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Council



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Welcome to the Launch of the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus 2025- 2030

Amy Crestanello – SACRE/RE
Advisor



Photo from Rushden, Northamptonshire

What will I be covering?

1. What is the SACRE?

2. How was the syllabus reviewed?

3. What was the feedback from the consultation?

4. What are the key changes?

5. What is the Suggested Syllabus?

6. How do I access the relevant information?



Pupils from Higham Ferrer's Junior School who completed unit 3.1 Diversity within Hindu Dharma: What do Hindus believe and how may they live?

1. What is the SACRE?

- Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education is part of local government
- Its main function is to advise the local authority (LA) on matters related to Religious Education and collective worship in schools
- A SACRE requires the LA to review its Agreed Syllabus every 5 years.

Group A	Christian denominations other than the Church of England and other religions and their denominations, reflecting the principal religions of the area
Group B	The Church of England
Group C	Teacher and head teacher associations and often others representing education interests
Group D	The Local Authority

- The Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught in Religious Education (RE) from ages 3 to 19.
- **Maintained schools without a religious character** are required to teach RE to all registered pupils in accordance with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- **Academies and free schools** are also required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE. They can choose to use the locally agreed syllabus but are not required to do so, however if they do not choose to they must provide their own, or follow another locally agreed syllabus:
The requirements are that a syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'
- For **foundation and voluntary controlled schools** with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the Agreed Syllabus unless, parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school; and
- In **voluntary aided schools** RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

2. How was the syllabus reviewed?

Research

- Analysis of Ofsted feedback on RE teaching and learning in Northamptonshire
- **Key papers:** Ofsted Research Review (2021), Ofsted Annual Report (2023), Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom: Developing a Worldviews Approach (2022), National Content Standard for Religious Education in England (2023), Ofsted Deep and Meaningful Subject Report (2024)
- Best practice trends in agreed syllabus from other local authorities

Consultation

- Schools consultation results (over 80 responses)
- SACRE members consultation

Development

- Teacher Working party which fed into the curriculum design (Over 30 teachers involved)
- Syllabus written with input from teachers, head teachers, SACRE members, Schools Effectiveness Teams including EYFS and SEND Specialist teachers

Review

- Units reviewed by SACRE members
- Units piloted in some schools

Over 80 consultation responses

Over 30 teachers involved in the teacher working party

Over 15 schools involved in writing and reviewing units



3. What was the feedback from the consultation?

38% wanted **flexible** syllabus; whilst **62%** wanted a **detailed** syllabus

Identity, belonging, and **respect** were the key values that were identified as important.

Primary teachers specifically appreciated **creative** ways of delivery RE

Many teachers felt there was **too much breadth of worldviews and knowledge** to cover

Many wanted more exploration of the **diversity** within worldviews

Less time dedicated on Christianity, to make way for other religions/worldviews

Most schools want to use a blend of **systematic** (looking at one religion/worldview) and **thematic** (exploring more than 1 religion/worldview)

Detailed unit plans including clear **links between units** and **prior learning**; and **knowledge statements** for each lesson/unit

4. What are the key changes? EYFS and KS1

These are the current statutory requirements in our agreed syllabus: Blue text is from the new syllabus and symbolises a change.

- Christians will be studied in all Key Stages.
- EYFS will encounter Christians and other worldviews as part of their growing sense of self, community, and place within it. 36 hours (e.g. short sessions of 30 minutes twice a week implemented through continuous provision).
- In KS1, Christians and at least two other worldviews. The suggested syllabus provides units to be taught on Jews and Muslims in a systematic way (a unit that focuses on one worldview). Schools may change this selection of worldviews to other worldviews relevant to the pupils' experiences and local demographics.
- Pupils can also encounter non-religious worldviews within KS1. Unit 2.2 provides an introduction to the concept of non-religious worldviews as well as within other thematic units within the key stage (thematic units are different from systematic units in that they will look at a few worldviews throughout the unit in response to the 'big' unit question).

4. What are the key changes? KS2

These are the current statutory requirements in our agreed syllabus: Blue text is from the new syllabus and symbolises a change.

- In KS2, the worldviews taught in KS1 should be covered, as well as at least two additional worldviews, one of which must be a non-religious worldview. The suggested syllabus provides units on those covered in KS1 and units on Hindus and Humanists.



4. What are the key changes? KS3, 4 & 5

These are the current statutory requirements in our agreed syllabus: Blue text is from the new syllabus and symbolises a change.

- In KS3, the worldviews included in KS1 and KS2 with the addition of two other worldviews, one of which must be a Dharmic worldview. The suggested syllabus provides units to teach that were covered in KS1 and KS2, as well as units on Buddhists and Sikhs.
- In KS4, pupils where possible should learn RE through a core course e.g., a short or long GCSE. Whilst there is no legal requirement to sit public examinations, pupils deserve the opportunity to have their learning accredited as far as possible.
- In KS5, some pupils will follow a course which may lead to a public examination in RE. Schools and colleges are to select religious and non-religious worldviews as appropriate to their setting. Clearly identified RE, preferably taught as continuous provision where learning progress is being made.

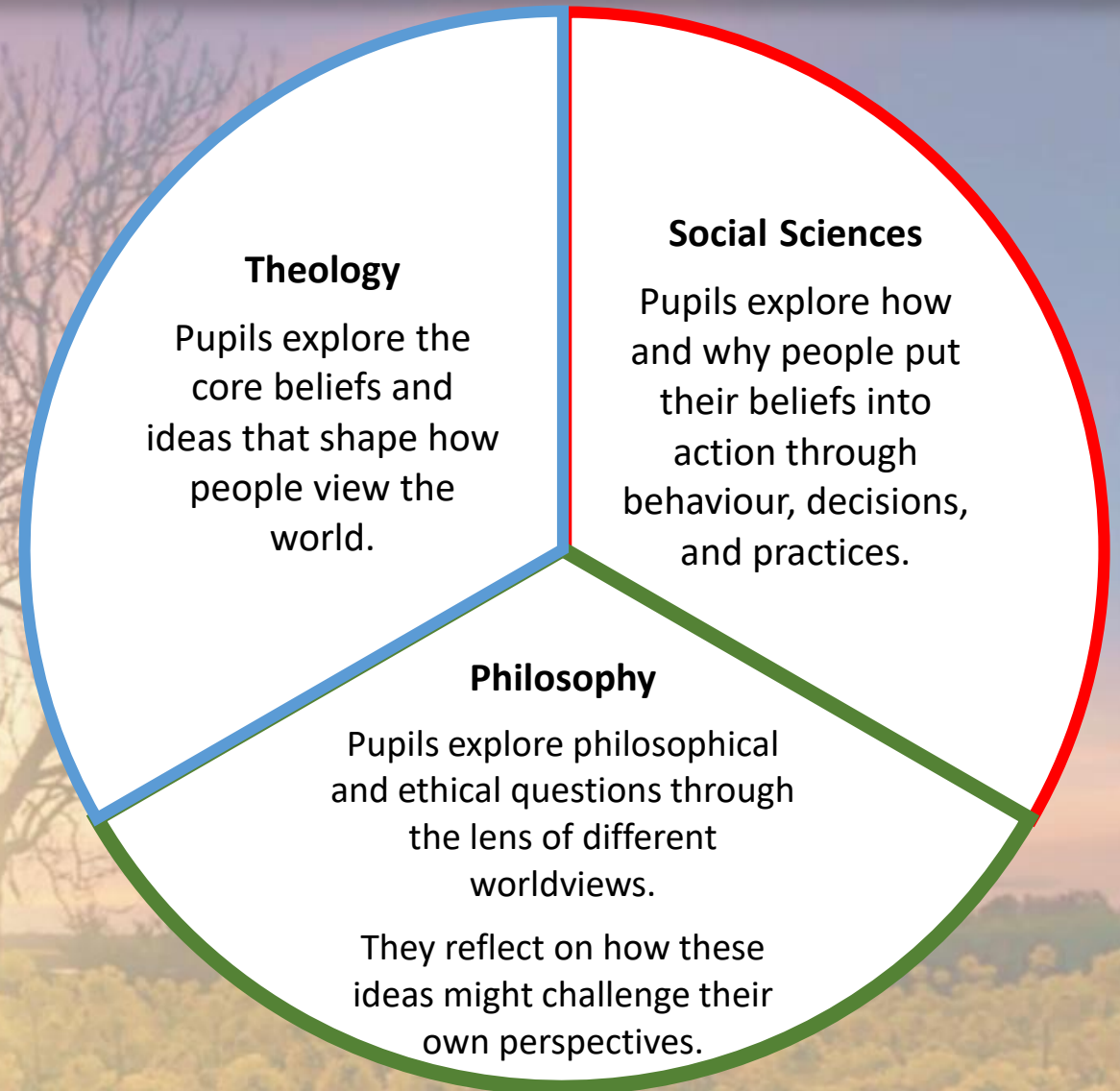
Ensuring a Balanced Approach to Religious Education

A key change is from the learning outcomes of 'Learning about religion and belief' and 'Learning from religion and belief' to the Disciplinary Lenses; Theology, Social Sciences, and Philosophy.

Current research suggests RE in schools is better presented as a blend of academic disciplines.

This approach provides a more balanced picture of religions and worldviews, which in turn leads to better religious literacy.

Each year group in the Suggested Syllabus has two units from each lens, and within the units the learning outcomes are also from each lens.



3.6 How do beliefs and ideas about land and the natural world shape the way human beings live?

Suggested questions to explore:	Impact and learning outcomes: (intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes)	Suggested content: (teachers can select alternative content as appropriate)	Knowledge Statements:
1. What does 'land' mean to different people? 2. What do Christians believe about looking after the world? 3. What do Muslims believe about wastefulness? 4. How do Hindu beliefs around eating meat affect what they may eat?	Can describe religious and non-religious beliefs about the land and the natural world. Can give some simple examples of how beliefs about land and the natural world impact the way different people live. Can describe some connections between similar beliefs around stewardship for	1. Pupils to read the 'The Enormous Turnip,' a folk tale that illustrates teamwork and community effort (video of the story can be found The Enormous Turnip (Retold by Irene Yates) I Read Aloud I Classic Tales (youtube.com). 'The Enormous Turnip' tells the story of a farmer who plants a turnip that grows extremely large. When it's time to pull it out of the ground, he realises he needs help from his family and friends. Together, they work as a team to succeed. During the story ask: How big is the turnip? How do you think the turnip will be? What does it mean to work together? Following this, discuss working together. A team together help us in many things we can grow. Pupils can then draw a vegetable. Encourage them to draw together in their drawing. Incorporate a simple seed in small pots.	Land is important to humans and in order to care for land people rely on cooperation. Christians believe that God created the world and humans are given the responsibility to care for creation.

KS2: ~~Colour~~ coding relates to the disciplinary lens they focus on. The number relates to which key concept it is from.

3.1 Diversity within Hindu Dharma: What do Hindus believe and how may they live? (Theology) 2	3.2 How and Why are people welcomed into different communities? (Philosophy) 1	3.3 Diversity within Hindu Dharma: What do Hindus believe and how may they live? (Social Sciences) 4	3.4 Why is Jesus a special person to some religious people? How might this help Christians lead a good life? (Theology) 5	3.5 What do Jews learn about Passover? What special things might they do? (Social Sciences) 6	3.6 How do beliefs and ideas about land shape the way human beings live? (Philosophy) 3
4.1 Part 1: What is a Humanist? What matters most to a Humanist? (Theology) 1	4.2 What do different people do in difficult times? What impact might it have on them? (Theology) 6	4.3 Part 2: What is a Humanist? What do they believe about leading a good life? (Social Sciences) 5	4.4 What do Christians learn about the incarnation of Jesus? Do all Christians agree? (Philosophy) 2	4.5 What are the five pillars of Islam and how do Muslims live by them? (Social Sciences) 4	4.6 What do different people believe about the creation of the world? (Philosophy) 3
5.1 What is a worldview? What are the worldviews of people where I live? (Social Sciences) 1	5.2 What is the role and impact of the Mandir on the lives of Hindus and the local community in your area and around the world? (Theology) 3	5.3 Is Easter a commemoration or a celebration for Christians? (Theology) 2	5.4 What are Jewish food laws (Kashrut) and How do these beliefs impact Jewish people in different ways? (Philosophy) 5	5.5 Why is Prophet Muhammad so special to Muslims? How might this help Muslims lead a good life? (Social Sciences) 4	5.6 What do different people believe about what happens when you die? How might this impact the way they behave in life? (Philosophy) 6
6.1 Are science and religion in conflict when it comes to creation? (Philosophy) 2	6.2 What do Hindus believe about the cycle of life and death? How does it impact their lives? (Social Sciences) 5	6.3 Why is Jerusalem a sacred place to people who follow Abrahamic religions? (Theology) 1	6.4 Why is it important for Muslims to fast in Ramadan? How does Ramadan impact Muslims' lives? (Social Sciences) 4	6.5 Should we be able to use the natural world as we wish? (Theology) 3	6.6 What does it mean to be a Christian? Exploring diverse beliefs and practices. (Philosophy) 6

Key Concepts to Develop a Spiral Curriculum:

- The syllabus has also used "Developing a Religion and Worldviews Approach in Religious Education in England: A Handbook for Curriculum Writers" to align planning with the latest guidelines set out by the Religious Education Council.
- One unit from each year group represents one of these concepts, allowing knowledge of these concepts to build progressively, developing a spiral curriculum.
- By the end of their studies, pupils will have a deep understanding of these concepts and it will ensure there is adequate depth rather than breadth.
- The key concepts are inspired by the following: "What are the Big Ideas for RE?" and the consultation results.
- The six concepts selected for this agreed syllabus are:

1. Belonging and Believing: The connection between identity, community, and faith, and how belief shapes personal identity.

2. Words and Wisdom: The study of sacred texts and teachings across religions and how they guide followers.

3. Respecting Places and the World: Reverence and responsibility towards sacred places and the natural world.

4. Experience and Behaviour: How religious experiences influence actions and moral decisions.

6. Continuity, Change, and Diversity: How religious beliefs evolve over time while maintaining continuity, and the coexistence of diverse perspectives.

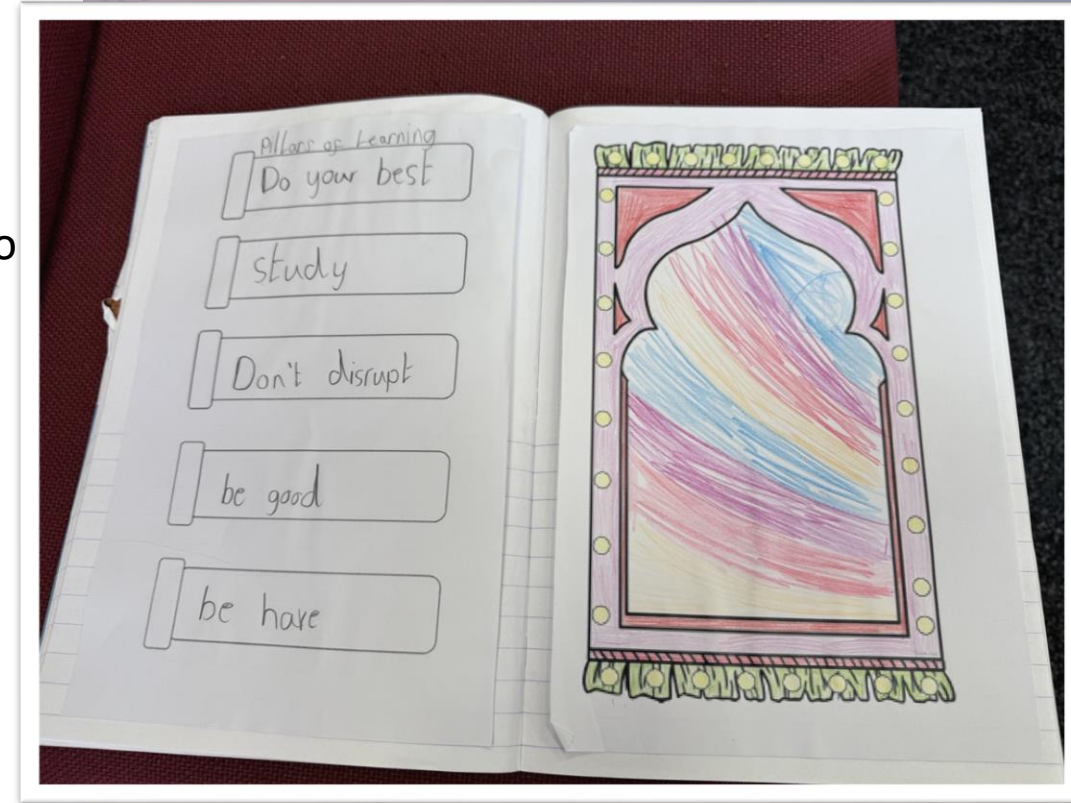
5. Leading a Good Life: Ethical teachings within religions and philosophies on living morally good lives.

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5. What is the suggested syllabus?

- In response to the consultation
- Completely optional, modify as needed
- Generally 6 lessons per unit
- Knowledge builds up over time using the 6 concepts
- Introductions to worldviews consist of two units to enable pupils to have a good foundational knowledge
- Units are asked as a specific question to bring focus and depth
- Units are broken down into the following sections:
 - Learning objective (a key question)
 - Learning outcomes (theology, social sciences, philosophy)
 - Suggested content
 - Knowledge statements
 - Suggested assessment ideas
 - Keywords
 - Links to previous and future units
- Overview of the suggested syllabus can be found in section 19 p43 of the agreed syllabus



A year 2 pupils work from Higham Ferrers Infant School whilst completing the unit: 2.1 Part 1: Diversity within Islam: What do Muslims believe and how may they live?

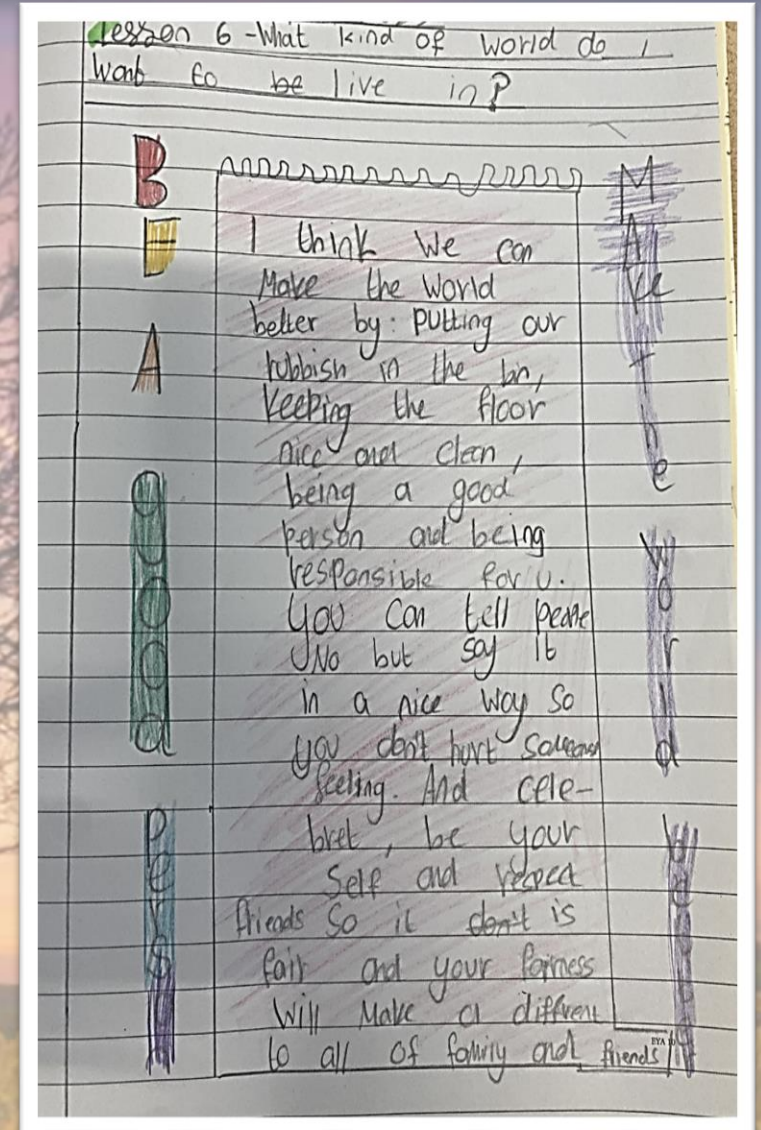
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Unit 1.0 State Enquiry Question here

Suggested questions to explore:	Impact and learning outcomes: <i>(intended to enable pupils to achieve end of key stage outcomes)</i>	Suggested content: <i>(teachers can select alternative content as appropriate)</i>	Knowledge Statements:
Generally, one question per lesson that helps to answer the overall 'big' enquiry question 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 	<i>Theology/social science/philosophy</i>	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	Assessment suggestions: <i>This could be at the end of the unit or during. It might be a piece of work you have already suggested in the suggested content column. You might want to give 2 suggestions.</i>
Key vocabulary:		Links to prior knowledge: <i>(Prior knowledge should be discussed at the beginning of the lesson to help pupils make connections and deepen knowledge)</i>	Links to future units:

How does my school implement the agreed syllabus?

- Will vary from school to school – dependent on your current provision and how much of the suggested syllabus you choose to use
- At a minimum maintained schools need to ensure they are following the statutory requirements which include the learning outcomes
- Compatibility with Jigsaw (mixed units)/RE today (mixed)/Kapow (largely thematic units), Oak Academy
- Timescales: See A year 4 pupils work from Higham Ferrers Junior School whilst completing the unit: 4.1 What is a Humanist?
What matters most to a Humanist?



6. How do I access the relevant information or arrange a school visit with the SACRE Advisor?

- Termly Newsletter – email me if you would like to be put onto the mailing list
- Website will have a public version of the syllabus
- ConnectEd – North Northamptonshire schools will have access to this soon
- SACRE Advisor visit – consisting of a supportive review of RE teaching and learning in your school,

including curriculum review, pupil voice, book review, Ofsted support and written feedback (potential fee for academies)

- Termly RE Network meetings from September
- Email: Amy Crestanello: sacre@northnorthants.gov.uk

A year 5 pupils work from Walgrave Primary School whilst completing the unit:

