

Challenging RE

**The Oxfordshire
Agreed Syllabus for
Religious Education
2023**

Contents

Foreword	3
Acknowledgments.....	4
1. Introduction: Challenging RE - The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2023.....	5
1.1. The Nature and Purpose of the Agreed Syllabus	5
1.2 Legal requirements.....	6
1.3 The right of withdrawal.....	7
2. The educational rationale for RE in the curriculum.....	7
2.1 The importance of RE.....	7
2.2 RE and Personal Development.....	8
2.3 RE and SMSC	8
3. The basis for planning quality RE	10
3.1 The four aims of the Agreed Syllabus.....	10
3.2 The learning process for ‘Challenging RE’	11
3.3 Concepts in RE.....	13
3.4 Conceptual Creativity	13
3.5 Inclusion and Special Educational Needs.....	14
4. What pupils will learn in RE	16
4.1 Deciding which religions and other worldviews to study	16
4.2 Agreed Syllabus expectations across the Key Stages.....	16
4.3 Contexts and Core Questions across the Key Stages	17
5. Early Years and Foundation Stage	19
6. Key Stage 1: Exploring religion, experience and feelings	21
7. Lower Key Stage 2: Enquiring into experience and beliefs.....	25
8. Upper Key Stage 2: Enquiring into experience, beliefs and life’s questions.....	28
9. Key Stage 3: Enquiring into the significance of religions, other worldviews and ultimate questions in the modern world	31
10. Key Stage 4: Statutory Core RE and external qualifications	35
11. RE in the Sixth Form	37
Appendices: Non-statutory guidance	42
Appendix 1 Progression: 1.1 Progression through the Learning Process.....	43

Appendix 2: Different approaches to learning and teaching in RE.....	48
Appendix 3: Conceptual Creativity: experience, worldview and personal knowledge.	49
Appendix 4: How to structure pupils' learning – guidance on planning.....	52
Appendix 5: Non-statutory guidance EYFS	53
Appendix 6: Non-statutory guidance KS1	54
Appendix 7: Non-statutory guidance Lower KS2.....	56
Appendix 8: Non-statutory guidance Upper KS2.....	58
Appendix 9: Non-statutory guidance KS3	60
Appendix 10: Theme grids from 2007 syllabus	65

Foreword

Religious Education has an important place in the curriculum of all schools, enabling children and young people to develop their understanding of people, cultures and faiths in Britain and around the world. This agreed syllabus provides a coherent plan that will enable schools in Oxfordshire to teach RE that is of high quality and that sets out to teach all children about religion and world views in a way that will prepare them well for life in 21st century Britain.

The syllabus is comprehensive and inclusive, and gives schools flexibility to take account of their own communities. It encourages children and young people to be curious in relation to religious faiths and other world views and encourages exploration and reflection. It also provides links to wider learning in Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and aims to promote community cohesion. It is the legal document to be followed for the teaching of RE in all Oxfordshire maintained schools. Academies and Voluntary Aided schools are also welcome to use the syllabus.

I am grateful to The Oxfordshire SACRE and to the colleagues who gave of their time to draw up the revised syllabus for 2023-28 and am delighted to recommend it to you all.

Kevin Gordon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KSG', is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Director for Children, Education and Families

Acknowledgments

This new version of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus has come about through the work of the various SACRE and ASC representatives, and in particular the Writing Group, which was comprised of several local teachers. We would like to thank them all for their work on this document. However, there are various people specially to acknowledge by name.

First is Bill Moore, our long-standing RE advisor, who has overseen the drafting, and contributed so much expertise from his work with other local authorities; we are well connected with the world of RE through him.

Second is Charles Mathew, who was a local councillor, and previous Chair of both SACRE and the ASC. He initiated the syllabus review but did not stand for re-election in 2021 so could no longer be an authority representative, and therefore could not see the work through. His understanding of and guidance through the local authority's systems and people has been a great contribution to us over the years.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Carol Worthington, one of our Church of England representatives, and Margaret Godden, our Humanist representative. Both passed away during the review process, Carol in April 2022, and Margaret in January 2023. Carol had been a science teacher and school inspector. Involvement in SACRE was important to her, and given her multi-faceted expertise, her wisdom and insight were invaluable. Margaret was a member of the Oxford Humanists and had been active in local politics, notably for the Liberal and then Liberal Democrat party before retirement. She always offered clear and incisive comments from a deeply felt humanist perspective. We hope that they would have approved of this final version.



Dr Nigel Fancourt
Chair, Oxfordshire SACRE and ASC

1. Introduction: Challenging RE - The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2023

The new Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus builds on the strengths of its predecessors and takes account of the most recent developments in education and in RE to enable teachers to plan an ambitious and coherent RE curriculum for their pupils.

In particular, in the light of these recent developments, the ASC decided that the Agreed Syllabus would:

- a) move away from the Non-Statutory Framework 2004 format in order to bring the syllabus more in line with current practice in RE by introducing an enquiry approach;
- b) take on board the 'worldviews approach', given recent case law and as advocated in the REC's Report ['Religion and World Views The Way Forward, A National Plan for RE' \(2018\)](#) (the Report);
- c) reflect the demands of Ofsted's emphasis on curriculum intent, implementation and impact;
- d) include disciplinary approaches to teaching RE alongside the other approaches; and
- e) take account of the three types of knowledge set out in the [Ofsted research review series: religious education](#) (12th May 2021)

1.1. The Nature and Purpose of the Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus is the statutory long-term planning document for RE in Oxfordshire maintained schools, including Voluntary Controlled schools, and is an important benchmark used in other types of school. It provides the overall rationale, aims, objectives and the content overview whilst allowing for the subject leader's professional judgement to determine the detail, order and methods used. The syllabus sets out a learning process in which pupils explore the themes and issues raised by religions and other worldviews through key stage enquiries and concepts in the light of the pupils' own experience and questions.

It also specifies the principles of assessment that will provide a coherent structure for planning, progression and reporting. This forms the basis for the school to develop its curriculum intent, implementation, and impact as appropriate to the whole school curriculum and the context of the pupils.

It is not, and nor can it be, a detailed scheme of work to be delivered by teachers to pupils. This should be used by the **subject leader** to develop a coherent and ambitious school curriculum.

Further non-statutory guidance for subject leaders can be found in the Appendices. Note that much of this guidance is based on earlier models of syllabus, which had different specifications, so will need to be adapted for the current approach.

The Agreed Syllabus, appropriately implemented, provides a coherent, progressive experience of RE for pupils from Reception to post-16, enabling schools to meet statutory requirements and provide educational rigour and value. It is expected, except in EYFS and post-16, **that a minimum of 5% of curriculum time across each Key Stage** (approximately one hour per week) is provided to enable quality learning to take place. It is up to the school to decide how this is planned and provided, but it must ensure

that the RE curriculum as a whole develops knowledge and is sequential and ambitious with clear end points.

The provision for RE can be flexible to meet the planning and learning needs of the school, so long as the school ensures that there is a sequential and coherent curriculum, that pupil learning, progression and assessment are transparent and coherent, and that teachers can report meaningfully on progress and attainment in RE as with any National Curriculum subject.

The Oxfordshire ASC together with the Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE) hope that this Agreed Syllabus will encourage and enable all schools in Oxfordshire, whatever their designation, to provide coherent, quality and challenging RE for all their pupils, not just because by law they must, but because Head Teachers, governors and teachers see the value of high quality RE for their pupils, school and communities.

1.2 Legal requirements

RE is a fundamental part of education in England. It has been a part of education for centuries, and was recognised as important at the inception of compulsory education in 1870; it is now part of the basic curriculum and is a legal requirement for all state-funded schools. The Education Act 2002 sets out the requirement for 'a basic curriculum which includes provision for religious education' (s. 80(1)). This is through an Agreed Syllabus; these have been recognised legally since 1936 and have been mandatory since 1944.

The national requirements for the subject have been guided by nearly two centuries of legislation and are currently set out in the 1996 Education Act:

Every Agreed Syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain (s. 375(3))

In schools where an Agreed Syllabus applies, RE must be non-denominational, but teaching about denominational differences is permitted.

The requirement to teach RE is part of the funding agreement for Free Schools, Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts, which must provide RE in accordance with the requirements as for an agreed syllabus conference. Free Schools and Academies can adopt the locally agreed syllabus if they so choose, by agreement of the board of directors, and SACRE encourages those in Oxfordshire to do so in the interests of continuity, coherence and opportunities to share best practice across all schools.

Oxfordshire SACRE has also taken some account of recent case law (*Fox v Secretary of State for Education*) and the Report's use of 'worldview' as central to the provision of high-quality RE. We have adopted the Report's understanding of 'worldview' as a person's way of experiencing, responding to and understanding the world:

A worldview is a person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can

be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. This includes how a person understands the nature of reality and their own place in the world. A person's worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments. (Report p4)

RE includes institutional as well as personal worldviews. Worldviews can be fluid, with people often drawing on aspects of a number of institutional worldviews. This has always been implicit in previous Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabuses, not least in the learning process, the centrality of lived experience and their focus on enabling pupils to reflect on their own position as they explore religions and other worldviews.

1.3 The right of withdrawal

Oxfordshire ASC and SACRE recognise that under the current legislation (School Standards and Framework Act 1998 s71, as amended), a parent may request that their child may be wholly or partly excused from receiving RE given at the school in accordance with the school's basic curriculum, and if so, the pupil shall be excused until the request is withdrawn. We also recognise the right to provision of alternative forms of RE under current legislation.

2. The educational rationale for RE in the curriculum

2.1 The importance of RE

Although RE is statutory, it justifies its place in the curriculum on purely educational grounds. It is the opportunity to explore a major and distinctive dimension of what it means to be a person: the search for meaning and value in a wondrous but also often confusing and sometimes threatening world. It offers pupils: the chance to raise and reflect on perennial questions about life; insights into the development of different human cultures.

In doing this, RE draws on the major religious traditions in Britain, giving due prominence to Christianity to reflect the fact that these traditions are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the other principal world religions, and non-religious beliefs that may form the family background of many children in our schools.

Thus, there are two main educational purposes to RE:

1. For pupils to learn *about* religions and beliefs which have influenced the lives of millions of people and heavily influenced the development of different human cultures. Pupils apply academic skills such as analysis and critical and creative thinking, approaching the study of religion with different disciplines as they mature.
2. For pupils to recognise and develop their own perspective *from* their increasingly academic and creative exploration of religions and other worldviews.

RE is therefore both **rigorously academic and personally significant**.

Quality RE:

- Teaches pupils about Christianity and other religions and worldviews so that they can understand the world better and develop their own sense of place within it;
- Teaches pupils about the diverse range of perspectives within religions and other worldviews, as well as shared perspectives between them;
- Engages pupils of any religious faith or none and of all academic attainment and social backgrounds;
- Challenges pupils to question and explore their own and others' understanding of the world;
- Does not seek to impose beliefs upon pupils, nor to compromise their own beliefs, but rather to deepen their self-understanding and their understanding of others;
- Raises questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value and encourages people to reflect on experience, ways of living and of knowing;
- Contributes positively and powerfully to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
- Contributes to mutual understanding, thereby developing cohesive communities;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to encounter people with beliefs and ways of living different from their own;
- Provides opportunities for pupils to develop communication and thinking skills; and
- Introduces pupils to different disciplinary lenses and types of knowledge for exploring religions and other worldviews.

2.2 RE and Personal Development

RE contributes significantly to Personal Development both in terms of character education and the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) of pupils of all ages. RE develops self-concept and self-esteem, explores moral and social frameworks and encourages people to reflect on experiences and emotions. It explores the spiritual dimension of life.

In RE, pupils explore what it means to be a person and the way they should treat others, thereby developing an understanding of and respect for diverse beliefs and cultures. This contributes to addressing issues of prejudice such as antisemitism, Islamophobia and racism.

RE promotes creative and conceptual thinking and links these to universal and personal human experiences so that learning is engaging, reflective and enjoyable. Personal development and academic achievement are woven together so that pupils are able to apply critical thinking to and reflect meaningfully on spiritual, moral, social and cultural values.

Pupils' own experiences, beliefs and perceptions lie at the heart of RE. This pupil-centric approach both necessitates and ensures that they contribute to their learning. RE provides the opportunity for pupils to explore and reflect on spiritual and ethical values and thus helps them to develop qualities, attitudes and dispositions that will help them to engage effectively with the world of work and responsible citizenship. In this way, it plays an essential part in the character development of pupils.

2.3 RE and SMSC

*RE provides opportunities to promote **spiritual** development through:*

- discussing and reflecting on key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe,

life after death, good and evil, beliefs about God and values such as justice, honesty and truth.

- learning about and reflecting on important concepts, experiences and beliefs that are at the heart of religious and other traditions and practices.
- considering how beliefs and concepts in religion may be expressed through the creative and expressive arts and related to the human and natural sciences, thereby contributing to personal and communal identity.
- considering how religions and other worldviews perceive the value of human beings, and their relationships with one another, with the natural world, and with God.
- valuing relationships and developing a sense of belonging.
- developing their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues.

*RE provides opportunities to promote **moral** development through:*

- exploring the influence of family, friends and media on moral choices and how society is influenced by beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and guidance from religious leaders;
- considering what is of ultimate value to pupils and believers through studying the key beliefs and teachings from religion and philosophy about values and ethical codes of practice;
- studying a range of ethical issues, including those that focus on justice, to promote racial and religious respect and personal integrity;
- considering the importance of rights and responsibilities and developing a sense of conscience.

*RE provides opportunities to promote **social** development through:*

- considering how religions and other worldviews lead to particular actions and concerns;
- investigating social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions as well as the common ground between religions;
- articulating pupils' own and others' ideas on a range of contemporary social issues;
- contributing to and reflecting on the significance of Fundamental British Values and preventing the risks of radicalization.

*RE provides opportunities to promote **cultural** development through:*

- encountering people, literature, the creative and expressive arts and resources from differing cultures;
- considering the relationship between religion and culture and how religions and other worldviews contribute to cultural identity and practices and vice-versa;
- promoting racial and interfaith harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination, contributing positively to community cohesion, and promoting awareness of how interfaith collaboration can support the pursuit of the common good.

3. The basis for planning quality RE

3.1 The four aims of the Agreed Syllabus

The Agreed Syllabus has four aims for RE. To enable pupils to:

- understand the nature, role and influence of religions and other worldviews, locally, nationally and globally.
- reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value.
- formulate reasoned opinion and argument.
- enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs, worldviews, and backgrounds.

These are developed in the following ways, which can be seen as 'steps' to achieve each aim:

- ***To understand the nature, role and influence of religions and other worldviews, locally, nationally and globally by:***
 - developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions and worldviews (KS1 onwards);
 - exploring similarities and differences between religions and other worldviews (KS1 onwards);
 - Considering the nature and interpretation of sources of authority in Christianity, other faiths and worldviews (LKS2 onwards);
 - exploring similarities and differences within religions and other worldviews (LKS2 onwards);
 - understanding what it means to belong to a religious community and the influence religious faith has on individuals and communities (UKS2 onwards);
 - considering the way religious teaching and practice relate to ultimate questions (UKS2 onwards);
 - evaluating the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society; (KS3 onwards);
 - developing the ability to analyse and think critically about religious and other beliefs and practices and different interpretations of these (KS3 onwards);
 - analyse and evaluate aspects of religion, including their significance and influence (KS4).
- ***To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose, and value by:***
 - reflecting on the significance of personal experience and emotion (KS1 onwards);
 - Thinking about what influences our beliefs and lifestyle and the way we see things (LKS2 onwards)
 - Exploring what different religions and other worldviews say about meaning purpose and value (UKS2 onwards)
 - raising and exploring the ultimate questions which arise from these (KS3 onwards);
 - reflecting on and expressing their own responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others' experiences and beliefs (KS3 onwards);
 - Analysing and evaluating the impact these responses can have in the world (KS4).
- **To formulate reasoned opinion and argument by:**
 - gaining the necessary knowledge and understanding to give informed opinions (KS1 onwards);
 - developing the skills of questioning and reasoning (LKS2 onwards);
 - developing the ability to see things from other peoples' perspective (UKS2 onwards);
 - evaluating the influence of beliefs on attitudes and behaviour (KS3 onwards);

- developing skills of interpretation, argumentation and justification (KS3 onwards);
- developing the ability to analyse and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in arguments/ stances (KS4).

In achieving these three aims, pupils will be better able to achieve the fourth aim: to enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds.

Note: General skills such as enquiry, analysis, and reasoning are developed age-appropriately at all key stages. These skills are further elaborated by key stage progression in section 5.3

3.2 The learning process for ‘Challenging RE’

The learning process below draws together the academic and the personal dimensions of RE. It enables schools to plan learning that meets many of the recommendations in the Report. These include its aims and purposes, where it states that RE *“is more than learning facts... it is about understanding the human quest for meaning, being prepared for life in a diverse world and having space to reflect on one’s own worldview”* (Report p. 73)

It also places emphasis on developing skills that enable young people to (p77):

- *Reflect on their own personal responses to the fundamental human questions to which worldviews respond*
- *Learn to articulate these responses clearly and cogently while respecting the right of others to differ*
- *Developing skills relevant to various disciplinary approaches*
- *Develop wider transferable skills and dispositions*

In the learning process, we have tried to reflect this in the context of RE. Learning in RE involves helping pupils make sense of life. Learning about religions, beliefs and lifestyles is the vehicle through which they develop their understanding of themselves, others and the world.

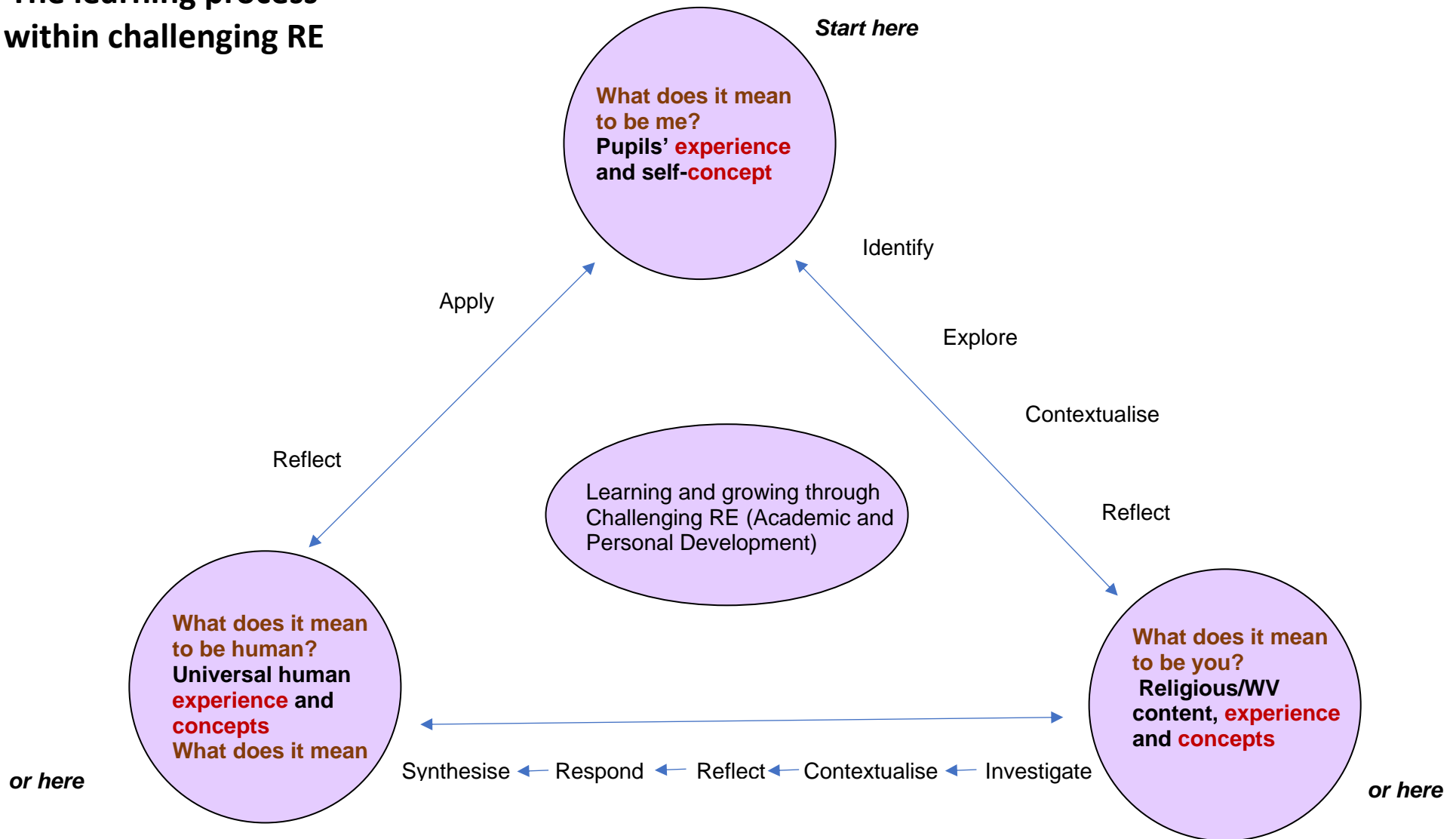
The learning process involves a journey with three possible starting points (see next page):

1. What does it mean to be me? (Pupils’ experience and self-concept)
2. What does it mean to be you? (Religious/Worldview experience and concepts)
3. What does it mean to be human? (Universal human experience and concepts)

Schools should decide which aspect is the best way in for the pupils and/or what they will be learning. The model incorporates skills-development and progression. The skills running along the sides of the triangle are described for each Key Stage, thus providing a means of progression. Subject leaders use these to plan challenging learning. Thus at KS1 the process will be basic and will become more complex and challenging as pupils progress through school.

Pupils will grow to recognise how we are all different, yet we share our humanity in common (what we refer to as ‘identity-in-difference’), so that through their exploration of religions and other worldviews they will develop their own understanding of what it means to be human and their own sense of meaning, purpose and value in relation to others.

The learning process within challenging RE



3.3 Concepts in RE

Concepts are key ideas that shape our understanding. In RE these relate to how we understand or make sense of our lives and the world around us – for example, identity; purpose; value. So in RE concepts are closely related to experience in the lives of children, young people and their communities. Concepts are deep and often complex. In order to help map concepts in RE, they are often divided into three categories:

1. universal human concepts (eg 'worth')
2. general religious concepts (eg 'worship')
3. religion/worldview-specific concepts (eg 'Eucharist', 'Puja')

They can be expressed in different ways, which include some or all of:

- Language
- Art
- Music
- Drama
- Dance
- Symbol
- Ritual

3.4 Conceptual Creativity

Central to the approach to learning in 'Challenging RE' is the process of building conceptual bridges between the pupils' own lives and the content that they explore. Whatever background a pupil comes from, RE must engage all pupils in meaningful learning that they can apply to their own lives. And this means engaging pupils in their learning by building bridges between pupils' experience and religious/worldview contexts.

Thus, in order to provide opportunities for all children to learn and grow through their experiences of RE, teachers have to take pupils own experience and background seriously, whilst at the same time expanding their understanding and horizons. In this way they can appreciate the relevance to life in the modern world and their own lives of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles found in the principal faiths and beliefs.

This approach is developed more fully in Appendix 3.

3.5 Inclusion and Special Educational Needs

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is the RE entitlement of all pupils in maintained schools and therefore supports the principles of inclusion as set out in the National Curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

As the subject matter of RE sometimes raises sensitive issues, it is important that teachers are aware of, and are sensitive to, the background and personal circumstances of their pupils.

It is expected that teachers of pupils with special educational needs will modify the RE provision according to their own situation, meeting the needs of the children in the most appropriate way. This also includes meeting the needs and challenges of the most able pupils.

The guidance that follows for Special Schools may also prove helpful to teachers of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in mainstream schools.

3.6 RE in Special Schools

RE of pupils in special schools is referred to in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, requiring (s. 55) "provision for ensuring that, so far as practicable, every pupil attending a community or foundation special school (a) receives religious education unless withdrawn from receiving such education in accordance with the wishes of his[/her] parent".

Teachers of children with special educational needs, whether in mainstream or special schools, will broadly need to follow the three core principles outlined below:

- a) Be sensitive to and meet the needs of the individual child.
- b) Set challenging tasks but have realistic expectations of what they can do and celebrate their responses.
- c) Make the pupils' experience of RE meaningful, taking account of their ability and special educational need.

Some pupils will be able to work factually but not relate to feelings and meanings. Others will find factual detail confusing and will need a more sensory and experiential approach in their RE lessons. **It is up to the teacher's professional judgement and personal knowledge of the child to decide how best to meet the needs of individual pupils.**

For example, pupils with Educational and Behavioural difficulties may have short concentration

spans and so will not cope with extensive reading, research and writing. The school may well decide it is more fitting to have short sessions more frequently during the week – the ‘little and often’ approach. A more active and varied lesson will help these pupils gain from their experience of RE.

We suggest that teachers use activities and resources that best meet the needs of their pupils. Teachers should choose appropriate content from the Agreed Syllabus. *For example, in Rites of Passage during KS2, birth and marriage may be more accessible to particular pupils than initiation rites. Professional judgement and personal knowledge of the pupils will inform practice.*

4. What pupils will learn in RE

4.1 Deciding which religions and other worldviews to study

Schools remain free to choose which religions other than Christianity to study and when (although we recommend schools to study the religions exemplified in the Syllabus so that all pupils gain an understanding of all principal faiths). It is not good educational practice to study all religions in a superficial manner over a single Key Stage, so the syllabus recommends those for in depth study and adds the option of others to be included as with reference to others as appropriate.

The 'with reference to' feature enables you to bring in relevant material from different religions and worldviews to illustrate, develop or enrich an understanding of a key concept, or to engage pupils from different backgrounds not covered in the 'in depth' enquiries.

In deciding which to choose, schools should consider the following:

- What is the pupils' background?
- How are you contributing to an understanding of the principal religions and other worldviews?
- How are you liaising with your main feeder or transfer schools to ensure broad coverage of religions and other worldviews across the key stages, and at an appropriately challenging level.
- Are you providing a balance by including something from both western (Abrahamic) religions and eastern (Dharmic) traditions?
- What will you include under the category of 'with reference to....'?

In the EYFS, teachers will provide opportunities for child-initiated learning and plan adult led learning focusing on the background, experience and needs of the children, ensuring that you introduce experiences that help the children in their Understanding of the World.

4.2 Agreed Syllabus expectations across the Key Stages

At KS1, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth,
- ii) one other Abrahamic religion in depth (Judaism suggested),
- iii) with reference to one Dharmic tradition and non-religious perspectives (NB not necessarily a specific non-religious worldview)

At LKS2, pupils will explore:

- i. Christianity in depth,
- ii. one other Abrahamic religion in depth (Islam suggested),
- iii. one Dharmic tradition in depth (Hinduism suggested),

- iv. with reference to other religions and perspectives, as appropriate.

At UKS2, pupils will explore:

- i. Christianity in depth,
- ii. one other Abrahamic religion in depth,
- iii. one Dharmic tradition in depth,
- iv. Humanism,
- v. With reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate

For (ii) and (iii), the syllabus recommends Hinduism and Islam, but schools may choose others than those studied at LKS2

*Thus, **by the end of KS2** pupils will have good knowledge and understanding of all Abrahamic religions and at least one Dharmic tradition, and some knowledge of non-religious perspectives and Humanism.*

At KS3, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth
- ii) two other religions in depth (at least one from Dharmic traditions) plus
- iii) Humanism in depth**
- iv) with reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate.

At KS4 statutory core RE, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth.
- ii) two or three other religions or non-religious worldviews in depth.
- iii) with reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate.

Pupils should also be *offered the option* to study an external qualification equivalent to a GCSE in Religious Studies, but schools should ensure that any GCSE syllabus meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This Agreed Syllabus is developed with a three-year KS3 and a two-year KS4 in mind, in line with the most recent research on the effectiveness of learning for pupils.

RE in the 6th Form is based on an entitlement to 10 hours of RE in each of the two years and can be planned flexibly. See the section on 6th Form RE on pp. 32-33

4.3 Contexts and Core Questions across the Key Stages

Religions and other worldviews will be explored in an educational **context** and through broad **core questions**:

KS1 Context: An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life.

Core Questions: How does our background influence who we are? How does belonging to a religion or group affect people's lives? How should we behave and treat others and the world?

LKS2 Context: An exploration of what people believe to be important in life and why, and how this is expressed.

Core Questions: What is most important in life? How do people show what is most important to them? How does this affect their attitudes to themselves, other people and the world around them?

UKS2 Context: A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed.

Core Questions: What do people believe about life, the world and the good life? Where do these beliefs, attitudes and ways of living come from? How are these expressed in the lives of individuals and communities?

KS3 Context: A critical engagement with ultimate questions, exploring, analysing and responding to a range of responses to these.

Core Questions: What is the continuing relevance of religions and other worldviews in the modern world? Does life have any meaning, purpose or value? What kind of world do we want to live in? How do pupils' responses to these questions influence the ways they might live their lives?

KS4 Context: A critical analysis of questions arising from and issues relating to religions and worldviews, analysing and evaluating the impact they have on the modern world.

Core Questions: Are religions and other worldviews positive or negative forces in the world? What are pupils' visions for the world?

5. Early Years and Foundation Stage

All registered pupils in maintained schools have a legal entitlement to RE, and thus it must be taught to Reception classes.

However, the way learning here is structured is through the Early Years and Foundation Stage curriculum and not through the Agreed Syllabus itself. Teachers should teach to the seven areas of learning and their respective Early Learning Goals (ELGs) as the basis of their planning and assessment. What follows is suggested guidance on what RE can contribute to learning in the Reception year. Remember, this is only statutory for registered pupils (i.e., Reception), but it is good practice to provide for all EYFS some context of belief, belonging and relationships from different cultural and global contexts, especially in relation to Understanding the World: People, Culture and Communities.

The Areas of Learning identified in the Foundation Stage ensure that breadth of learning is possible across a range of individual experiences and activities. The provider uses her/his professional expertise to elicit development in a number of areas from planned activities and learning experiences.

The Areas of Learning and specific ELGs towards which RE can make an explicit contribution are:

Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

ELG: Speaking

Literacy

ELG: Comprehension

ELG: Writing

Understanding the World

ELG: Past and Present

ELG: People, Culture and Communities

- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG: Creating with Materials

ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Possible topic areas with RE:

- Myself
- Other people

- How I live
- How other people live
- Important people and faith leaders
- Belonging
- Important things
- Important experiences
- Feelings
- Expressing our feelings
- Celebrations and festivals
- Religious stories and what they mean
- Exploring artefacts and clothing

It is entirely at the discretion of the Early Year's provider whether these topics are taught separately or within cross-curricular themes. Religions and other worldviews represented locally should be a focus for the children's learning. The environment in which learning takes place can provide many contexts in which young children may explore religion and ask questions. Such contexts might include:

- the home corner;
- dressing up boxes;
- interest areas;
- artefacts;
- story books;
- jigsaws;
- object trays;
- (Persona) dolls;
- painting and drawing.

To meet the Early Learning Goals and the requirements of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus, Reception classes should include specific planned activities (for example on festivals, special places and faith leaders) as well as unplanned opportunities for developing children's knowledge and understanding of religions and other worldviews through circle time and everyday routines.

6. Key Stage 1: Exploring religion, experience and feelings

At KS1, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth,
- ii) one other Abrahamic religion in depth (Judaism suggested),
- iii) with reference to one Dharmic tradition and non-religious perspectives (NB not necessarily a specific non-religious worldview)

Context: An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life.

Core Questions:

- A. How does our background influence who we are?
- B. How does belonging to a religion or group affect people's lives?
- C. How should we behave and treat others and the world?

These are explored over KS1 using the following enquiries to construct a curriculum appropriate to the pupils in your school, bearing in mind the requirements of a broad and balanced curriculum. This could be *systematic studies* of each religion or worldview using the enquiry themes to construct the exploration; or it could be *thematic explorations* as per the questions; or it could be a combination of systematic and thematic. Note that some research suggests that pupils learn more effectively through one coherent approach (either systematic or thematic) than through a mix of approaches. However, each brings a different focus and emphasis in the exploration of religions and other worldviews.

Enquiries (referencing back to the core questions):

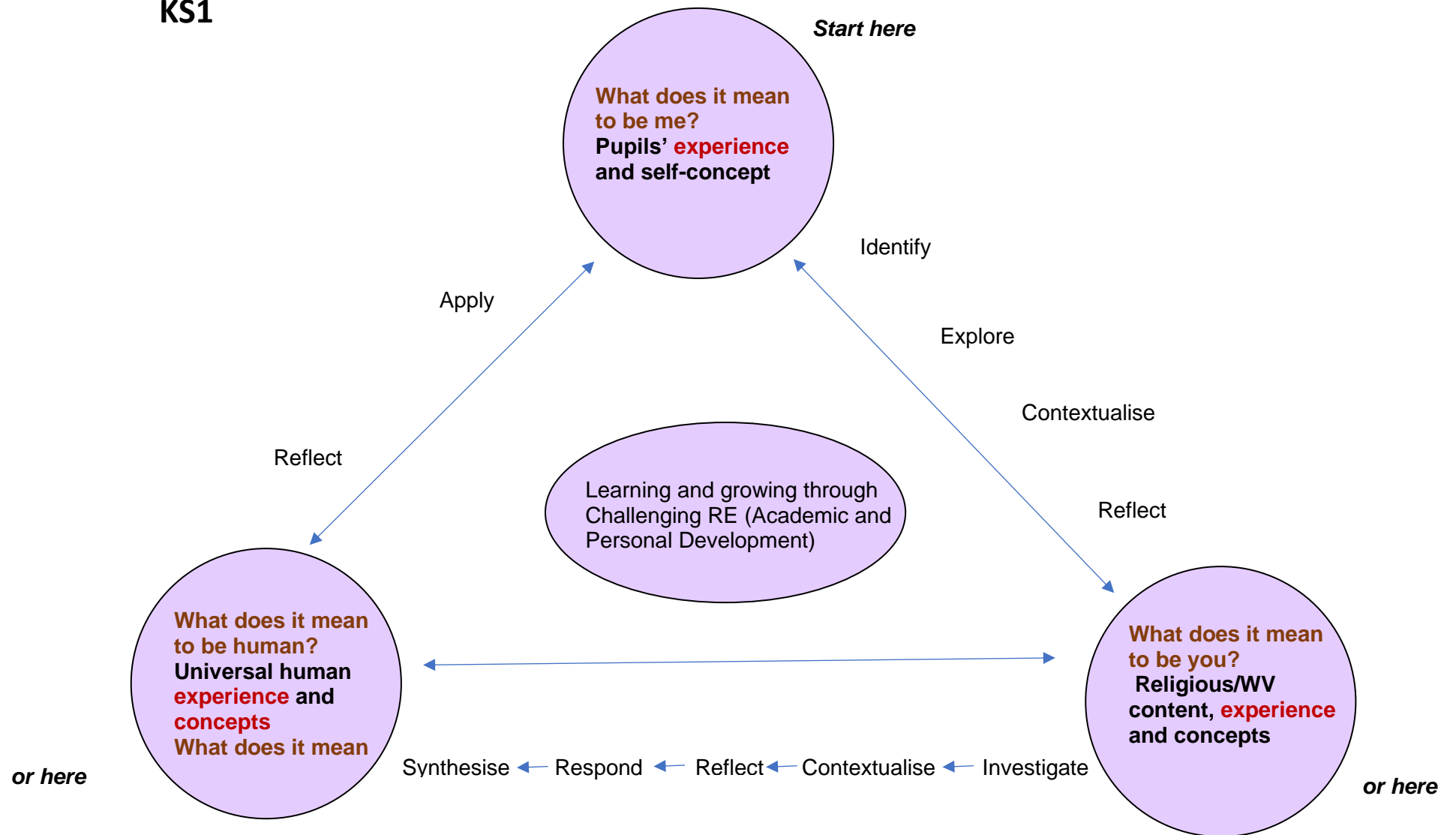
- 1. What does it mean to be me?
- 2. How important is belonging to a group for people?
- 3. What makes some people important?
- 4. Why are some places important?
- 5. What makes some things sacred to some groups of people?
- 6. What makes some stories so important to different people?
- 7. Why is it important to look after our world?
- 8. Why do people celebrate important occasions?

In exploring these questions, the children will also reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family and community;
- What they believe, why what they think is important and how these influence their day-to-day lives.

The learning process within challenging RE

KS1



KS1 Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	Pupils recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise some basic concepts used to express this.
	Explore	Pupils learn how to find out about other people's experience and feelings in a way that is sensitive and appropriate and to relate their own experience and that of others to the general concepts being developed
	Contextualise	Pupils learn to see their own experience in the light of their own background and compare this sensitively with the experience of other pupils in the class
	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about their experience and the feelings related and to see how these affect themselves and others
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	Pupils learn about related experiences and concepts within the religions and other worldviews explored
	Contextualise	Pupils learn to see the lived experience in the context of the beliefs and practices of the religion or worldview being explored and the feelings that arise from them for believers
	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about the religious/worldview's experiences and concepts and their significance to the believers and to see how these make a difference to how they live
	Respond	Pupils learn how to express sensitively and in a variety of ways their own views about the lived experiences and concepts
	Synthesise	Pupils learn to identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs practices and concepts they have explored
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	Pupils learn to think about what they can take from their learning about the religions to help them understand their own experience, feelings and beliefs
	Apply	Pupils relate the religious experience, beliefs and concepts they have explored to their own lives and think about how their own ideas have developed

Context: An exploration of home life and how this influences the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of children and others in relation to their sense of self, belonging and celebrating what is important in life.

7. Lower Key Stage 2: Enquiring into experience and beliefs

At LKS2, pupils will explore:

- i. Christianity in depth,
- ii. one other Abrahamic religion in depth (Islam suggested),
- iii. one Dharmic tradition in depth (Hinduism suggested),
- iv. with reference to other religions and perspectives, as appropriate.

Context: An exploration of what people believe to be important in life and why, and how this is expressed.

Core Questions:

- What is most important in life?
- How do people show what is most important to them?
- How does this affect their attitudes to themselves, other people and the world around them?

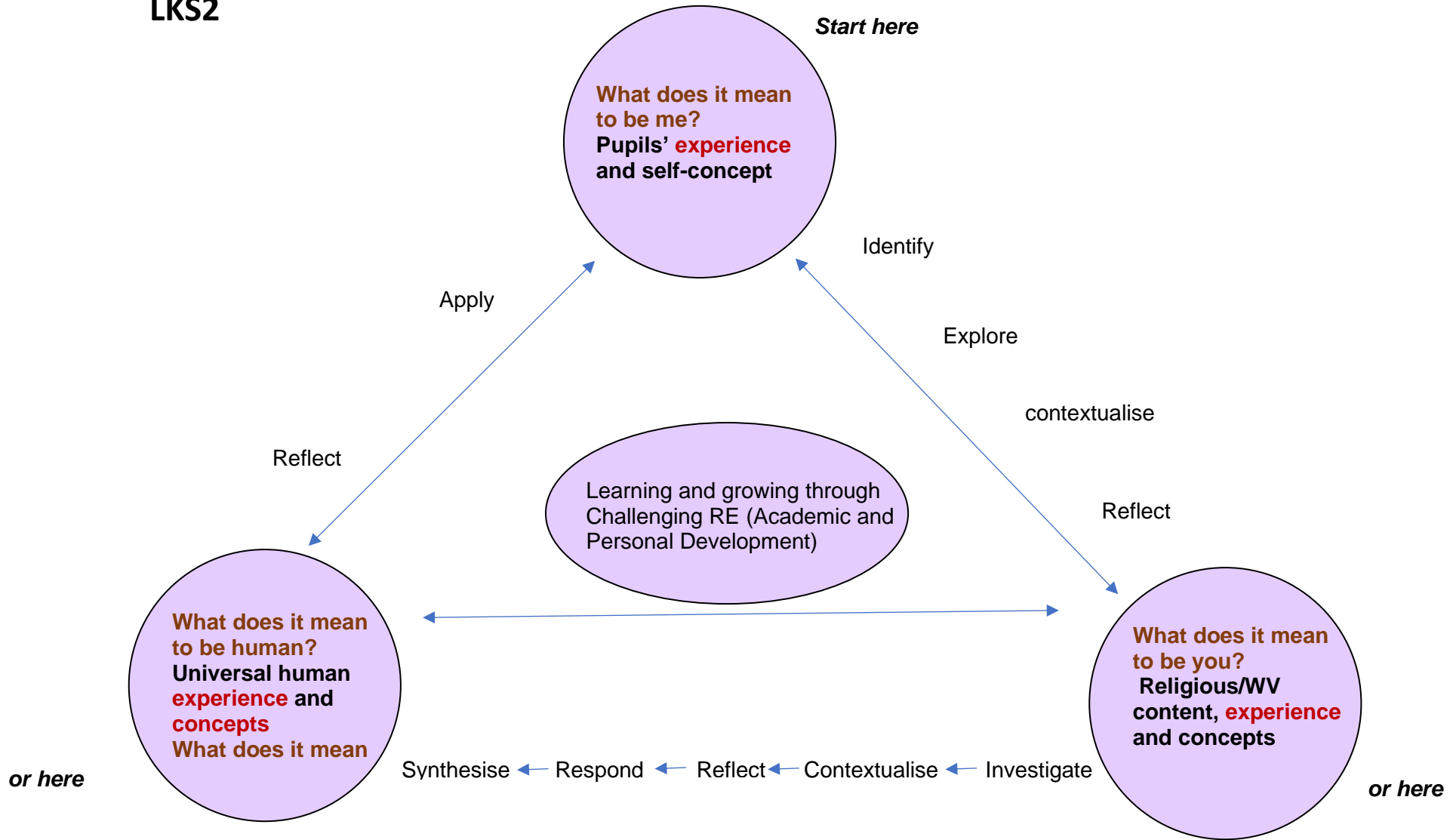
Enquiries (referencing back to the core questions)

- How and why do people worship?
- Are places of worship really needed?
- What holds communities together?
- How do religions express their beliefs about God?
- Why are sacred texts and holy books so important?
- What do celebrations show about what we think is important in life?

In exploring these questions, pupils will also reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community and world;
- What they believe, what they think is important and how these influence their day-to-day lives.

The learning process
within challenging RE
LKS2



LKS2 - Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	Pupils learn to identify what is most important to them in terms of people places celebrations and beliefs
	Explore	Pupils learn to ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own views about what is important to them and why
	Contextualise	Pupils compare and contrast their own views with those of others in the class
	Reflect	Pupils think about how these different 'values' affect their own and other peoples' lives
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	Pupils learn how to inquire into what religions and other worldviews hold to be most important and how these are expressed personally and in community
	Contextualise	Pupils relate concepts and beliefs to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and other worldviews explored, learning to identify differences and similarities between religions
	Reflect	Pupils learn to consider what is important to people through their exploration of beliefs, concepts and practices and how these compare with their own
	Respond	Pupils explain their responses to the beliefs and practices giving reasons for their views
	Synthesise	Pupils think about what the beliefs and practices show about what is important to human beings
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	Pupils reflect on what they have learned about what people and communities see as of great importance in life
	Apply	Pupils consider how their views on what is important in life may have developed through their study of these religions and worldviews

Context: An exploration of what people believe to be important in life and why, and how this is expressed.

8. Upper Key Stage 2: Enquiring into experience, beliefs and life's questions

At UKS2, pupils will explore:

- i. Christianity in depth,
- ii. one other Abrahamic religion in depth,
- iii. one Dharmic tradition in depth,
- iv. Humanism,
- v. With reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate

For (ii) and (iii), the syllabus recommends Hinduism and Islam, but schools may choose others than those studied at LKS2

Thus, by the end of KS2 pupils will have good knowledge and understanding of all Abrahamic religions and at least one Dharmic tradition, and some knowledge of non-religious perspectives and Humanism.

Context: A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed.

Core Questions:

- A. What do people believe about life, the world and the good life?
- B. Where do these beliefs, attitudes and ways of living come from?
- C. How are these expressed in the lives of individuals and communities?

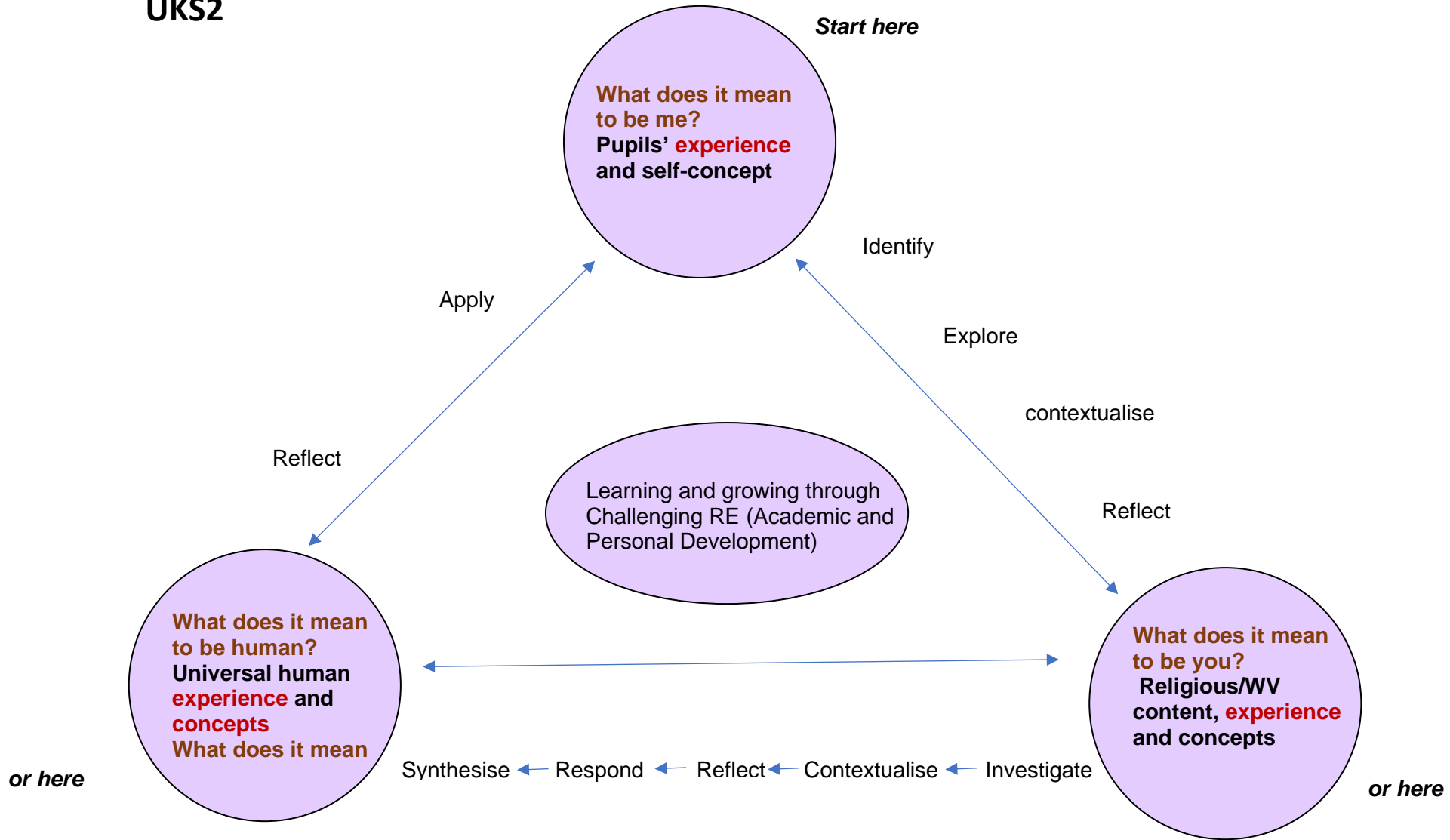
Enquiries (referencing back to the core questions)

1. Why do religions or non-religious groups celebrate important moments in life?
2. Why is pilgrimage so important to some religious communities?
3. Do all members of a religious or non-religious community believe and live in the same ways?
4. How did the religions and other worldviews begin?
5. How do our beliefs influence the way we treat the world?
6. What do the religions and other worldviews suggest about how people should live their lives?

In exploring these aspects of the religions and other worldviews, the children will also reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community and world;
- What they believe, what they think is important and how these influence their day-to-day lives

**The learning process
within challenging RE
UKS2**



UKS2 - Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	Pupils identify their own responses to some of the big questions that life can throw at us
	Explore	Pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own responses to some of the Ultimate Questions raised through the material studied
	Contextualise	Pupils compare and contrast their own response with those of others in the class
	Reflect	Pupils consider all however views are situ or different us from others and why this might be the case
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	Pupils learn how to enquire into the different beliefs, practices and concepts and to explore what they reveal about different responses to ultimate questions
	Contextualise	Pupils relate beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and other worldviews explored and the differences and similarities between religions
	Reflect	Pupils consider how the beliefs concepts and lifestyles relate to responses to ultimate questions
	Respond	Pupils consider the extent to which the beliefs and concepts explored express a reasonable response to the ultimate questions
	Synthesise	Pupils relate the beliefs, concepts and practices that they have explored to their own experience and views, and consider their own beliefs, values and way of living in the light of these
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	Pupils reflect on what they have learned and what this might suggest about human values, responsibilities and experience
	Apply	Pupils consider how their understanding of the world may have developed through their exploration of the religions and other worldviews

Context: A reflective exploration of some of the big questions, beliefs and concepts about life and what it means to be human, and how responses to these are expressed.

9. Key Stage 3: Enquiring into the significance of religions, other worldviews and ultimate questions in the modern world

At KS3, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth,
- ii) two other religions in depth (at least one from Dharmic traditions),
- iii) Humanism in depth,
- iv) with reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate.

Core Questions:

- A. What place do religions and other worldviews have in the modern world?
- B. Does life have any meaning, purpose or value?
- C. How do our responses to these questions influence the ways we live our lives?

These are explored over a three-year KS3 using the following enquiries to construct a curriculum appropriate to the pupils in your school, bearing in mind the requirements of a broad and balanced curriculum.

This could be *systematic studies* of each religion or worldview using the enquiry themes to construct the exploration of each (but note that 15 and 16 require a range of religions and other worldviews). Or it could be *thematic explorations* as per the questions (but note that 10-13 each focus on a particular worldview). Or it could be a combination of systematic and thematic. Note that some research suggests that pupils learn more effectively through one coherent approach (either systematic or thematic) than through a mix of approaches. However, each brings its own particular focus to the exploration of religion and belief.

Enquiries (referencing back to the Core Questions)

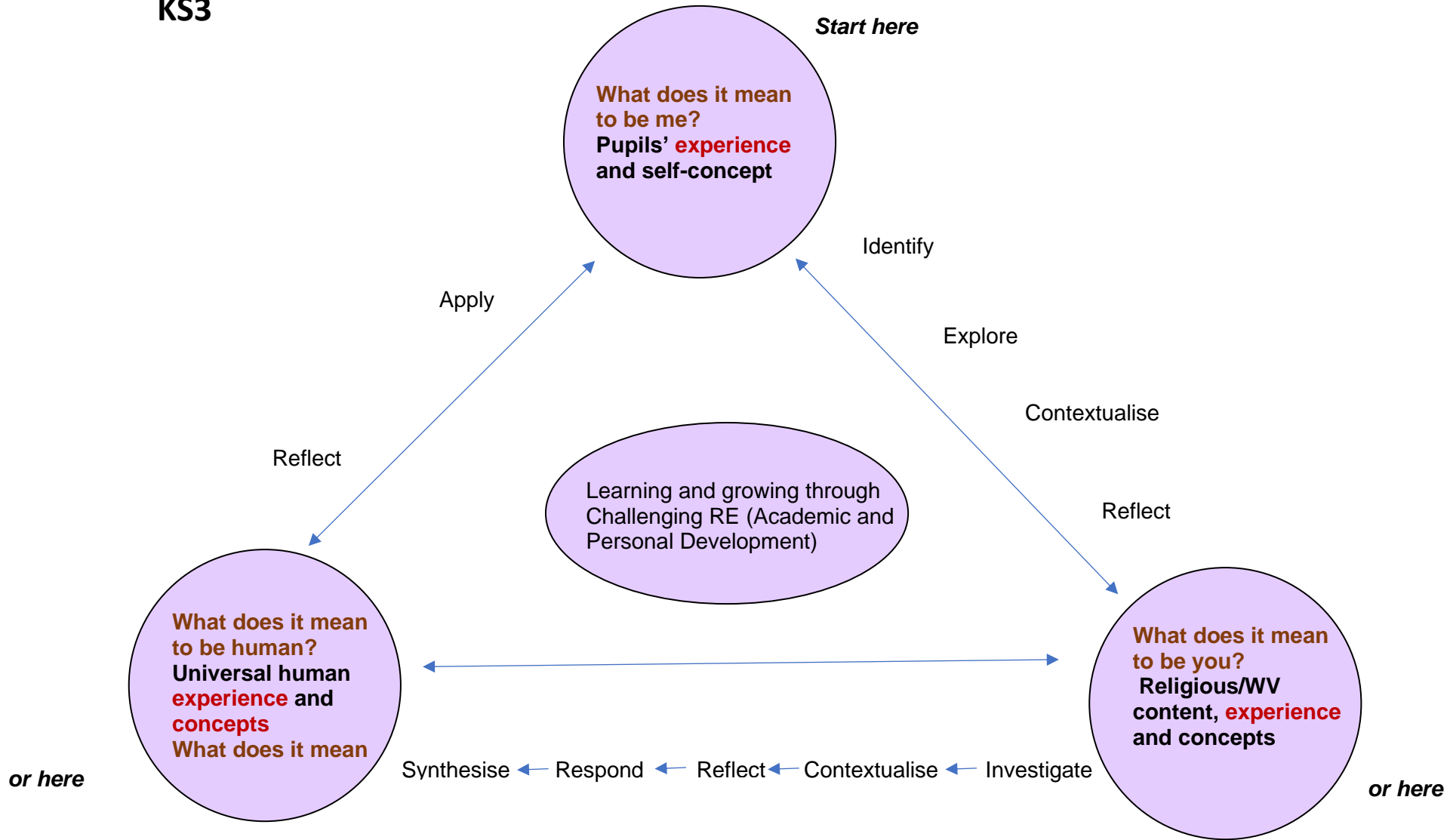
1. Is belief in 'God' rational? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism
2. What is 'Truth' and why is it important? - Christianity, (Buddhism), rationalism
3. What is knowledge? – Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism
4. What does it mean to be human? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism
5. To what extent are religion and science compatible? - Christianity, (Buddhism), materialism
6. How do we decide what is right and wrong? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism
7. How can prayer and worship serve any purpose? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), Humanism
8. Is it possible to make sense of evil and suffering? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism
9. What do we mean by a just and fair world and is it possible to create one? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism
10. What responsibility do humans have towards the natural world? - Christianity, (Sikhi), indigenous spiritualities, Humanism
11. What does it mean to be a Buddhist/Christian/Humanist etc in the modern world?
12. One truth or many? How can people with different worldviews live together? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism
13. Is religion more relevant than ever? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), Humanism

In exploring these aspects of the religions and other worldviews, pupils will also reflect on:

- Their own sense of who they are and their uniqueness as a person in a family, community and world;
- What they believe, what they think is important and how these influence their day-to-day lives

The learning process within challenging RE

KS3



KS3 - Learning Process		
Pupil experience	Identify	Pupils recognise which aspects of their own worldview arise out of responses to ultimate questions
	Explore	Pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's worldviews expressed in responses to ultimate questions
	Contextualise	Pupils recognise and reflect on aspects of their own background and experience that have influenced the development of their worldview
	Reflect	Pupils consider how their own worldview relates to those of others in the class and how and why they are similar or different
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	Pupils explore the concepts and ideas expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of living enshrined in institutional religions and other worldviews.
	Contextualise	Pupils relate different responses to and/or expressions of ultimate questions to differences of experience, interpretation and practice within and between religions and other worldviews.
	Reflect	Pupils reflect on the concepts that underpin responses to ultimate questions in the context of both institutional religions and other worldviews and personal perspectives within these
	Respond	Pupils learn to evaluate responses to and expressions of ultimate questions using empathy and reasoned argument.
	Synthesise	Pupils relate the range of responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider any similarities and/or differences and how these might/might not be significant.
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	Pupils reflect on what they have learnt about concepts underpinning different responses to or expressions of ultimate questions and how these relate to our understanding of what it means to be a person.
	Apply	Pupils apply what they have learned to their own experience and self-understanding and consider how, if at all, this might affect their self-understanding and their understanding of others.

Context: A critical engagement with ultimate questions and global issues, exploring, analysing and responding to a range of responses to these.

10. Key Stage 4: Statutory Core RE and external qualifications

RE at Key Stage 4 is statutory for all students and what follows provides a choice regarding how the school can plan for an appropriate curriculum for its pupils.

At KS4 statutory core RE, pupils will explore:

- i) Christianity in depth.
- ii) two or three other religions or non-religious worldviews in depth.
- iii) with reference to other religious traditions, as appropriate.

Pupils should also be *offered the option* to study an external qualification equivalent to a GCSE in Religious Studies, but schools should ensure that any GCSE syllabus meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This Agreed Syllabus is developed with a three-year KS3 and a two-year KS4 in mind, in line with the most recent research on the effectiveness of learning for pupils.

Thus, students may: **Either** follow a specification from an accredited course in RE or RS from one of the recognised examination boards, ensuring that it meets the criteria for the Agreed Syllabus. It will be the school's decision whether all, some or none are entered for the actual qualification, though SACRE encourages schools to enable as many pupils as possible to gain accreditation for their work as this motivates students, celebrates their achievement and raises the profile of the subject;

Or follow the principles of this syllabus to provide a general course in Core RE, as set out below.

It is quite possible that schools may wish to enter all students for GCSE RS, or some for an option in GCSE RS alongside a Core RE programme based on this syllabus for everyone or all students following a Core RE curriculum based on this syllabus.

Oxfordshire SACRE strongly encourages all Secondary schools to give students the option to follow an accredited course leading to a qualification at the end of their KS4.

Principles for planning General RE at KS4:

The Agreed Syllabus requires schools to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Understand the nature, role and significance of religion and belief in the world;
- Reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value;
- Formulate reasoned opinion/argument and handle controversial issues and truth claims;
- Enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what people hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed and responded to in diverse ways.

All planned learning must:

- Draw on the experience and ideas of the students;
- Enrich knowledge and understanding of religions and other worldviews;
- Develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the knowledge and understanding

- Ensure coherence and progression and a sense of challenging and worthwhile learning for KS4 students.

Over the course of the Key Stage, **students must be given the opportunity to enquire into each of the nine areas** below. The examples are for exemplification only and others may be pursued according to the interests and backgrounds of the students.

How do religion and belief influence individuals and communities?		
<p>Area 1 Religion and belief in the home For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it right to raise children in a religion or worldview? • Do religions or worldviews have anything worthwhile to say about families? • Are families sources of brainwashing? 	<p>Area 2 Religion and belief in the community For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do people combat prejudice and discrimination? • What role do celebrations play in holding communities together? • Is diversity something to be celebrated? • How are religion and belief portrayed in the media? 	<p>Area 3 Religion, belief and the individual For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does being religious mean losing your personal freedom? • How free should people be to express their faith and/or belief? • Does religious experience make sense?

How do religion and belief respond to ultimate questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value?		
<p>Area 4 Religion, belief and moral values For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any moral absolutes? • Can there be morality without 'God'? • How can religions and other worldviews live peacefully together? 	<p>Area 5 Religion, belief and human identity For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are humans more important than other animals? • What does it mean to be human? • Is death the end? 	<p>Area 6 Religion, belief and the cosmos For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is science enough to explain life? • Is God just a concept by which we measure our pain? • Is there more to life than our physical existence?

What do religion and belief have to say about moral issues?		
<p>Area 7 Religion and life issues For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should we be able to choose when and how to die? • Is Veganism the only hope for the future? • Turn the other cheek, or an eye for an eye? 	<p>Area 8 Religion and relationships For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does anything go when it comes to sex? • Are men the problem? • Is family the building block of society? If so, what sort of family? 	<p>Area 9 Religion and global issues For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights or human responsibilities? • Whose world is it anyway? • Is equality possible?

Explored through a study of Christianity and two or three other worldviews in depth, of which one must be non-religious, and with reference to other religions worldviews as appropriate.

11. RE in the Sixth Form

RE in the Sixth Form is an opportunity to engage students at greater depth in issues to do with contemporary religion and belief in society, and approaching it from different disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, science and literature. It prepares students for a greater understanding of the role of belief and culture in the modern world and enables them to develop more critical approaches to media and popular portrayals of faith, as well as faith issues themselves. It should enable discernment of truth, application of belief and synthesis of perspective.

RE is required for all registered pupils in a school; this includes Sixth Form students. There is a variety of ways in which schools can ensure this provision and schools should choose the best option or combination of options to meet the needs of their students.

Option 1 - A level Religious Studies

Option 2 - AS Religious Studies

Option 3 - Discrete lessons of General RE (perhaps rotating with other general education)

Option 4 - As part of a General Studies course

Option 5 - RE study/workshop days

The Agreed Syllabus Conference wishes schools to have the maximum curriculum freedom which current legislation on RE permits. To achieve this, schools may design their own units or use already existing work in RE or General Studies which the school has taught for a number of years. Alternatively, the work could be of a cross-curricular nature, or work particularly suited to the local circumstances of the school and local community.

All non-examination, core RE in the Sixth Form must meet the requirements set out in the principles below. The expected minimum time for general RE in Year 12 is 10 hours over the year e.g., the equivalent of two one-day conferences; in Year 13 is 5 hours – eg the equivalent of 1 full day or 2 half day conferences.

The Agreed Syllabus requires schools to provide students with the opportunity to:

1. Understand the nature, role and significance of religions and other worldviews in the world;
2. Reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value;
3. Formulate reasoned opinion/argument and handle controversial issues and truth claims;
4. Enter into meaningful dialogue with people of different beliefs and backgrounds, appreciating and celebrating diversity, recognising what we hold in common, and respecting a shared humanity that can be experienced, expressed and responded to in diverse ways.

Each learning experience or period of learning must:

- Draw on the experience and ideas of the students;
- Relate to appropriate religious content;
- Develop the students' experience and ideas in relation to the religious content.

Planning should provide a sense of challenging and worthwhile learning for Post-16 students.

It is important to note that it is not expected that these should in any way be used for assessment purposes in the Sixth Form. They are purely here to be used for planning purposes to ensure that work of an appropriately challenging nature is provided to stimulate learning. The following units are suggestions of the type of learning a school might wish to offer.

Religion, belief and philosophy	
<p>Religion, belief and the existence of God</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we prove the existence of God? • Can we prove there is no God? • Is there any adequate moral explanation for evil and suffering? • If science can do it, should we do it? 	<p>Religion, belief and knowledge</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it reasonable to base your life on faith? • Revelation or reason? Is it as simple as that? • What can we know for certain and how can we know that we know?

Religion, belief and ethics	
<p>Religion and ethical questions</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible to agree on an approach to ethical and moral issues? 	<p>Religion and ethical issues</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>What are the most important ethical questions for the 21st Century and how well equipped are the main institutional worldviews to address them?</p>

Religion, belief and community	
<p>Exploring religion and belief around us</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is Quakerism important in Oxfordshire? • How have faith communities changed and evolved in Oxfordshire in the last 50 years? • Do blasphemy laws protect peoples' freedoms or restrict them? 	<p>Religion in the world</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do so many wars seem to be caused by religion? • 'Imagine there's no heaven...there's no countries.. no religion too': REALLY? • How do religion and belief affect our modern world?

11. Progression and assessment

11.1 Progression

The Agreed Syllabus is designed to help teachers plan RE that is appropriate to the needs and attainment of all pupils. It provides a structure and a language of progression to enable them to do this and to share it with their pupils. It will help with planning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning. Above all, regardless of the prior attainment of the pupil, it enables teachers to construct meaningful learning experiences for, and develop higher order thinking skills in their pupils. The structure that follows consists of separate sections to help teachers help their pupils make progress in their RE, to see what they will have done in earlier stages of learning and what they will be expected to do in later stages.

Progression is reflected in different ways within the Agreed Syllabus.

1. The **aims** of the Agreed Syllabus help planning age-appropriate learning (*puts KS learning into context*);
2. The development of learning in RE through the **learning process** for each Key Stage; (*helps make expectations clear to pupils*) (see appendix 1.1);

There are also **end of key stage statements** to help with reporting and clarifying expectations (see appendix 1.2).

Progression is about planning learning experiences that will challenge pupils appropriately so that they gain in skills and attitudes as well as in knowledge and understanding. These structures, taken together, will help teachers to identify where pupils are and plan appropriate ways of moving them on in their learning. It is important that all aspects of progression are considered in medium term and lesson planning so that pupils gain maximum benefit.

11.2 Assessment

Assessment is a statutory requirement of the Agreed Syllabus. Schools are required to report pupil attainment and progress to parents annually. We encourage schools to use the progression statements and end of Key Stage statements to measure and report progress, but schools should adapt this to their whole-school assessment and reporting policy as far as is practicable.

The Agreed Syllabus does not specify how frequently formal assessment should take place. However, it recommends that most assessment should be formative (assessment for learning) and that, in each of Key Stages 2 and 3, there should be no more than 5 formal assessments (assessment of learning), and fewer in Key Stage 1. *Most formative assessment should be through tasks and quizzes planned into the learning itself rather than end of unit assessments/tests.*

Please note that there are aspects of RE, such as personal development and personal beliefs and attitudes, that should not be judged or assessed in themselves, subject to legislative provision concerning safeguarding.

11.3 Progression through the aims of the Agreed Syllabus

Aims	KS 1 pupils	Lower KS2 pupils	Upper KS2 pupils
To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and other worldviews locally, nationally and globally, pupils:	Show basic knowledge and understanding of Christianity and at least one, at most two, other faiths, exploring similarities and differences between religions.	Show knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths and beliefs, and can explain what difference faith makes in family life.	Understand what it means to belong to a religious community and the influence religious faith has on individuals and communities.
To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value pupils:	Reflect on personal experience and say how it is linked to feelings and opinions.	Think about what influences our beliefs and lifestyle and the way we see things.	Explore what different religions and other worldviews say about meaning, purpose and value.
To formulate reasoned opinion and argument pupils:	Give an opinion, with one or more reasons, based on appropriate factual knowledge and understanding.	Give a relevant opinion, exploring valid reasons for and against an opinion, showing a basic understanding of some beliefs.	Explain how beliefs influence attitudes, way of life and behaviour; Express and justify their own beliefs and opinions and listen sensitively to those of others; Distinguish between valid and invalid arguments.
Aims	KS 3 pupils	KS 4 pupils	
To understand the nature, role and influence of religion and worldviews locally, nationally and globally, pupils:	Analyse concepts, teachings and practices to identify responses to ultimate questions; Relate a range of textual sources to beliefs, practices and ultimate questions, showing understanding of different interpretations; Reflect on the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society.	Analyse and think critically about a range of beliefs and practices and different interpretations of these.	
To reflect on questions of meaning, purpose and value pupils:	Raise and explore the ultimate questions which are contained in a range of beliefs and practices; Develop personal responses to ultimate questions in the light of their own and others' experiences and beliefs; Relate a range of textual sources to beliefs, practices and ultimate questions, showing understanding of different interpretations.	Reflect on their own and others' responses to ultimate questions and the impact these can have in the world.	
To formulate reasoned opinion and argument pupils:	Analyse teaching and practice from religions and other worldviews to identify responses to ultimate questions; Relate a range of textual sources to beliefs, practices and	Analyse and think critically about religious and other beliefs and practices and different	

	ultimate questions, showing understanding of different interpretations; Reflect on the benefits and challenges of living in a multi-faith and diverse society.	interpretations of these.
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Appendices: Non-statutory guidance

Appendix 1 Progression: 1.1 Progression through the Learning Process

Learning Process Progression KS1-UKS2		KS1	LKS2
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils recognise what is significant to them in their immediate experience and recognise some basic concepts used to express this.	pupils learn to identify what is most important to them in terms of people places celebrations and beliefs
	explore	pupils learn how to find out about other people's experience and feelings in a way that is sensitive and appropriate and to relate their own experience and that of others to the general concepts being developed	pupils learn to ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own views about what is important to them and why
	contextualise	pupils learn to see their own experience in the light of their own background and compare this sensitively with the experience of other pupils in the class	pupils compare and contrast their own views with those of others in the class
	Reflect	pupils learn to think about their experience and the feelings related and to see how these affect themselves and others	pupils think about how these different 'values' affect their own and other peoples' lives
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn about related experiences and concepts within the religions explored	pupils learn how to inquire into what religions and traditions hold to be most important, and how these are expressed personally and in the community
	Contextualise	pupils learn to see the religious experience in the context of the beliefs and practices of the religion being explored and the feelings that arise from them for believers	pupils relate religious beliefs to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and worldviews explored, learning to identify differences and similarities between them
	Reflect	pupils learn to think about the religious experience and concepts and their significance to the believers and to see how these make a difference to how they live	pupils learn to consider what is important to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs concepts and practices and how these compare with their own
	Respond	pupils learn how to express sensitively and in a variety of ways their own views about the religious experiences and concepts	pupils explain their responses to the beliefs and practices giving reasons for their views
	Synthesise	pupils learn to identify similarities and differences between their own experience and the religious beliefs practices and concepts they have explored	pupils think about what the beliefs and practices show about what is important to human beings
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	pupils learn to think about what they can take from their learning about the religions to help them understand their own experience feelings and beliefs	pupils reflect on what they have learned about what people and communities see as of great importance in life
	Apply	pupils relate the religious experience, beliefs and concepts they have explored to their own lives and think about how their own ideas have developed	pupils consider how their views on what is important in life may have developed through their study of these religions and other worldviews

Learning Process Progression LKS2 – UKS2		LKS2	UKS2
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils learn to identify what is most important to them in terms of people places celebrations and beliefs	pupils identify their own responses to some of the big questions that life can throw at us
	explore	pupils learn to ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own views about what is important to them and why	pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own responses to some of the Ultimate Questions raised through the material studied
	contextualise	pupils compare and contrast their own views with those of others in the class	pupils compare and contrast their own response with those of others in the class
	Reflect	pupils think about how these different 'values' affect their own and other peoples' lives	pupils consider all however views are situ or different us from others and why this might be the case
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn how to inquire into what religions and traditions hold to be most important, and how these are expressed personally and in the community	pupils learn how to enquire into religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and concepts and to explore what they reveal about different responses to ultimate questions
	Contextualise	pupils relate religious beliefs to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions explored learning to identify differences and similarities between religions	pupils relate beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and beliefs explored and the differences and similarities between religions
	Reflect	pupils learn to consider what is important to religious people through their exploration of religious beliefs concepts and practices and how these compare with their own	pupils consider how the religious and non-religious beliefs concepts and lifestyles relate to responses to ultimate questions
	Respond	pupils explain their responses to the beliefs and practices giving reasons for their views	pupils consider the extent to which the religious beliefs and concepts express a reasonable response to the ultimate questions
	Synthesise	pupils think about what the beliefs and practices show about what is important to human beings	pupils relate to the religious beliefs concepts and practices that they have explored to their own experience and views, and consider their own beliefs, values and way of living in the light of these
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	pupils reflect on what they have learned about what people and communities see as of great importance in life	pupils reflect on what they have learned and what these might suggest about common human values, responsibilities and experience
	Apply	pupils consider how their views on what is important in life may have developed through their study of these religions and world views	pupils consider how their understanding of the world may have developed through their exploration of the religions and other worldviews

Learning Process Progression UKS2 – KS3		UKS2	KS3
Pupil experience	Identify	pupils identify their own responses to some of the big questions that life can throw at us	pupils recognise which aspects of their own worldview arise out of responses to ultimate questions
	explore	Pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own responses to some of the Ultimate Questions raised through the material studied	pupils ask thoughtful and searching questions about their own and other people's worldview expressed in responses to ultimate questions
	contextualise	pupils compare and contrast their own response with those of others in the class	pupils recognise and reflect on aspects of their own background and experience that have influenced the development of their worldview
	Reflect	pupils consider all however views are situ or different us from others and why this might be the case	pupils consider how their own worldview relates to those of others in the class and how and why they are similar or different
Religious/worldview context	Investigate	pupils learn how to enquire into religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and concepts and to explore what they reveal about different responses to ultimate questions	pupils explore the concepts and ideas expressed in beliefs, practices and ways of living enshrined in institutional religions and other worldviews.
	Contextualise	pupils relate beliefs and concepts to the practices, lifestyles and attitudes of the religions and beliefs explored and the differences and similarities between religions	pupils relate different responses to and/or expressions of ultimate questions to differences of experience, interpretation and practice within and between religions and other worldviews.
	Reflect	pupils consider how the religious and non-religious beliefs concepts and lifestyles relate to responses to ultimate questions	pupils reflect on the concepts that underpin responses to ultimate questions in the context of institutional and personal worldviews.
	Respond	pupils consider the extent to which the religious beliefs and concepts express a reasonable response to the ultimate questions	pupils learn to evaluate religious responses to and expressions of ultimate questions using empathy and reasoned argument.
	Synthesise	pupils relate to the religious beliefs concepts and practices that they have explored to their own experience and views, and consider their own beliefs, values and way of living in the light of these	pupils relate the religious responses to ultimate questions to their own experience and ideas and consider any similarities and/or differences and how these might/might not be significant.
Universal Human Experience	Reflect	pupils reflect on what they have learned and what these might suggest about common human values, responsibilities and experience	pupils reflect on what they have learnt about concepts underpinning different responses to or expressions of ultimate questions and how these relate to our understanding of what it means to be a person.
	Apply	pupils consider how their understanding of the world may have developed through their exploration of the religions and other worldviews	pupils apply what they have learned to their own experience and self-understanding and consider how, if at all, this might affect their self-understanding and their understanding of others.

1.2 Age-related expectations

Pupils will be 'emerging', 'achieving' or 'exceeding' or similar judgements according to school policy. This is for summative assessment, taking an overview of a pupil's work and achievement over time and where appropriate specific assessment tasks/tests.

KS1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils can retell stories from different religions and traditions and explain what they think it teaches people. 2. They recognise some religious phenomena and can say what religion these are from and say something about their meaning. 3. They can recognise that religions share things in common and have real differences. 4. They can talk about what is important to themselves and others and give a reason why. 5. Pupils ask appropriate questions about the religions they explore and can give a good reason for their own and other people's beliefs and opinions.
LKS2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils describe beliefs and teachings from Christianity and two other religions and show how these influence how people live and behave. 2. They recognise and can describe symbols and rituals from Christianity and two other religions and say something about what these mean for people. 3. They recognise different religions and can compare different beliefs and teachings about God, the world and humanity from Christianity and two or three other religions studied. 4. They recognise who and what inspires themselves and others and say something about how this affects their behaviour. 5. They ask questions about religion and belief that help them find out more about Christianity and two or three different beliefs and practices, comparing these with their own ideas.
UKS2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils describe similarities and differences of belief and practice within and between Christianity and two or three different religions and show how these influence the lives of individuals and communities. 2. They use correct vocabulary to suggest meanings for different ways in which people show their religious beliefs. 3. They raise questions about beliefs, values and how people live their lives and are able to research what different religions and a non-religious view say about important beliefs, ideas and issues, including the sources of authority such as sacred texts and key figures. 4. They recognise different sources of inspiration and influence on people's lives and can discuss the positive and negative impact these might have on individuals and communities. 5. They can discuss the impact of religion on individuals and communities and support their views with good reasons linked to evidence and examples

KS3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils use religious and philosophical language and concepts to explain religions, beliefs, practices and values, including differences within religions and similarities shared across religions and other worldviews. 2. Pupils can explain and interpret different forms of religious and spiritual expression. 3. Pupils explain different interpretations of religious and non-religious beliefs and research different perspectives on issues and ideas. 4. Pupils consider different responses to and insights about questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value found in Christianity and other religions and worldviews, arguing their own views in the light of this. 5. Pupils explain some challenges of living in a multi-faith and belief society and the impact of commitment on the lives of individuals and communities.
KS4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pupils use a wide range of language, ideas, approaches and methods to analyse and demonstrate a broad understanding of religions and beliefs and their significance in modern society. 2. Pupils can pull together evidence and insights from religion and other disciplines to explore what it means to be human. 3. Pupils can explain how different interpretations of religious and non-religious views may be brought together to share insights about meaning, purpose and values. 4. Pupils relate a wide range of perspectives from religions and other worldviews to contemporary social and moral issues, demonstrating understanding of the diversity of views within and between them. 5. Pupils arrive at independent conclusions based on research into & evidence about religion and belief and their impact, positive & negative, on communities & society.

Appendix 2: Different approaches to learning and teaching in RE

The Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE encourages teachers to adopt a wide range of teaching approaches and RE Pedagogies, including:

- **The Phenomenological Approach** in which pupils study the rituals and dimensions of religions and other worldviews in order to understand their meaning and significance to members of the faith community.
- **The Experiential Approach** which focuses on how RE can help pupils make sense of their own experience in the light of their learning about and from the religious experience of faith communities.
- **The Interpretive Approach** in which pupils learn about religions and worldviews through encounter with the experiences, views, beliefs, perspectives, beliefs and ways of life of the members of different communities and reflect on the light this sheds on their own perspectives and experiences.
- **The Conceptual Approach** where the pupils explore the concepts of the religions and worldviews and reflect on the insights these shed on different ways of understanding and making sense of life.
- **The Personal Quest Approach** focusing on how the study of religions and worldviews helps pupils to develop their own self-understanding.
- **The Ultimate Questions Approach** where the focus is on exploring meaning, purpose, value and identity through the study of religious and worldviews' responses to the questions that life throws at us.
- **The multi-disciplinary approach**, using 'lenses' through which to explore and research aspects of religion and belief based on academic disciplines. These are, most frequently, Theology, Philosophy, Social/Human Sciences, but can equally be Linguistics, Aesthetics, Creative and Expressive Arts.

Naturally there is rich overlap across all these approaches, and no one approach adequately covers all possible aspects of learning in RE, although teachers have their natural preferences. What is most important is identifying which approaches are best suited to achieving the particular purposes of the RE that is being taught and the needs of the pupils. It is a good idea to be clear about these, sharing them with pupils to aid their learning.

Appendix 3: Conceptual Creativity: experience, worldview and personal knowledge.

Central to the approach to learning in the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus is the process of building bridges between the pupils' own lives and the religious content that they explore. Whether the pupil comes from a particular faith background or none, RE must be relevant to their lives and engage them in meaningful learning with which they can identify and that they can apply to life.

In order to provide opportunities for all children to learn and grow through their RE, we have to take their **own experience** seriously whilst expanding their knowledge, understanding and horizons through the religions and other worldviews. In this way they can appreciate the significance of the beliefs, practices and lifestyles found in the principal religions and other worldviews, to life in the modern world and to their own lives. RE moves pupils beyond their own worldview to explore other worldviews and ways of living found in the principal religions and beliefs of humanity – 'the best which has been thought and said in the world' – and bringing this to bear on their own perspective and way of living. Pupils are challenged to think reflectively and critically about what they learn, through an exploration of **key questions and concepts**.

The diagrams on the following pages provide a structure to help plan for this.

- The 'universal' structure on the left of the diagram provides a way of exploring the pupils' own experiences, ideas and feelings: We all have experiences.
- These experiences evoke a range of responses (feeling, thinking, challenging).
- We need to express these responses and make sense of them and do so in a variety of ways.
- The 'religious' structure on the right of the diagram mirrors the universal structure, but in the context of a faith perspectives: Religions experience the world as being in some sense 'sacred'.
- This evokes such responses as reverence and particular beliefs, attitudes and dispositions.
- These are expressed through worship in its broadest sense, including how to live life.

People use a range of ways of expressing these feelings, thoughts and challenges, whether secular or religious: art, music, drama, language, inner creativity and imagination, actions and the way we live our lives; and these can combine in various ways (e.g. words and music = songs).

High quality RE is challenging, engaging and transformative because it engages pupils with the big questions and concepts that help them to make sense of experience and what it means to be human.

(We all have) Experiences



(These produce) Emotions

?

Expression

language

Creativity/
imagination

actions

music

drama

art

face

body

Universal experience

- 1 We all have experiences
2. Experience evokes a range of responses
3. how we make sense of and express these.

(Religious people) Experiencing the world
as in some sense sacred



Beliefs, attitudes, dispositions and feelings

?

Worship

language

Creativity/
imagination

actions

music

drama

art

face

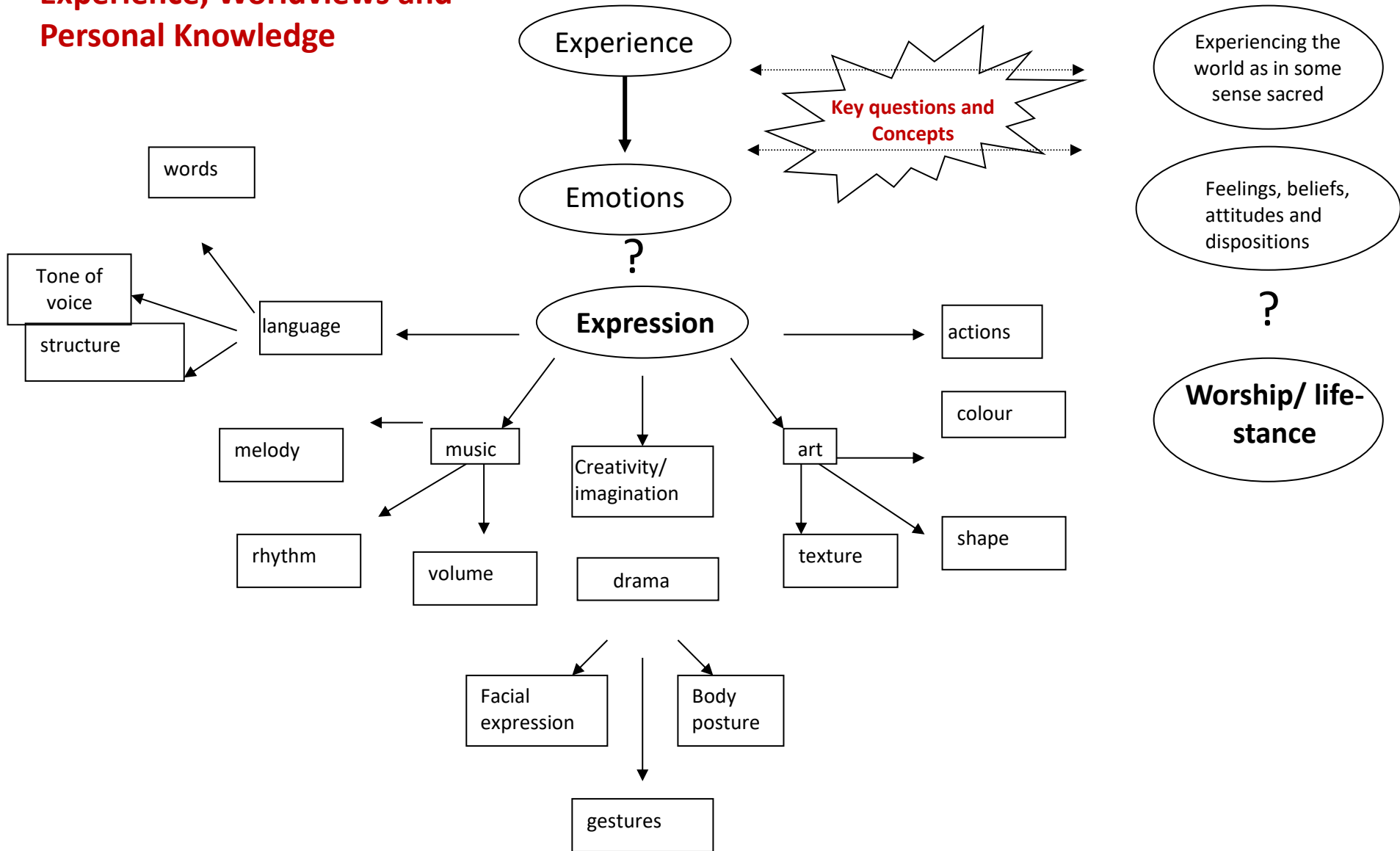
body

Religious experience

1. Religions experience the world as being in some sense 'sacred'.
2. This evokes a response of reverence, beliefs attitudes and dispositions.
3. These are expressed through worship in its broadest sense, including how to live life.

We can now build bridges between the pupils' own experiences and the experiences of others, religious and non-religious, through an exploration of questions and concepts. These bridges can start anywhere on the diagram (e.g., music to personal feelings to personal experience and over to religious worship, on to religious belief, feeling or attitude and reflection on relevant concepts and questions) and pupils can engage in creative ways to understand both their own experience and other people's. However, it is the creative conceptual enquiry that provides the link between the two and which has to occur for there to be any meaningful learning and connection. **This produces engaging, creative, challenging, enjoyable and worthwhile RE, in which pupils genuinely learn and grow.**

Conceptual Creativity: Experience, Worldviews and Personal Knowledge



Appendix 4: How to structure pupils' learning – guidance on planning

When planning pupils' learning, think of developing an enquiry that can be divided into '**chunks of learning**', which can last from 1 – 3 lessons. Over the course of the enquiry, pupils should consider their own experience/background/perspective, explore the religious/worldview content and reflect on how/whether this can apply universally to humanity. Finally, they should be given the opportunity to reflect on how, if at all, this has developed their own views and why.

1. Establish an aim for the learning – **why** should the pupils learn this? What is the purpose? This should be in the form of a 'big question' or enquiry and the learning is driven by the question.
2. Identify **what** you want pupils to learn (learning intentions).
3. Identify key **concepts** and **key questions** that will help pupils to achieve these.
4. Group concepts in relation to
 - a. Pupils' own experience (e.g. friendship);
 - b. Specific religious concepts (e.g. *agape*);
 - c. Universal human experience (e.g. relationship).
5. Establish what religious and other content you want pupils to learn or develop.
 - a. Knowledge and understanding; eg parables, stories, beliefs, sacred texts
 - b. Skills;
 - c. Attitudes and personal development
6. Develop the outline of your Learning Structure (Scheme of Work)
7. Identify learning objectives for each 'chunk of learning' (this means that objectives carry over more than one lesson).
8. Provide knowledge of the relevant concepts to avoid presuming pupils already come equipped with that knowledge and to correct any prior misconceptions.
9. Plan appropriate activities and resources to enable pupils of different abilities and learning styles to achieve the appropriately challenging learning outcomes (the **how** of the learning structure).
10. Establish what you want to assess over the whole Learning Structure and plan how you will assess it through the learning activities (NB: you do not have to assess everything and most assessment will be formative – i.e. built into the learning and tasks set, rather than summative - i.e. end of unit).
11. Assess appropriately, using the frameworks in the AS applied in the context of your whole school policy and practice

It is good practice during all stages of the Learning Structure to allow opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions about the concepts and content. This is especially powerful at the start of the learning, with pupils' questions arising from an appropriate stimulus.

Appendix 5: Non-statutory guidance EYFS

(More examples will be available in the support materials)

<p>Communication and Language ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding. ELG: Speaking.</p>	<p>Using stories, persona dolls, show and tell to explore how different religions are lived out in the home and their impact on family and home life.</p>
<p>Literacy ELG: Comprehension. ELG: Writing.</p>	<p>Responding to stories, re-telling stories, from different religions and cultures, exploring different ways of life.</p>
<p>Understanding the World ELG: Past and Present. ELG: People, Culture and Communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps. 	<p>Learning about some key people from the religions through story – e.g., Jesus, Muhammad (pbuh), Moses, Guru Nanak, Buddha. Important people in the communities – e.g., Vicar, Rabbi, Imam Families in the UK, in India, and how religious celebrations are similar and different.</p>
<p>Expressive Arts and Design ELG: Creating with Materials ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive</p>	<p>Using art to express what is important to them and to others. Using music, drama and art to retell stories.</p>

Appendix 6: Non-statutory guidance KS1

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. What does it mean to be me? (Who I am).

- I wonder, what makes me, me?
- Who am I important to?
- What do religions say about what people are like and what they should be like?
- What do you think the perfect person would be like? Is it possible to be perfect?

2. How important are the groups people belong to? (Belonging).

- What groups do I belong to and how do they make me feel?
- What does belonging to a group mean to the group members; why is belonging to the group important to them? What do they gain from this?
- What does belonging to a religion mean to religious people; why is belonging to the religion important to them? What do they gain from this?
- How do people show they belong to a religion?
- I wonder, how do the groups we belong to make a difference to who we are?

3. What makes some people so important? (Important people).

- I wonder, who is most important to me and why?
- Who are the really important people in the religions and what makes them so important?
- Who are the important people in the different religious communities and what do they do?
- How can other people influence us?
- How do important people influence the way we behave?

4. Why are some places so important? (Important places).

- Do you have a special place that means a lot to you?
- How do you feel when you are in your special place?
- Which buildings in our local area are important – what makes them important??
- What buildings are important in some religions? Why? What happens there?
- What are the main features of these places of worship?
- I wonder, what do people gain from being together in a shared important place?

5. What makes some things sacred to some groups of people? (Special things).

- Do you have a special object? What makes it special? How does it make you feel?
- What objects are Important or sacred in the religions and why?
- How do religious people use them and treat them?
- What beliefs are expressed in the objects?
- What is it about special things that makes them so important to people?
- I wonder, why is it important to show respect and care for things that are important to people?

6. What makes some stories so important to different people? (Sacred books).

- What stories are special to you? What makes them special?
- What stories are important to some religious people and why?
- What message or teaching might these stories have for religious people?
- Are all stories true in the same way?
- I wonder, what can we learn from stories? How might they influence how we behave?

7. Why is it important to look after our world? (The natural world).

- What do you find 'wonder-full' in the natural world? Why? Is it important to protect it for your children and their children? How can we do this?
- What do religious stories say about how the world began
- What do creation stories teach some religious people about looking after the world?
- How do the religions celebrate and show thanks for the world?
- What other explanations are there for how the world began?
- I wonder, how should we live together to look after each other and animals?

8. Why do we celebrate important occasions? (Special occasions).

- What important times do I celebrate with my family and friends and why? What beliefs and feelings are expressed on these occasions?
- What makes a good celebration?
- How do some religious people celebrate their important occasions? What beliefs and feelings are expressed on these occasions?
- I wonder why we all have special occasions and why they are important to us?

Appendix 7: Non-statutory guidance Lower KS2

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. How and why do people worship? (Worship)

- What is most important to me in my life? (Things, people, ideas, feelings, beliefs)
- How do I express my feelings and beliefs about what I think is important in my life?
- What do religious people do in their worship? Why do they do this?
- Why are beliefs and attitudes important?
- How does worship express different beliefs about God, humans and the world?
- What do believers gain from worshipping on their own (privately) and with other people (in the home or place of worship)?
- How does worship influence their lives?
- How do we show what is most important in our lives and how might this influence how we live and affect other people?

2. Are places of worship really needed? (Religious buildings)

- What different kinds of buildings are there in the local communities? What are they for?
- How do the features of these buildings help them to fulfil their purpose?
- What are the places of worship in the religions called and how are they used?
- What features are found in the different places of worship and what are they used for?
- What role do places of worship play in the lives of the individuals and faith communities?
- How do these places help believers feel closer to God and understand life better?
- What are the differences between private and collective worship? How might believers benefit from each? Do they need to have a public place of worship?
- Why is it important for people to have public buildings in the community? Why not just have homes?
- How important is it for people to have somewhere to go to be on their own? Why?

3. What holds communities together? (Religion in the community)

- What is it like to belong to our class? Our school? What responsibilities do different people in the school have?
- How can belonging to a religion influence the lives of the faith communities?
- How do religious communities live out their beliefs and actions in the wider world?
- What beliefs do the different religions share in common and how are they different?
- What does it mean to be a Christian, a Hindu or a Muslim?
- Is religion important in the community? Why/why not?
- How does being part of a community influence people's actions, choices and behaviour?
- How can different people and groups live together in communities (local, national, global)?

4. How do religions express their beliefs about God? (Symbolism)

- What does our school badge or motto say about us?
- What is important to me and how can I express my deeply held feelings and beliefs?
- What is the difference between a sign and a symbol? What symbols are important to you?

- What do some religions believe about God?
- How do they express these beliefs through art, language, rituals and symbols?
- How do symbols and language express deep ideas, beliefs and feelings?

5. Why are sacred texts and holy books so important? (Sacred Texts)

- What is your favourite book or story? What are books for and how do we use them?
- How do stories help us understand how we should behave/live our lives?
- What is a sacred text? What sacred texts are important in the religions? How did they come into existence?
- What beliefs about God are expressed in the sacred texts?
- What do different sacred texts say about what it means to be a person?
- What rules for living are found in different sacred texts?
- How might religious people interpret their sacred texts differently?
- How might non-religious people interpret sacred texts? How do they know what their rules for living are?
- Do people need to believe in God in order to be good?

6. What do our celebrations show about what we think is important in life? (Festivals)

- What things do we celebrate? Why? How do we celebrate?
- How do celebrations show what is important in our lives?
- Why do we usually celebrate with other people and not just on our own?
- What are some of the main festivals in the religions?
- How do festivals express important beliefs and events in each religion?
- What value do religious festivals have in the lives of individuals and communities?
- What are the similarities and differences between secular and religious celebrations?
- What makes something worth celebrating?
- What can we learn from this about what people think is really important in life?

Appendix 8: Non-statutory guidance Upper KS2

Statutory Enquiries with suggested non-statutory key questions

1. Why do religions and non-religious groups celebrate important moments in life? (Rites of Passage).

- What might the key milestones be in my life and why are they important?
- What/who do I have a commitment to and how do I show this?
- What rites of passage do people observe in religious and non-religious traditions?
- What beliefs about life and commitment are expressed in the rites of passage?
- Why do many people want to involve others in important moments in their lives?
- What can we learn about our own values and commitments from the values, commitments and attitudes of others?
- What benefits and challenges can commitment bring to our lives?

2. Why is pilgrimage important to some religious communities? (Pilgrimage).

- What is the most important or meaningful journey that I have been on? What happened? What was memorable about it? What influence has it had on me?
- What is pilgrimage and why do people choose to go on pilgrimage?
- What happens on different pilgrimages and how do they influence the pilgrims?
- What challenges can the pilgrims face and how do they overcome these?
- What value does pilgrimage have in the lives of believers? How might pilgrims be different after having completed their pilgrimage?
- How does going on pilgrimage not only express beliefs, but also strengthen them for the pilgrims and even their communities?
- Is there a purpose to life and how can we find out? What helps give meaning and purpose to life?

3. Why don't all members of a religious or non-religious community believe and live in the same ways? (Diversity).

- How am I similar to and different from other people around me? Why can't we all be the same?
- Does it matter that people have views, beliefs and religions that differ from my own? Why?
- What is a 'worldview' and where do we get our worldview from?
- What different views, beliefs and traditions are there within religions and non-religious groups?
- What can we learn about the different beliefs within the religions from their worship, prayer and ritual?
- What holds communities together?
- How might differences enhance the life of a community?

4. How did the religions and other worldviews begin? (Founders and Prophets / Roots).

- What does it mean to admire someone? What sort of people do I admire?
- What qualities do we look for in leaders?
- What are the origins of the religions and why are the 'founders' so significant? How do devotees show their devotion to these figures?
- How do the lives, teachings and example of the key religious figures in the different religions influence individuals and faith communities today?

- Are these figures good role models for us today? Why?
- Who are some of the key figures in the development of Humanism? What were their key ideas?
- How important is it for us to have good role models to base our lives on?

5. How do our beliefs influence the way we treat the world? (Creation and environment).

- What do I think caused the universe?
- Does the universe have a purpose or is it just there?
- What do different religions, non-religious groups and scientific views say about how the universe and life came about?
- How do religious /non-religious beliefs and scientific teachings influence people's treatment of the world?
- Do people have a responsibility to care for the world? Why, and what is this?
- If you were to create a new world, what would it look like? What would you leave out and why?
- How important is human life? Why? Is human life more important than all other life? Why/Why not?
- How can humanity work together to improve the natural world? What is stopping us?

6. What do the religions and other worldviews suggest about how people should live their lives? (Ethics).

- Who and what influences how I live my life? How important is my behaviour?
- What is my personal code of conduct? What are my most important values in life?
- What do the different religious and non-religious teachings say about how we should live our lives? Do they have anything in common?
- How do different religious and non-religious groups decide what is right and wrong?
- How relevant or helpful in modern life are religious teachings about how we should live?
- How can humans live well together?

Appendix 9: Non-statutory guidance KS3

Possible key questions (non-statutory):

1. Is belief in 'God' rational? - **Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism**

- What is 'God'? What do the religions say about the nature and existence of 'God'? How are they similar to and different from each other? How do they differ within themselves? If God is infinite, how can finite human language say anything about God? What do Humanists believe?
- If there is no form of divine power or 'God', how can we make sense of life? Does life have any meaning and/or purpose? Why do some people believe in 'God' and others don't? How does or should belief in 'God' affect the way people live their lives?
- To what extent is atheism or agnosticism a more reasonable life stance? Would the world be better if there were no belief in 'God'? Would the world be better if everyone believed the same things?

2. What is 'Truth' and why is it important? -**Christianity, (Buddhism), rationalism**

- In what sense can sacred texts, religious narratives and stories be held to be true? What evidence is there for the truth of religions? Is there more to truth than simply being factually correct? What makes someone or something an authority on truth?
- What is truth and how do we know? What is real and what is fake? Are there somethings that are true now that will be true for all time? What does truth mean in maths, science, literature, the arts, history, philosophy, ethics and religion? Is there just one form of truth? How do we decide what is true? Does faith provide insights into truth? What is the relationship between knowledge, belief and faith? Can there be any place for revelation?
- Is factual truth sufficient for making sense of and expressing how we experience, understand and respond to the world? is it possible or desirable for everyone to believe the same truth in the same way? Why do people disagree about how we should live our lives? Why isn't there one right way to live for all people at all times?

3. What is knowledge? – **Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism**

- What are ultimate questions? What kinds of answer do ultimate questions require? What can science and religion tell us about the universe and life? And can they both be held together? How is language used in religion and science?
- What is the nature of knowledge, belief and faith?
- What basis is there for our beliefs? What is revelation? How reliable is revelation?
- How do our beliefs influence the way we live and behave?

4. What does it mean to be human? - **Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism**

- what do some religions teach about what it means to be human? What do they teach about what happens when we die? Do all members over religion understand these in the same way? what do humanists have to say about these questions?
- Is there more to life than just the material and physical? Does life have meaning, purpose and value? to what extent is human life different from and similar to other animals?

- How important is our sense of identity? Does being human hold innate value and responsibilities? What makes me, me, you, you and us human?

5. Does religion prove science is wrong? - Christianity, (Buddhism), materialism

- What meaningful contribution can religion make to our understanding about the origins of the universe and of life? What is the status of scientific theories about the origins of the universe and of life?
- Are science and religion incompatible? Why is there something rather than nothing and why is this an important question, or is it not?
- Do we have to have a sense of meaning and purpose? Can life have meaning and purpose if it is just a brutal fact? Is there any point or purpose or value to life?
- How can science provide a moral code to live by?

6. How do we decide what is right and wrong? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do the religions and humanism have to say about 'the good life'? Does everyone within a religion or worldview have the same understanding of what their worldview says about the good life? What might influence a person's understanding of the good life?
- Are all beliefs and theories about right and wrong equally valid? What makes something right or wrong? How do we know?
- Is there such a thing as the good life? If so, how can we all live it? If everyone just obeyed the law, wouldn't the world be a better place?

7. How can prayer and worship serve any purpose? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhi), Humanism

- In what different ways do religious devotees worship and express what is of absolute value or ultimate concern in life? What can religious devotees gain from acts of ritual and worship? To what extent is it fair to say that such things as our celebrity culture and our desire to define ourselves through our possessions bear any similarity to religious worship?
- What if anything is the point of worship? Can humans live without some form of worship or experience of something greater than we are?
- How do we express what is of absolute value or ultimate concern in life? How does religious worship compare to modern celebrity culture in terms of values and ways of living? Is there more to life than material and physical needs?

8. Is it possible to make sense of evil and suffering? - Christianity, (Buddhism), Humanism

- How do the religions and humanism explain the existence of evil and suffering? To what extent are these explanations adequate?
- How can people believe in God in the face of evil and suffering? Does the reality of evil and suffering make belief in God irrational? Does belief in God provide a means for facing up to and explaining evil and suffering?
- How can we explain and deal with Evil and suffering? What would life in a world without evil and suffering be like? Would a perfect world be desirable or possible?

9. What do we mean by a just and fair world and is it possible to create one? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do the religions and humanism teach about how we should treat other people? What are human rights and where do they come from? Do we have a responsibility to make life better for other people? If so, why?
- Why should we be concerned about creating a fairer world and a just society?
- Where do our values come from? Is it possible to create a fair and just world? Can we agree on what would make a fair and just world? Is it desirable to create a fair and just world? If these are not possible, should we just give up and simply look after ourselves and our nearest and dearest?

10. What responsibility do humans have towards the natural world? - Christianity, (Sikhi), indigenous spiritualities, Humanism

- How do religious beliefs and experiences influence people's understanding of human responsibility for the world? To what extent do humans have a common responsibility to work towards climate justice? How do we balance our needs and our wants with our responsibility to work towards climate justice?
- What prevents people from living up to their beliefs and ideals about climate justice?
- Do religious beliefs and other worldviews really make any difference to how we treat the natural world? Should everyone become vegan? How far are you prepared to adjust your way of living to ensure global climate justice?

11. One truth or many? How can people with different worldviews live together? - Christianity, (Sikhi), Humanism

- What do the religions and world views teach about living with people who have different beliefs and lifestyles from their own? To what extent are religious faith and secular beliefs a positive or negative force in society?
- Why do religious beliefs and ways of living seemed to divide people more than bring them together? To what extent is this a fair judgement? How helpful are media understandings of and reporting on issues of religion and belief?
- How can all sacred texts be true? How can people with different truth claims learn to live and flourish together in community? Would the world be a better place if everyone believed the same?

12 Is religion more relevant than ever? - Christianity, (Buddhism), (Sikhism), Humanism

- Why are some people religious whilst others are not? To what extent does religion help to make sense of the world? Are all worldviews equal?
- Would the world be a better place without religion? What good have religion ever done the world?
- Do religious belief and devotion have any place in a rational world? Is there such a thing as a rational world? Is some form of religious or spiritual awareness a necessary part of expressing true humanity?

13 What does it mean to be a Christian in the modern world?

- Why is Jesus so important in Christianity? How do different Christians understand the significance of Jesus? How is Jesus depicted throughout the ages and across different cultures? How does Jesus influence the lives of different individuals and communities?
- How and why are the Old and New Testaments important to different Christians? How was the Bible put together and why is this important regarding different ways of interpreting the sacred texts amongst different Christians? How is the Bible used by different Christians and how does it influence their Christian life? What is the central narrative of the Bible?
- How do different Christians worship? Why are there different styles of worship and what do these show about diversity in belief and understanding amongst Christians?
- How does worship influence their ways of living? What value is there in worship?
- Why are there so many different Christian denominations and what is their significance?
- How is Christian faith expressed through the arts?
- What important occasions and life events do Christians celebrate and what does this show about what is most important in life to them?
- What do different Christians believe about life after death and how does this influence their life in the world?
- To what extent is Christian faith more than just agreeing to credal statements?

14 What does it mean to be a Buddhist in the modern world?

- Why is the historical Buddha so important to Buddhists? How do different Buddhists interpret the nature of the Buddha?
- What are the most important principles in Buddhism? How do these principles find expression in the lives of Buddhists around the world?
- How is the Buddhist dhamma lived out in the sangha and in the laity?
- What are the core Buddhist sacred texts/teachings and how do they shape the lives of individuals and communities?
- To what extent could Buddhism be seen as a philosophy rather than as a religion?
- To what extent does Buddhism provide a worldview suited to the modern western mind?
- How is Buddhism lived and experienced around the world?
- To what extent can Buddhism be an agent for social action and change?

15 What does it mean to be a Sikhi in the modern world?

- How did the social and historical context of northwest subcontinent influence the emergence and development of Sikhi and Sikhis today?
- How do the lives of the 10 gurus influence the living faith of Sikhi today?
- What is the Guru Granth Sahib? What are the key stories and teachings? How is it used and how does it influence modern Sikhi living?
- What do the Five Ks tell us about Sikhi living and how are they lived out and interpreted differently within Sikhi communities?
- What are the most important aspects of Sikhi living and how do Sikhis responded differently to these?
- What are the core beliefs of Sikhi and how do they influence Sikhis in Britain and beyond?
- To what extent is the importance of equality lived out in different Sikhi communities?

- Why is seva such an important aspect of Sikhi life and how does it relate to Sikhi understandings of what it means to be human?

16 What does it mean to be a humanist in the modern world?

- In what different ways do Humanists understand the world? What do they hold in common?
- How is Humanism similar to and different from religion?
- What are the roots of Humanism?
- How do Humanists find value and meaning in their lives? How is this shown in their celebrations and way of living?
- How do Humanists know what is right and wrong?
- How do Humanists decide what is true?
- What do Humanists believe about the nature of reality, what it means to be human and matters of living and dying?
- What is the Humanist vision for society?
- Are all Humanists atheists? How do they respond to religious faith?

Appendix 10: Theme grids from 2007 syllabus

KS1	1. Believing	2. Story	3. Celebrations	4. Symbols	5. Leaders & Teachers	6. Belonging	7. Myself
CHRISTIANITY	One God, Father, Creator, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Holy Spirit	Old Testament stories Stories of Jesus' birth Stories Jesus told	Sunday Harvest Advent Christmas Epiphany Easter Weddings	Bible, cross Candle, Chalice & paten Bread & wine, Icons	Jesus Christ Clergy	Baptism/ Dedication Church as community	The Christian Family Prayer Making a difference
ISLAM	One God Allah Creator Muhammad, the Messenger	Stories of Muhammad	Ramadan / Eid-UI-Fitr Hajj/Eid-UI-Adha Weddings	Qur'an Subhah (beads) Qiblah (compass) prayer mat Head covering Modest dress	Muhammad Muslim clerics	Naming Ceremony Call to prayer Mosque Ummah (Muslim community)	The Muslim Family Prayer Making a difference
JUDAISM	One God Creator Covenant God given Torah	Stories from the Torah (5 Books of Moses), Abraham, Joseph, Moses	Shabbat Sukkot Hanukkah Pesach Weddings	Sefer Torah (Torah Scroll) Tallit (prayer shawl) Kippah (head covering) Mezuzah Menorah / Hanukiah	Patriarchs and Matriarchs including Abraham Moses Rabbis	Synagogue The people of Israel	The Jewish Family Prayer Making a difference

KS2	Beliefs and Questions	Teachings and Authority	Worship, Pilgrimage and Sacred Places	Journey of Life and Death	Symbols and Religious Expression	Inspirational People	Religion and the Individual	Religion, Family and Community	Beliefs in Action
CHRISTIANITY	One God Creator, Father, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Holy Spirit Good and Evil	Bible: Old and New Testaments	Church Pilgrimage sites Holy Communion	Baptism Dedication Confirmation Weddings Death & the afterlife	Pentecost Visual Symbols, Symbolic titles given to Jesus Art, Music and Architecture	Jesus' early life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension Peter Paul Modern day examples	Ten Commandments Jesus' teaching on Commandments Jesus' parables	Clergy Personal Bible study, family prayer, service to others, Modern monastic community	Fairtrade Christian Aid Tear Fund Cafod Stewardship
ISLAM	God – Allah Creator Muhammad, the Messenger Good and Evil	Qur'an Hadith	Ramadan / Eid-UI-Fitr / Hajj / Eid-UI- Adha Makkah Medina Mosque	Adhan / Aqiqah (Naming Ceremony) Weddings Death and the afterlife	Five Pillars Art and Architecture	Muhammad Prophets Khalifah Modern day examples	Five Pillars Sunnah Dietary Laws Modest dress	Imam Family prayer Service to others	Zakat (charity) Islamic Aid Khalifah Khilafah
JUDAISM	God Creator Covenant God given Torah Messiah	The Law Ten Commandments Justice and Forgiveness	Synagogue Jerusalem (Western Wall)	Bar / Bat Mitzvah Weddings Burials and rituals of mourning (sitting shivah) The value of life	Aron Hakodesh Torah Mezuzah Tefillin Tallit Art, Music and Architecture	Abraham Moses Modern day examples	Ten Commandments Mitzvot – good deeds Daily prayer Dietary Laws Blessings Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur	Rabbi Shabbat Passover Purim Shavuot	Tzedakah (charity / justice) Shemittah (Environment)

HINDUISM	One God, (Brahman) many aspects Atman Creation Preservation Destruction Good and Evil	The Vedas The Bhagavad Gita Ramayana	Shrine Temple Puja Ganges Varanasi (Benares) Divali Holi Kumbhamela	Namakaran (Naming) Upanayana (Sacred Thread) Raksha Bandhan (family) Weddings Death and the afterlife	Aum Murtis (representatio ns) Puja Tray Art, Music and Architecture	Gurus Rama, Krishna Sita Modern day examples	Sanatanadharma Karma Dharma Self-discipline	Priest Guru Puja Shrine Temple	Karma Dharma Ahimsa
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KS3	Beliefs and Concepts	Authority	Religion and Science	Expressions of Spirituality	Ethics and Relationships	Rights and Responsibilities	Global Issues	Interfaith Dialogue
BUDDHISM	Buddha Noble Eightfold Path Four Noble Truths Karma/Samsara Reincarnation	Buddha Dhamma (teachings) Sangha (Triratna) Teachers, e.g. Tibetan Lamas Personal Experience	Wheel of life anicca anatta dukkha Conditioned Arising	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. Buddha image and shrine, Wesak, pilgrimage Diversity of private worship, e.g. meditation, prayer, chanting	Suffering Compassion (Karuna) Middle Way Five Precepts	Right livelihood action, speech Engaged Buddhism Dana (Alms) Sangha Metta Project Dalai Lama	Right livelihood Animal welfare Samye Ling Conservation project Ahimsa	Inter-dependence
CHRISTIANITY	Trinity, Incarnation, Resurrection, Atonement, Salvation, Soul	Bible Revelation, Conscience, Reason, the Church's authority	Creation, Design, First Cause arguments, experiential argument	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. across denominations, Diversity of private worship, including meditation and prayer	Agape, Forgiveness, Equality, The Lord's Prayer	Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King, Trevor Huddleston, Mother Teresa	Pacifism, Just War, stewardship, aid issues, liberation theology	Corrymeela, Taizé Evangelism, Jerusalem, Local interfaith dialogue, e.g. Oxford Round Table of religions
HINDUISM	Brahman, Atman, Samsara, Moksha, Dharma Karma, Artha, Reincarnation	Smirti Shruti Gurus (e.g. Sai Baba) Krishnamurthi Ramakrishna	Creation, Evolution, Atomic theory, Great elements (5 elements)	Diversity of corporate worship, Diversity of private worship, e.g. puja, meditation, the 3 paths, Sannyasin Hare Krishna	Dharma Karma Manu's laws Seek the truth, act righteously	Gandhi Ahimsa Duties to yourself, family and society, caste, ashramas or stages in life	Satyagraha Ahimsa Chipko movement	Local groups, e.g. Oxford Round Table Views about other religions Inter-community celebrations

ISLAM	Tawhid, Creation, Shirk, Prophethood, Judgement	Qur'an Revelation, Sunnah, Shia authority, Reason	Creation, Kalam argument, reason	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. zikr, hajj Diversity of private worship, e.g. rakat Dervish, Shi'ite	Submission Purity, Equality, Greater Jihad	Justice, Community Ummah Jammah	Jihad (struggle) Khalifah Zakat, Sadaqah,	Religions of the Book, Ibrahim, Isa, Islamophobia / Westophobia Da'wah, Jerusalem
JUDAISM	God Israel Covenant God-given Torah	Tanakh Torah, Prophets, Writings Talmud	Creation	Diversity of corporate worship, e.g. Shabbat, Yom ha Shoah and across denominations Diversity of private worship, e.g. Jewish Mysticism	Yom Kippur, Purity, Preservation of Life, Rosh Hashanah	Social Justice Tzedakah	Tikkun Olam (repair of the world)	Jerusalem, Covenant, Abraham, Messiah Anti-Semitism
SIKHISM	God Gurmukh Manmukh Guru	Guru Granth Sahib, Gurus Khalsa	Creation and active God Karma – cause and effect (sukh – happiness dukh – unhappiness)	Corporate and individual worship, e.g. Akhand Path, Nit Nem kirtan, prayer	Sewa Equality, e.g. gender, caste, race, disability, rich and poor	Langar Faith and Community Justice Human Rights Khalsa Aid	Fighting discrimination Human rights Environment Diaspora	Guru Tegh Bahadur Universality of Guru Granth Sahib Design of Golden Temple Guru Arjan