

The Review of Religious Education Syllabuses

Guidance for Local Education
Authorities and Agreed Syllabus
Conferences in Wales



AWDURDOD
CYMWYSTERAU,
CWRICWLWM AC ASESU
CYMRU

QUALIFICATIONS,
CURRICULUM &
ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY
FOR WALES



© Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) 2001

Ref: AC/GM/0165

Price: £4.50

ISBN 1 86112 327 2

Extracts of this document may be copied provided that the source is acknowledged and that copies are made only in the educational establishment in which they are used. Such copies are not to be sold, hired or lent to any other individual, organisation or establishment. All other rights rest with the publisher.

Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales, Castle Buildings, Womanby Street, Cardiff, CF10 1SX.

Tel: (029) 2037 5400

Fax: (029) 2034 3612

e-mail: info@accac.org.uk

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. Legal requirements	3
3. Reviewing a locally agreed syllabus in the light of the revised National Curriculum	5
Appendix 1 – An exemplar framework for religious education	16

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 Every local education authority (LEA) must:

- adopt a locally agreed syllabus for religious education (RE)
- institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus within five years of either its adoption or the last review (whichever is later) and, subsequently, every five years after the completion of each further review.

1.2 These requirements and the relevant procedures and processes to be followed are set out in Welsh Office Circular 10/94, the Education Act 1996 and the Education Standards and Framework Act 1998. Local education authorities will need to refer to the relevant legislative provisions as they adopt or review their locally agreed syllabuses.

The purpose of the guidance

1.3 This document offers non-statutory advice and guidance to all those involved in the review of locally agreed syllabuses. It raises issues that an agreed syllabus conference might consider as part of their review and replaces the 1996 ACAC publication *The Review of Religious Education Syllabuses – Guidance for Local Education Authorities and Agreed Syllabus Conferences in Wales*, taking into account changes in the law and developments from the revised National Curriculum.

1.4 The document provides exemplar national level descriptions for religious education in order to provide a coherent assessment framework for the whole of Wales and improve standards of religious education nationally. The document also suggests that LEAs should consider adopting the common format used for the programmes of study of the National Curriculum Orders. An example of such a framework is to be found in Appendix 1. Local education authorities may wish to customise any examples provided and the exemplar level descriptions in line with their locally determined agreed syllabus.

The development of the document

1.5 This document was produced by ACCAC in cooperation with LEA representatives, advisers and teachers from primary, secondary and special education and a representative from Estyn. An earlier version was the subject of consultation with LEAs, SACREs, schools and religious interests across Wales. ACCAC is grateful for the responses received which helped finalise this document.

2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The section below summarises the legal requirements for locally agreed syllabuses. It also identifies the new legislation and indicates how it might be incorporated into an agreed syllabus. Local education authorities and agreed syllabus conferences should also seek their own legal advice.

2.1 A locally agreed syllabus should clearly identify the legal requirements that define the pupils to whom the locally agreed syllabus must be taught and the contents of the syllabus.

2.1.1 The legal requirements for agreed syllabuses are to be found in Welsh Office Circular 10/94, the Education Act 1996 and the Education Standards and Framework Act 1998.

2.2 A locally agreed syllabus must make appropriate provision for all registered pupils, including registered school pupils below the age of five and those at post-16.

2.2.1 Section 352 of the Education Act 1996 (updated) requires that the curriculum for every maintained school shall comprise a basic curriculum that includes:

- provision for religious education for all registered pupils at the school (in accordance with such of the provisions of Schedule 19 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as apply in relation to the school).

2.2.2 A locally agreed syllabus should make adequate provision for all registered pupils in maintained schools below the age of five, including those registered at three or four years old, to the age when pupils leave school post-16, including those with special needs. Locally agreed syllabuses should either provide programmes of study for all pupils or provide guidance on how the legal requirements will be fulfilled.

- In the case of registered pupils below the age of five, ACCAC recommends that agreed syllabuses should offer guidance as to what should be taught at this age. *Desirable Outcomes of Children's Learning Before Compulsory School Age* (ACCAC, 2000) sets out a general curriculum for four-year-olds, which includes six broad areas of learning and experience: language, literacy and communication; mathematical development; personal and social development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Agreed syllabus conferences should consider customising these recommendations, in line with locally agreed syllabus requirements, to provide guidance on religious education for teachers of this age group.
- In the case of Key Stage 4 and post-16, agreed syllabuses should provide specific programmes of study and/or recommend specific courses that could lead to external qualifications (see section 3.6).

2.2.3 A locally agreed syllabus needs to be flexible enough to provide access for all pupils. Agreed syllabus conferences should ensure that access is identified within the agreed syllabus. Local education authorities may wish to adopt the statements which parallel those used in the National Curriculum subject Orders (see section 3.3).

2.3 Every agreed syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain (The Education Act 1996, Section 375(3)).

2.3.1 Teachers need a clear indication of what is expected. A locally agreed syllabus may, therefore, indicate the number of religions, in addition to Christianity, to be studied at each key stage. Local education authorities may specify which religions, in addition to Christianity, should be taught at specific key stages.

2.3.2 Christianity should feature significantly in all locally agreed syllabuses. The other principal religions should be those represented in Great Britain, not just those found in the locality of the LEA or the school.

2.4 No agreed syllabus shall provide for religious education to be given to pupils at a school by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination (but this is not to be taken as prohibiting provision in such a syllabus for the study of such catechisms or formularies). (Schools Standards and Framework Act, Section 69 (2) and Schedule 19: paragraph 2(5).)

2.4.1 A locally agreed syllabus must be non-denominational but teaching about a particular catechism or formulary is not prohibited. Teachers may identify the differences in teaching, beliefs and practices of the religious traditions studied but must avoid promoting denominational views.

3 REVIEWING A LOCALLY AGREED SYLLABUS IN THE LIGHT OF THE REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM

3.1 In order that religious education can be part of the single coherent framework for schools and that the agreed syllabus is clear, concise and manageable, LEAs should consider adopting an organisational framework similar to that used in the revised National Curriculum Orders.

3.1.1 In recent years many of the changes in the design of agreed syllabuses have been influenced by developments within the National Curriculum Orders, particularly in terms of the structure and terminology. The revised National Curriculum has provided a single coherent framework across all National Curriculum subjects. This aims to help schools raise standards of achievement and widen educational opportunity.

3.1.2 The framework of the revised National Curriculum Orders consists of:

- a general overview section that describes the structure of the National Curriculum and the common requirements
- programmes of study in a standardised form
- level descriptions that summarise the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should demonstrate.

3.1.3 Local education authorities are encouraged to use a similar framework for their agreed syllabuses. The section that follows demonstrates how the framework used by the National Curriculum Orders could be adopted as a basis for revising locally agreed syllabuses.

General overview section

3.2 A locally agreed syllabus should explain how it employs National Curriculum structure and terminology in setting out the requirements for religious education.

3.2.1 All National Curriculum subject Orders have a foreword describing the structure of the National Curriculum and providing a general explanation about key stages, programmes of study, attainment targets and level descriptions. This section clarifies terminology and structure and helps teachers to identify the main aspects of the subject Order.

3.2.2 As the majority of agreed syllabuses currently use much of the terminology used by the National Curriculum Orders, it would be helpful if agreed syllabuses provided teachers with an overview of the structure of the agreed syllabus for RE. An exemplar statement is provided on the following page.

Religious education syllabuses in Wales

Religious education is part of the basic curriculum. It is a statutory requirement for all pupils registered at maintained schools to be taught religious education as identified in the locally agreed syllabus. It applies to all registered pupils from those below the age of five to post-16. This means that religious education should be taught in the early years stage of development, the four key stages as identified in the National Curriculum Orders and education post-16.

	Pupils' ages	Year group
Early years	pre 5	reception/ nursery
Key Stage 1	5–7	1–2
Key Stage 2	7–11	3–6
Key Stage 3	11–14	7–9
Key Stage 4	14–16	10–11
Post-16	post-16	12–13

For early years pupils (registered pupils who are under five years old) the agreed syllabus sets out broad requirements for religious education that are consistent with the desirable outcomes framework.

At Key Stages 1–3 the agreed syllabus sets out programmes of study detailing what pupils should be taught. Attainment targets set out the expected standards of pupils' performance. At the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, standards of pupils' performance are set out in eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, with an additional description above Level 8 to help teachers in differentiating exceptional performance.

At Key Stage 4 and post-16, the agreed syllabus sets out either programmes of study or other guidelines on what should be taught. Students may be taught courses leading to appropriate external qualifications.

3.3 A locally agreed syllabus should mirror the common requirements of the revised National Curriculum.

- 3.3.1** The National Curriculum Orders contain a common requirements section, which includes an access statement for all pupils, that identifies how the programmes of study can be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. A similar formulation that applies to religious education is provided on the next page.

Access for all pupils

The religious education locally agreed syllabus provides teachers with greater flexibility to respond to the needs of pupils identified with special educational needs, including gifted and talented pupils. The statement on access for all pupils in the section on common requirements increases the scope for teachers to provide such pupils with appropriately challenging work at each key stage.

The programme of study for each key stage, as specified within the locally agreed syllabus, should be taught to the great majority of pupils in the key stage, in ways appropriate to their developing maturities and abilities.

For those pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from earlier key stages where this is necessary to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age and experience.

For gifted and talented pupils material should be presented in ways that encourage further enquiry, research, problem solving and creative thinking. Material from programmes of study in later key stages may be used to enable such pupils to make further progress.

Appropriate provision should be made for pupils who need to use:

- means of communication other than speech, including computers, technological aids, signing, symbols or lip reading
- non-sighted methods of reading, such as Braille, or non-visual or non-aural ways of acquiring information
- technological aids in practical and written work
- aids or adapted equipment to allow access to practical activities within and beyond school.

Appropriate provision should be made for pupils whose first language is not English or Welsh.

Judgements made in relation to the level descriptions should allow for the provision above, where appropriate.

- 3.3.2** The common requirements in the national curriculum are signposted, by means of symbols, throughout the programmes of study, indicating the explicit opportunities for pupils to develop and apply these skills. Local education authorities may wish to consider using the symbols in preparing revised religious education syllabuses.

Common Requirements

Teachers should provide opportunities, where appropriate, for pupils to develop and apply the following common requirements through their study of religious education. The number and range of opportunities are for teachers to determine in the context of their school's scheme of work.

Where a statement or section of a programme of study is explicitly linked to a particular common requirement, this is indicated by means of one of the symbols below. The use of the symbol indicates that teaching the identified aspects of the subject will, at the same time, contribute to the common requirement.



Curriculum Cymreig

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.



Communication Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply their skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and expressing ideas through a variety of media.



Mathematical Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply their knowledge and skills of number, shape, space, measures and handling data.



Information Technology Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate in their study of religious education to develop and apply IT skills to obtain, prepare, process and present information and to communicate ideas with increasing independence.



Problem-Solving Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply their skills of asking appropriate questions, making predictions and coming to informed decisions.



Creative Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply their creative skills, in particular the development and expression of ideas and imagination.



Personal and Social Education

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of religious education to develop and apply the attitudes, values, skills, knowledge and understanding relating to Personal and Social Education.

The Programmes of Study

3.4 Local education authorities should consider adopting the common format used for the programmes of study of the National Curriculum Orders.

3.4.1 In the National Curriculum Orders each programme of study for every key stage in foundation subjects has been placed within a double page spread. This allows teachers easy access to the information required for a key stage, and because of the common format across subjects, teachers are better able to plan work across the curriculum.

3.4.2 Each programme of study has certain features consistent within and across all subjects. These are:

- a 'focus statement' that encapsulates what each pupil should be taught at each key stage
- the context/opportunity statement that indicates the contexts for the development of knowledge, understanding and skills or the opportunities that are provided throughout the programme of study
- a series of columns that set out clearly defined knowledge, skills and understanding for the subject, emphasising that the content of the columns should be integrated in relation to teaching and learning
- symbols that identify where the explicit opportunities for developing the common requirements are to be found
- examples that provide further details as regards the content

3.4.3 Appendix 1 illustrates how this format could be used to simplify and standardise the structure of agreed syllabuses. No examples are included as LEAs would provide their own examples of content as appropriate to their own locally agreed syllabus.

3.4.4 The spiritual and moral dimensions, that are essential to religious education, are made explicit in the context/opportunity statements for each key stage.

Appropriate assessment arrangements for agreed syllabuses

3.5 Local education authorities should consider adopting or customising the national exemplar level descriptions for religious education.

3.5.1 As a result of the revision of the National Curriculum, all subjects within the National Curriculum now use level descriptions to define standards of performance across Wales. In view of this development ACCAC has, in conjunction with representatives from each of the 22 LEAs, produced a set of national exemplar level descriptions for religious education. These can be customised by each LEA in accordance with locally determined content, while retaining consistent standards of attainment in religious education across Wales.

3.5.2 In the National Curriculum non-core subject Orders, standards expected of pupils' performance are set out under a single attainment target. In the national exemplar level descriptions below, a single attainment target has been used. This subsumes the three areas of study previously identified as separate attainment targets in locally agreed syllabuses:

- knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practices
- awareness of life-experiences and the questions they raise
- exploration and response to religion and life-experiences.

3.5.3 A general guidance statement on the use of level descriptions from the National Curriculum and the national exemplar level descriptions for religious education is set out overleaf.

General guidance on the use of level descriptions

The following level descriptions describe the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate. In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. Each description should be considered in conjunction with the descriptions for adjacent levels.

By the end of Key Stage 1, the performance of the great majority of pupils should be within the range of Levels 1–3; by the end of Key Stage 2 it should be within the range of Levels 2–5; and by the end of Key Stage 3 within the range of Levels 3–7. Level 8 is available to very able pupils and, to help teachers differentiate exceptional performance at Key Stage 3, a description above Level 8 is provided. The scale does not apply to pupils under five or at Key Stage 4, or to post-16 pupils.

National exemplar level descriptions for religious education

All statements made within the levels should be read as they relate to Christianity and the other principal religions as identified within the specific locally agreed syllabus.

Attainment target: religious education

Level 1

Pupils recall and respond to some basic beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied. They show some awareness that these aspects of religion are special. They talk about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion. They recognise that their feelings, actions and opinions may be similar to or different from those of other people. They use simple religious vocabulary appropriately, on occasion.

Level 2

Pupils recall and communicate simply some of the basic beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied. They suggest, in simple terms, why these aspects of religion are important to some people. They ask questions about their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, and suggest some answers. They talk in simple terms about their own feelings, actions and opinions and those of other people. They use simple religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 3

Pupils describe some of the basic beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied. They describe how some of these aspects of religion affect adherents' lives. They discuss the questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion, giving their own opinions. They describe their own feelings, actions and opinions and, in simple terms, comment on the viewpoints of others. They use religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 4

Pupils describe and begin to explain the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied. They give specific examples of the ways in which these aspects affect adherents' lives. They discuss their own and others' responses to questions about life, the world around them and religion. They explain in simple terms how their own feelings, actions and opinions differ from those of others. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately.

Level 5

Pupils make links between the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied. They describe the effects that these have in the lives of adherents. They explore some of the fundamental questions about life, the world around them and religion. They express and justify an opinion about these issues, in the light of their own experiences. They explain how their own feelings, actions and opinions affect their own lives, and describe how those of others similarly affect their lives. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a simple understanding of symbolic language.

Level 6

Pupils use the links between the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied to present a coherent understanding of what it is to be a practicing adherent. They describe some of the differing viewpoints that religious adherents have. In responding to fundamental questions, they draw on their own experiences and on a variety of informed sources. They explain the relationship between their own beliefs and actions. They also explain the relationship between other people's beliefs and actions. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate an understanding of symbolic language.

Level 7

Pupils apply a wide range of religious concepts to present arguments for and against a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices. They describe accurately a range of viewpoints held by religious people. They consider fundamental questions from a variety of religious perspectives and begin to draw reasoned conclusions. They consider the implications of their own beliefs and actions, compare these with other peoples' and draw balanced conclusions. They use a range of religious vocabulary appropriately and are able to explain the symbolic meaning of symbolic objects, actions and language.

Level 8

Pupils demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of religious concepts, including various perspectives on beliefs, values and traditions within the religions studied. They evaluate the various aspects of religion and explain how these affect the lives of individuals, communities and society. They consider fundamental questions drawing rational conclusions based on evidence gathered from relevant sources. They consider the religious concepts studied, examining their own and other people's viewpoints, through reasoned argument and evidence. They use a wide range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a developed understanding of symbolic language.

Exceptional Performance

Pupils analyse and give reasons for the different perspectives held concerning the beliefs, values and traditions of the religions studied, recognising the differences between religions and appreciating the tension of unity and plurality within each religion. They have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the behaviour and beliefs of adherents of various faith systems. They acknowledge that fundamental questions are often complex and that answers are often partial and inconclusive. In relation to the religious and moral concepts studied, they express well-considered opinions of the viewpoints of others based on in-depth investigation. They use an extensive range of religious vocabulary appropriately and demonstrate a well-developed understanding of symbolic language.

3.6 Local education authorities should provide clear guidance on how schools can meet the legal requirements for pupils at Key Stage 4 and post-16 and, where appropriate, identify specific qualifications that can provide external accreditation for their work at this level.

Key Stage 4

3.6.1 All GCSEs have been reviewed, following the curriculum reviews in England and Wales. From September 2001, awarding bodies will provide full and short course GCSE specifications, under the title 'religious studies'. The specifications will broadly follow the approaches provided by the current religious education (RE) and religious studies (RS) GCSEs. In planning how to fulfil statutory requirements, LEAs should advise schools as to which GCSE short course specification best matches the requirements of their own locally agreed religious education syllabus. The new specifications also allow for pupils to extend their study of religious education as a statutory requirement to a full course GCSE. Schools may also continue to offer the optional full course following the existing RS approach.

3.6.2 Local education authorities should consider recommending one or more of the following options to schools:

- to offer a short course in RS, in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, with GCSE accreditation for all or most pupils
- to offer a short course in RS as a statutory RE programme for many pupils, with 'topping up' for some to a full course GCSE
- to maintain their existing statutory RE programme according to the locally agreed syllabus, and offering, as an option, a short course or a full course GCSE in RS.

Post-16

- 3.6.3** With the revisions made at GCSE and the new AS/A level, there is a wider range of options available to accredit the requirements of locally agreed syllabuses for registered pupils. Local education authorities should advise schools on the specification that best matches the requirements of their own locally agreed syllabus. Schools may continue to offer the optional A/AS level, following the existing RS approach.
- 3.6.4** Local education authorities should consider recommending one or more of the following options to schools:
- to offer a 'top up' of the short course studied in Years 10–11, to convert the original short course into a full GCSE in RS in Years 12–13
 - to offer an AS level course in RS, in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, to be studied over a single year or two years during Years 12–13
 - to maintain their existing statutory RE programme according to the locally agreed syllabus, and offer, as an option, an AS course or a full A level.

APPENDIX 1 – AN EXEMPLAR FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Key Stage 1: Exemplar programme of study

Focus statement

At Key Stage 1, pupils should be given opportunities to explore how Christians and members of other religions express their faith through worship, celebration and daily life. They should be taught how sacred books and important religious figures from the past and present are important sources of authority, and should become familiar with key stories and events from Christianity and other faiths. Pupils should be given opportunities to develop an awareness of themselves, their relationships with others and the natural world around them. They should be encouraged to develop a positive and questioning approach to religious responses. They should be taught to respect the beliefs of others and to express their own opinions and feelings with sensitivity and imagination.

Knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice

In relation to the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and the other principal religions studied pupils should be taught about:

- places of worship, acts of worship, festivals and celebrations in a variety of ways, including practical experiences of such things as visits, music, food, visitors, etc.
- religious stories from the past and present, including, where appropriate, selected passages from holy books
- the importance of special customs and rules that religious people follow as part of their daily lives
- stories of how religion affects people's lifestyle.

Pupils should be taught to:

- recognise that certain religious events, objects and activities are special to some people
- use ICT and other means, to gain access to information and to communicate ideas.



Awareness of life experiences and the questions they raise

Pupils should be taught about:

- how and why religions show concern and care for living things and the natural world
- ways in which religions show concern for others
- ways in which religions use objects, stories, poems, art, movement, etc., to help them express important beliefs and ideas.



Pupils should be taught to:

- recognise that religion has changed the lives of people both past and present
- ask important religious and moral questions, with encouragement to respond personally to these questions.



The context/opportunity statement

Pupils should be taught about:

- Christianity and the other principal religions in Great Britain, considering one tradition from within the religion(s) studied
- specific aspects of religion, e.g. *worship, celebration, stories, lifestyle, authority, the natural world, questions of meaning, relationships*
- religion in the local community and in Wales, past and present
- some spiritual and moral aspects based on the pupils' personal experiences.



Exploring and responding to religion and life experiences

Pupils should be taught to:

- express their own ideas and feelings in a variety of ways
- use simple religious language appropriately
- listen to and respect the opinions of others.



Key Stage 2: Exemplar programme of study

Focus statement

At Key Stage 2, pupils should be given opportunities to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at Key Stage 1. Pupils should be taught about the main features of worship, celebration and daily life for adherents and the main sources of authority recognising their significance for Christians and members of other religions. They should be taught to identify the beliefs, teachings and practice of adherents and be given opportunities to explore the links between these aspects of religion. They should be given opportunities to identify and explore some of the fundamental religious and moral questions raised and consider them in relation to their own experiences, their relationships with others and the natural world. They should be given opportunities to express their own feelings and opinions and to identify how their actions may affect others, recognising, in a positive way, that other peoples' viewpoints differ from their own.

Knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice

In relation to the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and the other principal religions studied pupils should be taught about:

- features of religious buildings and the worship and celebrations that take place within the special places and within the home
- different forms of authority expressed through religious stories, sacred texts, and religious leaders (including their influence on adherents)
- religious rules and customs, discovering how they were developed and how adherents, past and present, put them into practice
- ways in which adherents share beliefs and practices with others in order to create a sense of belonging and community.

Pupils should be taught to:

- recognise how religion affects the lives of adherents, recognising similarities and differences within and across religions
- understand the links between belief, teaching and practice to provide a greater depth of meaning to religious ideas
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information and to communicate ideas and present religious materials.



Awareness of life experiences and the questions they raise

Pupils should be taught about:

- the journey of life and how the various stages are acknowledged and celebrated in religion
- relationships between the natural world and human beings
- ways in which religions show concern and responsibility for the natural world and for other living things
- the importance that religion places on personal relationships and concern for others
- ways in which religion can change people's lives and/or attitudes.



Pupils should be taught to:

- recognise that there is a spiritual side to life that can provide people with comfort in times of need or focus in times of joy
- recognise that some symbolic objects, actions and language express hidden meaning
- ask and respond to important religious and moral questions about the world and personal relationships.



The context/opportunity statement

Pupils should be taught about:

- Christianity and the other principal religions in Great Britain, considering one or more tradition within each religion studied
- aspects of religion dealt with at Key Stage 1 but at a greater breadth and depth and taken from a different perspective or religion, e.g. *worship, celebration, stories, lifestyle, authority, the natural world, questions of meaning, relationships*
- some important historical and contemporary i) religious figures and ii) religious groups in Wales
- some spiritual and moral aspects of life and how these influence beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.



Exploring and responding to religion and life experiences

Pupils should be taught that:

- religious ideas and moral attitudes can be expressed in a variety of ways, e.g. *through language, symbols, dance, etc.*



Pupils should be taught to:

- express their own feelings and opinions through various means
- use a wide range of appropriate religious vocabulary
- provide a simple explanation to justify their own viewpoint
- consider and respect the viewpoints of others, acknowledging where they are similar to and different from their own.



Key Stage 3: Exemplar programme of study

Focus statement

At Key Stage 3, pupils should be given opportunities to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at Key Stage 2. They should be taught a range of knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other religions studied, identifying how the beliefs, teachings and practices culminate in a variety of expressions, traditions and values within each religion. They should be given opportunities to explore a variety of religious perspectives on life and relate these to fundamental questions that affect all humanity, such as suffering, death and morality. They should be given opportunities to explore the complexities of their own experiences, actions and opinions and recognise that these affect the lives of themselves and others.

Knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice

In relation to the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and the other principal religions studied pupils should be taught about:

- forms of worship and celebration that take place at different times of the year; the symbolic features of religious buildings and the worship that takes place within them
- celebrations, festivals and/or periods of religious abstinence and the significance of these practices for adherents
- the life stories of key religious leaders, including some of the issues involved in conveying religious authority
- the ways in which religions, individuals and communities demonstrate commitment and belonging through rules and rites of passage
- religious commitment, identity and belonging.




Pupils should be taught to:

- draw on a range of religious knowledge in order to present arguments for and against a variety of religious issues
- evaluate how various aspects of religion influence the lives of individuals, communities and society
- describe and give explanation for the similarities and differences across religions and/or between the religious traditions within a religion
- use ICT and other means to research relevant topics, communicate ideas and present religious materials in a variety of relevant ways.






Awareness of life experiences and the questions they raise

Pupils should be taught about:

- ways in which individual religions acknowledge the importance of taking responsibility for the natural world and living things
- contemporary debates about how religions view the natural world and value living things
- situations of conflict and reconciliation between individuals and groups informed by relevant religious teachings 
- difficult fundamental questions that concern all humanity, and the ways in which religions respond to these questions 
- religious symbolism and the various ways in which truth and meaning are expressed in religious literature, ritual, artefacts, etc. 
- traditional examples of religious, spiritual and moral experience and behaviour, as exemplified by religious founders, key leaders and adherents.

Pupils should be taught to:

- ask focused questions about religion and/or moral issues from the perspective of specific religions and from their own perspective 
- reflect on the difficulties involved when considering the fundamental questions of life 
- recognise and evaluate varieties of religious and spiritual experience and moral decisions that might affect their own lives and the lives of others. 

The context/opportunity statement

Pupils should be taught about:

- Christianity and the other principal religions in Great Britain, identifying some of the similarities and differences within and across religions
- aspects of religion dealt with at Key Stage 1 and 2 but at a greater breadth and depth, e.g. *worship, celebration, stories, lifestyle, authority, the natural world, questions of meaning, relationships, etc.*, and with greater emphasis on how these aspects interrelate within individual religions
- the ways in which religion has influenced Welsh society in the past and focusing on ways in which religious communities in Wales express their faith today
- the spiritual and moral aspects as identified within individual religions and ways in which these influence personal belief and behaviour.



Exploring and responding to religion and life experiences

Pupils should be taught about:

- religious people's beliefs, feelings, opinions and actions that affect and influence their lives
- various opinions that exist within a religion and across a selection of religions.



Pupils should be taught to:

- communicate religious concepts, personal opinions and ideas in a variety of creative ways
- explain how their own beliefs, feelings and opinions affect their lives
- use religious vocabulary appropriately with developed understanding of symbolic language
- consider a variety of responses to religious and moral issues and draw their own conclusions based on reasoned argument and evidence.



