

The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

Based on the National Exemplar
Framework for Religious Education



Mae'r ddogfen hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh

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Introduction

This document has been written to comply with the legal obligations for a locally agreed syllabus* which requires:

- the promotion of the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, including those in nursery settings
- appropriate provision for all registered pupils in every maintained school in Wales, including those in reception settings and those up to the age of 19
- that Christianity should be studied at each key stage and that the other principal religions should be those represented in Great Britain
- that religious education be non-denominational, but teaching about a particular catechism or formulary is not prohibited (i.e. similarities and differences in beliefs, teachings and practices of the religious traditions can be studied).

Annex 1 provides details of these relevant legislative provisions.

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.

* The statutory position of religious education within non-maintained (Voluntary Aided) schools is not affected by this agreed syllabus.

Time

At all key stages sufficient time and resources are required to provide an effective and coherent course of study. In terms of curriculum time religious education should be given parity with comparable foundation subjects. Time allocated to Collective Worship is distinctive from, and additional to, curriculum time given to religious education.

Complaints and withdrawals

A complaints procedure operates whereby the SACRE will consider complaints about the provision, or lack of provision, of religious education.

Parents or guardians of a pupil at any maintained school may personally request that their child be wholly or partly excused from receiving religious education. Since withdrawal from religious education may be requested on grounds of conscience it is important that schools:

- a) ensure parents are aware of the solely educational aims and nature of religious education and that an opportunity is given to discuss with parents the implications of withdrawal
- b) discuss with parents the practicalities of providing an alternative religious education programme

The rights of teachers and headteachers to excuse themselves from teaching religious education remain.

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.; 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 tithing, 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, RE 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

Spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical developments are essential aspects of religious education and should be clearly identifiable.

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 world*)
- the essence of what it means to be human, which explores shared values, identity, personal worth, creativity, imagination, love, faithfulness and goodness (*human experience*)
- 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 (*search for meaning*)

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 world*)
- 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 (*human experience*)
- 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) (*search for meaning*)

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 world*)
- 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 (*human experience*)
- pupils' personal response to multicultural/multi-faith Wales, Europe and the World (*search for meaning*)

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 world*)
- the ability to discern, to challenge bias and to make value judgements and the skill of synthesising and analysing complex and often conflicting information (*human experience*)
- clarity of thought, reflection, intuitive thinking, symbolic understanding and interpretative skills (*search for meaning*)

the physical focuses on:

- physical activity that responds practically to the needs of others and demonstrates responsible (social) action and positive lifestyle (*the world*)
- 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 (*human experience*)
- physical activities that promote well-being and equilibrium, help clarify thought processes, and inspire, for example, meditation, stilling and yoga (*search for meaning*).

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 in 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 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 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 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.

Religious education in the Foundation Phase

Statutory Requirements

The introduction of the Foundation Phase does not affect the statutory duty of maintained schools to provide religious education for all registered pupils, including those in reception classes but excluding pupils in nursery schools and nursery classes. This is subject to the rights of parents to withdraw their child(ren) from religious education. The content of religious education is set out in this agreed syllabus through the exploration of People, beliefs and questions. When planning the delivery of the Foundation Phase, schools should take account of provision of the Foundation Phase Framework and of this agreed syllabus.

People, beliefs and questions

Through an exploration of People, beliefs and questions, children will naturally develop skills and make links with all Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase:

- Personal and Social development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity
- Language, Literacy and Communication Skills
- Mathematical Development
- Welsh Language Development
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

The skills highlighted in this agreed syllabus largely match those in the Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity Areas of Learning. It is important that links should be made with all other Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase whenever possible to ensure that children experience a holistic learning experience.

People, beliefs and questions for nursery settings

The Foundation Phase will promote children's spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development across all the Areas of Learning including People, beliefs and questions.

People, beliefs and questions outlines non-statutory entitlement for children at nursery schools, classes and settings as the basis on which to develop statutory provision for children in the rest of the Foundation Phase. Children will concentrate on accessing cultural and traditional stories and practical experiences relating to spiritual, moral and cultural endeavour.

People, beliefs and questions for the rest of the Foundation Phase

By using the section outlining People, beliefs and questions within statutory religious education, which includes reception classes and those up to Key Stage 2, children will focus on the way in which specific religious stories and activities build on previous experience of the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical.

Through developing their skills of enquiry, investigation and experimentation across all the Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase, children should have opportunities to prepare for Key Stage 2.

Skills

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

To experience the familiar world through investigating the indoor and outdoor environment, children should be encouraged to be curious and find out by:

- exploring and experimenting with new learning opportunities, including role play, visiting special/religious places, making and using artefacts and foods and 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
- investigating sources and issues raised through stories, holy books, festivals, celebrations and rights of passage
- making comparisons and identifying similarities and differences of identity, lifestyle, community and tradition
- thinking creatively and imaginatively about important human and religious questions
- 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.

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity

Personal development

Children should be given opportunities to:

- 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 particularly when learning about people from other religions and cultures
- 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

Children should be given opportunities to:

- be aware of and respect the needs of others
- take responsibility for their own actions
- consider the consequences of words and actions on themselves and others
- develop an understanding of what is fair and unfair, while showing mutual respect
- value friends and families and show care and consideration
- develop a positive self-image and a sense of belonging as part of different communities and to 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 religious groups and communities
- begin to question stereotyping.

Moral and spiritual development

Children should be given opportunities to:

- 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 and situations, or personally, suggesting alternative responses, including those from religious perspectives
- respond personally to simple imaginary moral situations, considering them from religious perspectives and giving reasons for decisions made
- experience exciting, wonderful, inspirational, creative and/or quiet times and express ideas and feelings about these times creatively, explaining why they are significant
- consider why people, including religious people, value and seek times of creativity, inspiration, awe and wonder, peace and tranquillity and revelation
- talk about the choices available to individuals and discuss whether the choices available make a decision easier or more complex
- ask questions about what is important in life from a personal perspective and from the perspective of other people
- communicate ideas, values and beliefs about themselves, others and the world.

Well-being

Children should be given opportunities to:

- value and contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of others
- be aware of their own feelings and opinions and develop the ability to express them in an appropriate balanced way
- understand the relationship between feelings, beliefs and actions
- understand that other people have feelings and beliefs that affect the way they think and behave
- demonstrate care, respect and affection for other children, adults, other living things and their environment
- develop a growing interest in the world around them and develop understanding and responsibility for living things and the environment.

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 are child-initiated and those that are built on previous experiences
- work on their own and in small and large groups.

Range for nursery settings

The range is further illustrated in Annex 2.

Children should (through stories, activities and experiences) be given opportunities to:

- gain **insight** into their own and other people's spiritual, moral and cultural identities, lifestyle and traditions
- consider the **influence** of the spiritual, moral and cultural aspects of life that have **guided people's lives**, past and present, locally in Wales.
- ask **questions** about their own and other people's beliefs, actions and viewpoints
- explore and **express meaning** in creative ways (through art, dance, ritual, artefacts)
- share their **personal responses** to important personal, spiritual and moral questions
- show **responsibility**, care and/or concern for living things and for the natural world.

Range for the rest of Foundation Phase

The range is further illustrated in Annex 2.

Children should (through stories, activities and experiences) be given opportunities to:

- gain **insight** into religion, religious people and religious aspects of life
- explore how religion has **influenced** and **guided people's lives**, past and present, including the emphasis of religion on spirituality and religious experience, in Wales and the wider world
- pose **questions** about beliefs, values and actions that arise from exploration
- investigate and express **meaning** (including religious meaning) through signs, symbols, artefacts and imagery
- express **personal responses** to personal, religious and moral questions
- explore our **responsibility** and the responsibility of religion for living things and for the natural world
- ask and explore **more complex questions** (including personal, religious, spiritual and moral questions) about the world, human experience, and aspects of religion.



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, and their knowledge and understanding of **Christianity plus two other principal religions**. Aspects of other religions appropriate to topics or themes may also be included from time to time. These are used 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 other principal religions (as appropriate)** 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.

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.

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.

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*

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*


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:

- 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*
- explain how what they have learned about religious/spiritual experience and moral decision-making might relate to their own and other people's lives
- appreciate, respect, empathise with and evaluate the viewpoints of others, acknowledging where they are similar to and different from their own
- 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. 

- **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.*

The level descriptions for religious education

The following level descriptions describe the types and range of performance that pupils working at 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 identified within the agreed syllabus.

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.

Outcomes for religious education

The following outcomes for religious education are non-statutory. They 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.

Foundation Phase	Religious Education
Foundation Phase Outcome 1	Religious Education Outcome 1
Foundation Phase Outcome 2	Religious Education Outcome 2
Foundation Phase Outcome 3	Religious Education Outcome 3
Foundation Phase Outcome 4	Religious Education Level 1
Foundation Phase Outcome 5	Religious Education Level 2
Foundation Phase Outcome 6	Religious Education 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 about 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.

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.

This 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.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, the agreed syllabus programme of study relates to the requirements of current GCSE qualifications, but also provides suggestions 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. All students should be given proper access to external examinations in religious studies, without unfair disadvantage from subject groupings and with a time and resources allocation equivalent to other subjects taken to this level.

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. All students should be given proper access to external examinations in religious studies, without unfair disadvantage from subject groupings and with a time and resources allocation equivalent to other subjects taken to this level.



Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, their knowledge and understanding of **Christianity and other principal religions as appropriate**. At Post 16 the course of study could be widened to include an exploration of non-principal religions, religious sects and movement. These are used 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 for Key Stage 4 and Post-16

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.

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.







Range for accredited/non-accredited statutory RE at Key Stage 4

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 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* 

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.*



Range for accredited/non-accredited statutory RE at Post-16

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 aspects 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** – ways in which religion emphasises the value and worth of human existence, *e.g. motives, decisions and consequences; exploitation and modern slavery; justification for fair trade/equality/justice*
- **the natural world and living things** – religious justifications and objections to use and abuse of the natural world and living things, *e.g. medical ethics; interpretations of natural law; governance of the world*

Human experience

- **human identity** – questions about religious certainty and truth in contemporary society, *e.g. interpretations of God; reality TV; truth and honesty in the media; hedonism*
- **meaning and purpose of life** – ways in which religious and contemporary values and ideas influence self-worth and perception of others, *e.g. media portrayal of God, religion, morality; media depiction of role models; inspirational figures and celebrities*
- **belonging** – Wales and the global village's implications for religion, *e.g. multicultural society; pluralism; richness and diversity; global accessibility; erosion of traditional values; rise of electronic communication and the breakdown of relationships*



- **authority and influence** – ways in which religious and secular authorities relate to the contemporary media and entertainment industries, *e.g. videos and music; sensationalism of violence; trivialisation of sexual behaviour*
- **relationships and responsibility** – the ways in which religion, government and world-wide organisations impact on global harmony/discord, *e.g. responsibilities of the UN; liberation theology; war/peace; democracy/rule of God*
- **the journey of life** – religious interpretations of creation and the purpose of humanity, *e.g. nature versus nurture; interpretations of fate, destiny and salvation*

Search for meaning

- **non-material/spiritual** – traditional and contemporary definitions and understanding of religious experience and spirituality, *e.g. is religion active or passive?; religious experience through the media; religious and psychological views of conscience/consciousness*
- **knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual** – the impact of the non-material/religious/spiritual on individuals, communities and societies and the ways in which this impact is hindered/promoted by secular society, *e.g. portrayal of near-death experiences/miracles in the media; politics; apathy/commitment/extremism.*

Annex 1 – Legal requirements for agreed syllabuses

‘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))

‘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))

Religious education, along with other subjects on the curriculum, should promote:

- ‘(a) ...the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- (b) prepare[s] such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.’

(Education Reform Act 1988, Part 1 (2)(a)(b))

‘(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 Reform Act 2002, Section 99 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b))

‘(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)...’

(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))

Annex 2 – Religious education in the Foundation Phase

Suggested topics for People, beliefs and questions

People, beliefs and questions for nursery settings

Within nursery settings children will concentrate on accessing cultural and traditional stories and practical experiences relating to spiritual and moral endeavour. These stories and experiences will encourage children to become aware of and ask questions about:

Themselves

- their homes, families and experiences in order to explore their identity (*including Curriculum Cymreig, cultural diversity*)
- their likes, dislikes and feelings (*including hopes, dreams, opinions and sense of fun*)
- their role and place in the community (*as a member of their family, out of school activities*)
- choices that they make (*sharing, kindness, behaviour*)
- spiritual/moral meaning expressed in stories, poems, artefacts, art, movement, rituals and celebrations (*birthdays, St David's Day, traditional stories about people who help others, dealing with happy and sad times*)

Other people

- other people's homes, families and experiences in order to explore similarities and differences of lifestyle and traditions (*family celebrations and traditions*)
- special people and people who help them (*stories about influential people past and present such as Jesus and St David, children's families, teachers, and people in their community*)
- likes, dislikes and feelings (*including sharing hopes, dreams, opinions and a sense of fun with others*)
- people's roles and place in the community (*as members of families and groups*)
- decisions other people make (*rules, routines, consequences of choice, as part of a community*)
- reasons why other people express a deeper spiritual/moral empathy towards other people (*exploring why people help others in their work and free time*)
- the need to respect/challenge their own ideas/beliefs and those of other people (*ask questions, share ideas and opinions*)

Living things

- the ways in which they and others show care, concern and respect for living things, the environment and the natural world (*taking responsibility for animals/plants, asking questions and sharing opinions*)
- responsibility/recycling/global concern for the world (*finding out how people can make a difference*)
- awe/wonder (*investigation of nature, the natural world and the seasons*).

People, beliefs and questions for the rest of the Foundation Phase

Through developing their skills of enquiry, investigation and experimentation across all the Areas of Learning of the Foundation Phase, children should have opportunities to prepare for Key Stage 2 by extending their knowledge and understanding of:

Themselves

- their homes, families and experiences in order to explore their identity and belonging (*personal experiences of festivals, celebrations, rites of passage including Curriculum Cymreig, cultural diversity*)
- their personal responses (*in times of joy and sadness, their hopes, dreams, opinions and sense of fun*)
- their role and place in the community (*as a member of their family, group activities including religious activities and charity work*)
- the decisions that they make and resulting consequences (*behaviour, choice, attitudes*)
- spiritual/moral meaning expressed in the stories, poems, artefacts, art, movement, rituals and celebrations (*religious stories, dealing with happy and sad times, asking about big questions*)

Other people

- other people's homes, families and experiences in order to explore similarities and differences of lifestyle and traditions (*experience of religious festivals, worship, rules, food*)
- special people and people who help them (*stories about Jesus and other influential religious people past and present*)
- personal responses (*including sharing feelings, ideas, experiences, opinions and a sense of fun with others*)
- people's roles and place in the community (*as members of families, religious groups, local religious leaders*)
- decisions other people make and resulting consequences (*rules, routines, choices, being part of a community*)

- reasons why other people express a deeper spiritual/moral empathy towards other people (exploring why people help others in their work and free time – do their beliefs influence their lives?)
- the need to respect/challenge their own ideas/beliefs and those of other people (*ask questions, share ideas and opinions*)

Living things

- the ways in which they and others show care, concern and respect for living things, the environment and the natural world (*taking responsibility for animals/plants, asking questions and sharing opinions*)
- responsibility/recycling/global concern for the world (*finding out how people can make a difference*)
- awe/wonder (*investigation of nature, the natural world and the seasons*).

During this phase of education children should also extend their skills so they can begin to:

- develop insights into religion and religious people
- understand about belief and action
- recognise and appreciate how religion has influenced and guided people's lives past and present, including an emphasis on spirituality and religious experience
- raise increasingly complex religious and moral questions and issues about human experience, the world and aspects of religion.