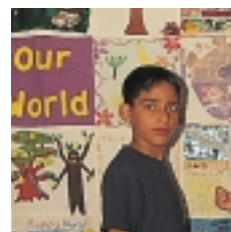


Religious education



Non-statutory guidance on RE

The importance of religious education

Religious education develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of, and their ability to respond to, Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. By exploring issues within and across faiths, pupils learn to understand and respect different religions, beliefs, values and traditions (including ethical life stances), and their influence on individuals, societies, communities and cultures.

RE encourages pupils to consider questions of meaning and purpose in life. Pupils learn about religious and ethical teaching, enabling them to make reasoned and informed

judgements on religious, moral and social issues. Pupils develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society.

Through the use of distinctive language, listening and empathy, RE develops pupils' skills of enquiry and response. RE encourages pupils to reflect on, analyse and evaluate their beliefs, values and practices and communicate their responses.

RE does not seek to urge religious beliefs on pupils nor compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another. RE is not the same as collective worship, which has its own place within school life.



thank you God
for fruit and

drink *In RE lessons you get to know a lot about other religions and it helps you understand the followers better. What I like about RE is that it is open-minded and condemns no one. RE is modern and deals with issues today and things that happen and some of us go through.*

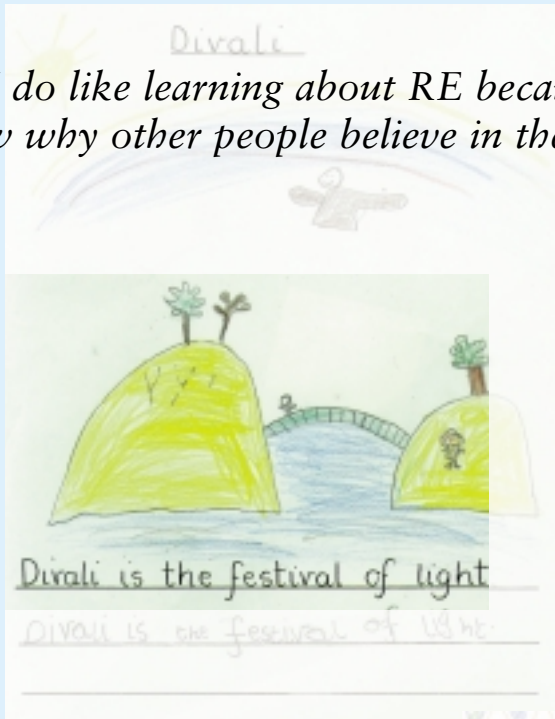
I felt very moved by Garvan and his strong faith, and the ending, although inevitable, seemed sad as he was good, honest and deserved to live, probably more than the rest of us.

I think that Garvan was very lucky to have a strong faith, as he knew that death wasn't a sad occasion but a happy joyous one where he is reunited with God and Jesus.

I have learnt new religious things and also about different religions and how they affect others. I like RE because it is interesting and challenging and one of the hardest subjects to learn.

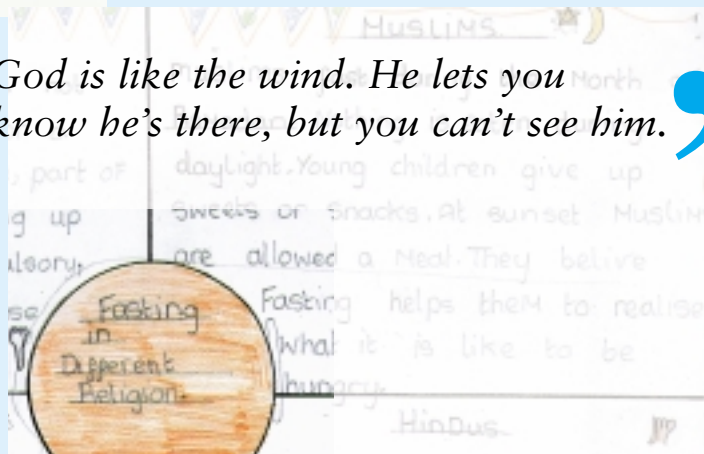


Yes I do like learning about RE because I like to know why other people believe in their God.



You can't put a value on any human being's life. Money can make you look big but inside's what matters.

God is like the wind. He lets you know he's there, but you can't see him.



These symbols are important they show people on the outside they are trying to be 'righteous'; this reminds a Jew everyday that he must rid himself of undesirable feelings, emotions & thoughts. Mezuzah and tephillin are both deeds that must be done in the Covenant between God and his people, the Shema.

I think that God is good and he is sending special people down to tell us how to live. God is bigger than the universe and he is all around us all the time.

Since doing this coursework my ideas about Christians have changed dramatically. Before I did this coursework I did not really appreciate how hard being a Christian is and how much effect it can have on people's lives. I can now see that being a Christian is not just something that people do on Sunday mornings and before they go to bed, it is a commitment which affects people's lives every day and influences every action that they make. I have learnt that being a Christian is not just about the superficial actions, it is a way of life.

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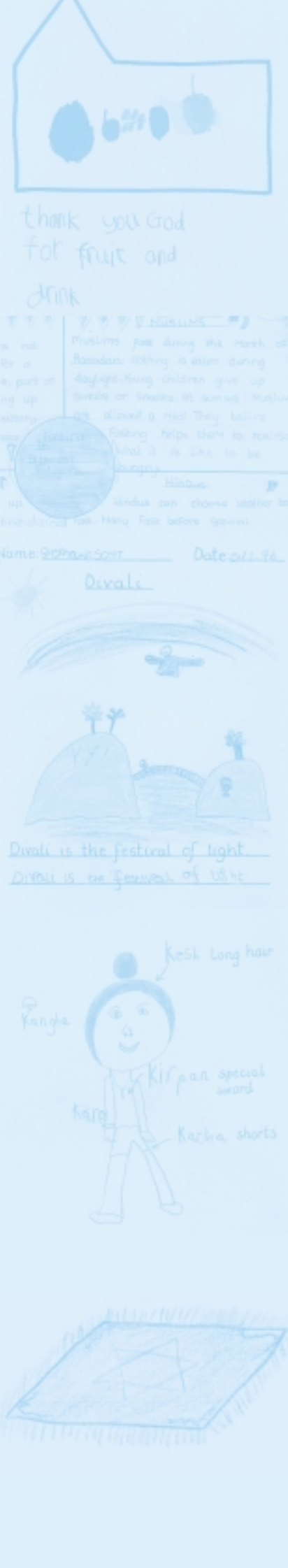
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Introduction

This guidance is in three sections:

- a non-statutory assessment scale for RE;
- how RE contributes to personal, social and health education (PSHE), citizenship education and the development of key skills and other learning skills;
- guidance on effectively teaching the attainment target 'learning from religion'.

Under the Education Act 1996 schools must provide religious education for all registered pupils, although parents can choose to withdraw their children. Schools, other than voluntary-aided schools and those of a religious character, must teach religious education according to the locally agreed syllabus. Each agreed syllabus should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

This guidance relates to RE taught according to a locally agreed syllabus, but it may also be useful to those planning RE in other schools. It supports guidance previously published by QCA on the teaching of RE (see the bibliography).

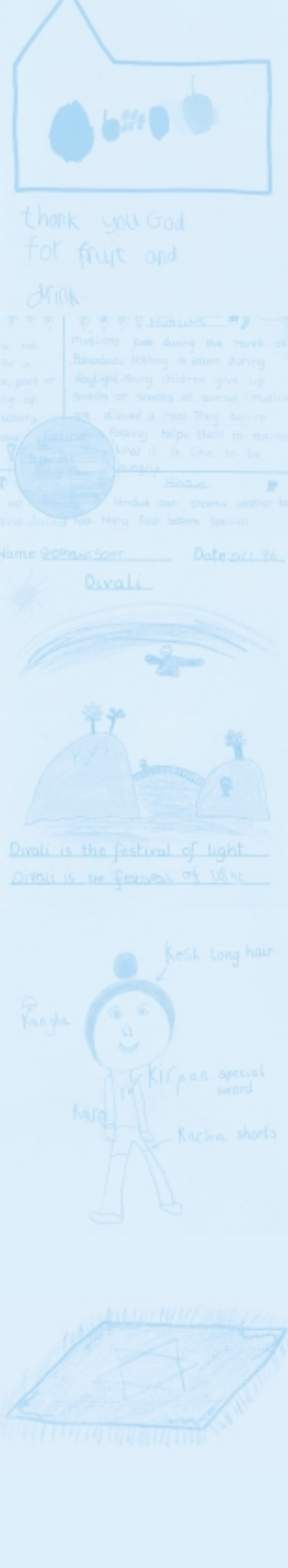
It will be useful to:

- agreed syllabus conferences;
- local education authorities (LEAs);
- standing advisory councils for religious education (SACREs);
- ITT institutions;
- all those involved in advising on, supporting and teaching religious education.

It was prepared by a group of teachers, advisers, inspectors, representatives of faith communities and others working together in 1998–9.

Purpose of this guidance

In September 2000 a revised national curriculum will be introduced in England. The legal status of religious education is not affected by this review. However, much curriculum development has taken place since the model syllabuses were published in 1994 by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (one of QCA's predecessor bodies).



For example, members of faith communities have contributed to producing new agreed syllabuses. These have led to work in classrooms on the distinctiveness of the principal religions in the UK and on the ways these religions interact with each other.

There is also much evidence about changes in the nature and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RE. Ofsted inspection reports and annual SACRE reports indicate that improvements in the provision and quality of RE in key stages 1 and 2 sometimes lead to changes in RE in key stage 3. The arrival of the GCSE (short course) in RE has greatly enhanced the provision of RE in key stage 4.

This document builds on the model syllabuses and gives further guidance on the effective teaching and assessment of RE.

A non-statutory assessment scale

The assessment scale is a set of level descriptors describing the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to have by the end of a key stage. It is not statutory. Some agreed syllabus conferences, LEAs, SACREs and schools have defined their own assessment scales. The aim of this scale is to help increase the consistency of assessment in RE and to improve standards of achievement further.

The scale can be used by agreed syllabus conferences, LEAs, SACREs and others when devising and implementing an assessment process for their own agreed syllabuses. It can also be used to help identify, monitor and raise standards in schools.

The contribution of RE to PSHE, citizenship, key skills and other learning across the curriculum

Every subject in the revised national curriculum has a short section on how the subject contributes to learning across the curriculum. This document includes similar information for RE.

Guidance on 'learning from religion'

'Learning from religion' is the second attainment target in the model syllabuses. Monitoring by QCA and Ofsted has found that many teachers lack confidence in dealing with it. This document provides guidance on teaching and assessing this attainment target and provides examples of lessons that teachers have used to cover both attainment targets.

Section 1:

National expectations in RE

The need for a national assessment scale for RE

From August 2000 all subjects of the national curriculum, except citizenship, will have a scale for assessing pupils' progress. Some LEAs and schools have worked out similar scales for RE. However, although valuable, these scales vary in nature, scope and demand.

To help improve the consistency and effectiveness of assessment in RE, QCA is providing the *non-statutory* scale below as guidance for agreed syllabus conferences, LEAs, SACREs and others.

This scale, as far as is possible, does not depend on any particular content; it may be applied to any agreed syllabus to develop progression in a consistent way. However, the scale does not represent all aspects of teaching and learning in RE. Areas such as personal beliefs, opinions and reflections are not included because they are inappropriate for assessment.

About the scale

The scale is based on the end-of-key-stage statements of the model syllabuses (published by SCAA in 1994). It also takes account of the work of the Forms of Assessment in RE (FARE) project carried out in 1993 and the eight-level scale published by the Association of RE Advisers, Inspectors and Consultants (AREAIC) in 1998.

The scale is structured around the two attainment targets in the model syllabuses – 'Learning about religions' and 'Learning from religion'. Each attainment target has been given three strands:

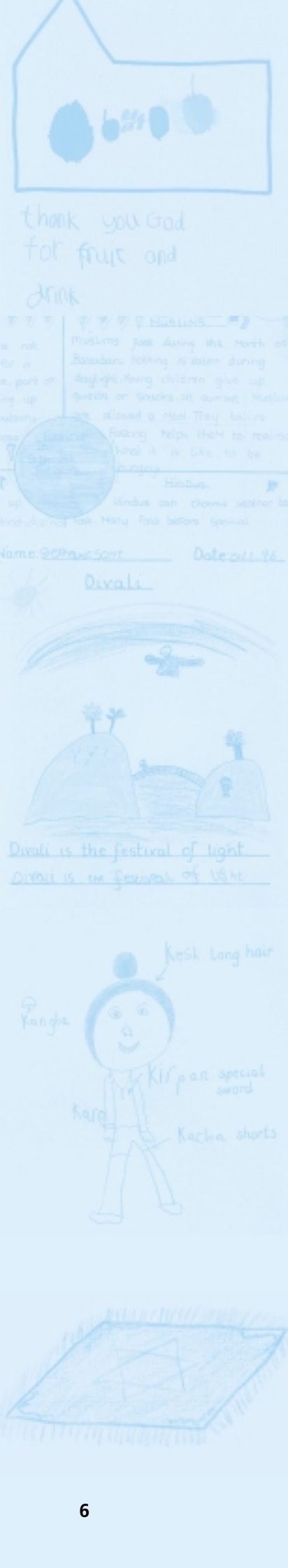
Attainment target 1: Learning about religions

- knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and teachings;
- knowledge and understanding of religious practices and lifestyles;
- knowledge and understanding of ways of expressing meaning.

Attainment target 2: Learning from religion

- skill of asking and responding to questions of identity and experience;
- skill of asking and responding to questions of meaning and purpose;
- skill of asking and responding to questions of values and commitments.

The scale is made up of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description of exceptional performance. Each level description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate. The level descriptions can provide the basis for making judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications (such as GCSE and GCSE short course) are the main means of assessing attainment in RE.



National expectations in RE, in prose

Level 1

- AT1** Pupils recount outlines of religious stories. They recognise features of religious life and practice, and some religious symbols and words.
- AT2** They identify aspects of their own experience and feelings, and what they find interesting or puzzling and of value and concern to themselves, in the religious material studied.

Level 2

- AT1** Pupils retell religious stories, identify some religious beliefs, teachings and practices, and know that some are characteristic of more than one religion. They suggest meanings in religious symbols, language and stories.
- AT2** They respond sensitively to the experiences and feelings of others, including those with a faith, and to other people's values and concerns in relation to matters of right and wrong. They realise that some questions that cause people to wonder are difficult to answer.

Level 3

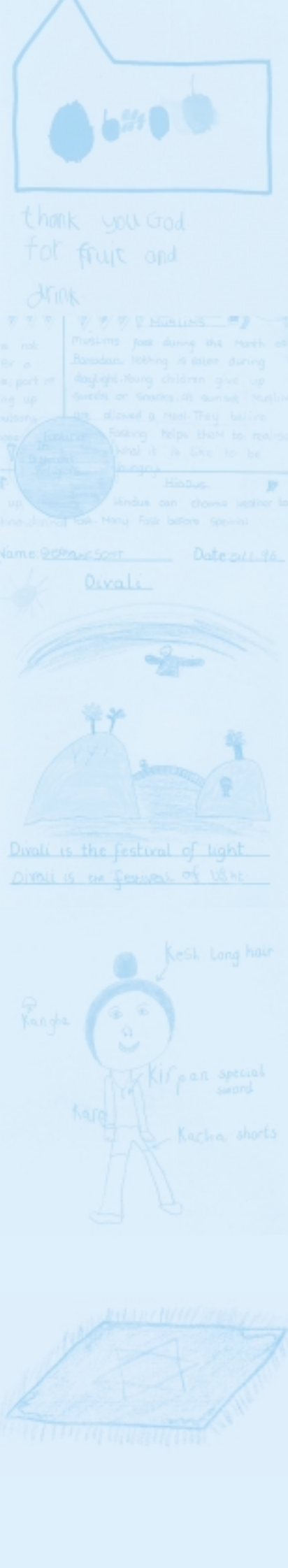
- AT1** For the religions studied, pupils describe some religious beliefs and teachings and their importance, and how some features are used or exemplified in festivals and practices. They make links between these and the ways in which religions express themselves.
- AT2** They compare aspects of their own experiences and ideas about questions that are difficult to answer with the experiences and ideas of others, and identify what influences their lives. They make links between values and commitments, including religious ones, and their own attitudes or behaviour.

Level 4

- AT1** Pupils describe the key beliefs and teachings of the religions studied, connecting them accurately with other features and making some comparisons between religions. They show understanding of what belonging to religions involves. They show how religious beliefs, ideas and feelings can be expressed in a variety of forms, giving meanings for some symbols, stories and language, using technical terminology.
- AT2** They ask questions about the significant experiences of key figures, puzzling aspects of life and moral and religious issues, and suggest answers from their own and others' experiences, making reference to the teaching of religions and showing understanding of why certain things are held to be right and wrong.

Level 5

- AT1** Pupils explain how some principal beliefs, teachings and selected features of religious life and practice are shared by different religions. They explain how these make a difference to the lives of individuals and communities, showing how individuals and communities use different ways to express their religion.



AT2 They make informed responses to questions of identity, experience, meaning and purpose, and to people's values and commitments (including religious ones) in the light of their learning.

Level 6

AT1 Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of the religions studied to explain how the principal beliefs and teachings, belonging to a faith community and religious expression vary among different groupings, denominations and traditions, correctly using technical terminology.

AT2 They respond to the teachings and experience of inspirational people, and religious perspectives on questions of meaning and purpose and on a range of contemporary moral issues by relating these to their own and others' lives.

Level 7

AT1 Pupils relate religious beliefs, teachings, practices, lifestyles and the forms of religious expression, including texts, figurative language and symbolism, to their historical and cultural contexts.

AT2 They evaluate religious and other views on human identity and experience, on questions of meaning and purpose and on values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.

Level 8

AT1 Pupils analyse and account for the varying influence of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and society, different views of religious practices and lifestyles and different interpretations of religious expression in texts, figurative language and symbolism, using appropriate evidence and examples.

AT2 They give an informed and well-argued account of their own and others' views, values and commitments regarding identity and experience, questions of meaning and purpose and contemporary moral issues in the light of different religious views and other views and feelings.

Exceptional performance

AT1 Pupils distinguish and investigate different interpretations of: the nature of religious belief and teaching, giving a balanced analysis of their sources, validity and significance; the importance for believers of religious practices and lifestyles and of the issues raised by their diversity within a plural society; and the meaning of language in religion in the light of philosophical questions about its status and function.

AT2 Pupils place religious, non-religious and their own views of human identity and experience, the nature of reality, and religious and ethical theories concerning contemporary moral issues, within a comprehensive religious and philosophical context, and make independent, well-informed and reasoned judgements about their significance.

Examples to illustrate national expectations in RE

level	AT1 Learning about religions Knowledge and understanding of:			AT2 Learning from religion Response, evaluation and application of questions of:		
	beliefs and teachings (what people believe)	practices and lifestyles (what people do)	expression and language (how people express themselves)	identity and experience (making sense of who we are)	meaning and purpose (making sense of life)	values and commitments (making sense of right and wrong)
	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils
1	talk about the ideas in the parable of the lost sheep	recognise that a synagogue is a place of worship for Jewish people	recognise the cross, the star of David, and the importance of celebration	identify ways in which they sometimes feel special	ask why religious people wear different things	talk about what giving presents means to pupils at Christmas
2	know that Christians believe in God as, for example, do Jews and Muslims	know that Muslims pray five times a day, and that Christians and Jews also pray regularly	say why Christians often think of God as Father	talk sensitively about why many people pray	talk about occasions when people are upset or sad, and why	talk sensitively about religious rules on not stealing
3	describe how Muslims believe Muhammad is God's messenger and that this means they follow Muhammad's teaching on prayer	describe how stories about important people in a religion are used in festivals and practices	know why the cross is the symbol of Christianity	talk about people and events that they admire and like, and why	compare their own ideas on why God cannot be seen with those of other people	talk about their behaviour and how it relates to what religious people think they ought to be like
4	know about and explain Christian belief in the triune God and how this is reflected in prayer and worship	understand how Hindus practice their faith at home and in the community, and that there are similarities with how Christians practice their faith	name, show and explain why Sikhs wear the five Ks	talk about the experience of the Burning Bush, and how they may have had significant experiences in their lives	talk about why things and people die, and how Hindus explain reasons for this	sensitively give their own views about vegetarianism and why religious people differ on whether it is right or not
5	explain how believing in God affects the behaviour of people of different religions and how it is seen in communities' practices	explain how going to worship regularly makes a difference to the lives of Jews and their communities	explain how the cross is used in different ways in Christianity and why	talk about the ways in which they understand their identity in the light of the existence of different religious groups	give an informed view on whether human beings have souls	make an informed response to a question such as 'Does charity begin at home?'



Examples to illustrate national expectations in RE continued

AT1 Learning about religions Knowledge and understanding of:		AT2 Learning from religion Response, evaluation and application of questions of:				
level	beliefs and teachings (what people believe)	practices and lifestyles (what people do)	expression and language (how people express themselves)	identity and experience (making sense of who we are)	meaning and purpose (making sense of life)	values and commitments (making sense of right and wrong)
	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils	Pupils
6	explain how the meaning of Jesus's teachings for today may vary among Catholics and Protestants	explain how Orthodox and Progressive believers understand and practice their Jewish faith	explain how and why a pilgrimage or rite of passage symbolises the commitment of a religious believer, using correctly technical terminology like Hajj, Ihram, confirmation	explain how the life and experience of Martin Luther King relates to their own and others' lives and communities today	explain clearly their views on why there is suffering in the world, and how they react to Buddhist teaching on this	explain clearly what Judaism teaches about divorce and relate this to their own and others' views
7	describe how and why there are similarities and differences between Sunni and Shiite Muslims	explain how and why the Society of Friends believe and practice their faith in the way they do	explain how and why the meanings of the creation stories in Genesis have been interpreted differently	evaluate religious, non-religious and their own views on 'a right to die', using appropriate evidence and examples	evaluate religious, non-religious and their own views on the origin and purpose of the universe, using appropriate evidence and examples	evaluate religious, non-religious and their own views on third world debt, using appropriate evidence and examples
8	explain how and why Hinduism varies among individuals and communities, using evidence and examples of different teachings on yoga	explain how and why Sikhism varies among individuals and communities, using evidence and examples of different practices and clothing	explain how and why Christians vary in their interpretations of the Bible, using evidence and examples of different views of authority	give an informed and well-argued explanation of where they think they are going in life, and what meaning life has for them in the light of different religious and non-religious views and feelings	give an informed and well-argued explanation of their own views on life after death in the light of different religious and non-religious views and feelings	give an informed and well-argued explanation of their own views on 'dying for what you believe in' in the light of different religious and non-religious views and feelings
EP	discuss the origin, development and meaning of the Apostles' creed	discuss the variety of religious festivals and their importance within a plural society	discuss the importance of analogy in explaining meaning in religious language	evaluate a proposition like 'it is the spiritual that makes us fully human'	evaluate a proposition like 'nothing is real except God'	evaluate a proposition like 'you are what you believe'



Section 2: Learning across the curriculum

Promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

RE provides opportunities for:

- *spiritual development*, through helping pupils to consider and respond to questions of meaning and purpose in life, and questions about the nature of values in human society;
- *moral development*, through helping pupils to consider and respond to areas of morality using their knowledge and understanding of religious and ethical teaching. This enables them to make reasoned and informed judgements on religious and moral issues;
- *social development*, through helping pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society;
- *cultural development*, through fostering pupils' awareness and understanding of a range of beliefs, practices and values in their own society and in the wider world. Pupils explore issues within and between faiths, developing their understanding of the cultural contexts within which they live.

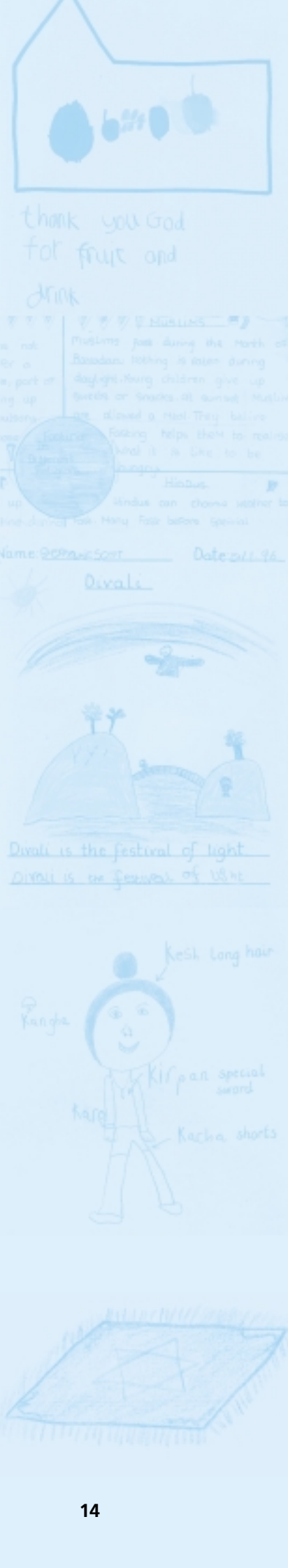
Promoting pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship

RE deals with religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin personal choices and behaviour (eg relationships), social policies and practices (eg crime and punishment), and concepts and patterns of health (eg use of drugs). RE looks at the voluntary and charitable activities that help to make up a healthy society and provide opportunities for the development of active citizenship and involvement in society.

Beliefs about the nature of humanity and the world influence how we organise ourselves and relate to others locally, nationally and globally. Issues in RE therefore contribute to social and political awareness (eg rights and responsibilities).

RE also contributes to pupils' understanding of Europe and the world. Religious and moral issues in RE are worldwide. It is not possible to understand the nature and significance of European identity without studying religion.

RE promotes the values and attitudes needed for citizenship in a democratic society by helping pupils to understand and respect people of different beliefs, practices, races and cultures. Similarities and differences in commitment, self-understanding and the search for truth and meaning can be recognised, respected and valued for the common good.



Promoting key skills

The prime purpose of using key skills in RE should be to enhance the quality of learning in RE.

Communication

In RE, pupils encounter a range of distinctive forms of written and spoken language, including sacred texts, stories, history, poetry, creeds, liturgy and worship. These are powerful uses of language, linked to fundamental human needs and aspirations.

RE has distinctive concepts and terminology, which stimulate pupils to use their language skills to reflect on their own experiences, and to help them understand and appreciate their cultural backgrounds.

In particular, pupils learn to talk and write with knowledge and understanding about religious and other beliefs and values; to discuss many of the fundamental questions of life; to construct reasoned arguments; to think reflectively and critically about spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues; and to present information and ideas about these issues in words and symbols. Moreover, RE emphasises that truly effective communication also includes an empathetic understanding of people and the issues that concern them.

Information technology

RE provides opportunities for pupils to use and develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In particular, ICT can support the activities of finding information about beliefs, teachings and practices and their impact on individuals, communities and cultures. ICT can help pupils to communicate and exchange information and understanding with others and to investigate and record data. Many faith communities use ICT on a worldwide basis.

Working with others

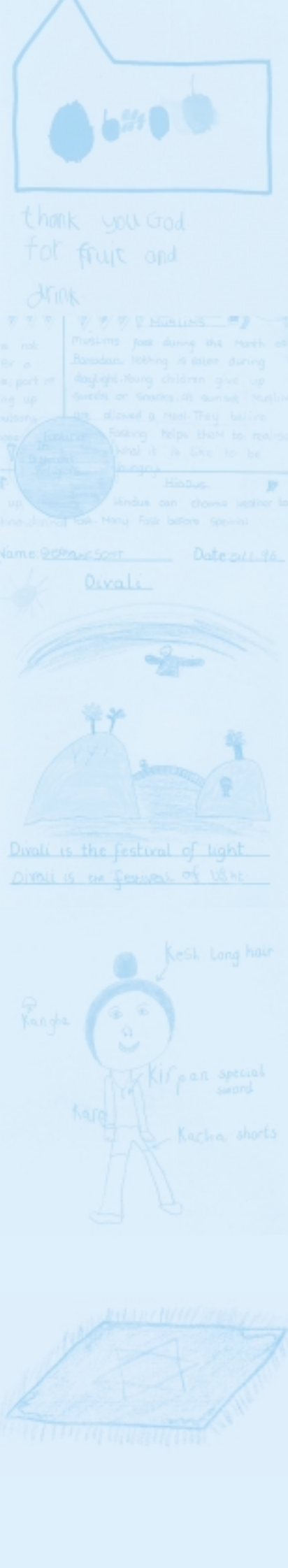
RE provides opportunities for pupils to work cooperatively, sharing ideas, discussing beliefs, values and practices and learning from each other.

Improving own learning and performance

RE includes learning about taking responsibility for oneself and others. The beliefs and values studied are the foundation for personal integrity and choice. Such study is personally challenging and relevant to many aspects of learning and achievement throughout life, including future careers.

Problem solving

RE deals with religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin individual problem solving and decision making. Examples include the areas of sexual relationships, bringing up children, striving for ideals, and facing bereavement.



Promoting other aspects of the curriculum

Thinking skills

RE is an academic subject, based on learning about and understanding Christianity and the other principal religions of Great Britain. The study of religion is a rigorous activity involving a variety of intellectual disciplines and skills. These include studying the sacred texts of the world; understanding the development, history and contemporary forms of believing; studying philosophy and ethics; and undertaking phenomenological, psychological and sociological studies in religion. Skills of research, selection, analysis, interpretation, reflection, empathy, evaluation, synthesis, application, expression and communication are promoted.

Financial capability

RE deals with the issues of the value and proper use of personal property, including money. These include means of acquisition, responsible use, taking care of others and giving to charity.

Enterprise education

How and why human beings work for themselves and others is a fundamental question of beliefs and values, to which learning in RE makes a contribution in its study of religions and other belief systems.

Creative thinking skills

The range of beliefs and values studied in RE cover questions of human nature and personality, personal fulfilment and vocation, sources of inspiration and discovery, and the connection between beliefs, values and the arts.

Education for sustainable development

How human beings treat each other and their environment and use the world's resources depends on their understanding both of the world's and their own significance. Such significance is reflected in the beliefs and stories about the origin and value of life.

Section 3: Guidance on learning from religion (attainment target 2)

The purpose of this section is to clarify what is meant by learning from religion (attainment target 2 in the model syllabuses), so that teachers may develop more confidence in promoting it. Monitoring of agreed syllabuses by QCA and inspection of RE by Ofsted both indicate that much of pupils' learning about religions is not accompanied by planned learning from these religions.

RE teaching is most effective when it includes learning about religions and learning from religion. Together, these topics develop pupils' awareness of what religion is about, including its function in human life. Pupils are unlikely to learn effectively from religion if they have inadequate knowledge and understanding of the religions being taught. But, to learn fully about religions pupils need to be involved in forming some kind of response to what is being taught.

What is learning from religion?

Learning from religion is concerned with developing in pupils the capacity and skill to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions.

Learning from religion allows pupils to make informed, reflective and personal responses based on their own experiences and values and engage with and interpret the views of others. They should interpret the significance of the data for themselves, for others, for their community and for the world. Pupils can do this in different ways and at different levels. Pupils can understand how believers in different religious traditions may interact with each other, not just historically but in contemporary ways, nationally and locally. Inter-faith issues can be explored.

Pupils should be able to make clear links between common human experiences and what religious people believe and do. Rituals, festivals, rites of passage, beliefs about God and the world – all these connect with common human experiences of awe, celebration, passage of time, a quest for meaning, purpose and value. Learning from religion requires pupils to see how such experiences are understood and interpreted in varying ways by members of different faiths and by those without religious beliefs. This plays a vital role in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Planning for learning from religion

For pupils to learn from religion effectively there must be a positive ethos of learning in the classroom. Teachers and pupils need to feel safe to make their responses and contributions from their own experience. A shared spirit of



thank you God
for fruit and

drink

Muslims fast during the month of
Ramadan. Fasting is easier during
daylight. Young children give up
sweets or snacks at sunset. Muslim
children allowed a meal. They believe
fasting helps them to realize
how hungry and it is like to be
hungry.

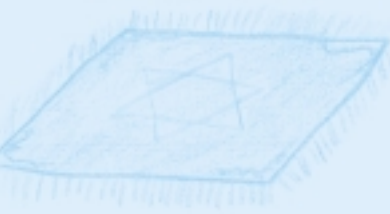
Hindu
Hindus can choose whether to
fast during the month. Fast before special

Name: Shahar Sait Date: 11/1/24

Diwali



Diwali is the festival of light
Diwali is the festival of light



genuine enquiry, openness and respect is important. The teacher's knowledge of, and relationship with, their class is crucial in achieving this.

Pupils need to have opportunities to respond to what they are learning, to evaluate it, and to relate it to their own experiences. Opportunities for learning from religion should therefore be planned so they occur at the same time as when pupils are learning about religions.

The success of learning from religion depends on teachers being able to:

- set an appropriate classroom atmosphere;
- use subject knowledge confidently;
- use a questioning technique effectively to elicit responses from pupils;
- be flexible in linking work in attainment target 1 with work in attainment target 2 as opportunities arise;
- be flexible in responding to pupils.



thank you God
for fruit and
drink

Muslims fast during the month of
Ramadan. Fasting is easier during
daylight. Young children give up
sweets or snacks all month. Muslim
children are allowed a treat. They believe
fasting helps them to realize
Allah's will and it is like to be
happy.

Hindu
Hindu can choose whether to
fast during the holy time before special

Name: Siddhant Date: 01/11/24



Diwali is the festival of light
Diwali is the festival of light



Keshi long hair

Kanga

Kiri pan special sword

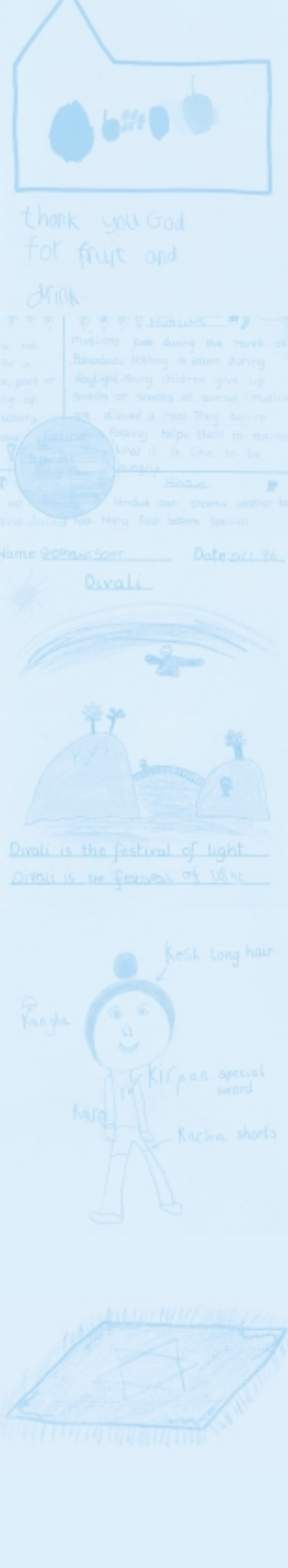
Kurti

Kacha shorts



Learning from religion: good and bad practice

Learning from religion is ...	Learning from religion is not ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ relevant to all pupils, regardless of their religious (or non-religious) background■ inextricably linked with attainment target 1, learning about religions■ about the concepts in religion(s)■ concerned with the active response of pupils to what they are learning about■ about helping pupils to apply the meaning and significance of religious ideas to their own lives■ about valuing pupils' own ideas and concerns■ sometimes about challenging pupils' own ideas and putting forward alternative views for consideration■ about developing skills, eg the skill of living in a plural society, and attitudes, eg empathy■ raising questions from religious teaching that speak to pupils' personal experience■ open-ended, allowing pupils to explore ideas■ about enabling pupils to draw their own conclusions■ assessable in terms of the standards of pupils' skills in making responses and evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ confined to pupils from a faith background■ free of religious content■ simply thematic teaching■ passive learning■ about promoting a religious lifestyle■ an invasion of pupils' privacy■ intended to be an opportunity to practise counselling■ value-free■ about providing pat answers■ dogmatic■ about providing set conclusions■ concerned only with measurable learning outcomes



Dealing with pupils' questions and disclosures

The nature of RE, particularly the second attainment target, learning from religion, may lead to pupils asking difficult questions or even making personal disclosures. Understandably, teachers can find such situations difficult to handle; it seems easy to say the wrong thing. This leads to a temptation to focus on the first attainment target, learning about religions, avoiding potentially difficult situations. However, this denies pupils access to those aspects of RE that are the most educationally rewarding.

Examples of difficult situations include pupils:

- asking questions to which the religions have no agreed answer, eg 'Was Jesus the son of God?';
- asking questions that raise difficult philosophical or theological issues, eg 'Why does a supposedly good God allow suffering?' (or more concrete and personal versions);
- asking what the teacher believes, eg 'Do you believe in God?';
- making comments or asking questions that reflect an offensive or unreflective approach to religion, eg 'Are you one of the God squad?';
- making disclosures that reveal personal faith commitments, eg 'I believe that the Qur'an is the absolute word of God';
- making disclosures that are personal, eg 'My grandma died yesterday';
- making inappropriate value judgements on the faith of other people, eg 'People who believe that are stupid!'

Such situations may be difficult for one or more reasons:

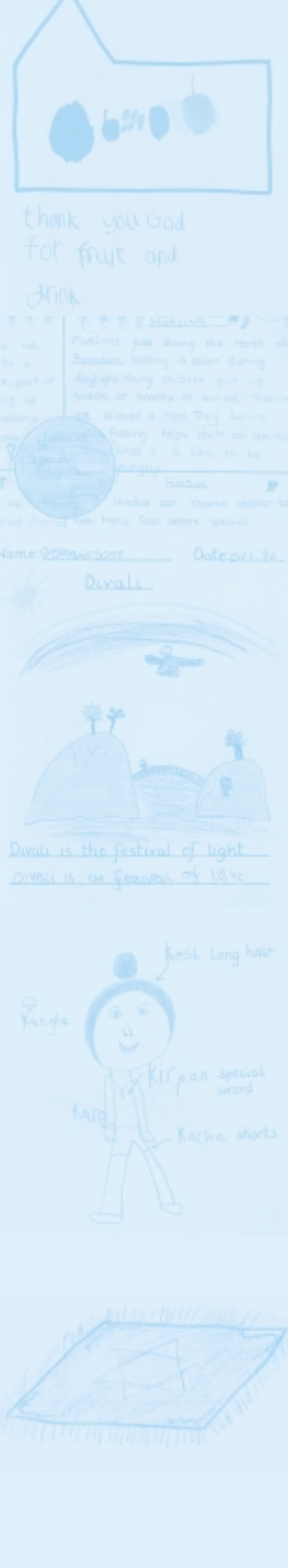
- they may cause upset or offence to other pupils;
- they may expose the pupil to upsetting comments;
- they may reveal misunderstandings that seem in need of correction;
- there may be no straightforward answer to the question;
- they may reveal an inability to cope with differences of opinion;
- they may be embarrassing;
- there may not be time to deal with them;
- the teacher may not have the training or knowledge needed to deal with them.

There are no 'off-the-shelf' ways of dealing with such classroom incidents. Teachers will need to use their professional judgement and sensitivity. The ethos of the school, and the contribution of RE to it, will be important in establishing the right climate for dealing with such questions and incidents. The following practical guidelines may be of help.



Practical guidelines

1. Encourage the use of 'owning and grounding' language such as 'in my opinion' or 'some Hindus would say'. This allows belief statements to be made in the classroom without everyone feeling they have to agree.
2. Treat the question or incident as a positive rather than negative event, wherever possible. Remember that it is the way the incident is dealt with and how the class response is managed that matters most.
3. Affirm the importance of the pupils' contribution, even if you don't agree with it, with phrases like 'I've often wondered about that too, that is an excellent question', 'You're not the only one who doesn't know the answer to that.'
4. Help pupils to understand that diversity of opinion and the existence of unanswerable questions are aspects of life that we all have to learn to live with. Education, age or intelligence will not eliminate all of these aspects.
5. Allow for the possibility of a range of answers or opinions. For example, use 'most Christians would probably say ..., but some Muslims would think differently, saying ...'. Encourage an awareness of diversity without undermining the pupil's own beliefs.
6. Use the situation to open up rather than close down conversation or thinking. Encourage a 'let's explore this together' approach in which the teacher is a participant, not simply an expert.
7. Encourage further exploration by suggesting other people that pupils could ask, eg faith community leaders, or places where they might find help, eg resource centre. In particular, affirm the importance of people close to the pupil, such as their family, their faith community, their friends.
8. Correct factual misinformation, wherever possible, without confrontation. But always respect the right of the pupils, their families and the members of the communities to which they belong to hold their own beliefs.
9. In the case of personal disclosure, the prime need may be for comfort rather than abstract discussion of any concepts involved. With some pupils it may be possible to suggest a follow-up to the pupil's disclosure (eg personal tutor), but without 'fobbing-off' the importance of it. If this is not possible, set the class an activity that provides time to attend to the pupil or allows the pupil some personal space.



10. Throw questions back for further clarification with phrases like ‘What do you think?’, ‘Can you clarify?’, ‘What would happen if ... ?’. Aim to keep the pupil pondering, rather than giving closed answers that seem clear cut when the issue is anything but clear cut.
11. Be as honest as possible without being ruthless. For example, it does not help to tell a pupil that her granddad has gone to heaven if the teacher does not believe that, or if it would be offensive to the pupil. But a teacher could tell the pupil that many religious people believe that. In these circumstances a teacher should not normally challenge a pupil’s belief. Keeping one’s integrity with sensitivity is important.
12. Let a discussion develop if it is being taken seriously by the class. But have a quiet or reflective technique ready to provide a suitable close to the discussion, eg a chance for the pupils to make a private diary entry or to make a personal resolution based on the lesson.
13. Never intrude into a pupil’s personal life. There should always be the freedom to remain silent in lessons where the discussion is intimate or deep. Teaching the whole class rather than small groups may reduce the risk of particular pupils being exposed to such intrusions.
14. Establish ground rules with the class for discussing controversial issues.
15. If a difficult issue arises, which is impossible to handle properly, return to it later when it can be dealt with in a more considered way.

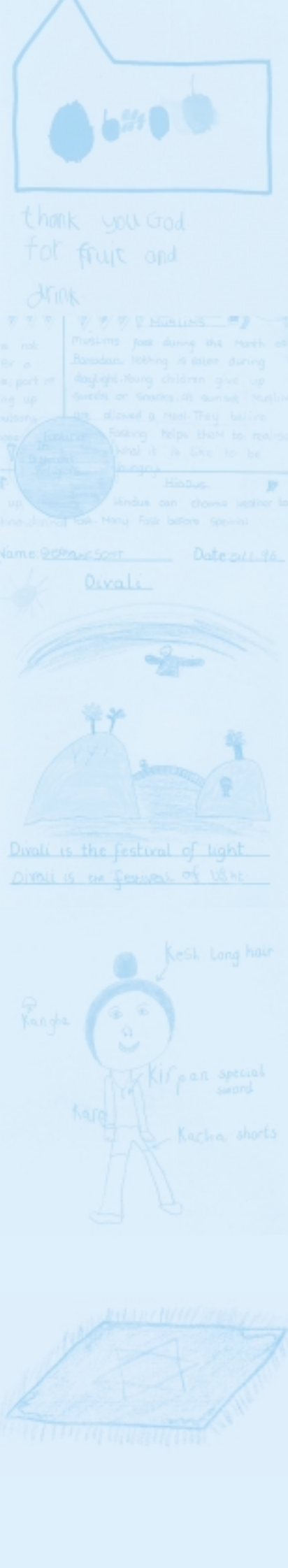
Teaching and learning approaches

The focus of learning from religion is likely to be on the ideas underlying the content being taught. Those ideas may be explored using small steps of enquiry and questioning to link the variations in religious belief and practice with aspects of human experience, allowing pupils to make a personal response.

Starting points and teaching approaches may vary, but could include the three approaches described on the next page. These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be mixed to form bridges between attainment target 1 and attainment target 2. Each approach provides pupils with opportunities to learn about religious beliefs and practices, express a response to them, and apply these religious beliefs and practices to human experience and vice versa. The contents of the approaches should of course be taken from the scheme of work or agreed syllabus.



Approach A		Approach B		Approach C	
Conceptual Starting with a key religious idea	Example The Incarnation – idea of God giving up his position to come alongside humans Giving up power/position to stand alongside other people, perhaps using a secular story The Christmas story – developing the idea of Incarnation Learning activity to allow pupils to express understanding of meaning of Christmas, eg a poem Reflective activity to encourage pupils to consider when they might step out of a position of power to stand alongside someone in need, eg gang in the playground	Ethnographic Starting with the religious believer's experience	Example The importance and use of the Qur'an Discussion of books that have influenced our lives Learning how and why young Muslims are taught in Qur'an school Reflect on which books are a good and bad influence. What is the difference?	Human or personal Starting from a common human or personal experience	Example Belonging to a community Belonging to a religious community Learning activity that explores belonging to religious communities Reflective activity to encourage pupils to consider what they gain from, or contribute to, communities of which they are part
Identify a key religious concept to be taught Identify a key aspect of human or personal experience to create a bridge to the religious concept Learn about an element of religious belief or a practice linked with it Respond to the new knowledge and understanding of this element Revisit, reinterpret, respond to the aspect of common human or personal experience	Identify an element of religious belief or practice from the life of a believer Identify a bridge between this and an aspect of human or personal experience Explore the practice and its meaning (concept) for the individual or community or tradition Revisit, reinterpret, respond to the practice and its human or personal experience parallel	Identify a key idea from human or personal experience to create a bridge to a religious concept Learn about an element of religious belief or practice linked with it Respond to the new knowledge and understanding of this element (concept) Revisit, reinterpret, respond to the aspect of common human or personal experience			



Teaching and learning opportunities and experiences

There is a wide variety of teaching and learning methods that are appropriate to learning from religion. Many are also appropriate for learning about religions. Some are illustrated below with examples of their use in learning from religion.



In all these opportunities and experiences, the effective use of questioning (both of and by pupils) is essential to secure learning from religion.

Assessing learning from religion

Though essential to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, not all aspects of learning from religion are assessable or measurable. The personal views, attitudes or emotions of pupils are not assessable and it would be intrusive to do so.

How well pupils demonstrate they are developing the skills of responding and evaluating is assessable. The level and characteristics of skill development vary with experience, education and maturity. An unthinking, dismissive response to an issue can develop into an informed, reflective evaluation that takes account of the insights of others in (re)considering one's own views. The steps in this process are described in the non-statutory eight-level scale for RE, published in section one of this guidance.

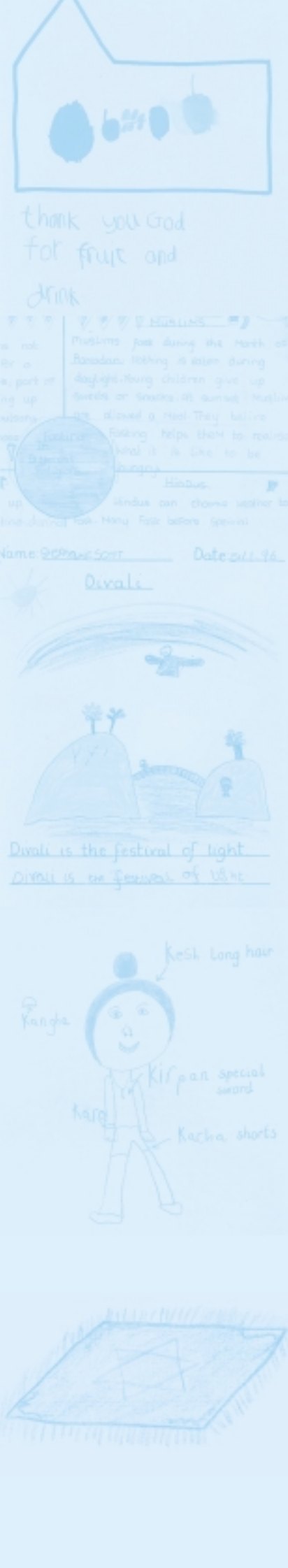
Not all assessment in RE consists of tests or external judgement. Self-assessment is particularly useful in some aspects of learning from religion.



Some classroom examples

The following examples illustrate a variety of approaches where teachers are aiming to promote both learning about religions and learning from religion. They include:

- an example of a lesson planning sheet;
- learning from a Muslim festival about celebrations and promises;
- learning from Christian prayer about expressing and reflecting beliefs;
- learning from a Sikh moral code about own values;
- learning from a Jewish festival about own experiences;
- learning from the five pillars of Islam;
- learning from Hindu beliefs about the life cycle to clarify own views on life after death;
- learning from Christians' beliefs about life after death to clarify own views on life after death;
- learning from one young Christian about expressing oneself.



An example of a lesson planning sheet

Lesson title	Class
<p>Learning objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skills and attitudes to be developed (including response). ■ Knowledge and understanding to be gained. ■ Opportunities for learning about and from religion. 	
<p>Classroom organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How to create the right atmosphere for the lesson. ■ How to arrange the classroom. ■ Use of music or other stimuli. 	
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What resources to use. ■ Where to put resources. ■ What variety to use. 	
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whether this will include personal response, pupils' human experience or religious material. ■ Use of open-ended as well as closed questions. 	
<p>Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ As appropriate for 'religious material being studied', 'personal response' and 'pupils' human related experience'. ■ Description of what will happen in the lesson. ■ Opportunities for pupils to link to the material being studied, reflect on it, express their ideas and encourage application. 	
<p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reinforcement of learning outcomes, with revision of knowledge and understanding and pupils' personal responses. ■ If appropriate, discussion of how the pupils will apply what they have learnt or reflected on. 	
<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Linked to learning objectives and outcomes. ■ By listening to discussion, observation, marking. ■ Notes on pupils' responses. ■ More formal assessment. 	
<p>Evaluation and future planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improvements to the lesson the next time. 	

Learning from a Muslim festival about celebrations and promises

Lesson title Id-ul-Adha		Class Year 1
Learning objectives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To learn the celebrations of the festival of Id-ul-Adha. ■ To consider the importance of making promises. ■ To understand the story of Ibrahim. 		
Classroom organisation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No special organisation needed. <p>[This could be part of a module on Islam or festivals. Islam will need to have been covered before this lesson is introduced.]</p>		
Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A book of suitable stories. ■ Information on Id-ul-Adha. ■ Card or paper to write promises on, and a box to post the promises in. 		
Introduction		
<p><i>Pupils' related experiences</i></p> <p>Discuss with the pupils what they would do if someone they cared for asked them to promise something. Wash up? Give up all their toys? Is there anything they wouldn't do?</p>		
Activity		
Religious Material Being Studied	Religious Material Being Studied	Personal Response
Read the story of Ibrahim and Ishmael. Why did God ask Ibrahim to do that?	Spend some time studying what happens at Id-ul-Adha, eg shopping involves buying new clothes, an animal is sacrificed and shared, a third of which is given to the poor. Draw two pictures to show what happens.	<p>The pupils make three promises to someone they care about. Write or draw them on a card to give to that person.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Promise to give someone something that does not cost money. Write the promise on the card and make a pilgrimage around the classroom to put the promise in a special box.</p>
Conclusion		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss promises the pupils have made if they are willing to disclose them. ■ Discuss why keeping promises is important. ■ How are they going to keep them? 		
Assessment		
Are the pupils able to make a promise? [This could be a verbal response.]		

Learning from Christian prayer about expressing and reflecting beliefs

Lesson title Christian prayer		Class Year 5
Learning objectives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To know the importance of prayer to Christians and understand the different types of prayer used by Christians. ■ To reflect on issues pupils would like to 'pray, meditate or think about'. To consider the ways in which the pupils choose to express thanks, and ask for things, whatever their beliefs. 		
Classroom organisation		
Lessons begin with whole class input. Pupils work in groups on Lord's prayer. Work individually on prayer/meditation. Stilling exercise in space on floor.		
Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pupils' prayer cards (available from Christian bookshops). Cut out bricks. ■ Christian prayer quotes. ■ Tape recorder and taped music for stilling exercise, possibly monks chanting the Lord's prayer. ■ Three feely bags (bags that disguise the identity of items but allow a child to feel the shape) containing sets of prayer beads. ■ Prayer book. Icon. A cross. ■ Version of Lord's prayer written by older pupils to be used by younger pupils. 		
Introduction: Religious material		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pass round the three feely bags with the prayer beads inside. Pupils each use a word to describe what is in the bag. ■ Put other items in the feely bags. Pick one child to say six things about each item. ■ Discuss each of the items. What are they used for? Why are they used? ■ Revision of work on types of prayer – intercessionary, thanks, worship/praise, confessional/sorry. ■ Revision of prayer positions for Christians. 		
Activity		
Religious Material Being Studied	Religious Material Being Studied	Personal Response
Pupils read out quotes written by Christians about prayer. Discuss meaning of prayer to Christians and any meaning within pupils' own lives of prayer or similar ideas. Read through the Lord's prayer. In groups, discuss meaning and use a colour to identify each type of prayer, eg green – sorry; red – thanks; blue – asking; orange – praise. Leave without colour anything they don't understand.	Bring class back together and discuss results. Find meanings for parts not understood. Read version of the Lord's prayer written by older pupils.	Individually write a meditation, reflection, or prayer for the millennium. Least-able group encouraged to use theme of thanks. More-able pupils encouraged to ensure all four types of prayer/themes are represented within their millennium prayer/meditation. With pupils' permission, read some examples of the prayers written.
Conclusion: Personal response Encourage pupils to think of something they are thankful for, would like to ask for themselves, or others, or something they would like to say sorry for. As they leave the room, silently, they write one thought on a previously cut out brick. They may 'pass' if they wish. These can be made into a 'prayer wall' display.		
Assessment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can they include the four types of prayer in the reflection they wrote for the millennium? Assessment through class discussion and reading. 		

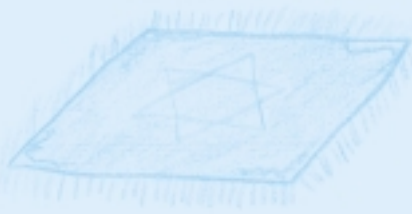


thank you God
for fruit and
drink

Muslims fast during the month of
Ramadan. Fasting is easier during
daylight. Young children give up
sweets or snacks. All around Muslim
world a real They believe
Fasting helps them to realize
that it is like to be
hungry.
Hindu
Hindu can choose whether to
fast during the Holy Day before special
Name: Siddhant Date: 01/11/20



Diwali is the festival of light
Diwali is the festival of light



Learning from Christian prayer about expressing and reflecting beliefs (continued)

Dear Dad...

Dear Dad, we love your name.

We pray it will be kept special.
You're the best king.
We pray you will be king of the whole world,
Just as you are king of heaven.

We will try to do what you want,
And pray that others will too.

Please give us our food today
And forgive us for our sins.
We will forgive those who wrong us too.

Please don't let us get tempted too hard
But set us free from evil.

Because you own the world,
And you own all the power,
And every beautiful thing praises you,
Now and until the end of time.

With love

The Lord's prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth, as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those
Who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil

For the kingdom,
The power and
The glory are yours.
Now and forever.

Amen



Learning from a Sikh moral code about own values

The text below was produced by a Sikh children's organisation to help young Sikhs to learn about the teaching of Guru Nanak. Teachers could use the text to teach about Sikh beliefs and values. Pupils could:

- pick out any points in the text they don't understand and clarify the meaning;
- consider whether these teachings would make a difference to the life in their family, classroom, town or country;
- discuss the reasons why people make and use moral codes like this one, and compare different moral codes;
- develop in groups some guidance of their own, perhaps '13 sentences to change the world';
- discuss whether moral codes help people to be good;
- consider how far they accept and agree with this Sikh code, and explore the reasons for their answers.

The teaching of Guru Nanak

There is only one God.

Worship and pray to the one God, and to no one else.

Remember God, work hard and help others.

God is pleased with honest work and true living.

Before God, there is no rich, no poor, no black and no white.
It is your actions that make you good or bad.

Men and women are all equal before God.

Love everyone, and pray for the good of all.

Be kind to people, animals and birds.

Do not fear.

Do not frighten.

Always speak the truth: God and truth are two in one.

Be simple in your food, dress and habits.

God is the end of which no one knows.

The more you say, the more it grows.



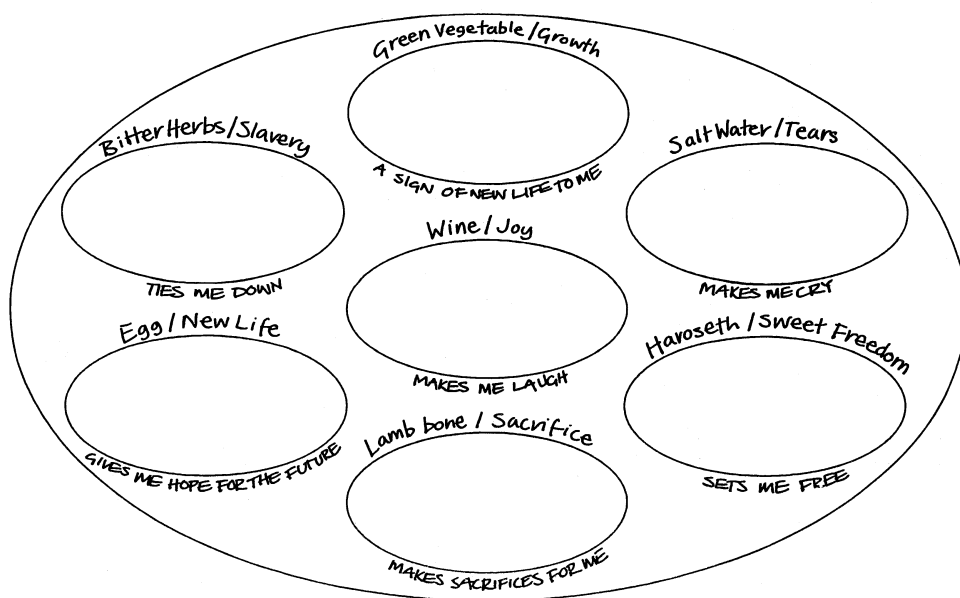
Learning from a Jewish festival about own experiences

A study of the festival of Pesach/Passover is a common part of the teaching of Judaism. Pupils will find many opportunities to learn about Judaism from the festival, the stories of Moses and the people of Israel that it celebrates, and the Jewish community today.

The symbolism of food and the Seder plate has links with the events of the Exodus, and also has broader links with the shared human experiences of celebration. This simple approach uses shared human experiences to develop opportunities for learning from religion. It is not the intention to imply that pupils' own experiences are completely like those remembered and celebrated in Pesach, but rather to open a conversation about the pupils' own experiences in the light of learning from Judaism.

The following activities might enable 'learning from Pesach':

- comparing the illustration (below) with a Jewish Seder plate;
- discussing the experiences of crying, laughing, hoping, liberation, being tied down, symbolising new life or having someone make sacrifices on their behalf;
- designing seven symbols for these experiences that relate to their own life and experiences;
- writing a story or poem based on a shared experience theme;
- expressing one of the themes in a drawing or illustration.





thank you God
for fruit and

drink

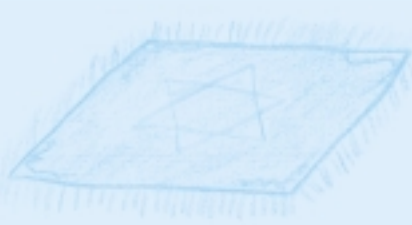
Muslims fast during the month of
Ramadan. Fasting is easier during
daylight. Young children give up
sweets or snacks at sunset. Muslim
children are allowed a meal. They believe
fasting helps them to realize
how hungry and it is like to be
hungry.

Name: Shahar Sult Date: 01/11/24

Diwali



Diwali is the festival of light
Diwali is the festival of light



Learning from the five pillars of Islam

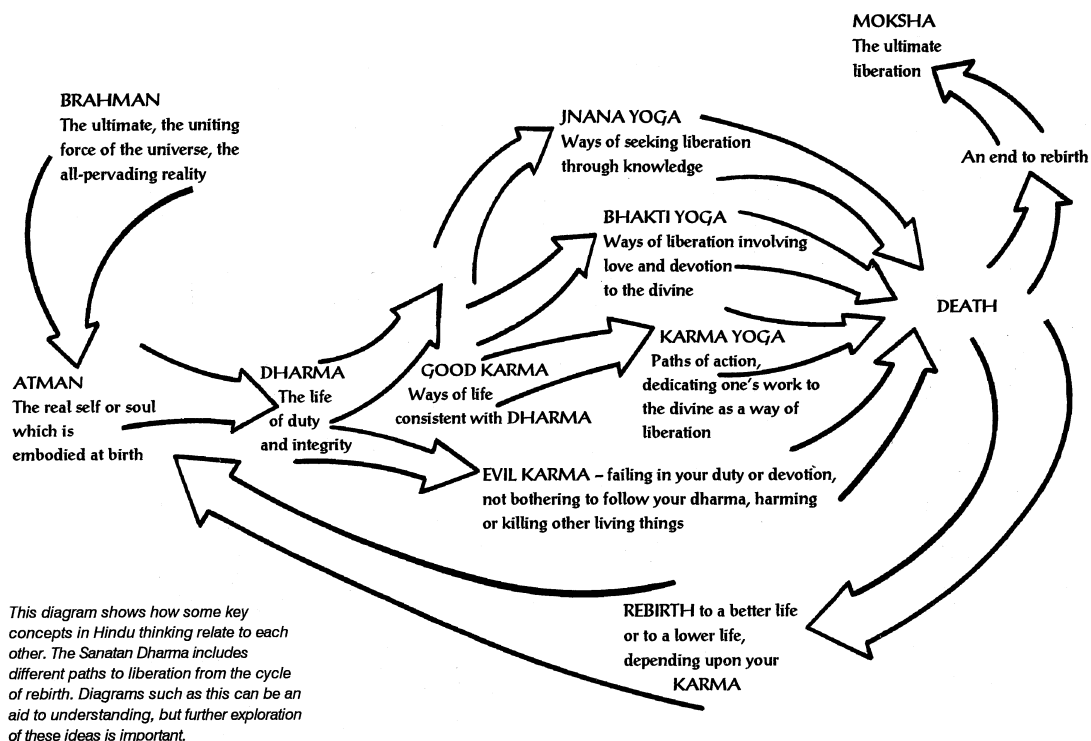
One aspect of the five pillars is that observance has a timeframe: all the time, daily, regularly, annually, once in a lifetime. This simple activity asks pupils to notice the observance of the pillars in the Muslim community. It provides an opportunity for pupils to make links between their own experience and the experience of most Muslims living their faith through the five pillars.

The table below might be helpful.

Learning about Islam	Learning from Islam
All the time, Muslims believe ...	All the time, I believe ...
Five times a day, Muslims ...	Every day, I intend to ...
Every week (or when they get their salary or wages) Muslims give ...	If I chose to be generous, I would ...
Once a year, for self discipline, Muslims ...	My ambition for the next year is ...
Once in a lifetime, Muslims hope to go ...	In my lifetime, I hope to ...

Learning from Hindu beliefs about the life cycle

The diagram shows, in a simple way, one view of the key ideas in Hindu teaching.



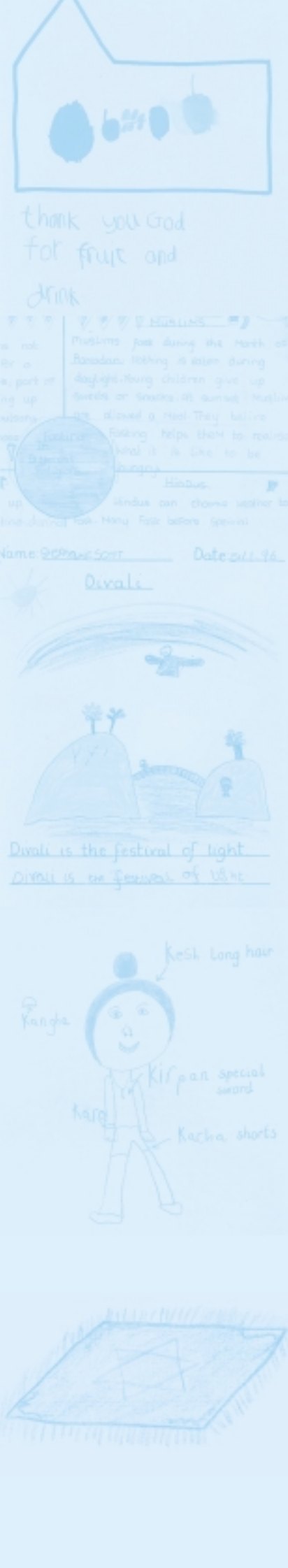
Ways of using the information

Pupils could be asked to:

- make a glossary;
- produce an illustrated chart with drawings and magazine cut outs of faces, people, activities for every stage and term;
- research the three paths of knowledge, devotion and action;
- explore and express their own visions of human life, good, evil, death and the ultimate liberation;
- work in groups to research another religion's teaching and produce a diagram of key aspects of belief;
- redesign the diagram as a flow chart or jigsaw or sequencing game.

In the light of their learning about Hindu belief, the activities aim to enable pupils to:

- clarify their understanding of their own responses to key questions about human life;
- develop and express their vision and perspective on life with increasing precision.



Learning from Christians' beliefs about life after death

The quotations below might be used to help pupils develop their understanding of the biblical sources for Christian belief about life after death. To bring out the potential for learning from the Bible, pupils might:

- brainstorm questions about the end of human life that they would like to put to a 'creator' or 'someone who knows everything' and consider the ways Christians might answer these questions;
- choose, develop or select seven sayings or quotations that express their own questions, ideas or views on the topic of life after death;
- write an essay exploring the teaching of Christianity, and offering reasoned responses from their own point of view.

Pupils might also study the viewpoints about life after death found in another religion, and draw up some points of comparison, divergence or agreement.

Life after death in the bible

I am the resurrection, and the life: whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies.
(Jesus in John 11:25)

This is how it will be when the dead are raised to life.

When the body is buried, it is mortal,

When raised it will be immortal;

When buried it is ugly and weak,

When raised it will be beautiful and strong;

When buried it is a physical body,

When raised it will be a spiritual body.

(Paul in I Corinthians 15:42–44)

There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you.
(Jesus in John 14:2)

... all that is left is to wait in fear of the coming judgement and the fierce fire which will destroy those who oppose God.

(Hebrews 10:27)

On the cross, Jesus spoke with one of the thieves crucified with him.

Thief: Remember me, Jesus, when you come as king.

Jesus: I promise you that today, you will be in paradise with me.

(Jesus in Luke 23:42–43)

The new heaven:

God himself will be with them, and He will be their God. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things have disappeared.

(John in Revelation 21:3–4)

The truth is that Christ has been raised from death as the guarantee that those who sleep in death will also be raised.

(Paul in I Corinthians 15:20)



Learning from one young Christian about expressing oneself

The questions for discussion and written work provide some opportunities for learning from Christianity. The final suggestions aim to provide pupils with a writing task through which they might clarify their own sense of direction and their own beliefs about purpose in life.

We asked James, who is 18, to tell us about why being a Christian is important to him.

“Like anyone else growing up today, I have to make lots of decisions about how to live my life. Media, friends and peers always tell us how to get a good time. Well, I’ve had the option to go God’s way, and God’s direction has been a lot more rewarding.

Last summer, I was lucky enough to go on a Christian mission in St Vincent, a Caribbean island which is socially and economically developing. We went as a team of young Christians, and did all kinds of practical work with the people there. We were encouraged to have a ‘yes’ attitude, to do anything and everything for God’s work. I was asked to talk about my faith in front of 250 people, something I’d never normally have done. I thought I would give it a try, and felt God was there with me, and helped me tell those people about what I’ve found: the excellence of following God. I came away with a new experience and a great feeling inside.

I often struggle to know what is right. I’ve always had a Christian upbringing, but when I was a young teenager I started to try and put God’s love in action in my own life. You have all kinds of temptations, life’s like a battle between what you want to do and God’s way. But sometimes doing what I want leaves me with regrets. I actually believe God has a purpose for all our lives, and for me that’s more exciting and fulfilling than my living selfishly.

If I let God rule my life, and have this ‘yes’ attitude to Him, then even if I feel small and insignificant, God makes it great.”

Questions for discussion and written work

Read James’s statement carefully.

- What kind of person do you think he is?
- Note down three things he likes about being a Christian.
- What does he mean by ‘having a “yes” attitude to God’?
- What do you think ‘having a yes attitude’ to life is?
- ‘God has a purpose for all our lives.’ What do you think?
- Make up three questions you would like to ask James if you could meet him. You might role play from this.
- Imagine you are asked to write about your beliefs and direction in life, as James did. What would you say? James has written about 250 words. Try to do the same.

Bibliography

Exemplification of standards in religious education: Key stages 1 to 4
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Model syllabuses for religious education: Model 1 Living Faiths Today
(SCAA 1994, reprinted by QCA 1998)

Model syllabuses for religious education: Model 2 Questions and Teachings
(SCAA 1994, reprinted by QCA 1998)

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We would also like to thank the many teachers, advisers, inspectors and others who collectively contributed to preparing this guidance.

About this publication

Who's it for?

For all those involved in advising on, teaching and supporting religious education, as well as agreed syllabus conferences, local education authorities (LEAs), standing advisory councils for religious education (SACREs), and ITT institutions.

What's it about?

This guidance is in three sections:

- a non-statutory assessment scale for RE;
- information on how RE contributes to personal, social and health education; citizenship education; and the development of key skills;
- guidance on effectively teaching the attainment target learning from religion, including examples of lessons.

Related material

Exemplification of standards in religious education: Key stages 1 to 4
Model syllabuses for religious education: Model 1 Living Faiths Today
Model syllabuses for religious education: Model 2 Questions and Teachings

What's it for?

The non-statutory assessment scale can be used by agreed syllabus conferences, LEAs, SACREs and schools when devising their own assessment scales.

The information on how RE helps learning across the curriculum can be used by teachers and others when planning schemes of work.

The section on learning from religion provides guidance on teaching and assessing this attainment target. It also provides examples of lessons.

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