place?	How can we live with conflicts among differing beliefs?
Practices	What do believers aim to achieve through religious practice?	How might the practices of faith communities change over time?	In what ways might practice influence belief?
Forms of expression	What can we learn from the ways in which different beliefs are expressed?	How might culture influence the way that beliefs are expressed?	Is abandonment of religious expression evidence of abandonment of religious belief?

Pupils will develop the capacity to describe, explain and analyse religious concepts through structured investigation, reflection and response which will enable them to understand and appreciate the nature (what it is), significance (why it is important) and impact (what difference it makes) of religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews.

This model promotes the style of enquiry recognised as good practice by Ofsted.⁴



⁴ Religious Education – Realising the Potential, Ofsted 2013

12. Assessment in RE

The assessment system for this Agreed Syllabus is based on key performance indicators (KPIs) for end of year and end of phase expectations which reflect what pupils are expected to achieve. Assessment will be both formative and summative and will be used as a basis for a written report to parents at the end of each academic year.

Key stage 1

At the end of year 1 pupils will

- Identify special places, days and objects related to the questions studied / aspects covered
- Identify special books and know some key teachings for the religions studied.
- Recount some religious stories and recognise some religious objects
- Reflect on their own identity and experiences.
- Ask questions and give opinions about religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Reflect on their own values, attitudes and commitments.

At the end of year 2 pupils will

- Talk or write about some key teachings in at least two religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Talk or write about special places, days and objects in at least two religions in relation to the topics studied
- Show understanding of the meaning of stories and symbols relating to the topics covered.
- Recognise that others' identity and experiences are important to them.
- Recognise that some 'deep' questions are about meaning and purpose.
- Recognise and respond to examples of others' values, attitudes and commitments and share their own.

Lower key stage 2

At the end of year 3 pupils will

- Talk or write about key teachings with increased depth. Identify the key details of some stories.

- Talk or write about special places, days and objects and their significance to believers.
- Explain why stories and symbols are significant to believers.
- Respond to others' identity and experiences.
- Respond to questions about meaning and purpose.
- Recognise that values, attitudes and commitments are often rooted in religious teachings and authority.

At the end of year 4 pupils will

- Use correct terminology when talking or writing about special places, days, rituals and objects and key beliefs and teachings
- to explain the details of significant stories.
- to explain some ways that different religions can share common features.
- Understand that symbolic meaning and significance can be expressed in a variety of ways.
- Make connections between their own identity and experience and that of others.
- Reflect on what is special and significant in their own lives and/or realise that there are puzzling and difficult questions.
- Show some understanding of values, attitudes and commitments in relation to stories and teachings, beliefs and practices.

Upper key stage 2

At the end of year 5 pupils will

- Understand the significance of key writings and teachings.
- Understand and make connections between key teachings in religious and non-religious worldviews. Understand some of the ways in which believers interpret story and symbolism and use language and ritual to convey meaning.
- Reflect on links and comparisons between their own and others' identity and experience.
- Formulate questions of meaning and purpose.
- Reflect on moral issues in their own lives, in relation to their understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews

At the end of year 6 pupils will

- Understand the significance of key writings and teachings for the followers of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Understand the significance of worship, rituals and values for the followers of religious and non-religious worldviews and make comparisons between the religions and beliefs studied.
- Explain how believers give meaning to symbols, story, language etc. and make some links between beliefs, practices and ways of expressing meaning.
- 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.
- Discuss moral questions, recognising that there are different views to be considered.

Key stage 3

At the end of year 7 pupils will

- Identify and explain the principal teachings and beliefs in the religious and non-religious worldviews studied and make some comparisons between different standpoints.
- Identify and explain, using correct technical vocabulary, the significant practices, people, places and objects of the religious and non-religious worldviews studied to form an understanding of each religion and belief as a whole and the diversity that exists within it.
- Explain the meanings of texts, language and symbols in relation to the key beliefs studied.
- Reflect on the relevance of religious and non-religious worldviews in developing their understanding of themselves and their experiences
- Formulate questions and give answers on meaning and significance in relation to teachings and practices.
- Articulate their understanding of moral issues, giving reasons for their own views

At the end of year 8 pupils will

- Understand key teachings and beliefs in relation to the sources of authority within religious and non-religious worldviews and make contrasts and comparisons between them.
- Place believers' practices and lifestyles within their religious, philosophical, historical, cultural and social context.
- Explain the meanings of a variety of texts, language, symbols in relation to key beliefs and practices, using appropriate religious vocabulary.
- 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 religious and non-religious worldviews affect understanding of life and its significance and give their own standpoint.
- Reflect on and evaluate others' values and attitudes in developing their own.

Key stage 4

At the end of key stage 4 pupils will

- Demonstrate a coherent understanding of teachings and beliefs and how these relate to people's experiences.
- Explain the unity and diversity which exists within and between religious and non-religious worldviews and understand the contemporary relevance of religion and beliefs in the lives of individuals and communities.
- Recognise ways of expressing meaning within religious and non-religious worldviews and recognise and explain varieties of interpretation of textual and other sources.
- Reflect on the ways in which religious and non-religious worldviews 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.
- Relate moral principles to religious and non-religious worldviews and evaluate their significance in considering and developing their own views.

Additional, non-statutory, guidance will be available to schools to exemplify the ways in which the key performance indicators can be used with the programme of study

and the deep questions to ensure a coherent and progressive conceptual understanding of religions and beliefs.

ⁱ www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf