

Shropshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2019



Statutory Requirements

Children's Services, Education Improvement Service

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AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

June 2019

Since the first modern Shropshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was developed in July 1991 there has been a regular five-yearly review process in place which has seen the syllabus develop overtime to reflect both local and national changes. For the first time since 1991 the review process has decided that the 2019 syllabus should not be amended from the 2014 version.

Shropshire SACRE established an Agreed Syllabus Conference at its June 2018 meeting to start the review process. A consultation took place throughout the autumn term with schools, SACRE members and focused discussions at both the primary and secondary Religious Education network meetings. The feedback was that there was no requirement to change the syllabus but primary schools asked for further non-statutory guidance to be developed to support their work. This work was presented to the 2019 spring term meeting where it was formally approved for implementation in Shropshire schools from September 2019. The new Agreed Syllabus will be required to taught in Community Maintained and Voluntary Controlled schools from that date onwards. Governors of Voluntary Aided, academies and free schools will need to decide if they wish to make use of the syllabus in conjunction with their trust deeds and religious nature of the school to inform their teaching of Religious Education.

I must thank the schools, teachers, officers and SACRE members who have contributed to this latest revision of the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. I commend it to everyone in our schools with an interest in the subject.

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Introduction

This new version of the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus has been developed with the full support of the local SACRE and teachers. It is based on the foundations laid down in previous Agreed Syllabuses, and an extensive consultation with schools, teachers and pupils on strengths and areas for development. Due recognition has been taken of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales' draft programmes of study for Religious Education and wider developments in education such as the primary and secondary national curriculum reviews.

The aim has been to produce an Agreed Syllabus that is flexible but which gives teachers clear guidance to develop their own curriculum models that reflect their local needs. The creative and challenging teaching and learning supported by the syllabus will develop children and young people who are **religiously literate and educated for life in the 21st century**.

As this syllabus has evolved from earlier syllabuses all existing example study units can be incorporated into the new schemes of work. Further guidance and diagrams from previous syllabuses can also be used where they support the teaching of the new requirements. With the need for local flexibility in mind, this syllabus will not offer complete key stage schemes of work, but will contain illustrative examples of units written to a common format. It is important that individual schools take ownership of the new syllabus and work through the process of developing their own schemes of work. The intention of the syllabus writers is that on-going development and further illustration will take place throughout the life of this syllabus, making this an organic and responsive Agreed Syllabus.

The syllabus endorses the purpose of study as set out in the Religious Education Council of England and Wales programmes of study which states:

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God or ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and non-religious worldviews. It should enable pupils to develop their own views, values and identity. It should develop an aptitude for dialogue in pupils and the capacity to participate positively as members of a diverse society and a globalising world. Pupils should learn how to study religions and non-religious worldviews systematically and to an increasing level of complexity and depth. They make progress by reflecting with increasing sophistication on the impact of religions and non-religious worldviews on contemporary life; and develop skills of interpretation and the capacity to evaluate evidence through this process. They learn to articulate clear and coherent accounts of their personal beliefs, opinions, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to have different views, values and ways of life.

On-going Continuing Professional Development will generate additional resources and alternative examples for use in the syllabus over the next five years. These will continue to be available electronically to all schools through the Shropshire Learning Gateway.

The National Legal Framework for Religious Education

RE, as part of the basic curriculum, should be provided for all registered pupils attending a maintained school.

It is the headteacher's duty to secure this provision. The governing body or, for LA-maintained schools, the governing body and the LA, must also exercise their functions with a view to securing this provision.

The headteacher and governing body must ensure that sufficient time and resources are given to RE in school to meet the statutory requirements.

RE is required to be included, alongside the National Curriculum, in the basic curriculum which all maintained schools must provide for their registered pupils; this includes those in reception classes and sixth forms, and is not confined to pupils of compulsory school age. The special status of RE as a part of the basic but not the National Curriculum is important. It ensures that RE has equal standing in relation to National Curriculum subjects within a school's curriculum, but is not subject to statutorily prescribed national attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements, which would be compulsory for all pupils, without exception.

The Education Reform Act 1988 requires that all new syllabuses, ie those adopted on or after 29 September 1988, must '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'.

Nothing in the Education Act 1993 affects parents' rights, as established in the 1944 Act and re-enacted in the 1988 Act, to withdraw their children from RE if they wish.

Further **non-statutory guidance** can be found in the publication "Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010" (DfE) which is available through the Shropshire Learning Gateway.

To summarise:

If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE, the school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from RE, unless the child is lawfully receiving religious education elsewhere.

Staff in special schools must provide RE for all their pupils, where practicable; it does not have to be taught to the locally agreed syllabus although staff are encouraged to do so and most will use the syllabus as a basis for their planning.

The Syllabus

The Legal Position of the Agreed Syllabus in Different Categories of School

Community Schools	RE is taught according to the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus and comes under the remit of SACRE
Voluntary Controlled Schools	RE is taught according to the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus and comes under the remit of SACRE
Voluntary Aided Schools	RE is determined by the governors in accordance with the trust deed and reflects the religious character of the school
Foundation schools without a religious character	RE is taught according to the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus and comes under the remit of SACRE
Academies	RE must be taught as part of the curriculum in accordance with the school's funding agreement

Breadth of Study

It will be expected that schemes of work will ensure that:

- Christianity is included in each key stage.
- Other world religions are included as follows:
 - Reception – At least one other religion
 - Key Stage 1 – At least one other religion
 - Key Stage 2 – At least two other religions
 - Key Stage 3 – At least two other religions
 - Key Stage 4 – At least one other religion
 - Post-16 – Relevant material is drawn from those religions felt most appropriate for the nature of the study.
- There is evidence of attention being given to those faiths represented in the community.
- Pupils understand how religious beliefs are applied to everyday life in a personal context, but also in a wider setting.

NB

Although schools should identify the religion(s) they will focus on during each key stage, this does not prevent reference being made to other religious and secular world views (or belief systems) when it is relevant and appropriate. Such references should be seen as 'enrichment experiences'. Teachers and inspectors should not expect pupils to have the same in-depth knowledge and understanding of these religions and world views that they have of those on which the school has chosen to focus.

Time Allocation

In order to fulfil the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus, it is vital that adequate time is allocated. Whilst the actual amount is left to the discretion of the school, it is important that managers recognise the statutory requirements that must be achieved in this time. The minimum recommended teaching time necessary to fulfil the requirements is:

KS1/2

R/Y1/2 25-30 hours in each year

Y3/4 35 hours in each year

Y5/6 35 hours in each year

KS3

5% of overall curriculum time, ie the equivalent of one hour a week. (This is in line with other humanities subjects)

KS4

Non – examination courses.

One hour a week, or the equivalent, is recommended. Schools can determine the appropriate delivery but it must be in accordance with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

Examination Courses

- Short Course - at least 1 hour per week (In line with other exam options)
- Full course - at least 2 hours per week (In line with other exam options)

Sixth Forms in 11-18 schools

The school should provide a meaningful course based on the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Although the organisation of such courses may differ greatly, the time given should be appropriate to meet the course needs (based on the SACRE's suggestion of one hour a week or its equivalent).

The time allocations given above do not include Collective Worship.

Aims

The principal aim of Religious Education is to help young people:

- to develop knowledge and understanding of religious experiences, insights, beliefs and practices.

This involves two attainment targets which are, by their nature, interconnected and reliant on each other.

AT1 – Learning about religion

Children should be able to describe and explain a variety of religious and non-religious world views preparing them for adult life as citizens in a plural society.

AT2 – Learning from religion

Children should draw from AT1 the understanding to articulate their own world view whilst appreciating that of others. From this process they should be able to come to a reasoned and reflective personal viewpoint.

The curriculum should ensure that pupils:

- know and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:
 - describe, explain and analyse religious and non-religious beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between individuals and communities;
 - identify and investigate the questions posed and the responses offered by the world's religions and non-religious worldviews;
 - appraise the nature and significance of religion and non-religious worldviews; and
 - appreciate the impact of faith, beliefs and values on individuals and communities
- know and understand a range of responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth
- develop the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and non-religious worldviews, so that they can:
 - describe them, interpret text, consider, analyse, and appraise evidence critically;
 - explain some of the key concepts that underpin them; and
 - articulate beliefs and values clearly in order to explain the reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

Key Elements

The teaching of any religion needs to focus on the key ideas, principles and concepts contained within it. These must be at the heart of teachers' planning for any scheme of work and should be prominent in their thinking when deciding what should be taught. It is these elements that provide the basis for setting out and understanding how children make progress in RE. They are reflected throughout the support materials for progression, assessment and reporting.

Identity, diversity and belonging

Understanding how believers develop a sense of identity with their faith; the range of belief contained in any faith and the ceremonies which take place when individuals become part of any faith group.

Practices and ways of life

Understanding what religious practices take place within a faith community and how people live their lives within that faith community. Understanding how these practices differ within faiths, over time and around the world.

Expressing meaning

Understanding that different faiths demonstrate meaning through symbols, symbolic actions or colour, eg through art, music, artefacts, rituals, dance, prayer etc.

Values and commitments

Understanding the shared values of different faiths and what these require of their followers in terms of actions and behaviours.

Beliefs, teachings and sources

Understanding what different religions teach about God, life and ethical issues and the sources on which this teaching is based. This will include religious texts, leaders and teachers.

Meaning, purpose and truth

Exploring how different religions give sense and purpose to life, death, the nature of good and evil, what it means to be human and other ultimate questions?

Religious Questions

Religious Education has moved from a subject that was perceived as 'providing answers' to one that is fundamentally about 'the exploration of questions'.

For all children following this syllabus their RE should be an exploration, reflection or investigation of a range of appropriate questions. These questions must be both stimulating and challenging, and provide opportunities for children to gain important insights into their own beliefs and values as well as those represented in the religions and other world views being studied.

The Religious Questions that form the basis of the syllabus are set out below/overleaf. It is expected that they will be identified and addressed in the schemes of work of all schools. In some cases, the question may actually form the title of an actual lesson or a unit of work being covered. In others their coverage will be evident from the way the work is planned and taught.

We also recommend that each component within a unit of work, [this may be an individual lesson or series of lessons] should also be set out as a question. This will help ensure the teacher does not lose sight of the identified purpose of the lesson or the unit of work as well as helping make the evaluation process at the end more meaningful.

The 14 Religious Questions that form the core of the syllabus have been set out below/overleaf and are listed under the possible Key Elements they link to. If, for example, in the planning an individual teacher is setting out to explore an issue surrounding identity, diversity or belonging then question 1, 3 or 5 could be the central question to use. If the issue is about practices and ways of life then question 2 or 14 would be appropriate. The links are illustrative only and different combinations of questions to concepts are possible.

Religious Questions

RQ1	Who am I?
RQ2	How do people express their beliefs through worship and celebration?
RQ3	Who is my neighbour?
RQ4	How should I lead my life?
RQ5	Where do I belong?
RQ6	How should we relate to others and to the natural world?
RQ7	How do people make sense of hardship and suffering?
RQ8	Has science got all the answers?
RQ9	What do people believe about God?
RQ10	How is belief expressed through symbols and action?
RQ11	How do people express their beliefs about truth?
RQ12	How do people make sense of life and death?
RQ13	Where do people's beliefs come from?
RQ14	Why do people's belief and practice differ?

Exploring the Key Elements through the Religious Questions

The allocation of religious questions to the key elements shown below is illustrative only. Other combinations are possible and the supporting materials for the syllabus will show these different combinations.

Identity, diversity and belonging

Understanding how believers develop a sense of identity with their faith; the range of belief contained in any faith and the ceremonies which take place when individuals become part of any faith group.

RQ1	Who am I?
RQ3	Who is my neighbour?
RQ5	Where do I belong?

Practices and ways of life

Understanding what religious practices take place within a faith community and how people live their lives within that faith community. Understanding how these practices differ within faiths, over time and around the world.

RQ14	Why do people's belief and practice differ?
RQ2	How do people express their beliefs through actions, worship and celebration?

Expressing meaning

Understanding that different faiths demonstrate meaning through symbols, symbolic actions or colour, eg through art, music, artefacts, rituals, dance, prayer etc.

RQ10	How is belief expressed through symbols and action?
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Values and commitments

Understanding the shared values of different faiths, societies and belief systems and what these require in terms of actions and behaviours.

RQ4	How should I lead my life?
RQ6	How should we relate to others and to the natural world?

Beliefs, teachings and sources

Understanding what different religions teach about God, life and ethical issues and the sources on which this teaching is based. This will include examining religious texts, and studying what religious and non-religious leaders and teachers have said and how these texts have been interpreted.

- RQ9 What do people believe about God?
- RQ13 Where do people's beliefs come from?
- RQ8 Has science got all the answers?

Meaning, purpose and truth

Exploring how different religions give sense and purpose to life, death, the nature of good and evil, what it means to be human and other ultimate questions?

- RQ7 How do people make sense of hardship and suffering?
- RQ12 How do people make sense of life and death?
- RQ11 How do people express their beliefs about truth?

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment and Recording

The national legal position regarding assessment, recording and reporting has significantly changed with the introduction of the new national curriculum in September 2014.

The previous system of assessing pupils' progress through the use of levels has been removed as a statutory requirement. The decision on how to report pupil progress will be a matter for individual schools to decide reflecting the greater freedom they have to teach the curriculum.

Non-statutory guidance for the syllabus will support schools to fulfil this requirement.

Reporting

The law requires that:

Parents receive a specific annual report on RE. This should indicate the child's achievements, general progress and attendance record. [Schedule 1, Regulation 6 (4) The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (SI2005/1437)]. The school does not have to provide a report for any child fully withdrawn by their parents under Section 71 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Recording

The syllabus does not specify how a school should record the progress made by a pupil in RE. However the syllabus recommends that the method used should reflect that used by the school for all other national curriculum subjects.

In addition to providing this information whenever possible schools should indicate to their next phase partner schools what were the 'focus religions' they had chosen to study with their pupils. This will enable the receiving school to take this into account when designing their own schemes of work.

Membership of Shropshire SACRE

Chair	Mr Henry White
Clerk to SACRE	Ms Sue Round

Committee A – OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS/OTHER FAITHS

Mr Darren Clarkson	Buddhism
Mr David Bowgett	Religious Society of Friends
Mrs Carole Morgan	Roman Catholic Church
Mr Henry White	Methodist Church
Mrs Denise Samari	Bahai
Imam Sohayb Peerbhai	Islam
Mr Ajmer Singh	Sikhism
Mrs Rashmika Jogi	Hinduism
Mrs Jacqui Osmund-Smith	Baptist Church
Mr Bill Morris	Greek Orthodox
Mr Mark Michaels	Judaism
Mrs Sue Michaels	Judaism

Committee B – CHURCH OF ENGLAND**HEREFORD DIOCESE**

Mr Tristram Jenkins

LICHFIELD DIOCESE

Mrs Jane Crouch

Mrs Fiona Iddon

Committee C – TEACHERS ASSOCIATIONS

Mrs Elizabeth Badger	Secondary Teacher
Mr Adrian Black	Secondary Teacher
Mr Michael Reynolds	Primary Teacher
Mrs Cathy Rutherford	Primary Headteacher
Mrs Stephanie Shirra	Primary Teacher
Mrs Amanda Skidmore	Primary Headteacher

Committee D – SHROPSHIRE LA MEMBERS

Cllr Mrs Pauline Dee

Cllr Mr Roger Evans

CO-OPTED MEMBER

Mr Simon Nightingale	Humanist
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Notes



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