

Excellence and distinctiveness

Guidance on RE in Church of England schools

Coventry DBE

May 2006

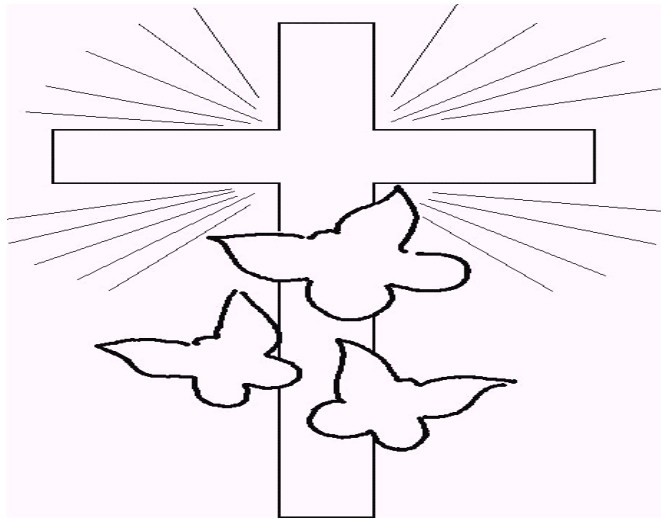
DBE PREFACE

The DBE commends the document to complement the review and development of the Schemes of Work from your Local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

This is not a statutory document, merely supportive guidance to assist you in your role of striving for Excellence and Distinctiveness in RE.

Please be aware that for Voluntary Aided schools RE is inspected under the SIAS framework. For Voluntary Controlled schools, RE will be commented upon under the section on Distinctive Christian character.

We trust it will be of help to you. You may access further copies on the website (www.coventry.anglican.org).





Ever since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 Religious Education has suffered for lack of a nationally accepted standard. The subjects within the National Curriculum have seen gains in status and in national development funding that have been lacking for RE. The Church of England, along with many other organisations in the world of RE, has been pressing for action to redress this imbalance for many years.

In October 2003 Charles Clarke, then Secretary of State for Education, held a consultation with a large number of faith leaders, including representatives of the Church of England, which yielded the clear result that they would work together with a group of teachers, academics, advisers, inspectors and consultants to produce a National Framework for RE. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority was commissioned to coordinate this task.

The resulting non-statutory Framework, which had the full support of the Church of England representatives, was published by QCA in October 2004. Although Charles Clarke moved to be Home Secretary in December 2004, we shall hold the government to their commitment to resource the Framework adequately with a continuing programme of financial and professional support. We look for the National Framework to become the kite-mark for quality RE.

The primary audience for the National Framework is the Local Authority Agreed Syllabus Conferences and those responsible for setting the RE curriculum in faith-based schools. The Board of Education has decided that the new Framework should underpin RE in all church schools. The best means of achieving this would be for all Church of England schools to adopt their locally agreed syllabus, provided it has been produced on the basis of the National Framework for RE. That is a matter on which Diocesan Boards of Education will advise their schools.

This Guidance for the Church of England in implementing the Framework is supplementary to the Framework and does not seek to replace it. It should be used in tandem with the Framework to ensure that RE in church schools is of the highest quality and reflects their distinctive Christian character. It is advisory to the dioceses. I hope it will be helpful as they consider a response to the Framework and their role in developing new agreed syllabuses.

The Church of England is well placed to support the implementation of the National Framework for RE. Each Agreed Syllabus Conference is made up of four committees, one of which represents the Church of England. All four committees have to be unanimous in their approval of a syllabus and therefore each one has an effective veto. We recommend that the members of the Church of England committee on a SACRE or ASC make it clear from the beginning that they will not support any proposed agreed syllabus that is not based on the new National Framework, and that, if necessary, they take this commitment to its logical conclusion.

I am grateful to the working group responsible for producing this Guidance and commend it to the dioceses of the Church of England.

+Kenneth Portsmouth

The Right Reverend Dr Kenneth Stevenson
Bishop of Portsmouth

Contents

	Preface	2
1	Introduction and key recommendations	4
2	RE in a distinctively Christian school	5
3	Teaching about world faiths and world views	7
4	The development of RE	8
5	The purpose of RE	9
6	Managing RE in church schools	11
7	Distinctiveness in the RE classroom	13
8	The contribution of RE to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	14
9	Key Christian topics and concepts	16
10	Resources	19
	Acknowledgments	20



1 Introduction

This Guidance on the teaching of Religious Education in Church of England schools is based on two key principles: firstly, that the RE in a church school should be of the highest standard, always striving for **excellence**; and secondly that it should reflect the school's **distinctive** Christian character.

Many dioceses currently support RE in their schools through their own syllabus or guidelines supplementary to the local agreed syllabus. The introduction of a National Framework for RE for the first time provides an opportunity for dioceses to recommend a new model to their schools with two elements: the adoption of their local agreed syllabus for RE, supplemented by this Guidance. The adoption of the local agreed syllabus, which should from now on reflect the National Framework, can enhance continuity between sectors and effective partnerships between dioceses and local authorities. It should also provide a higher quality of syllabus construction and resourcing; new materials are already being published that support the approach found in the Framework. The careful use of this Guidance should ensure that the RE in church schools reflects their distinctive Anglican foundation.

Over recent years both Ofsted and denominational inspections have shown that there is much good and improving practice in RE, especially in church schools. This progress will be maintained, if the provision of RE in church schools is a high priority for leadership teams and governing bodies. They should aim to ensure that RE is at the heart of the curriculum and recognised as such by the whole school community. The quality of teaching and learning in RE should be at least as good as in any other subject. All church schools should, in a sense, be 'specialist schools' for RE.

Key recommendations

- That governors in Voluntary Aided schools adopt their local agreed syllabus for RE, provided it is based on the National Framework, with the addition of these Guidelines.
- That the standards of teaching, learning and achievement in RE in Church of England schools are at the highest level.
- That at least 5% of curriculum time is devoted to RE.
- That Christianity has a central role in the RE curriculum, usually taking up between two-thirds and three quarters of the time available.
- That appropriate teaching about other faiths and world views is given in all church schools.
- That all pupils are entered for an accredited qualification in Religious Studies at the end of Key Stage 4.
- That all students in the 16 – 19 age groups have the opportunity to take an A level qualification in Religious Studies.



2 RE in a distinctively Christian school

In an Anglican school, the educational process is rooted in the living faith of the school. This goes beyond the ethos of the school to affect the planning and teaching in every curriculum area. Religious Education is not just an academic subject, but, lying at the very heart of the curriculum, has an important role in reflecting and conveying the distinctively Christian character of the school.

In developing this distinctive approach to RE shaped by the National Framework, schools should consider what lies at the heart of the Christian faith. This can be expressed in relation to the Framework's two attainment targets.

Learning about religion

We learn about:

- The God who reveals the truth about himself and humanity through creation, the giving of the law, his action in history and through the prophets;
- The God who reveals himself ultimately in Jesus his Son, living among us and dying and rising for us;
- The God who reveals himself in his Spirit working in the living faith of the Church experienced through scripture, tradition and reason.

Learning from religion

We learn from:

- An empathetic response to the Christian faith and a critical engagement with it;
- Responding personally to the transforming power of Jesus Christ;
- Developing a vision for life that transcends a dull materialism and recognises the reality of the spiritual realm;
- Understanding ourselves and others, celebrating our shared humanity and the breadth of human achievement;
- Examples of Christian living which give priority to the claims of justice, mercy, holiness and love.

RE does not exist in a vacuum; it comes as a challenge to the learner's existing values and practices. It involves and confronts the individual in a way no other subject can. As Rowan Williams has observed, RE should help pupils see why religion is a deep and serious matter. A vision of education inspired by Jesus Christ is a catalyst for a process of formation for the whole person and the whole human family.

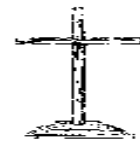
RE is key to fulfilling the purpose of a church school as described by the late Lord Runcie when he was Archbishop of Canterbury:

- to nourish those of the faith;
- to encourage those of other faiths;
- to challenge those who have no faith.

Maintaining the balance between these intentions will always require skill and tact and will need to reflect local circumstances.

Therefore RE in church schools should help pupils to:

- think theologically and explore the great questions of life and death, meaning and purpose;
- reflect critically on the truth claims of Christian belief;
- see how the truth of Christianity is relevant today and face the challenge of Jesus' teaching in a pluralist and post modern society;
- develop the skills to handle the Bible text;
- recognise that faith is not based on a positive balance of probabilities but on commitment to a particular way of understanding God and the world;
- respond in terms of beliefs, commitments and ways of living;
- develop a sense of themselves as significant, unique and precious;
- experience the breadth and variety of the Christian community;
- engage in thoughtful dialogue with other faiths and traditions;
- become active citizens, serving their neighbour;
- find a reason for hope in a troubled world;
- understand how religious faith can sustain them in difficult circumstances and in the face of opposition.



3 Teaching about world faiths and world views

As 'schools of faith' Church of England schools recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. The secular assumption that there is no reality beyond the physical world is ultimately sterile. There is a divide between those with a religious faith and those for whom religion is meaningless. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in RE within a church school. This respect must be based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

A positive outcome of this approach is to provide learners with a greater understanding of the world and society in which they are growing up. Another outcome is that learners will be able to see the faith of others in relation to their own. Both of these outcomes contribute to building up harmonious relations within communities, promoting inclusion for all and combating the evils of racism. Parents not of the Christian faith who seek a place for their children at a church school often express the view that here faith itself is respected. In a church school there should be opportunities for their children to grow in the understanding of their own faith.

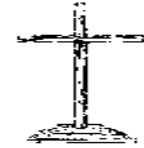
The non-statutory Framework has also introduced the deliberate study of secular world views where appropriate. This is a welcome recognition that such positions are indeed matters of 'faith' rather than commonly accepted certainties. RE should equip pupils for the critical evaluation of such world views.

Therefore RE in church schools should also help pupils to:

- learn *about* other faiths, their beliefs, traditions and practices and *from* them through encounter and dialogue;
- recognise and respect those of all faiths in their search for God;
- recognise areas of common belief and practice between different faiths;
- enrich and expand their understanding of truth while remaining faithful to their own tradition;
- enrich their own faith through examples of holy living in other traditions;
- recognise the common human quest for justice, peace and love and the common goal of the survival of life on this planet.

The allocation of teaching time

We recommend that in church schools between two-thirds and three-quarters of RE curriculum time is spent in the study of Christianity and that other faiths and positions are covered in the remainder of the time (ie no more than one-third). This may represent a higher proportion of time on Christianity than is recommended in the agreed syllabus, but it is essential to fulfil the requirements of the distinctive Christian character of the school. Diocesan Boards of Education should offer further guidance and support in this matter that relate to specific local Agreed Syllabuses.



4 The development of RE

From the beginning of a mass system of education in England and Wales, there was never any doubt that church schools had the purpose of sharing with their pupils the Christian faith as received by the Church of England. Pupils learnt the Bible and the Catechism. They were nurtured and formed in the Church of England's understanding of Christianity, the Church's "rites, practices and doctrines".

This was not always comfortable for Christians of other traditions and, when parliament legislated in 1870 for universal elementary education, through the establishment of Board schools, the nature of the religious instruction in such schools was extensively debated. There was no doubt that there must be religious instruction to share the common Christian faith, but it must be simply biblical: non-denominational, non-catechetical, non-indoctrinatory.

In the Education Act 1944, the requirement that there must be a daily act of collective worship and clear religious instruction in all schools was the historic result of William Temple's work. This was the first time that schools were required by law to give religious education; indeed, famously, in the days before the national curriculum, RE was the only subject they were required to teach. Now it was to be taught in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus. To achieve that local agreement, with appropriate checks and balances, the local authority was required to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference consisting of four committees, representing the nonconformist churches, teachers, the authority itself and the Church of England. Each committee would exercise a single vote; and decisions had to be unanimous. It was still a requirement that the agreed syllabus should not be distinctive of any particular religious denomination; only voluntary aided denominational schools would teach religion in accordance with the rites, practices and doctrines of their own Church. Voluntary controlled schools were required to follow the local agreed syllabus.

For 25 years, RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus continued to be predominantly biblical. It did not always inspire its pupils, nor was it dramatically successful at conveying biblical knowledge (though at least it aimed to do so). The work of Ninian Smart and others in the 1970s led to major changes in RE (as it had now become); there was a danger that these could result in too great a concentration on the outward phenomena of a variety of religions. By now, topic based teaching and theoretical approaches to children's 'readiness for religion' meant that RE was losing its place in primary schools and not generally regaining it in the secondary phase. For twenty years, RE in non-church schools suffered decline, as also it did in many Church of England schools.

The recovery of confidence in RE to its current place as a vibrant and increasingly popular subject, with over 400,000 students taking a GCSE in Religious Studies in 2005 and 16.9% more A level candidates than in the previous year, began with the introduction of Ofsted and denominational inspections (in the 1992 Act) that challenged schools about their failure to comply with the law. The change of emphasis in GCSE Religious Studies from 1998 onwards has transformed the subject's image with students as the issues studied relate more closely to their questions and concerns. A renewed emphasis on 'cracking the concepts' underlying religious beliefs has enabled primary sector pupils to tackle subjects that were previously not studied until the secondary phase. There is now an increasingly widespread acceptance of the twin aims of RE: **learning about religion** and **learning from religion**.



5 The purpose of RE

The importance of Religious Education

‘Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these. It also offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances pupil’ awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their response.

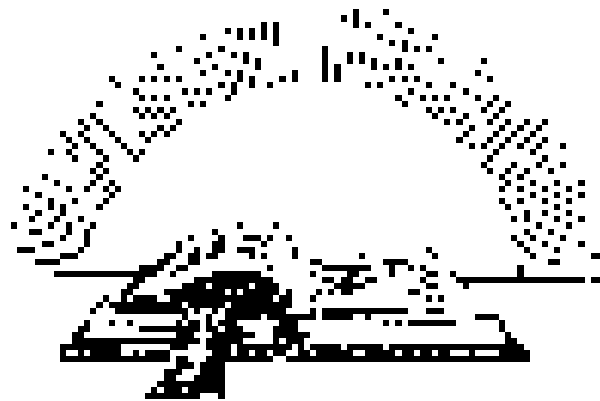
Religious Education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community. Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faith and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.’

Non Statutory National Framework for RE page 7

This provides a good basis for establishing the purpose of RE in Church of England schools.

National Framework	Comment
Religious education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning of and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.	RE is no longer just about the phenomena of religion, but addresses directly the essential reality and nature of God. The Christian understanding of God, revealed through the life and work of Jesus Christ, and as understood by the Church, is the heart of the matter.
It develops pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to questions such as these. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development.	In church schools, pupils are entitled to know and understand Christianity as received and handed on by the Church of England. Pupils are also entitled to have an understanding of traditions other than their own, which they are likely to encounter in their life’s journey.
It enhances pupils’ awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expressions, as well as of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.	The role of religious communities in the past and today in advancing causes, from the abolition of slavery to making poverty history, should be an important part of RE’s contribution to the creation of community life in a church school.

<p>Religious education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions, while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.</p>	<p>Pupils are entitled to explore their own beliefs in response to the great traditions, an essential basis for developing any religious understanding. This enables them to discern and locate 'the Spirit that is within them' that 'leads...into all truth'.</p>
<p>Religious education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community. Religious education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.</p>	<p>Most adults see themselves as belonging to a particular religious tradition (72% Christian in the 2001 census). In a Church of England school pupils are entitled to develop a strong sense of being part of a worldwide, growing faith.</p>
<p>It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.</p>	<p>This is a proper goal for Church of England, as for other, schools. Teaching about other faiths will include, at the right stages, a consideration of issues of truth.</p>





6 Managing RE in church schools

“Church schools ... should ensure that ... the character and quality of religious education are a particular concern of the headteacher and governing body.”
[*The Way ahead* 4.6]

In **Voluntary Aided** schools the management of RE is a distinctive role of the governors and headteacher. From 1944 onwards successive Education Acts have placed the responsibility for the provision of RE with the governors, in accordance with the school’s trust deed. In practical terms most VA schools have adopted syllabuses or followed guidance provided by the Diocesan Boards of Education. In the light of the publication in 2004 of a National Framework for RE, in which the Church of England has had a stake, it is expected that in many dioceses this model will change, so that VA schools will be encouraged by DBEs to adopt their local authority’s agreed syllabus. It is the intention of this Guidance to provide material which can be used as a supplement to these agreed syllabuses to ensure that RE in church schools is provided that is in keeping with the distinctively Anglican character of Church of England schools.

This material should also be a useful source of additional advice for the planning of RE in **Voluntary Controlled** schools which are required in law to provide RE in accordance with their local agreed syllabus.

In implementing the advice in this Guidance governors and headteachers will need to consider the following management issues:

- All governors should be aware of:
 - the legal requirements for RE in a church school
 - the advice of their DBE on the development of the RE curriculum
 - the RE syllabus adopted, including the faiths to be studied
 - the standards achieved in the subject in the school.
- Religious Education should be managed separately from Collective Worship with separate policy documents and responsibilities. Ideally there should be separate coordinators for each area, though it is recognised that this may be difficult in smaller schools.
- There should be a clear and detailed policy document for RE outlining the school’s vision and aims for the subject and the learning outcomes for each key stage or year group. It should be revised regularly in consultation with staff, managers and governors. It should outline the school’s policy on the parental right of withdrawal from RE and how the school will deal with this issue.
- There should be a subject leader or coordinator appointed for RE (if possible a practising Christian) with sufficient training (initially or through CPD) to be confident and competent to support colleagues in the delivery and assessment of the curriculum.
- RE should regularly form part of the school’s improvement plan and self-evaluation procedures. The National Society’s self-evaluation toolkit provides assistance in this process.
- A detailed curriculum and scheme of work should be drawn up and agreed with all the teachers who will teach RE. This must be in accordance with the syllabus adopted by the governors.

- No less than a full 5% of curriculum time (and ideally more) must be assigned for RE in a clearly identifiable way. This does not of course include the time spent in Collective Worship.
- Sufficient resources should be provided to deliver the curriculum in an exciting and dynamic way, including books, artefacts, ICT and video materials. This should be at a level at least equivalent to the level that is provided for foundation subjects.
- RE should be allocated time within the CPD programme for both the subject leader and for all teachers who teach the subject.
- A link governor, preferably one of the foundation governors, should liaise with the subject coordinator and keep the full governing body informed of these contacts and of the needs of the subject. The subject leader should make a regular report to the governing body.
- The subject leader for RE should maintain good links with the local parish, involving clergy and lay people in the delivery of the subject where appropriate. Pupils' work should be displayed in the church from time to time.

Additional considerations in secondary schools

- Sufficient qualified specialist staff should be employed to teach all RE lessons.
- The Head of Department should receive an appropriate teaching and learning responsibility payment that reflects the special status that the subject has in a church school. In a VA school it is particularly important to appoint as an RE Head of Department someone with a personal Christian commitment [School Standards and Framework Act 1998 section 60(5)].
- The minimum 5% of curriculum time applies to all pupils of compulsory school age (ie 11 – 16). It is also essential to ensure there is suitable provision of RE in the curriculum for 16 – 19 year old students, though not necessarily within the weekly timetable. More intensive provision through day conferences for whole year groups is a successful and innovative model established in some dioceses.
- The minimum expectation for Key Stage 4 in church schools should be that all pupils are entered for a GCSE Short Course in RS with sufficient Christian content; many church schools enter the complete cohort for the full GCSE course; some enter more able candidates for AS level at the end of year 11. Where there are post 16 students there should be well-resourced provision for AS and A2 courses in RS.
- The RE department should have a distinct and generous budget that reflects the special status of the subject in a church school. There should be sufficient provision for ICT and a dedicated specialist room for each full-time teacher of RE.
- The Head of Department should liaise with the heads of other subject areas to ensure that appropriate cross-curricular links are made.



7 Distinctiveness in the RE classroom

In what ways is the RE in a church school different from RE in a community school? This section assumes that a church school will already be aiming at the highest possible standards in RE; it therefore deals only with those issues that are distinctive of a church school.

Planning and preparation will include:

- Opportunities to explore the experience of the Church's year;
- Study of the story of the local Christian community with its saints and martyrs;
- Visits to places of worship, especially the local parish Church and the Cathedral, to develop the understanding of the church as a living community;
- Welcoming visitors from the local parish to share their experience of Christian belief and life;
- Liaison with the local parish to enable these visits and links to occur.

The classroom environment will provide:

- High quality displays that reflect the Church's year;
- Displays of the best Christian writing and reflection;
- Support for the pupils' confident use of religious language;
- A well-used set of bibles in language that can be understood by the learners and examples of bibles and prayer books from a variety of contexts;
- The facility to listen to Christian 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs' from a wide variety of traditions;
- Access to Christian artefacts that are used with care, respect and confidence;
- A sacred space that can be used as a focus for prayer and silent reflection;
- Encouragement of mutual respect based on Christian values, where pupils and teachers are able to talk openly and freely about their own personal beliefs and practice without fear of ridicule.

The quality of learning in RE enables:

- High achievement in RE reflecting its importance in a church school;
- Pupils to be enthusiastic about their work in RE;
- Pupils to make excellent and appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the Anglican tradition;
- Pupils from Christian families to talk openly about their beliefs and values in lessons and to grow in their faith;
- Pupils from other faith backgrounds to understand and be encouraged in their faith;
- Pupils with no religious background to face the challenge of the Christian faith;
- Pupils of all backgrounds to have a safe place to explore the place of doubt and certainty in a maturing faith.

The quality of teaching in RE relies on teachers who:

- Have excellent subject knowledge and the ability to speak with confidence about Christianity, the Anglican tradition and the other faiths studied;
- Are willing to speak about their personal beliefs and doubts;
- Show respect and sensitivity for their pupils as they search for personal faith and meaning;
- Are able to use religious language accurately;
- Provide opportunities for prayer and spiritual reflection in their classrooms.



8 The contribution of RE to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in a church school is distinctive because these four aspects of the school curriculum are inextricably rooted in the reality of God the Holy Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Religious Education curriculum in a church school is the place where excellent and distinctive SMSC is seen most clearly.

Spiritual development

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.

Psalm 139.13-14

Spiritual development within RE in a church school enriches and encourages the pupils' discovery of God the creator, of their 'inmost being' and of the wonder of the environment.

This is promoted through:

- exploring their relationship with God and the sense that they are his children, unique and loved by him;
- exploring and experiencing prayer and worship from a variety of Christian traditions;
- giving thanks to God for all aspects of school life;
- discussing and reflecting upon key questions of meaning and truth such as the existence of God, the origins and purpose of the universe, good and evil, life after death;
- considering the value of human beings and their relationship with God, with one another and with the natural world;
- discovering how the creative and expressive arts enable spiritual development;
- opportunities to discuss feelings and emotions openly;
- recognising and encouraging the use of personal and group gifts and talents;
- opportunities to develop their gift of imagination and creativity;
- encouraging curiosity and questioning so that their own views and ideas on religious and spiritual issues can be developed within a secure environment where faith is valued;
- developing a sense of personal significance and belonging;
- encountering Christian fellowship.

Moral development

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12.2

Moral development in RE in a church school is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, which offer pupils a secure foundation stone on which to make decisions and build their lives.

This is promoted through:

- developing a sense of right and wrong based on the teaching of Jesus Christ;
- recognising the values identified within the Bible: truth, justice, trust, love, peace, compassion, forgiveness, reconciliation and redemption;
- learning to follow a path through the conflicting demands of faith, family, peers, society, the media and the world of ideas;
- recognising the importance of personal integrity;
- developing mutual respect across racial and religious divides;
- recognising that people's rights also imply responsibilities;
- developing a sensitive conscience.

Social development

As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.

John 13.34-35

Social development in RE in a church school develops pupils' understanding of what it means to live in a Christian community where Jesus' command to love one another is put into practice.

This is promoted through:

- developing a sense of empathy, compassion and concern for others;
- building relationships within the school and between the school, the parish and the local community;
- considering how Christian beliefs affect decisions at local and national level;
- investigating social issues from the perspective of Christianity and of other faiths, recognising the common ground and diversity that exists between them;
- providing opportunities for pupils to articulate their own views on a range of current issues and to show respect for the opinions of others and a willingness to learn from their insights.

Cultural development

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3.28

Cultural development in RE in a church school provides opportunities to develop an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide, multi-cultural faith that has an impact on the lives of millions of people.

This is promoted through:

- promoting an understanding of Christianity from a global perspective through encounters with people, literature and the creative arts from different cultures;
- exploring the diversity of Christianity worldwide with particular reference to the diversity of the Anglican community;
- considering the relationship between British and European culture and Christianity;
- appreciating the diversity of cultures within Britain.



9 Key Christian topics and concepts

Church of England schools are committed to offering their pupils a sufficient understanding of Christianity as a vibrant, world-wide faith. The purpose of this section is to enable schools and teachers to ensure that, in adopting their local agreed syllabus, there is sufficient emphasis given to those key Christian topics and concepts that are vital for this understanding. By using this section as a checklist it is possible to identify those areas that need to be added to the content of the agreed syllabus.

Church of England schools should encourage an emphasis on the church as people more than buildings and on the church as wider than a single parish. Teaching should reflect accurately the wide range of types and styles of being an Anglican. In a worldwide perspective Anglicanism represents an important 'bridge' between the catholic and protestant traditions.

Teachers will need to select and adapt material from this list that is appropriate to the age and ability of their pupils. The amount of content included assumes an education in church schools from the Foundation Stage until the end of Key Stage 4.

The material is presented in three charts simply as a way of organising the concepts and not as a programme of study.

Some key Christian texts

Pupils should encounter and be familiar with some of the great statements of Christian belief and worship, including:

- The Lord's prayer
- The ten commandments
- Jesus' summary of the law
- The apostle's creed
- Some psalms such as 23, 121, 150
- Liturgical material such as the Collect for Purity, the Gloria, Greetings, the Grace
- The structure of the Eucharist
- The Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis
- Scripture passages such as Romans 8.38-39, 1 Corinthians 13, Hebrews 12.1-2
- Some of the great prayers such as the prayers of St Richard of Chichester, St Ignatius Loyola and St Francis of Assisi
- Some of the great traditional hymns as well as more recent examples

The Church's year		Key concepts
Advent		Prophecy and hope Death, judgement, heaven and hell
Christmas	Epiphany Candlemas	Incarnation Revelation Servant leadership
Lent	Shrove Tuesday Ash Wednesday	Temptation and sin Repentance
Holy Week	Palm Sunday Maundy Thursday Good Friday Holy Saturday	Evil and the Fall Atonement and sacrifice Forgiveness and reconciliation Redemption and salvation Eucharist
Easter		Resurrection Miracle Baptism Eternal life
Ascension		Christ in glory
Pentecost		Holy Spirit Confirmation Church Unity and diversity
Trinity		God the Holy Trinity Creeds
Harvest		Creation and stewardship Thanksgiving Justice and freedom
All Saints' day	Individual saints' days	Covenant Community Peace

See pages 138 and 139 in 'Be Bold' published by CHP.

Being an Anglican

Parish life

RE in a Church of England school enables pupils to expand their understanding of the Church by learning about everyday life in a parish.

- Priests, vicars and curates
- Lay leaders: churchwardens and PCCs
- Worship: Eucharist, services of the Word
- Music in worship
- Baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals
- Evangelism, Alpha, Emmaus, Credo, etc
- Home groups
- Pilgrimages and retreats
- Activities for children and young people
- Community involvement

Beyond the parish

An understanding of the life of the Church beyond the parish boundaries:

- Dioceses, bishops and cathedrals
- Archbishops of Canterbury and York

And in the rest of the world:

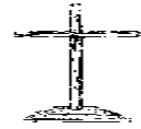
- Lively and growing churches
- Multicultural Christianity
- The Anglican Communion
- Ecumenical partnerships and inter-faith dialogue

Church and nation

Pupils should understand how the story of the Church of England has affected our national life. Teachers will need to select from the following list.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christianity comes to Britain• Rome and Northumbria• Church and state• The Bible in English• The Reformation• Developing worship• Evangelicals and Tractarians• Improving society• Church schools and hospitals• The development of missions• The twentieth century• People of local significance in the diocese | <p>Alban, Patrick, Columba and Augustine
Iona, Lindisfarne, Hilda and the synod of Whitby
Thomas a Becket, monasteries
Wycliffe, Tyndale and the Authorised Version
Henry VIII to Elizabeth, the martyrs
From Cranmer to the 1662 Prayer Book
Wesley, Simeon, Pusey and Newman
Wilberforce, Shaftesbury and Josephine Butler
Robert Raikes, Joshua Watson, Florence Nightingale
SPCK, CMS and USPG
William Temple, CS Lewis, Desmond Tutu</p> |
|---|---|

See also the RE section in the SIAS Toolkit.



10 Resources

Websites

Church of England sites

www.natsoc.org.uk
www.encounterchristianity.co.uk
www.cofe.anglican.org
www.anglicancommunion.org
www.culham.ac.uk
www.assemblies.org.uk

Gateway sites

www.reonline.org.uk
www.theredirectory.org.uk
<http://re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk>

Professional association sites

www.pcfre.org.uk
www.retoday.org.uk
www.areiac.org.uk
www.nasacre.org.uk

Christian sites

www.e-stapleford.co.uk
www.churchnet.org.uk
www.christian-teachers.org.uk
www.biblesociety.org.uk
www.themiraclemaker.co.uk
www.barnabasinschools.org.uk
www.request.org.uk

National sites

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/
www.channel4.com/learning
www.teachers.tv
www.dfes.gov.uk
www.gca.org.uk
www.becta.org.uk

Sources of artefacts and posters

www.articlesoffaith.co.uk
www.tts-shopping.com
www.festivalshop.co.uk
www.pcet.co.uk

Aid agencies

www.christian-aid.org.uk
www.tearfund.org
www.cafod.org.uk
www.reep.org

You can add your own favourite to the list above.

Acknowledgments

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We are grateful for comments and suggestions received from

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Deborah Weston
Brian Gates
John Gay
Trevor and Margaret Cooling
Paul Hopkins
Rachel Moriarty

