

Diocese of Chester Religious Education Guidelines for the Primary School



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester



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They are provided for Church of England aided schools in the Diocese of Chester and controlled schools will find them helpful.

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Some material is taken from the National Society's publication, *Excellence and distinctiveness* (2005) and from QCA's *Non-Statutory National framework for RE* (2004).

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Legalities

- Every pupil has an entitlement to religious education.
- Parents must be advised of their right to withdraw pupils from RE in all church schools (including aided schools).
- In the event that pupils are withdrawn, schools retain responsibility for health and safety and are **required** to provide alternative work.
- Religious Education must be identifiable on the timetable, in order that the right to withdraw might be exercised.
- The Act of Worship is separate from RE, although each will support the other, and may not be counted as curriculum time for RE or any other subject.
- In an aided Church of England school Governors are ultimately responsible for the subject and they must ensure that their religious education syllabus is in accordance with ‘the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England’ and we recommend that they are based on these **Diocesan guidelines**.
In a controlled Church of England school RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus of the authority where the school is located.
- These guidelines **strongly** recommend that the majority of work should be based on the Christian faith, with the addition of another world religion at Key Stage 1 and two world religions at Key Stage 2.

The choice of the other world religions to be studied is at the discretion of the Governing body and Headteacher.

Using the guidelines

- The guidelines are organized around **two** attainment targets. There are programmes of study containing content overviews for each religion and guidance on assessment levels.
- There are glossaries for each religion.
- If a new religion is begun at Key Stage 2 it is recommended that some of the elements of the Key Stage 1 programme be included.
- These guidelines recommend that the majority of work should be based on the Christian faith, with the addition of one religion at Key Stage 1 and two religions at Key Stage 2.
- **In order to use these guidelines successfully, not less than 5% of curriculum time must be allocated.**

The Importance of Religious Education

To a Church school, religious education and collective worship should be seen as part of an integrated experience, with collective worship acting as an expression of what is taught in many RE lessons. Pupils gain a religious education in its fullest sense in a Church school through good, well-planned and well-organized collective worship, through the example of Christian teachers, and through the quality of RE teaching.

The Way Ahead, para 4.14

In Religious Education pupils should acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity **with particular emphasis on the practices and principles of the Church of England** gaining experience of what it is like to be a member of **Christian** and other faith communities.

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

Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.

Religious Education has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

The Aims of Religious Education

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

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

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

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

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

Therefore the aims of RE in church schools should be to help pupils to:

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

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

Learning about religion

We learn about:

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

Learning from religion

We learn from:

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

(Adapted from Excellence and Distinctiveness, National Society 2005)

Teaching about World Faiths and World Views

As 'schools of faith' Church of England schools recognise the common search of all humanity for ultimate truth and relationship with the divine. There is a divide between those with a religious faith and those for whom religion is meaningless. It is entirely appropriate and necessary in today's world, therefore, that respect for the great world faiths is fostered in RE within a church school. This respect must be based on an accurate and sympathetic understanding of the other faiths which is consistent with the school's loyalty to its Christian foundation.

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

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

Therefore RE in church schools should also help pupils to:

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

(Adapted from Excellence and Distinctiveness, National Society 2005)

Attitudes in Religious Education

The following four attitudes are essential for good learning in Religious Education and should be developed at each stage or phase of Religious Education:

- self-awareness
- respect for all
- open-mindedness
- appreciation and wonder.

Self-awareness in religious education includes pupils:

- feeling confident about their own beliefs and identity and sharing them without fear of embarrassment or ridicule
- developing a realistic and positive sense of their own religious, moral and spiritual ideas
- recognising their own uniqueness as human beings and affirming their self-worth
- becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.

Respect for all in religious education includes pupils:

- developing skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others' views are different from their own
- being ready to value difference and diversity for the common good
- appreciating that some beliefs are not inclusive and considering the issues that this raises for individuals and society
- being prepared to recognise and acknowledge their own bias
- being sensitive to the feelings and ideas of others.

Open-mindedness in religious education includes pupils:

- being willing to learn and gain new understanding
- engaging in argument or disagreeing reasonably and respectfully (without belittling or abusing others) about religious, moral & spiritual questions
- being willing to go beyond surface impressions
- distinguishing between opinions, viewpoints and beliefs in connection with issues of conviction and faith.

Appreciation and wonder in religious education includes pupils:

- developing their imagination and curiosity
- recognising that knowledge is bounded by mystery
- appreciating the sense of wonder at the world in which they live
- developing their capacity to respond to questions of meaning and purpose.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

The Contribution of RE to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

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

Spiritual development

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

Psalm 139.13-14

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

This is promoted through:

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

Moral development

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

Romans 12.2

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

This is promoted through:

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

Social development

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

John 13.34-35

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

This is promoted through:

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

Cultural development

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

Galatians 3.28

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

This is promoted through:

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

(Adapted from Excellence and Distinctiveness, National Society 2005)

Religious Education and Inclusion

Religious Education can make a positive and valuable contribution to inclusion, particularly in its focus on promoting ‘respect for all’.

The national framework for Religious Education (QCA 2004), contains references to the role of Religious Education in challenging stereotypical views and developing a positive appreciation of others.

All pupils should be encouraged to consider the impact of people’s beliefs on their own actions and lifestyle. The national framework also highlights the importance of religions and beliefs and how Religious Education can develop pupils’ self-esteem. Schools therefore have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.

Effective inclusion involves teaching a lively, stimulating religious education curriculum that:

- builds on and is enriched by the differing experiences pupils bring to religious education
- meets all pupils’ learning needs including those with learning difficulties or who are gifted and talented, boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, pupils from all religious communities and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups and diverse family backgrounds.

To overcome any potential barriers to learning in religious education, some pupils may require:

- support to access text, such as through prepared tapes, particularly when working with significant quantities of written materials or at speed
- help to communicate their ideas through methods other than extended writing, where this is a requirement. For example, pupils may demonstrate their understanding through speech or the use of ICT
- a non-visual way of accessing sources of information when undertaking research in aspects of religious education, for example using audio materials.

Schools should provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils. The National Curriculum programmes of study provide all pupils with relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage. It also sets out three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum:

A Setting suitable learning challenges

Teachers should aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. Teachers should teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit their pupils’ abilities which may mean choosing knowledge, skills and understanding from earlier or later key stages so that individual pupils can make progress and show what they can achieve. Where it is appropriate for pupils to make extensive use of content from an earlier key stage, there may not be time to teach all aspects of the syllabus. A similarly flexible approach will be needed to take account of any gaps in pupils’ learning resulting from missed or interrupted schooling.

B Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs

When planning, teachers should set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Teachers need to be aware that pupils bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way in which they learn. Teachers should plan their approaches to teaching and learning so that all pupils can take part in lessons fully and effectively.

To ensure that they meet the full range of pupils' needs, teachers should be aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation that covers race, gender and disability.

C Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

A minority of pupils will have particular learning and assessment requirements which go beyond the provisions described in sections A and B and, if not addressed, could create barriers to learning. These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a pupil having a special educational need or disability or may be linked to a pupil's progress in learning English as an additional language.

1. Teachers must take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of pupils to enable them to participate effectively in the curriculum and assessment activities.
2. Curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs must take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil. Teachers will encounter a wide range of pupils with special educational needs, some of whom will also have disabilities. In many cases, the action necessary to respond to an individual's requirements for curriculum access will be met through greater differentiation of tasks and materials, consistent with school-based intervention as set out in the SEN Code of Practice. A smaller number of pupils may need access to specialist equipment and approaches or to alternative or adapted activities, consistent with school-based intervention augmented by advice and support from external specialists as described in the SEN Code of Practice, or, in exceptional circumstances, with a statement of special educational need.

Teachers should, where appropriate, work closely with representatives of other agencies who may be supporting the pupil.

3. Teachers should take specific action to provide access to learning for pupils with special educational needs by:
 - a. providing for pupils who need help with communication, language and literacy
 - b. planning, where necessary, to develop pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences
 - c. planning for pupils' full participation in learning and in physical and practical activities
 - d. helping pupils to manage their behaviour, to take part in learning effectively and safely and, at key stage 4, to prepare for work
 - e. helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

The RE Programme

The Foundation Stage (ages 3–5)

Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage (QCA, 2000) sets out expectations of what pupils should learn to meet the early learning goals.



Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 (ages 5–14)

The knowledge, skills and understanding in RE are identified nationally by using **two** attainment targets which specify key aspects of learning.

AT1 Learning about religion

AT2 Learning from religion



The Allocation of Teaching Time

We recommend that in church schools approximately two-thirds of the RE curriculum time is spent in the study of Christianity and that other faiths and positions are covered in the remainder of the time (i.e. no more than one-third). This may represent a higher proportion of time on Christianity than is recommended in the agreed syllabus, but it is essential to fulfil the requirements of the distinctive Christian character of the school.

Attainment Targets

AT1 Learning about Religion

Learning about religion includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expression. It includes the skills of interpretation, analysis and explanation. Pupils learn to communicate their knowledge and understanding using specialist vocabulary. It also includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues. Learning about religion covers pupils' knowledge and understanding of individual religions and how they relate to each other as well as the study of the nature and characteristics of religion.

This includes identifying, naming, describing and giving an account of aspects of a religion in order to build up a clear picture. It involves explaining the meaning of religious language, stories and symbolism.

Explaining the similarities and differences between and within religions is a key aspect of this attainment target.

AT2 Learning from Religion

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflection on and response to their own and others' experiences in the light of their learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion. Pupils learn to develop and communicate their own ideas, particularly in relation to questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments.

This includes giving an informed response to religious and moral issues. It involves reflecting on what might be learnt from religion in the light of one's own beliefs and experiences. It encourages pupils to identify and respond to religious questions of meaning within religion.



The Foundation Stage

The foundation stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of reception at the age of 5. Religious Education is statutory for all pupils registered on the school roll. The statutory requirement for Religious Education does not extend to nursery classes in maintained schools and is not, therefore, a legal requirement for much of the foundation stage. It may, however, form a valuable part of the educational experience of children throughout the key stage, especially in church schools.

The contribution of religious education to the early learning goals

The early learning goals set out what most children should achieve by the end of the foundation stage. The six areas of learning identified in these goals are:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- mathematical development
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development.



Religious education can make an active contribution to all these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- creative development.

During the foundation stage, children may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They listen to and talk about stories. They may be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring religions and beliefs, practices and forms of expression. They reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world in which they live.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

The Foundation Stage

Examples of Religious Education–related experiences and opportunities

Personal, social and emotional development

- Children use some stories from religious traditions as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways.
- Using a story as a stimulus, children reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation. They learn about the story and its meanings through activity and play.
- Using role-play as a stimulus, children talk about some of the ways that people show love and concern for others and why this is important.
- Children think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

Communication, language and literacy

- Children have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences.
- Using a religious celebration as a stimulus, children talk about the special events associated with the celebration.
- Through artefacts, stories and music, children learn about important religious celebrations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- Children ask and answer questions about religion and culture, as they occur naturally within their everyday experiences.
- Children visit places of worship.
- They listen to and respond to a wide range of religious and ethnic groups.
- They handle artefacts with curiosity and respect.
- Having visited a local place of worship, children learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

Creative development

- Using religious artefacts as a stimulus, children think about and express meanings associated with the artefact.
- Children share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

Key Stage 1

Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn about different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognise that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, especially for other children and their families. Pupils ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world, using their imaginations. They talk about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences and developing a sense of belonging.

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

- 1 Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. explore a range of religious stories and sacred writings and talk about their meanings
 - b. name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities where appropriate
 - c. identify the importance, for some people, of belonging to a religion and recognise the difference this makes to their lives
 - d. explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts and communicate their responses
 - e. identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words.

Learning from religion

- 2 Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. reflect on and consider religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness
 - b. ask and respond imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
 - c. identify what matters to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
 - d. reflect on how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
 - e. recognise that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)



Key Stage 1

Breadth of study

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- a. Christianity
- b. at least one other principal religion
- c. a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- d. a secular world view, where appropriate

Themes

- a. believing: what people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- b. story: how and why some stories are sacred and important in religion
- c. celebrations: how and why celebrations are important in religion
- d. symbols: how and why symbols express religious meaning
- e. leaders and teachers: figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion
- f. belonging: where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- g. myself: who I am and my uniqueness as a person in a family and community

Experiences and opportunities

- a. visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings
- b. listening and responding to visitors from local faith communities
- c. using their senses and having times of quiet reflection
- d. using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination
- e. sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values and talking about their feelings and experiences
- f. beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

Key Stage 2

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Learning about religion

- 1 Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others
 - b. describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with, beliefs and teachings
 - c. identify and begin to describe the similarities and differences within and between religions
 - d. investigate the significance of religion in the local, national and global communities
 - e. consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expression, understand why they are important in religion and note links between them
 - f. describe and begin to understand religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
 - g. use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding
 - h. use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources.

Learning from religion

- 2 Pupils should be taught to:
 - a. reflect on what it means to belong to a faith community, communicating their own and others' responses
 - b. respond to the challenges of commitment both in their own lives and within religious traditions, recognising how commitment to a religion is shown in a variety of ways
 - c. discuss their own and others' views of religious truth and belief, expressing their own ideas
 - d. reflect on ideas of right and wrong and their own and others' responses to them
 - e. reflect on sources of inspiration in their own and others' lives.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

Key Stage 2

Breadth of study

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through the following areas of study:

Religions and beliefs

- a. Christianity
- b. at least two other principal religions
- c. a religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- d. a secular world view, where appropriate

Themes

- a. beliefs and questions: how people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives
- b. teachings and authority: what sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
- c. worship, pilgrimage and sacred places: where, how and why people worship, including at particular sites
- d. the journey of life and death: why some occasions are sacred to believers, and what people think about life after death
- e. symbols and religious expression: how religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
- f. inspirational people: figures from whom believers find inspiration
- g. religion and the individual: what is expected of a person in following a religion or belief
- h. religion, family and community: how religious families and communities practise their faith, & the contributions this makes to local life
- i. beliefs in action in the world: how religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment

Experiences and opportunities

- a. encountering religion through visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community
- b. discussing religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others
- c. considering a range of human experiences and feelings
- d. reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning
- e. expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT
- f. developing the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing pupils' awareness of religions and beliefs globally.

(Adapted from the Non-Statutory National framework for RE QCA 2004)

Key Stage 1: Christianity

Schools should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

Overview of Content

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ as love ▪ as loving parent ▪ as creator of the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of parents ▪ caring for the world ▪ reflecting on the beauty of creation ▪ understanding religious language
JESUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jesus as teacher ▪ Jesus as healer ▪ Christmas ▪ Easter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ following Jesus' example ▪ listening and responding to stories about Jesus ▪ interpreting symbols ▪ wondering about difficult questions ▪ caring for those who have special needs ▪ relating to feelings of personal loss
THE BIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ as an important book for Christians ▪ as a book which shows what God is like ▪ containing stories about people who worshipped God ▪ investigating different kinds of Bibles ▪ listening to stories about God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ responding to stories about God ▪ wondering about the thoughts and feelings of Biblical heroes and heroines ▪ following the example of special people
THE CHURCH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Church of England - the local church ▪ Worship: church building, music, art, design ▪ Pentecost ▪ being a Christian: baptism ▪ observing religious activities ▪ investigating church buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ experiencing and responding to beautiful artefacts in churches ▪ understanding that the Church belongs to everybody ▪ the importance of special things to themselves and others ▪ understanding symbolic language

Key Stage 2: Christianity

Schools should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work for Key Stage 2

Overview of Content

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning from Religion
GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ as creator and sustainer ▪ the power of God ▪ different concepts of God ▪ understanding religious language and concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assessing their own impact on the environment ▪ considering courage, betrayal ▪ interpreting symbols
JESUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Christmas, Easter, Ascension ▪ Jesus as teacher ▪ Jesus as healer ▪ the importance of Jesus in the lives of believers ▪ incarnation, forgiveness, trust ▪ assessing the importance of Jesus' teaching for Christians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ status: what makes people important? ▪ rules and values to live by considering inspiration ▪ reflecting on the lives of Christian believers
THE BIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Bible as artefact the history of its writing and transmission ▪ the language of the Bible story, poem and history ▪ science and the Bible ▪ investigating how the Bible has been transmitted ▪ understanding religious language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of wisdom: what will endure? what will fade away? ▪ expressing personal thoughts in a variety of language ▪ considering personal views on 'truth' ▪ expressing rational arguments
THE CHURCH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Church of England and the Anglican communion: the world wide Church ▪ being a Christian: confirmations, funerals, eucharist, marriage ▪ inspiration leading to action: Pentecost, the Early Church, local Christian history, Christian Aid, Tear Fund ▪ Harvest and the environment ▪ researching the worldwide Church of England ▪ researching other Christian denominations and Christian service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ considering global responsibility ▪ what it means to make a commitment ▪ serving the needs of others ▪ reflecting on ultimate questions



Key Stage 1: Buddhism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Buddhism as their second religion at Key Stage 1, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
THE BUDDHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Buddha's life as a prince▪ listening to and reading stories of the Buddha: Nalagiri and Angulimala▪ looking at statues of the Buddha▪ Buddha's concern to find an answer to suffering▪ how he reached perfection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ showing respect for all living things▪ feeling compassion for those who are suffering
BUDDHIST TEACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Stories of the Monkey King, the Hunter and the Monkeys▪ listening and responding to stories▪ Prince Vesantara the importance of reflection, meditation and stillness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ being generous and kind to others▪ being honest▪ the importance of stillness in their own lives
BUDDHIST COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ different ways of being a Buddhist▪ finding out about monks, nuns priests and laypeople▪ Buddhist worship▪ interpreting symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ caring for and supporting each other▪ identifying people with different roles▪ recognizing that thoughts and feelings lead to actions



Key Stage 2: Buddhism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Buddhism as a religion to be studied at Key Stage 2, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
THE BUDDHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buddha's birth and upbringing ▪ finding out about the festivals celebrating the life of the Buddha ▪ reflecting on the Buddha's attitude to wealth ▪ making a Zen garden ▪ the four signs and the great renunciation ▪ Buddha's years in the forest ▪ the Enlightenment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ finding ways to alleviate suffering ▪ personal attitudes towards wealth and success ▪ practising stillness
BUDDHIST TEACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Five Moral Precepts ▪ the Four Noble Truths ▪ the Noble Eightfold Path ▪ writing stories that express moral truths ▪ finding out how Buddhists live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ giving generously of time, food and abilities ▪ showing compassion ▪ express personal feelings about suffering
BUDDHIST COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the universal Sangha ▪ Buddhist communities in Britain ▪ find out about Buddhists around the world ▪ observe religious activities in a Vihara, or from a video ▪ self-discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of leading by example ▪ identify communities to which they belong ▪ reflect on the need for self-discipline



Key Stage 1: Hinduism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Hinduism as their second religion at Key Stage 1, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
HINDU BELIEFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ there is one God with many names and forms Rama and Krishna ▪ examining posters and images of Krishna, Rama and Shiva ▪ listening and responding to stories from the Ramayana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ choosing names for others that express their positive characteristics ▪ reflecting on good overcoming evil
HINDU WORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ puja in the home, the family shrine ▪ finding out about family life for Hindu children ▪ find out where India is and look at pictures and videos ▪ understand that Hindus come originally from India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of families and friends ▪ examining feelings about relatives who are far away
HINDU WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the festival of Raksha Bandan ▪ the festival of Divali ▪ Hindu weddings ▪ Making Indian sweets ▪ Understanding religious symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of care for brothers sisters and friends ▪ thoughts and feelings about light and dark ▪ the importance of family celebrations



Key Stage 2: Hinduism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Hinduism as a religion to be studied at Key Stage 2, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
HINDU BELIEFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reincarnation: the cycle of birth and death ▪ moksha: every action produces an effect ▪ the concept of avatar ▪ listen to stories of the childhood of Krishna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ respect for all life. Non violence and vegetarianism investigate the Wheel of Life ▪ wonder about what happens after death ▪ discuss heroes and heroines and their influence
HINDU WORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ worship in the Mandir ▪ pilgrimage ▪ the Arti ceremony ▪ the festival of Holi ▪ observe religious activities on a visit to a Mandir, or from a video ▪ interpreting religious symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identify special rituals in their own lives ▪ thinking of ways of bringing light into darkness
HINDU WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reading the scriptures ▪ Dharma: the stages of life and different duties ▪ research the names of the scriptures and identify some of the moral teachings they contain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identify and discuss which values are important to them ▪ examine feelings and emotions about the different stages of life



Key Stage 1: Islam

If schools choose Islam as their second religion at Key Stage 1, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

Overview of Content

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
BELIEFS ABOUT ALLAH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ using special names ▪ Allah as Creator ▪ learning that the Islamic word for God is Allah ▪ distinguishing between the natural and the manufactured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ finding ways of looking after the natural world ▪ using names kindly ▪ reflecting on the beauty of the natural world ▪ experiencing looking after living things
ISLAMIC TEACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ listening to some of the stories about the prophets ▪ learning that the Qur'an is the Muslim Holy Book ▪ treating a copy of the Qur'an with respect ▪ finding out about the life of the prophet Muhammed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ copying people we admire ▪ people who are special to us
ISLAMIC WORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ understanding that Muslims pray every day ▪ learning about Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cleanliness as a sign of respect ▪ special occasions in our lives ▪ listening and responding to stories about the prophet Ibrahim ▪ responding to pictures of the festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha
ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ knowing that showing respect is important to Muslims ▪ finding out about family life for Muslim children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ showing respect for each other ▪ showing respect for adults ▪ the importance of honesty



Key Stage 2: Islam

Overview of Content

If schools choose Islam as a religion to be studied at Key Stage 2, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
BELIEFS ABOUT ALLAH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Muslims believe that Allah is the Creator ▪ the meaning of shirk ▪ research the Qur'an on Creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ expressing feelings and emotions about the natural world ▪ assessing their personal impact on the environment ▪ considering which things might act as idols for them ▪ consider arguments for the creation of the world and reflect on their own beliefs
ISLAMIC TEACHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ learning how the Qur'an was revealed ▪ knowing that there are different sources of teaching ▪ assessing the importance of the stories of the prophets to Muslims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ considering which books and people have particular importance for them ▪ the importance of self-discipline ▪ responding to stories from the Sirah
ISLAMIC WORSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ knowing the meanings of Salah, Wudu, Zakah, Khums and Hajj ▪ researching Hajj 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ charitable giving ▪ reflecting on issues of poverty and wealth ▪ holidays and their origins
ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be familiar with and researching birth and naming ceremonies ▪ researching Islamic greetings ▪ worship in a mosque ▪ knowing appropriate behaviour in a Mosque 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ hospitality ▪ attitudes to those in authority and elderly people



Key Stage 1: Judaism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Judaism as their second religion at Key Stage 1, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
G-D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ one G-d, the Creator of the world ▪ Abraham and Sarah ▪ Jews speak to G-d in prayer ▪ reflecting on the beauty of creation ▪ understanding religious language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ finding ways of looking after the natural world ▪ showing gratitude
TORAH AND WRITINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stories of Joseph, Miriam, David, Daniel ▪ listening and responding to stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ being frightened, showing courage
JEWISH HOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sabbath ▪ investigating and planning a Sabbath meal ▪ finding out about family life for Jewish children ▪ Hannukah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ special meals ▪ the importance of families
JEWISH COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Synagogues ▪ Weddings ▪ special places ▪ experiencing a Jewish wedding ceremony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ community life and celebrations



Key Stage 2: Judaism

If schools choose Judaism as a religion to be studied at Key Stage 2, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

Overview of Content

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
G-D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ covenant ▪ Shema ▪ Prayers, mezuzah, tefilin ▪ the coming of the Messiah ▪ understanding religious language ▪ interpreting religious symbols ▪ listening to songs, psalms and prayers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ making promises ▪ reflecting on how belief affects lifestyle ▪ hope in the future
TORAH AND WRITINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moses and the Exodus ▪ understanding the importance of Passover ▪ researching the importance of Torah to Jews ▪ The Law and the Ten Commandments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ finding rules and values to live by
JEWISH HOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Succoth ▪ Food Laws ▪ Women in the home ▪ Beth Din, rabbis, cantors <p>finding out about the importance of worship in the home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ responsibilities and roles: men, women and children ▪ experiencing and responding to Jewish music
JEWISH COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rosh Hashanah ▪ Yom Kippur ▪ Bar/Bat Mitzvah investigating the importance of Bar/Bat Mitzvah to Jewish children ▪ listening to stories of children in the Holocaust ▪ Israel is a special place for Jews all over the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ feeling guilty ▪ reflecting on sin and forgiveness ▪ growing up ▪ sensitivity to the sufferings of others



Key Stage 1: Sikhism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Sikhism as their second religion at Key Stage 1, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God is the Creator ▪ finding out about the way Sikhs share ▪ all people are equal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ finding ways of looking after the natural world ▪ the importance of sharing reflecting on the beauty of creation
GURUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the life of Guru Nanak: the Bhai Lalo story ▪ Guru Gobind Singh ▪ listening to stories of the Gurus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ copying the people we admire ▪ discussing what we may learn from the lives of others ▪ making a personal response to the stories of the Gurus
SIKH COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sikh families ▪ the Gurdwara ▪ finding out about the lives of Sikh children ▪ observing religious activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the importance of families ▪ discuss their experiences of belonging to a community
SIKH WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sikh appearance ▪ finding out about Sikh names ▪ understanding religious symbols ▪ Marriage and Naming Ceremonies ▪ Sewa: service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ discussing signs of belonging to school, uniformed organisations etc ▪ family names and their meanings ▪ serving others before ourselves and reflecting on the Sikh understanding of service



Key Stage 2: Sikhism

Overview of Content

If schools choose Sikhism as a religion to be studied at Key Stage 2, they should draw upon the following areas of study for devising their school scheme of work

	AT1 Learning about Religion	AT2 Learning From Religion
GOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ God is One ▪ Creator and Sustainer researching the Mool Mantra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ all human beings are equal ▪ caring for the environment ▪ considering arguments for the creation of the world
GURUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guru Nanak, his call journeys and teachings ▪ Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa –listening to stories ▪ Guru Granth Sahib ▪ finding out how the Guru Granth Sahib is honoured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ considering which books and people have importance for them ▪ reflecting on what makes a good leader ▪ responding to stories of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh
SIKH COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ worship in the Gurdwara: ▪ kirtan, ardas and langar ▪ The Golden Temple ▪ Gurdwaras ▪ Sikh martyrs ▪ listening to a Sikh explaining Baisakhi ▪ researching the lives of Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ considering how the design of a building reflects beliefs ▪ understanding the place of pilgrimage ▪ redesigning the classroom to reflect beliefs ▪ considering the idea of life as a spiritual journey ▪ considering the importance of family celebrations ▪ standing up for what you believe
SIKH WAY OF LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ principles for living: nam simran kirat karma vand chhakna sewa hukam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identifying opportunities for service and sharing ▪ reflecting on the need for service and sharing

Assessment, Recording & Reporting

Assessment

Assessment can be an integral and useful part of planning, teaching and learning in Religious Education and it may take place on any occasion when students give evidence of what they understand or can do. Assessments can be matched to learning objectives and signposted in planning. It should be recognized that it isn't possible to assess all aspects of Religious Education especially as this includes aspects of spiritual development and personal viewpoints. In judging the effectiveness of Religious Education in school may find it useful to refer to the SIAS grad descriptors on page 14 of the appendix.

The QCA level descriptions (2004) do provide a basis and starting point for assessment between Key Stages 1 – 3. They provide guidance for teachers in assessing some aspects of their students' levels of attainment and can be/may be helpful in contributing towards ensuring progression and continuity across each Key Stage in Religious Education. (See Below)

The scale is made up of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description of exceptional performance. Each level description describes the type and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level might characteristically demonstrate. The level descriptions can provide the basis for making judgements about and reporting upon pupil performance at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. (QCA 2004)

Range of levels within which the majority of pupils are expected to work		Expected attainment for the majority of pupils at the end of the key stage	
Key Stage 1	1-3	at the age of 7	2
Key Stage 2	2-5	at the age of 11	4
Key Stage 3	3-7	at the age of 14	5/6

DEFINITIONS of Terms used currently in education reports:

1. Assessment *of* learning (summative assessment)

Assessment of Learning is any assessment, which summarises where learners are at a given point in time – it provides a snapshot of what has been learned (in terms of both attainment and achievement). Formally set assessment tasks set against a set objective, (summative assessment). These may be set over time for groups, individuals and classes.

2. Assessment *for* learning (formative assessment)

Assessment for Learning (AfL) is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. (Assessment Reform Group, 2002a)

AfL is any assessment activity, which **informs** the next steps to learning. The key message is that AfL depends crucially on actually **using** the information gained. This includes any ongoing day-to-day assessment, which records progress, (formative assessment).

E.g. Assessments may be recorded on medium term plans or through day-to-day observations and records.

Recording

Individual schools will need to decide exactly how to assess and record pupil achievement in line with their normal procedures. However, it should be possible to track an individual pupil's progress over time and show aspects of levels they have achieved. Teachers may like to keep a record of pupil achievement for some assessments. This might take the form of a celebratory portfolio. A record can be useful for teachers in building up a picture of student attainment over the course of each year and provide some aspects of evidence required for making a meaningful judgement of their attainment at the end of the key stage.

Reporting

In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment, teachers might use the evidence they have gathered from assessment tasks to judge which level description best fits the pupil's performance, bearing in mind that this is only a best fit practice and a definitive process.

Attainment Targets for Religious Education (QCA 2004)

Level 1

Attainment target 1

Pupils use some religious words and phrases to recognise and name features of religious life and practice. They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols, and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings, what they find interesting or puzzling and what is of value and concern to themselves and to others.

Level 2

Attainment target 1

Pupils use religious words and phrases to identify some features of religion and its importance for some people. They begin to show awareness of similarities in religions. Pupils retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. They identify how religion is expressed in different ways.

Attainment target 2

Pupils ask, and respond sensitively to, questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings. They recognise that some questions cause people to wonder and are difficult to answer. In relation to matters of right and wrong, they recognise their own values and those of others.

Level 3

Attainment target 1

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. They make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. They begin to identify the impact religion has on believers' lives. They describe some forms of religious expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils identify what influences them, making links between aspects of their own and others' experiences. They ask important questions about religion and beliefs, making links between their own and others' responses. They make links between values and commitments, and their own attitudes and behaviour.

The attainment targets for religious education

The level descriptions for

Attainment target 1:

Learning about religion refers to how pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

- beliefs, teachings and sources
- practices and ways of life
- forms of expression.

The level descriptions for

Attainment target 2:

Learning from religion refers to how pupils, in the light of their learning about religion, express their responses and insights with regard to questions and issues about:

- identity and belonging
- meaning, purpose and truth
- values and commitments

Level 4

Attainment target 1

Pupils use a developing religious vocabulary to describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences. They make links between them, and describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. They suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils raise, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They apply their ideas to their own and other people's lives. They describe what inspires and influences themselves and others.

Level 5

Attainment target 1

Pupils use an increasingly wide religious vocabulary to explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. They describe why people belong to religions. They understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.

Attainment target 2

Pupils ask, and suggest answers to, questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, values and commitments, relating them to their own and others' lives. They explain what inspires and influences them, expressing their own and others' views on the challenges of belonging to a religion.

Level 6

Attainment target 1

Pupils use religious and philosophical vocabulary to give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. They explain why the impact of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities and societies varies. They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues. They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues. They express insights into their own and others' views on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth. They consider the challenges of belonging to a religion in the contemporary world, focusing on values and commitments.

How to implement the Diocesan Guidelines and design an RE scheme of work

In an **aided Church of England School** Governors are ultimately responsible for the subject and they must ensure that their religious education syllabus is in accordance with ‘the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England’ and we recommend that they are based on these guidelines. In a **controlled Church of England School** RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus of the authority where the school is located. Controlled schools may find it the Diocesan Guidelines useful reference material.

RE subject leaders should become familiar with the requirements of the Diocesan guidelines and in consultation with the whole staff, or department, identify the requirements. They should ensure that their teaching material shows how both Attainment Targets are being covered and identify which teaching units will be taught in each year group so that continuity can be ensured both within and across the key stages.

These Religious Education guidelines **strongly** recommend that the majority of work should be based on the Christian faith, with the addition of another world religion at Key Stage 1 and two world religions at Key Stage 2.

The choice of the other world religions to be studied is at the discretion of the Governing Body and Headteacher.

An effective scheme of work should consider the following:

- How to implement the teaching units or themes;
- Which teaching methods and classroom tasks/activities/learning experiences are to be used;
- How to implement differentiation so that pupils’ different needs are met;
- Approaches to assessment (including marking) recording and reporting;
- Statements on cross curricular links, special educational needs and equal opportunities;
- Resources: budgeting, storage, accessibility.

In order to fully implement these guidelines we would like to recommend that schools select materials from a range of current and successful schemes of work. The schemes we would like to suggest schools consider using are the Cheshire County Council Exemplar Primary Scheme of Work and the Stockport Christians in Schools, ‘Primary Vision’ document both downloadable from www.cheshire-learning.co.uk and www.cist.org.uk respectively. These schemes can also be purchased from the respective organisations by contacting: Cheshire County Council, Woodford Lodge Centre (tel 01606 814315) or Christians in Schools Trust (tel 0161 285 0346). A selection of material from different schemes can be used and adapted to suit individual school situations and mixed age school rolling programmes. Ultimately RE subject leaders are free to select material that is considered suitable from any available scheme as long as the overall content is of good quality. We do suggest that schools ensure the content chosen matches the Diocesan guidelines.

Continuity and progression should be considered when selecting and using a particular scheme and this can be achieved through a process of ‘building on.’ An example would be the development of work on festivals and religious celebration. Pupils should initially explore festival stories, customs and traditions and as they progress they should relate these to central beliefs in religious traditions e.g. incarnation and salvation. A growing awareness of religious concepts and moral issues; opportunity to reflect on questions of meaning; opportunities to extend their religious vocabulary and language, and their ability to recognise and use technical terms and symbols should all be considered when planning for continuity and progression across each key stage.

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RE Medium Term Planning Matrix					Key Stage __	Year __	_____ Term	No. of Weeks __
Learning Objectives	Suggested Activities			Learning Outcomes	Resources/ Key Vocabulary			
	AT1 Learning About Religion AT2 Learning from religion			<i>By the end of this unit:</i> <i>Most children will be able to:</i> <i>Some children will only be able to:</i> <i>More able children will also:</i>				
<i>Cross Curricular Links</i>	<i>Diocesan Syllabus Links</i>		<i>Assessment Suggestions</i>	(Spi) = opportunities for spiritual development <i>Citizenship Links</i>				

Blank Medium Term Planning Matrix

Artists and visitors with a culturally diverse background in schools

Roly Bain – Holy Fool!

Roly, the award-winning clown, has clowned all over the UK, across the USA, in Canada, Australia, Sweden, France, Belgium and Holland..... in churches, chapels and cathedrals, prisons, hospitals and schools, camps, conferences and clubs, halls, big tops and theatres! All his routines have some Christian basis, story or punchline. A real star to have at a special school event.

www.rolybain.co.uk
01454 616593

Chinese Art Centre

Visiting Artists arranged Calligraphy, Brush Painting, Lantern making, Ribbon Dancing etc

www.chinese-arts-centre.org
0161 832 7271

Miso'shi

Popular Ghanaian story teller, drummer, musician, cook, artist etc etc.

01257 278 745
email misoshi@aol.com

Maddworld

Music, art, dance, drama. Cheshire teachers who create stories from around the world. Performance and then workshop.

www.maddworld.co.uk
Ring Steve Meredith 01244 531212

Faith Bebbington

A sculptor
0151 727 2785
email enquiries@faithbebbington.co.uk

Bisakha Sarker

Indian Dancer, story teller, artist. Artist with extensive experience of working in schools.

10, Awelon Close
Grove Park
West Derby
Liverpool
07850 127823
email bisakha@blueyonder.co.uk

Bill Ming

Wood sculptor born in Bermuda. Has done a great deal of work in Cheshire over many years.

Usually leaves a permanent piece of work.
email info@billming.com

Cathy Wu

Chinese watercolour painter, traditional Chinese artist and general educationalist.

email yeeminho@gmail.com
0151 200 8463
07779826463

Levi Tafari

Poet, story teller from an urban background. (Caribbean descent.)
Performance poet of international repute.

0151 709 5585
email Itafari@btinternet.com

Winston Lewis

Drummer, storyteller, dancer from a Caribbean background. Has worked extensively in Cheshire over many years.

01227 459 243

Peter Kalu

Trickster tales, dilemma stories, story teller
email Peter_kalu@hotmail.com

Nina Edge

Folded paper structure, masks and puppet making, pastel drawings, batik.
Visual artist with great experience of working in schools and at the Tate in
Liverpool.

0151 726 0348

Mobile 07971472707

email edge@nedge.u-net.com

Caroline Slifkin

Textile painting, silk painting, design.

27 Ogden Street, Prestwich, Manchester. M25 1JL

0161 773 1203

Lynne Stein

Ragworks, Hessian

4 Oakdale Court

Altrincham. WA14 4BX

0161 941 5315 or 0161 946 0202

Helen McGreary

Street dance / Hip-Hop, Salsa and Marengo, Creative Dance for Children

Flat 4a Oak Street

Llangollen, Denbighshire LL20 8NR

01978 861947 or 01978 860281

email helen@sogf.freemove.co.uk

Sarah Gallagher Twig Twister!

Living willow structures, school group workshops. Experienced practitioner.

07889 507348

Bhupinder K Virdee-Lace

Multicultural Hindu and Sikh workshops – RE/PSHE,dance,drama,art and
design,literacy,numeracy, music and ICT. 01244 320643 or 07763 583820

Roop Singh

Workshops on Sikhism, religion and culture, Indian storytelling, dance and
drama. Child-centred anti-racism and bullying workshops, and guided visits
to a local gurdwara. INSET also available on cultural sensitivity.

Roop Singh – Workshop Leader, Sikh Educational Advisory Services, Guru
Guru House, 42 Park Avenue, Leeds, LS15 8EW

Tel: 0113 260 2484 or 07973 286585

Kiran Arts and Crafts

Indian embroidery, doll making, Indian block printing, tie and dye, fabric
printing, Rangoli, collage, Indian vegetarian cookery. Also offers a supply of
rag dolls to nurseries and playgroups, banner making and Pipli lantern
workshops and solo exhibition on eastern embroidery.

Ring Ranbir Kaur on 0121 358 1505

www.kiran-artsandcrafts.co.uk

Purvi Parikh Indian dance and culture

Stories behind the festivals, costumes, hand and face movements and an
introduction to Indian folk dance.

Purvi Parikh, 12 Alberta Grove, Prescott. Lancs. L34 1PX

0151 443 0076 or 07838 146 625

Kala Sangam

Music, dance, visual arts, craft, literature. Kala Sangam aim to bring people
together through South Asian arts such as dance, music, literature and crafts.
They work with all Key Stages, and have a particular interest in working
with adults and children with disabilities.

Kala Sangam, Freepost NEA9680, Bradford. BD8 7BR

01274 223 212 (T) : 01274 223 306 (F)

info@kalasangam.org

A more extensive and up to date list of artists is available from Church House. Schools need to make their own judgement regarding references, CRB checks etc.

Useful Websites

Church of England sites

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

Gateway sites

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

Professional association sites

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

Christian sites

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

National sites

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

Sources of artefacts and posters

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

Aid agencies

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

Sites of interest

www.islamicity.com
www.jamaat.org/islam/Muhammad
www.al-islam.org/gallery/kids/books/bilal
www.islamicart.com

Multicultural Books

www.willesdenbookshop.co.uk

Useful Addresses

CHRISTIAN Places of Worship

Chester Cathedral

Claire Chatterton
Education Officer
12, Abbey Square
Chester
CH12HU
Tel. 01244 324756
email claire.chatterton@chesterercathedral.com
www.chestercathedral.com

Manchester Cathedral

Pam Elliott
Education Officer
Manchester
M31SX
Tel 0161 833 2220
email pam.elliott@manchestercathedral.com
www.manchestercathedral.co.uk

Liverpool Anglican Cathedral

Sarah O'Donoghue
Education Officer
St James Mount
Liverpool
L17AZ
Tel. 0151 702 7210
email education@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk
www.liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King (Roman Catholic)

Miss May Gillet
Education Officer
Cathedral House
Mount Pleasant
Liverpool
L35TQ
Tel. 0151 707 2109
www.liverpoolmetrocathedral.org.uk

JEWISH Places of Worship

Princes Road Synagogue, Liverpool

Fine example of a 19th century Synagogue, still used for worship
For details ring
The Jewish Resource Centre 0151 722 3514

South Manchester Synagogue

An Ashkenazi Orthodox Synagogue which moved into state-of-the-art new premises in 2002.
The Firs, Bowdon, Cheshire WA14 2TE
Tel: 0161 928 2050
email info@southmanchestersynagogue.com
www.southmanchestersynagogue.org.uk

Manchester Jewish Museum

190, Cheetham Hill Road
M8 8LW
Administrator Don Ranger 0161 8349879
email don@manchesterjewishmuseum.com
www.manchesterjewishmuseum.com
Guided tours and sessions for KS1 to KS4
Arrange studies of Jewish Faith, beliefs, customs, festivals or home life.
Outreach visits available from the museum to schools in Cheshire and surrounding authorities.
Also INSET available for staff – half day sessions.
This is a long standing educational resource with an excellent reputation. It is also very popular so BOOK EARLY.
There is a reasonable charge for visits – details on application.

SIKH Places of Worship

Sikh Community Centre, Gurdwara

Wellington Avenue,
Liverpool
L15 OEJ
For guided visits ring
Mr H.S. Sohal
28. Old Vicarage Road,
Willaston,
Neston
CH64 2XD
0151 327 6710
email hs.sohal@ntlworld.co

Gurdwara Siri Guru Singh Sabha

32, Derby Street
Cheetham Hill
Manchester
M8 8RY
For guided visits ring the secretary
Amar Deap Singh Romi
0161 834 2241 .Mobile 07867558662

Wolverhampton Gurdwara

Visits arranged by Rev'd McManus 01902 833436

MUSLIM Places of Worship

Al-rahma Mosque (Toxteth)

29 – 31 Hatherley Street
A well used venue for educational visits KS1 – KS4
Experienced staff give child - friendly guided tours. Topics covered in a visit may be
History of Islam in the UK
Mosque architecture and features
The Pillars of Islam
Office 0151 709 2560 Mobile 07782110562
email. adamkelwick@yahoo.co.uk

Blacon Islamic Centre Chester

Chair –Mr Ahmed
01978 762330 Mobile 0791 3400668

Liverpool Mosque and Islamic Institute

8.Cramond Avenue
Liverpool
L18 1EQ
Education Officer Amjad Patel
0151 7341222
email amjadbapu@hotmail.com

Manchester Central Mosque

Ring 0161 248 0283

BUDDHIST Places of Worship

Manchester Buddhist Centre

16 – 20 Turner Street
Manchester M4 1DZ
'Clear Vision Trust' arranges guided visits to the Buddhist Centre. email
education@clear-vision.org
0161 8399579
www.clear-vision.org useful website with many resources and
information on Buddhism.

GENERAL

Merseyside Council Of Faith

Representing seven different world faiths throughout Merseyside and surrounding area (including Cheshire)

Council members can come along to schools to talk about their faiths and arrange visits to their places of worship.

All advice and visits are free of charge.

Christian, Muslim, Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh

Arrangements for visits via the council secretary

Chas Raws 0151 342 6482

www.merseysidecounciloffaiths.org



STATUTORY INSPECTION OF ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. Introduction

All Church of England Primary Schools undergo two inspections. They are inspected by Ofsted under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005 and by a Diocesan approved inspector under Section 48 of the Act.

The way in which they are inspected depends upon their status. The overarching question for both aided and controlled schools is:

How distinctive is the school as a Church of England Primary School?

Aided schools are inspected in the following areas:

How well does the school through its distinctive Christian character meet the needs of all learners?

What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?

How effective is Religious Education?

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

Voluntary Controlled schools are inspected on all these areas, however, they are not inspected with regard to the effectiveness of RE as a curriculum subject, but on how effectively RE contributes to the spiritual and moral development of all learners.

Self-evaluation

As with Ofsted, at the heart of the new arrangements is self-evaluation. Schools are now judged on how the Governing Body and Leadership team are monitoring their distinctiveness as a Church of England Primary School.

2. Distinctiveness

Under the overarching question of how distinctive is the school as a Church of England Primary School, inspectors will ask questions in each of the four categories (or three in controlled schools).

With regard to the effectiveness of RE (aided schools only), the inspector will look for evidence of the following, taking into account the school's own self evaluation:

1. How high are standards in RE and how well do all learners achieve? Why?
2. How effective are teaching and learning in RE?
3. To what extent do learners of all faiths and of none demonstrate a positive attitude towards the subject?
4. How well does RE contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all learners?
5. To what extent does RE promote the distinctive Christian character of the school, together with an understanding of other faiths?
6. How important is RE in the life of the school?

Inspectors are seeking to assess whether or not RE is treated with the same rigour in terms of standards, achievement and monitoring as they would find in any other curriculum subject taught in the school.

3. Self-evaluation Tools

The National Society has produced a tool kit for Self-evaluation, which can be downloaded from the National Society website (www.natsoc.org.uk)

In addition to these are, of course, the school's own self-evaluation materials, as part of an on-going School Improvement Plan.

Grade descriptors

Any school self-evaluation should be undertaken with due regard to the National Society's grade descriptors, as it is these descriptors against which the school will be judged. (See below)

Evidence for self-evaluation

Evidence on which the school's self-evaluation judgements are based may be drawn from a number of sources. These will include:

- Feedback from learners, parents, governors and others;
- Evaluation of learning activities;
- Evaluation of learners' work and achievement;
- Evaluation of statistical data and school performance information.

Verification of the self-evaluation findings

Inspectors will assess whether or not self-evaluation findings are based on secure evidence and accurate evaluation by:

- Listening to learners
- Discussion with staff, governors, clergy, parents and others.
- Observation of lessons and acts of worship
- Evidence trails

Pre-inspection briefing

Before the inspection, the inspector will examine the school's self-evaluation evidence. He/she will then form an hypothesis with regard to the school's distinctiveness. This will then be used as the basis for the focus of the inspection.

4. The process

Once the school receives notification of its section 5 inspection it should contact the office on 01244 620444 or sue.noakes@chester.anglican.org

When the school notifies the office, details will be sent to an inspector and the inspector will contact the school. (If there are circumstances which mean the school would rather have another inspector assigned to them they should contact the office immediately.)

The inspector and school will arrange a mutually acceptable date for the inspection (usually on one day but sometimes over two half days).

The school will be asked to send documents to the inspector who will then send the school the pre-inspection briefing with their hypotheses and details of the inspection day.

Further information can be found on the Diocesan website at www.chester.anglican.org/schools/Handbook/ainspection.htm.

Self-Evaluation – Grade Descriptors: How effective is Religious Education?

	How high are the standards in RE and how well do learners achieve?	How effective are the learning and teaching in RE?	To what extent do learners and staff of all faiths and of none demonstrate a positive attitude towards the subject?	How well does RE contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all learners?	To what extent does RE promote the distinctive character of the school, together with an understanding of other faiths?	How important is RE in the life of the school and how is this demonstrated?
OUTSTANDING	Virtually all learners achieve above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus/non statutory framework for RE for their age and Key Stage. Virtually all learners reach as high or better standards in RE when compared to standards in other core subjects. Achievement in RE is amongst the highest in the school.	Learning is very effective. Virtually all learners make demonstrably good or better progress across the key stage. RE schemes of work are of a high quality, reflecting the latest developments in RE teaching. Virtually all lessons observed are judged good or better. The use of assessment data is well established and effectively guides teacher's planning.	Virtually all learners, whatever their faith background enjoy RE and recognise how it has shaped society and how it is relevant to their own lives. In virtually all lessons behaviour and attitudes to learning are at least good and often exemplary.	Virtually all learners, regardless of their faith background and learners gain considerable spiritual and moral development and insight from RE. Learners can talk openly about their beliefs and acknowledge that their views are taken seriously by staff and other learners. Virtually all lessons provide well-planned opportunities for SMSC development. . These are clearly identified in schemes of work.	For their ages, learners have very good or excellent understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. The RE syllabus complies fully with the relevant syllabus (including a good understanding of other faiths). Many good curriculum opportunities exist to explore the Anglican faith, reflecting the NS excellence and distinctiveness document or current diocesan guidelines well. The school is recognised locally as a centre of excellence in RE.	RE is recognised by virtually all learners and key stakeholders as being a priority in the life of the school. The subject is rigorously monitored and evaluation leads to actions that bring about clear improvement. The school provides at least 5% curriculum time for RE. The subject is well resourced and staffed. RE is led by a recognised subject leader makes best use of regular CDP opportunities to develop subject expertise in other staff expertise.
GOOD	The majority of learners achieve above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus/non statutory framework for RE for their age/Key Stage. The majority of learners reach as high or better standards in RE when compared to standards in other core subjects. Progress in RE is good.	The majority of learners make demonstrably good or better progress across the key stage. RE schemes of work are of a good quality reflecting the latest developments in RE teaching. The majority of lessons are judged good or better. Assessment data are used to guide teacher's planning and learners' learning.	The vast majority of learners, whatever their faith background, enjoy RE and recognise its relevance to their own lives. In the vast majority of lessons the behaviour and attitudes to learning are good, and sometimes exemplary.	The vast majority of learners, regardless of their faith background, gain spiritual and moral development and insight from RE from them. Learners can talk openly about their beliefs and recognise that their views are taken seriously by staff. The vast majority of lessons provide planned opportunities for SMSC development. These are identified in schemes of work	For their ages, learners have a good understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. The RE syllabus complies with the relevant syllabus (including an understanding of other faiths). Good curriculum opportunities exist to explore the Anglican faith, reflecting the NS excellence and distinctiveness document or diocesan guidelines. The school supports others locally using examples of good practice in RE.	RE is recognised by the large majority of learners and key stakeholders as being a priority in the life of the school. The subject is effectively monitored. The school provides 5% curriculum time for RE. The subject has good levels of resourcing and staffing. RE is led by a recognised subject leader who benefits from regular CPD opportunities to maintain his/her expertise.

SATISFACTORY	<p>Most learners achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus/non statutory framework for RE for their age/Key Stage. Most learners reach as high or better standards in RE when compared to standards in other Core subjects. Progress in RE is secure.</p>	<p>The majority of learners make satisfactory or better progress across the key stage.</p> <p>RE schemes of work are of a satisfactory quality reflecting developments in RE teaching. Most lessons observed are judged good or better. Assessment data are used to guide teacher's planning, although this is not always consistent.</p>	<p>The vast majority of learners, whatever their faith background, enjoy RE and are receptive to learn about its relevance to their own lives. In most lessons, the behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.</p>	<p>Most learners, regardless of their faith background, gain some spiritual and moral development and insight from RE. Learners can talk about their beliefs, sometimes with prompting. Most realise that staff take their views seriously by staff, although other learners may need encouragement to do so. Most lessons provide planned opportunities for SMSC development. Many of these are recognised in schemes of work.</p>	<p>For their ages, learners have a satisfactory understanding of the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. The RE syllabus mostly complies with the relevant syllabus (including some understanding of other faiths). Some curriculum opportunities are taken to explore the Anglican faith, generally reflecting diocesan guidelines. Some links exist with other schools to engage in dialogue or joint work in RE.</p>	<p>RE is recognised by most learners and key stakeholders as being a priority in the life of the school. The subject is regularly monitored and the outcomes used to plan improvement. The school provides close to 5% curriculum time for RE. The subject is adequately resourced and staffed. A recognised subject leader leads RE.</p>
INADEQUATE	<p>Many learners do not achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus/non statutory framework for RE for their age/Key stage. Few learners achieve as high or better standards in RE when compared to standards in other core subjects.</p>	<p>Some learners make satisfactory progress across the key stage, but few make better progress than this.</p> <p>RE schemes of work are undeveloped or missing and provide minimal or no support for staff teaching RE. Few lessons are judged good or better. Assessment data is not used to inform teachers planning or learners' learning.</p>	<p>Many learners, whatever their faith background do not enjoy RE and are not receptive to learn about its relevance to their own lives. In the majority of lessons behaviour is unsatisfactory and attitudes to learning are poor or negative.</p>	<p>Most learners make little or no spiritual and moral development and progress in RE and are not able to talk about openly about their beliefs. Learner's views are not valued fully by staff and/ or learners. Most lessons do not provide planned opportunities for SMSC development, or it happens in a largely unplanned way. Opportunities for SMSC development are not clearly identified in departmental schemes of work.</p>	<p>For their ages, learners have poor understanding or erratic knowledge of the Christian faith and Anglican tradition. The RE Syllabus does not comply in one or more significant areas with the relevant syllabus. Few curriculum opportunities exist to explore the Anglican faith. Few or no links exist with other schools to engage in dialogue or joint work in RE.</p>	<p>RE is not recognised by many learners and key stakeholders as a priority in the life of the school. The subject is occasionally or never monitored. The school provides significantly less than 5% curriculum time for RE. Staffing and/or other resources are less than adequate. RE is not led by a recognised subject leader, or its leadership is ineffective. Opportunities for CPD are occasional, non-existent or not taken up when made available.</p>

A designated person should be given responsibility for co-ordinating and leading RE in the primary school. Their main responsibility is to foster an interest and knowledge of RE and to promote and develop RE as an enjoyable subject to teach and learn.

The Role of the RE Subject Leader

Policy, knowledge and development

Prepare a School Policy;
Whole School Plan and Schemes of Work which cater for progression;
Decide which religions are to be included at which key stage;
Ensure RE is at least 5% of curriculum time;
Devise appropriate procedures for planning, assessment, recording and reporting pupils' work in line with whole school policy;
Ensure SEN,EAL and gifted & talented school policies are promoted in RE.
Promote RE with staff, pupils, parents and governors;
Promote display of pupils' work in RE;
Audit available resources, buy new ones and deploy appropriately.
Keep up to date with local and national developments.

Monitoring

Review, monitor and evaluate provision and the practice of RE;
Identify trends, make comparisons and know about different groups;
Monitor planning, checking for clarity of outcomes and aspects of differentiation;
Provide observation feedback and report on findings;
Sample children's work.
Set overall school targets for improvement.

Supporting and Advising

Prepare a subject action plan, including short and long term targets and a funding policy, which builds on existing practice and strives for continuous improvement;
Lead curriculum development and ensure staff development through courses, in-school meetings and training;
Keep up-to-date with new developments and resources;
Support non-specialist teachers and staff with suitable advice;
Working alongside colleagues to demonstrate good practice;
Prepare statements about RE for parents and governors, as required;
Ensure parents and children are involved in the process.

The following document is recommended for aided schools to assist in developing their own individual RE policy. It may be adapted to suit controlled schools. All areas in blue indicate where a school should personalise the document to suit their own situation.

Church of England Aided Primary School

Religious Education Policy Date:

The Importance of Religious Education

To a Church school, religious education and collective worship should be seen as part of an integrated experience, with collective worship acting as an expression of what is taught in many RE lessons. Pupils gain a religious education in its fullest sense in a Church school through good, well-planned and well-organized collective worship, through the example of Christian teachers, and through the quality of RE teaching.

The Way Ahead, para 4.14

Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.

Religious Education encourages pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

(Religious Education the non-statutory national framework)

Religious Education makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' learning by enabling them to reflect upon themselves as whole people, experiencing life through the body, the mind and the spirit. The purpose of Religious Education is to help pupils understand the significance of religion and its contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

(Cheshire Agreed Syllabus 'Encounter and Response')

[Other suitable quotes may be used here](#)

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Religious Education at ----- Church of England Aided Primary School.

The spiritual and moral development of our children underpins all aspects of our school life.

Legal Requirements

----- is a Church of England Aided school, therefore Religious Education must be taught in accordance with the Trust Deed and should reflect the rites, practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The governing body is responsible for the subject in the school. This is delegated to the Headteacher and the Religious Education subject leader/coordinator on a daily basis.

Following the Diocese of Chester Guidelines for Religious Education, the majority of work in Religious Education will be based on the Christian faith with the introduction of one other major world religion – Judaism – at Key Stage 1 and then the study of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam at Key Stage 2.

Religious Education will be allocated not less than 5% of the timetable. In Key Stage 1 this amounts to between 40-50 minutes per week totalling 36 hours over the year. In Key Stage 2 children should be taught Religious Education for 1 ¼ hours per week totalling 45 hours over the year. At school, staff ensure coverage by block planning units of work for each term.

Withdrawals

Parents have a right by law to withdraw their children from the Religious Education curriculum. In this event, the school will undertake responsibility for the supervision of withdrawn pupils with regard to health and safety, alternative work will be provided.

Aims

The purpose of teaching Religious Education in school is to:

- To show children that Christianity is about following the living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and is relevant to their daily lives.
- To extend children's ability to reflect upon themselves as whole people, experiencing life through body, mind and spirit.
- To help pupils understand the significance of religion and its contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Principles

We aim through our teaching

- To provide a course of Religious Education within the framework of the *Diocese of Chester Religious Education Guidelines* appropriate to the educational needs of the children in our school, at their different stages of development.
- To contribute to the spiritual, social and moral development of the school as a caring community and the pupils as individuals.
- To assist and encourage experience of Christian life and worship.
- Through study of major world religions to encourage and understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of religious belief and practice in society today.

We aim to encourage children in our school

- To grow in awareness of others through learning activities involving sharing and co-operation and to develop trust and respect for others.
- To formulate their own sense of purpose in life and to embark upon a personal search for a faith by which to live.
- To learn something of the religious experiences of others.
- To develop their own beliefs, values and ideals in the light of their experiences
- To develop respect for other people, their beliefs and their life-styles.
- To develop an enquiring attitude towards religion and to explore activities of prayer and worship.

Entitlement

- The children's entitlement is based upon the [Primary Scheme of Work](#) which has two attainment targets together with thedocument and these provide the basis for our planning and teaching.

A.T.1 *Learning about Religion*

....to gain knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity in particular and world religions in general.

A.T.2 *Learning from Religion*

.....developing the capacity and skill to respond thoughtfully to and evaluate what they learn about religions.

- In the main, Religious Education will be taught as a discrete subject although the approach may vary. [For example in Key Stage 1 it may be more appropriate to integrate some areas of the Religious Study programme into a general topic with a thematic approach.](#)
- Religious Education in school is organized using a whole school overview or plan. This lays out which units, or themes, should be studied by each year group. The [Cheshire Scheme of Work and QCA](#) are referred to, supported by the [Primary Vision Religious Education](#) resource materials.
- Wherever possible all children will learn from primary source material as well as through the use of outside speakers with relevant experience and audio-visual aids. [Visits to places of worship and drama workshops and visiting theatre companies](#) also support the work of Religious Education in school

Implementation

- Religious Education will be taught throughout the school. Mainly by the class teacher and may be supported from time to time by clergy from local churches and visiting speakers.
- Religious Education may be taught in a ‘whole class’ setting but with flexibility to allow for discussion, questioning and reflection in small groups and individually.
- Visits to local [churches such as ...](#)
- A variety of teaching approaches are encouraged:
 - ◊ Teacher presentations, role play and story telling.
 - ◊ Questions and answer sessions, discussions and debates.
 - ◊ Individual and group research.
 - ◊ Photographs, pictures and maps
 - ◊ I.C.T, television, video, film, tape, CD, radio and PCs to research and communicate ideas.
- Mind Friendly strategies will support teaching and learning as appropriate.
- Progression will be guided by the Diocese of Chester Religious Education Guidelines supported by [Scheme of Work](#), and [schemes of work](#).
- Religious Education may be integrated with other subjects as appropriate for example ICT, History and PSCHE.
- Religious Education resources will be reviewed and updated regularly considering budgetary constraints.
- Classroom support will be welcomed under the guidance of the teacher, eg. skilled individuals and parents etc.
- [INSET will be included with the Strategic School Improvement Plan. External INSET will reflect budgetary constraints.](#)

Special Educational Needs.

Children with special educational needs will work alongside the other children in their group, as in other curriculum areas, but differentiation in approach, language and expected outcome will be appropriate to the varying needs in the class. We aim to meet the full entitlement of every child in our school. To optimize inclusion the children’s differing needs for learning (including children with special educational needs) will be addressed through differentiated activities. I.E.P’s and I.B.P’s may support children who are identified as having special educational needs. These will specify differentiated learning and assessment.

See separate SEN school policy

Equal Opportunities

Religious Education as an essential part of the curriculum should be relevant, worthwhile and accessible to all. It should express that all pupils are loved and valued by God as part of creation.

We aim to help the children in our school to respect themselves and to be sensitive to the needs of others.

Health and Safety

Teachers have a copy of the School Health and Safety Policy together with the Field Visits Policy. Located in the staffroom is the Educational Visits Folder for reference to risk assessment and guidance notes.

The school and its grounds are maintained in a manner that promotes a safe, healthy and educationally stimulating environment.

Resources

Resources are stored in area. Religious Education Resource boxes containing artefacts and other topic materials are currently stored in area. Each class teacher has a copy of Resources relevant to their year group in their classroom. An audit of Religious Education Resources is outlined in the Religious Education Action Plan.

Planning, Assessment, Reporting and Record Keeping

- Under the Diocese of Chester Religious Education Guidelines the statutory position is that all pupils will be assessed based on the level expectations informed by Scheme of Work and units of work.
- In order to show progress towards the end of Key Stage levels the staff appreciate that assessment of progress in Religious Education should be undertaken with sensitivity, based upon the teacher's observations of the child in class or group discussions, activities or recorded work.
- Children's work is evaluated and assessments for each child are carried out at the end of each unit of work. These statements will inform future planning assessment; reporting to parents; and curriculum monitoring by the coordinator and the Headteacher.
- Individual Pupil Progress Booklets are completed termly and are located at the back of each child's Golden Book.
- Records are kept by the class teacher, Headteacher and the Religious Education Coordinator. Samples of work are kept by the Religious Education Coordinator.
- Summative reports to parents will be made at the end of the year.
- **Long Term Planning** is informed by Diocese of Chester Religious Education Guidelines, supported by Primary Scheme of Work and
- Staff notate and divide the units of work from the **medium term planning** so that it informs the **short term planning**.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- The coordinator/RE subject leader will assist the Headteacher by monitoring Long Term and Medium Term plans.
- The coordinator will keep a file of examples of work to demonstrate continuity and progression.
- The coordinator will manage resources.
- The coordinator will endeavour to keep up to date with information, initiatives and developments in Religious Education and disseminate this as appropriate.
- The coordinator will be aware of staff development needs and encourage continuing professional development.
- The coordinator will facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- The coordinator will be responsible for drawing up an action plan for Religious Education. Generally this will be an annual plan and should be informed by this policy.

RE Subject Leader

Date

(Adapted from the RE policy of Bollinbrook CE Primary School with grateful thanks)

Key Christian Topics and Concepts

(Adapted from Guidance from National Society, 'Excellence & Distinctiveness' 2005)

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

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

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

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

Some key Christian texts

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

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

The Church's year

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

Being an Anglican

Parish life

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

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

Beyond the parish

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

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

And in the rest of the world:

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

Church and nation

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

- Christianity comes to Britain Alban, Patrick, Columba and Augustine
- Rome and Northumbria Iona, Lindisfarne, Hilda and the synod of Whitby
- Church and state Thomas a Becket, monasteries
- The Bible in English Wycliffe, Tyndale and the Authorised Version
- The Reformation Henry VIII to Elizabeth, the martyrs
- Developing worship From Cranmer to the 1662 Prayer Book
- Evangelicals and Tractarians Wesley, Simeon, Pusey and Newman
- Improving society Wilberforce, Shaftesbury and Josephine Butler
- Church schools and hospitals Robert Raikes, Joshua Watson, Florence Nightingale
- The development of missions SPCK, CMS and USPG
- The twentieth century William Temple, CS Lewis, Desmond Tutu
- People of local significance in the diocese Local heroes of faith past & present

Spiritual Development in Church of England schools

(Adapted from Guidance from National Society 'Educating the Whole Child' 2006)

Spiritual development should be embedded in every aspect of the life and work of a church school. It is important that spiritual development is seen as a lifelong process which is primarily a journey of discovery rather than a ladder to be climbed.

Definitions

“Spirituality is like a bird: if you hold it too tightly, it chokes; if you hold it too loosely, it flies away. Fundamental to spirituality is the absence of force.”

Rabbi Hugo Gryn: 'Things of the Spirit' (1993)

The spiritual development of children and young people is a journey of discovery which is concerned with their search for meaning and purpose in life. It relates to a dimension of life which extends beyond the physical senses and focuses much more on attitudes, beliefs, feelings and emotions. In church schools, the spiritual development of children and young people should be promoted within the context of the Christian ethos of the school. It should be evident in acts of worship, in Religious Education and across the whole of the curriculum.

Through spiritual development, pupils can be enabled:

- To think about themselves, how they relate to other people, to the wider world in which they live and to God;
- To reflect beyond and within themselves on God's creation and the precious nature of human existence;
- To develop greater self-awareness and self-esteem;
- To encounter a sense of awe, wonder and mystery: and,
- To experience opportunities for creativity, curiosity, freedom, imagination and response.

Spiritual Development and the ethos of a church school

Activities should take place within the life and work of a church school which:

- provide a safe and secure environment in which all pupils feel they are valued for the unique contribution each one of them can make;
- encourage and promote participation in the life of the school in ways that contribute to the well-being of everyone;
- ensure that pupils can express their beliefs, experiences, insights and feelings without a fear of ridicule, knowing that their ideas matter and are taken seriously;
- respect the rights of pupils who do not wish to discuss personal or sensitive issues and enable pupils to share what they have in common and to celebrate their differences.

Spiritual Development across the curriculum

In a church school, it is important there is evidence of spiritual development across the curriculum and that every curriculum area includes some aims and objectives which make spiritual development more explicit in the teaching and learning process.

The following are some examples:

- to develop the pupils' capacity for critical and independent thought
- to foster the emotional life of individual pupils, particularly with regard to the experience and expression of their own feelings
- to provide opportunities for the expression of imagination, inspiration, insight, empathy and understanding
- to promote opportunities for moments of stillness, silence and reflection
- to prepare learning materials and activities that encourage responses to Christian beliefs and ideas
- to explore issues concerned with the value and nature of human life
- to provide opportunities when pupils can reflect upon the inspiring quality of the world and focus on the power of nature or the creative imagination of human beings

The kind of teacher most likely to encourage spiritual development is one who:

- starts from pupils' own experience; from what they know or think they know
- displays a positive, encouraging, accepting attitude
- takes what pupils say seriously and values each individual contribution
- tries to involve everyone
- allows the subject matter 'to speak for itself' – be it symbol, story, building, painting, artefact; and encourages pupils to draw out their own meaning
- recognises that he or she has much to learn from the pupils
- is clear about intended learning outcomes but allows space for spontaneity
- listens and shows understanding
- is honest and open
- encourages and values pupils questions
- encourages pupils to listen and build on each other's ideas

Outcomes and pupil progress

It isn't easy for church schools to measure *outcomes and pupil progress* in the way that they promote the spiritual development of their pupils. Part of this difficulty relates to the nature of spirituality itself and often to an uncertainty over what spiritual development actually looks like in a school setting. If, however, church schools are to be effective in the way they promote spiritual development, they must develop strategies for the evaluation of this area of their life and work. The Ofsted criteria may provide a useful starting point for many church schools.

The Ofsted Criteria for Spiritual Development

Pupils who are developing spiritually are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour
- an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs
- a respect for themselves and for others
- a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- an ability to show courage in defence of their beliefs
- a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit, for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination
- an appreciation of the intangible - for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order, as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity
- a respect for insight as well as knowledge and reason
- an expressive and/or creative impulse
- an ability to think in terms of the 'whole' for example, concepts such as harmony, interdependence, scale, perspective
- an understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely impact

Schools that are encouraging pupils' spiritual development are likely to be:

- giving pupils the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives
- encouraging pupils to explore and develop what animates themselves and others
- giving pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful
- developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected
- accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals
- promoting teaching styles which:
 - ◊ value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns
 - ◊ enable pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning;
 - ◊ encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference -for example, asking 'why,' 'how' and 'where' as well as 'what'
- monitoring in simple, pragmatic ways, the success of what is provided
- encourages pupils to develop and use all their senses
- provides pupils with alternative activities and ways of expression
- encourages pupils to value reflective activities and times of silence
- views each pupil as a person with a special gift to give
- helps pupils to discover and develop that gift

Glossary: Christianity

The historic languages of the Christian scriptures are Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The Old Testament was written largely in Hebrew, with some texts in Aramaic and Greek (Apocrypha). The whole of the Old Testament was translated into Greek, although many words and passages have their origin in Aramaic. Latin became increasingly the language of the Western Church from the 5th century AD when the Bible was translated into Latin.

Absolution

The pronouncement by a priest of the forgiveness of sins.

AD (Anno Domini)

In the Year of our Lord. The Christian calendar dates from the estimated date of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Advent

Coming. The period beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas (40 days before Christmas in the Eastern Orthodox tradition). A time of spiritual preparation for Christmas.

Agape

The love of God. New Testament word used for the common meal of Christians; a Love Feast.

Altar (Communion Table, Holy Table)

Table used for Eucharist, Mass, Lord's Supper. Some denominations refer to it as Holy Table or Communion Table.

Anglican

Churches in full communion with the See of Canterbury. Their origins and traditions are linked to the Church of England, and are part of the Anglican Communion.

Apocalyptic

- (i) Revelatory, of God's present purposes and the end of the world.
- (ii) Used of a literary genre, for example the Book of Revelation.

Apocrypha

Books of the Old Testament that are in the Greek but not the Hebrew Canon. Some churches recognise the Apocrypha as part of the Old Testament Canon.

Apocryphal New Testament

A modern title for various early Christian books which are non-canonical.

Apostle

One who was sent out by Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel.

Ascension

The event, 40 days after the Resurrection, when Jesus Ascended into heaven (See Luke 24 and Acts 1).

Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent. In some Churches, penitents receive the sign of the cross in ashes on their foreheads.

Atonement

Reconciliation between God and humanity; restoring a relationship broken by sin.

Baptism

Rite of initiation involving immersion in, or sprinkling or pouring of, water.

Baptist

- (i) A member of the Baptist Church, which grew out of the Anabaptist movement during the 16th century Reformation.
- (ii) A Christian who practises Believer's Baptism.

Baptistry

- (i) Building or pool used for baptism, particularly by immersion.
- (ii) Part of a church, where baptism takes place.

BC (Before Christ)

Period of history before the estimated birth of Jesus Christ.

Believer's Baptism

The baptism of people who are old enough to understand the meaning of the rite.

Benediction

Blessing at the end of worship. Also, late afternoon or evening service including the blessing of the congregation with the consecrated host (usually in a Roman Catholic context).

Blessed Sacrament

Bread and wine which have been consecrated and set aside for future use (usually in the Roman Catholic Church).

Canon (Scripture)

The accepted books of the Bible. The list varies between denominations.

Catholic

- (i) Universal.
- (ii) Often used as an abbreviation for Roman Catholic.

Charismatic

A modern movement within the Church, emphasising spiritual gifts, such as healing or speaking with tongues.

Chrismation

- (i) The Orthodox second sacrament of initiation by anointing with chrism (a special oil). Performed at the same time as baptism.
- (ii) Anointing with oil, for example, healing or coronation.

Christ (Messiah)

The anointed one. Messiah is used in the Jewish tradition to refer to the expected leader sent by God, who will bring salvation to God's people. Jesus' followers applied this title to him, and its Greek equivalent, Christ, is the source of the words Christian and Christianity.

Christmas

Festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ (25 December, in most Churches).

Church

- (i) The whole community of Christians.
- (ii) The building in which Christians worship. (iii) A particular denomination.

Confession

- (i) One of seven sacraments observed by some Churches whose priest confidentially hears a person's confession.
- (ii) An admission, by a Christian, of wrong-doing.
- (iii) A particular official statement (or profession) of faith.

Glossary: Christianity

Congregationalist

Member of a Christian body which believes that each local church is independent and self-governing under the authority of Christ.

Consubstantiation

Doctrine of the Eucharist associated with Luther, which holds that after consecration, the substances of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and of the bread and wine co-exist in union with each other.

Creed

Summary statement of religious beliefs, often recited in worship, especially the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

Crucifixion

Roman method of executing criminals and traitors by fastening them to a cross until they died of asphyxiation; used in the case of Jesus Christ and many who opposed the Romans.

Easter

Central Christian festival which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Ecumenism (Oikoumene)

Movement within the Church towards co-operation and eventual unity.

Episcopacy

System of Church government by bishops.

Epistle (Letter)

From the Greek word for letter. Several such letters or epistles, from Christian leaders to Christian Churches or individuals, are included in the New Testament.

Eucharist

Thanksgiving. A service celebrating the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, using elements of bread and wine (see Holy Communion).

Evangelical

Group, or church, placing particular emphasis on the Gospel and the scriptures as the sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

Evangelist

A writer of one of the four New Testament Gospels; a preacher of the gospel.

Font

Receptacle to hold water used in baptism.

Free Churches

Non-conformist denominations, free from state control (used of 20 Churches).

Good Friday

The Friday in Holy Week. Commemorates the day Jesus died on the cross.

Gospel (Evangel)

- (i) Good news (of salvation in Jesus Christ).
- (ii) An account of Jesus' life and work.

Grace

- (i) The freely given and unmerited favour of God's love for humanity.
- (ii) Blessing.
- (iii) Prayer of thanks before or after meals.

Heaven

The place, or state, in which souls will be united with God after death.

Hell

The place, or state, in which souls will be separated from God after death.

Holy Communion

Central liturgical service observed by most Churches (see Eucharist, Mass, Lord's Supper, Liturgy). Recalls the last meal of Jesus, and celebrates his sacrificial and saving death.

Holy Spirit

The third person of the Holy Trinity. Active as divine presence and power in the world, and in dwelling in believers to make them like Christ and empower them to do God's will.

Holy Week

The week before Easter, when Christians recall the last week of Jesus' life on Earth.

Icon or Ikon

Painting or mosaic of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, a saint, or a Church feast. Used as an aid to devotion, usually in the Orthodox tradition.

Iconostasis

Screen, covered with icons, used in Eastern Orthodox churches to separate the sanctuary from the nave.

Incarnation

The doctrine that God took human form in Jesus Christ. It is also the belief that God in Christ is active in the Church and in the world.

Jesus Christ

The central figure of Christian history and devotion. The second person of the Trinity.

Justification by Faith

The doctrine that God forgives ('treats as just') those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ

Kerygma

The central message about Jesus proclaimed by the early Christians.

Kyrie (Greek)

O Lord. Addressed to Jesus, as in 'Kyrie eleison' (Lord have mercy).

Lectern

Stand supporting the Bible, often in the shape of an eagle.

Lectionary

List of scriptural passages for systematic reading throughout the year.

Lent

Penitential season. The 40 days leading up to Easter.

Liturgy

- (i) Service of worship according to a prescribed ritual such as Evensong or Eucharist.
- (ii) Term used in the Orthodox Church for the Eucharist.

Logos

Word. Pre-existent Word of God incarnate as Jesus Christ.

Lord

Title used for Jesus to express his divine lordship over people, time and space.

Lord's Supper

Alternative term for Eucharist in some Churches (predominantly Non-conformist).

Glossary: Christianity

Lutheran

A major Protestant Church that receives its name from the 16th century German reformer, Martin Luther.

Mass

Term for the Eucharist, used by the Roman Catholic and other Churches.

Maundy Thursday

The Thursday in Holy Week. Commemorates the Last Supper.

Methodist

A Christian who belongs to the Methodist Church which came into existence through the work of John Wesley in the 18th century.

Missal

Book containing words and ceremonial directions for saying Mass.

Mother of God

The title given to the Virgin Mary, mainly in the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, to underline the Trinitarian belief that Jesus was truly God (in this context, God refers to God incarnate as seen in Jesus Christ).

New Testament

Collection of 27 books forming the second section of the Canon of Christian Scriptures.

Non-conformist

Term used to describe Protestant Christian bodies which became separated from the established Church of England in the 17th century.

Old Testament

That part of the Canon of Christian Scriptures which the Church shares with Judaism, comprising 39 books covering the Hebrew Canon, and in the case of certain denominations, some books of the Apocrypha.

Ordination

In episcopal Churches, the 'laying on of hands' on priests and deacons by a bishop. In non-episcopal Churches, the 'laying on of hands' on ministers by other representatives of the Church.

Orthodox

(i) The Eastern Orthodox Church consisting of national Churches (mainly Greek or Slav), including the ancient Eastern Patriarchates. They hold the common Orthodox faith, and are in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

(ii) Conforming to the creeds sanctioned by the ecumenical councils, for example, Nicaea, Chalcedon.

Palm Sunday

The Sunday before Easter, commemorating the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem when he was acknowledged by crowds waving palm branches.

Paraclete (Comforter)

Advocate. Term used for the Holy Spirit.

Parousia

Presence. The Second Coming or return of Jesus Christ.

Passion

The sufferings of Jesus Christ, especially in the time leading up to his crucifixion.

Patriarch

Title for principal Eastern Orthodox bishops. Also used for early Israelite leaders such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

Pentecost (Whitsun)

The Greek name for the Jewish Festival of Weeks, or Shavuot, which comes seven weeks ('fifty days') after Passover. On the day of this feast, the followers of Jesus received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostalist

A Christian who belongs to a Church that emphasises certain gifts which were granted to the first believers on the Day of Pentecost (such as the power to heal the sick and speak in tongues).

Pope

The Bishop of Rome, head of the Roman Catholic Church.

Presbyterian

A member of a Church that is governed by elders or 'presbyters'; the national Church of Scotland.

Protestant

That part of the Church which became distinct from the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches when their members professed (or 'protested' - hence Protestant) the centrality of the Bible and other beliefs. Members affirm that the Bible, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the ultimate authority for Christian teaching.

Pulpit

An elevated platform from which sermons are preached.

Purgatory

In some traditions, a condition or state in which good souls receive spiritual cleansing after death, in preparation for heaven.

Quaker

A member of the Religious Society of Friends, established through the work of George Fox in the 17th century.

Reconciliation (Confession)

(i) Sacrament of the (Roman) Catholic Church, consisting of Contrition, Confession of sins, and Absolution .

(ii) The human process of reconciling Christians with one another.

Redemption

Derived from the practice of paying the price of a slave's freedom; and so, the work of Jesus Christ in setting people free through his death.

Reformation

A 16th century reform movement that led to the formation of Protestant Churches. It emphasised the need to recover the initial beliefs and practices of the Church.

Resurrection

(i) The rising from the dead of Jesus Christ on the third day after the crucifixion.

(ii) The rising from the dead of believers at the Last Day. (iii) The new, or risen, life of Christians.

Glossary: Christianity

Roman Catholic

That part of the Church owing loyalty to the Bishop of Rome, as distinct from Orthodox and Protestant Churches.

Sacrament

An outward sign of an inward blessing, as in baptism or the Eucharist.

Salvationist

A member of the Salvation Army founded by William and Catherine Booth in the 19th century.

Sanctification

The process by which a believer is made holy, to become like Jesus Christ.

Sin

(i) Act of rebellion or disobedience against the known will of God.

(ii) An assessment of the human condition as disordered and in need of transformation.

Synoptic

Having a common viewpoint. It is applied to the presentation of Jesus' life in the first three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke in contrast with that given in the Gospel of John.

Tabernacle

(i) A receptacle for the Blessed Sacrament, not immediately consumed but set aside or 'reserved' (mainly in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches). The presence of the consecrated elements is usually signalled by a continuously burning light.

(ii) Term used by some denominations of their building.

Transubstantiation

Roman Catholic doctrine concerning the Mass, defined at the Lateran Council of 1215, and confirmed at the Council of Trent in 1551. This states that in the Eucharist, at the words of consecration, the substance of the bread and wine becomes the substance of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and that he is thus present on the altar.

Trinity

Three persons in one God; doctrine of the three-fold nature of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Unction (Sacrament of the Sick)

The anointing with oil of a sick or dying person.

United Reformed Church

A Church formed by the union of English Congregationalists with the Presbyterian Church of England, and subsequently the Reformed Association of the Churches of Christ.

Vatican

The residence of the Pope in Rome, and the administrative centre of the Roman Catholic Church. The chief building of the Vatican is St Peter's Basilica, built on the traditional site of St Peter's tomb.

Virgin Birth

The doctrine of the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ by the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit and without the agency of a human father.

Glossary: Buddhism

As Buddhism spread throughout the East, it came to be expressed in many different languages. Terms in the Sanskrit and Pali of India are in most common use in the West, although Japanese and Tibetan terms also occur frequently. Pali is the language of the texts of the Theravada school, whilst Sanskrit is used for general Mahayana. Zen Buddhism uses terms expressed in Japanese, and Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan. There is no preferred form. For convenience, the Pali term appears first, followed by the Sanskrit, except where otherwise indicated. Italicised phrases represent a literal translation. Bold type indicates that this is also a glossary entry.

Abhidharma

Further or higher teaching. The philosophy and psychology of Buddhism in abstract, systematic form.

Abhidharma Pitaka

This is the third of the three principal sections of the canon of basic scripture. It is a systematic, philosophical and psychological treatment of the teachings given in the Sutta Pitaka.

Amitabha Amitayus (Sanskrit)

Also, Amida (Japanese). Buddhas having unlimited light and life respectively.

Anapanasati

Anapanasmrti Mindfulness of the breath. The practice most usually associated with the development of concentration and calm, but also used in the training of Vipassana (insight).

Anatta

Anatman No self; no soul. Insubstantiality; denial of a real or permanent self.

Anicca

Anitya Impermanence; transience. Instability of all things, including the self.

Arahat, Arahant Arhat

Enlightened disciple. The fourth and highest stage of Realisation recognised by the Theravada tradition. One whose mind is free from all greed, hatred and ignorance.

Asoka Ashoka

Emperor of India in the 3rd century BCE.

Atta Atman

Self; soul.

Bhikkhu Bhikshu

Fully ordained Buddhist monk.

Bhikkhuni Bhikshuni

Fully ordained Buddhist nun.

Bodhi Tree (Pali)

The tree (ficus religiosa) under which the Buddha realised Enlightenment. It is known as the Tree of Wisdom.

Bodhisatta (Pali)

A Wisdom Being. One intent on becoming, or destined to become, a Buddha. Gotama, before his Enlightenment as the historical Buddha.

Bodhisattva (Sanskrit)

A being destined for Enlightenment, who postpones final attainment of Buddhahood in order to help living beings (see Mahayana).

Brahma Viharas (Pali)

The four sublime states: loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and evenness of mind.

Buddha

Awakened or Enlightened One.

Dalai Lama (Tibetan)

Great Ocean. Spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people.

Dana

Generosity; giving; gift.

Dhamma Dharma

Universal law; ultimate truth. The teachings of the Buddha. A key Buddhist term.

Dhammapada Dharmapada

Famous scripture of 423 verses.

Dukkha Duhkha

Suffering; ill; unsatisfactoriness; imperfection. The nature of existence according to the first Noble Truth.

Gompa (Tibetan)

Monastery; place of meditation.

Gotama Gautama

Family name of the Buddha.

Jataka (Pali)

Birth story. Accounts of the previous lives of the Buddha.

Jhana Dhyana

Also Ch'an (Chinese) and Zen (Japanese). Advanced meditation.

Kamma Karma

Action. Intentional actions that affect one's circumstances in this and future lives. The Buddha's insistence that the effect depends on volition marks the Buddhist treatment of kamma as different from the Hindu understanding of karma

Karuna Karuna

Compassion.

Kesa (Japanese)

The robe of a Buddhist monk, nun, or priest.

Khandha Skandha

Heap; aggregate. The Five Khandhas together make up the 'person' (form, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness).

Khanti Kshanti

Patience; forbearance.

Kilesa Klesa

Mental defilement or fire, such as greed, hatred or ignorance.

Koan (Japanese)

A technical term used in Zen Buddhism referring to enigmatic or paradoxical questions used to develop intuition. Also refers to religious problems encountered in daily life.

Kwan-yin (Chinese)

Also, Kannon (Japanese). Bodhisattva of Compassion, depicted in female form. Identified with Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara.

Glossary: Buddhism

Lama (Tibetan)

Teacher, or one who is revered.

Lotus Sutra (Sanskrit)

A scripture of major importance to various schools within the Mahayana tradition. It describes the virtues of the Bodhisattva, and emphasises that all sentient beings possess Buddha-nature and can attain Enlightenment (Nirvana).

Magga Marga

Path, leading to cessation of suffering. The fourth Noble Truth.

Mahayana

Great Way or Vehicle. Teachings that spread from India into Tibet, parts of Asia and the Far East, characterised by the Bodhisattva ideal and the prominence given to the development of both compassion and wisdom.

Mala (Pali)

Also, Juzu (Japanese). String of 108 beads used in Buddhist practice (like a rosary).

Metta Maitri

Loving kindness. A pure love which is neither grasping nor possessive.

Metta Sutta (Pali)

Buddhist scripture which describes the nature of loving kindness.

Metteya Maitreya

One who has the nature of loving kindness. Name of the future Buddha.

Mudda Mudra

Ritual gesture, as illustrated by the hands of Buddha images.

Mudita Mudita

Sympathetic joy. Welcoming the good fortune of others.

Nibbana Nirvana

Blowing out of the fires of greed, hatred and ignorance, and the state of secure perfect peace that follows. A key Buddhist term.

Nirodha Nirodha

Cessation (of suffering). The third Noble Truth.

Panna Prajna

Wisdom. Understanding the true nature of things.

Parami Paramita

A perfection or virtue. One of the six or ten perfections necessary for the attainment of Buddhahood.

Parinibbana Parinirvana

Final and complete nirvana reached at the passing away of a Buddha.

Patimokkha Pratimoksha

The training rules of a monk or nun - 227 in the case of a Theravada monk.

Pitaka (Pali)

Basket. Collection of scriptures (see Tipitaka).

Rupa Rupa

Form. Used of an image of the Buddha; also, the first of the Five Khandhas.

Sakyamuni Shakyamuni

Sage of the Shakyas (the tribe of the Buddha). Title of the historical Buddha.

Samadhi Samadhi

Meditative absorption. A state of deep meditation.

Samatha Samatha

A state of concentrated calmness; meditation (see Vipassana).

Samsara Samsara

Everyday life. The continual round of birth, sickness, old age and death which can be transcended by following the Eightfold Path and Buddhist teaching.

Samudaya Samudaya

Arising; origin (of suffering). The second Noble Truth.

Sangha Sangha

Community; assembly. Often used for the order of bhikkhus and bhikkunis in Theravadin countries. In the Mahayana countries, the Sangha includes lay devotees and priests, eg in Japan.

Sankhara Samskara

Mental/karmic formation. The fourth of the five Khandhas.

Sanna Samjna

Perception. Third of the five Khandhas.

Satori (Japanese)

Awakening. A term used in Zen Buddhism.

Siddattha Siddhartha

Wish-fulfilled. The personal name of the historical Buddha.

Sila Sila

Morality.

Sutta Sutra

Text. The word of the Buddha.

Sutta Pitaka Sutra Pitaka

The second of the three collections - principally of teachings - that comprise the canon of basic scripture.

Tanha Trishna

Thirst; craving; desire (rooted in ignorance). Desire as the cause of suffering. The second Noble Truth.

Tathagata Tathagata

Another epithet for the Buddha.

Theravada Sthaviravada

Way of the elders. A principal school of Buddhism, established in Sri Lanka and South East Asia. Also found in the West.

Thupa/Cetiya Stupa

Reliquary (including pagodas).

Tipitaka Tripitaka

Three baskets. A threefold collection of texts (Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidhamma).

Tiratana Triratna

The triple refuge. Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Another way of referring to the three jewels.

Tulku (Tibetan)

Reincarnated Lama.

Glossary: Buddhism

Upaya (Pali)

Any skilful means, eg meditation on loving kindness, to overcome anger.

Upekkha Upeksa

Equanimity; evenness of mind.

Vajrayana (Sanskrit)

Thunderbolt; Diamond Way. Teachings promulgated later, mainly in India and Tibet.

Another term for esoteric Buddhism.

Vedana (Pali)

Feeling. The second of the Five Khandhas.

Vihara (Pali)

Dwelling place; monastery.

Vinaya (Pali)

The rules of discipline of monastic life.

Vinaya Pitaka (Pali)

The first of the three collections of the canon of basic scripture, containing mostly the discipline for monks and nuns, with many stories and some teachings.

Vinnana Vijnana

Consciousness. The fifth of the Five Khandhas.

Vipassana Vipashyana

Insight into the true nature of things. A particular form of meditation (see Samatha).

Viriya Virya Energy; exertion

Wesak Wesak Vesak (Sinhalese)

Buddha Day. Name of a festival and a month. On the full moon of Wesak (in May or June), the birth, Enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha took place, although some schools celebrate only the birth at this time, eg Zen.

Zazen (Japanese)

Meditation while seated, as in Zen Buddhism.

Zen (Japanese)

Meditation. Derived from the Sanskrit 'dhyana'. A school of Mahayana Buddhism that developed in China and Japan.

Glossary: Hinduism

The main references are to Sanskrit terminology, although variants are found and used in other Indian languages. Lakshmi, Laksmi, Vishnu or Visnu type variants are not always included because of their frequency. Many of these terms will also be found in books on Buddhism and Sikhism, but with somewhat different meanings.

Proper names and place names are only included in this list if variant forms are commonly used.

The preferred form appears first, followed by any variants.

Acharya Acarya

One who teaches by example. Usually refers to a prominent or exemplary spiritual teacher.

Advaita Advaita

Non-dual. Refers to the impersonalistic philosophy which unqualifyingly equates God, the soul and matter.

Ahimsa Ahinsa

Not killing. Non-violence; respect for life.

Artha

Economic development. The second aim of life.

Arti Arati

Welcoming ceremony in which auspicious articles such as incense and lamps are offered to the deity or to saintly people.

Aryan

Noble. Refers to those who know the spiritual values of life. Scholars say it refers to the original inhabitants of the Sindhu region in India.

Ashram Asram

A place set up for spiritual development.

Ashrama Asrama

A stage of life (of which there are four) adopted according to material considerations, but ultimately as a means to spiritual realisation.

Atharva Veda

The fourth of the Vedas.

Atman Atma

Self. Can refer to body, mind or soul, depending on context. Ultimately, it refers to the real self, the soul.

Aum Om

The sacred symbol and sound representing the ultimate; the most sacred of Hindu words.

Avatar Avatara Avtara

One who descends. Refers to the descent of a deity, most commonly Vishnu. Sometimes it is translated as incarnation which, although inaccurate, may be the best English word available.

Ayodhya

Birthplace of Rama.

Bhagavad Gita

The Song of the Lord. Spoken by Krishna, this is the most important scripture for most Hindus. Tradition dates it back to 3,000 years BCE, though most scholars attribute it to the first millennium BCE. Considered an Upanishad.

Bhajan Bhajana

Devotional hymn or song.

Bhakti

Devotion; love. Devotional form of Hinduism.

Bhakti-yoga

The path of loving devotion, aimed at developing pure love of God.

Brahma

A Hindu deity, considered one of the Trimurti, and in charge of creative power; not to be confused with Brahman or Brahmin.

Brahmachari Brahmachari Brahmacharin Brahmacharin

One in the first stage of life, a celibate student of Vedic knowledge.

Brahmacharya Brahmacharya

Also two words – Brahma and chari, cari, charin or carin

The first ashrama or stage of life.

Brahman

The ultimate reality, or the all-pervading reality; that from which everything emanates, in which it rests and into which it is ultimately dissolved.

Brahmin Brahman Brahmana

The first of the four varnas, the principal social groupings from which priests are drawn. Some writers, rather confusingly, use the spelling 'brahman', and the meaning only becomes clear in the context of a few sentences (see also Brahman and Brahma).

Darshan Shastras

Six systems of Hindu philosophy – Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Vedanta and Meemansa.

Dassehra Dussehra Dassera Dashara

(Other variants are also found) Ten days. Also called Vijay Dashami. Celebrates the victory of Rama on the tenth day of the bright half of the lunar month of Jyeshtha. As is often the case with Hindu festivals, followers may interpret the festival differently, for example in connection with Durga (see Navaratri).

Dharma

Religion or religious duty is the usual translation into English, but literally it means the intrinsic quality of the self or that which sustains one's existence.

Dhoti

A garment made of natural fibre (usually cotton or silk), worn by males, which covers the lower body and legs.

Dhyana

Meditation.

Diwali Diwali Dipavali Deepavali

Festival of lights at the end of one year and beginning of the new year, according to one Hindu calendar.

Glossary: Hinduism

Durga

Female deity. A form of the goddess Parvati; wife of Shiva.

Dvaita Dwaita

Dual. Refers to the personalistic philosophy that differentiates between God, the soul and matter.

Dwarka Dvarka Dvaraka Dwaraka

Pilgrimage site on the west coast of India.

Ganesha Ganesh Ganupati Ganapati

A Hindu deity portrayed with an elephant's head – a sign of strength. The deity who removes obstacles.

Ganga

The Ganges. Most famous of all sacred rivers of India.

Gangotri

Source of the river Ganges.

Grihastha Gristhi Grhastha

The second stage of Hindu life; one who belongs to that stage, that is, the householder (grihasti).

Guna

Rope; quality. Specifically refers to the three qualities of sattva (goodness), rajas (passion) and tamas (ignorance), which permeate and control matter.

Guru

Spiritual teacher, preceptor or enlightener.

Hanuman

The monkey warrior who faithfully served Rama and Sita. Also called Pavansuta (son of the wind God).

Havan

Also known as Agnihotra. The basis of many Hindu rituals used at weddings and on other ceremonial occasions; the ceremony or act of worship in which offerings of ghee and grains are made into fire.

Havan kund

The container, usually square or pyramid-shaped, in which the havan fire is burned.

Hitopadesh

Stories with a moral.

Holi

The festival of colours, celebrated in Spring.

Homa Term often used interchangeably with havan.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

A religious group of the Vaishnava tradition.

Janeu Jenoi

Sacred thread worn by Hindus who study under a guru.

Janmashtami Janmashtmi

The birthday of Krishna, celebrated on the eighth day of the waning moon in the month of Badra.

Japa Jap

The quiet or silent repetition of a mantra as a meditative process.

Jati

Caste is the usual translation, meaning occupational kinship group.

Jnana Gyan Knowledge.

Jnana-yoga Gyan-yoga

The path of knowledge, that aims at liberation.

Kali Kaali

Name given to that power of God which delivers justice – often represented by the Goddess Kali (a form of Durga).

Kali yuga

The fourth of the ages; the iron age or the age of quarrelling and hypocrisy.

Kama

The third of the four aims of life – regulated sense of enjoyment.

Karma

Action. Used of work to refer to the law of cause and effect.

Karma-yoga

The path of self-realisation through dedicating the fruits of one's work to God.

Kirtan

Songs of praise; corporate devotional singing, usually accompanied by musical instruments.

Krishna

Usually considered an avatar of Vishnu. One of the most popular of all Hindu deities in contemporary Britain. His teachings are found in the Bhagavad Gita.

Kshatriya Khatri

Second of the four varnas of traditional Hindu society, the ruling or warrior class.

Lakshmi Laksmi

The goddess of fortune.

Mahabharata

The Hindu epic that relates the story of the five Pandava princes. It includes the Bhagavad Gita.

Mala Maala

Circle of stringed beads of wood or wool used in meditation.

Mandala Mandal

A circle, area or community/group.

Mandir

Temple.

Mantra

That which delivers the mind. Refers to a short sacred text or prayer, often recited repetitiously.

Manusmriti

The laws of Manu. An ancient and important text on Dharma, including personal and social laws.

Marg

Path (see Jnana yoga, Karma yoga and Bhakti yoga).

Mata

Mother. Often associated with Hindu goddesses who represent shakti (power).

Glossary: Hinduism

Mathura

Holy place connected with Krishna.

Maya

Not this. Usually, it refers to illusion, particularly where the permanent soul identifies itself with temporary matter, for example, the body. It can also mean power.

Moksha Moksa

Ultimate liberation from the process of transmigration, the continuous cycle of birth and death.

Mundan

The head-shaving ceremony. Performed in the first or third year of life.

Murti Moorti

Form. The image or deity used as a focus of worship. 'Idol' should definitely not be used, and 'statue' may also cause offence.

Navaratri Navaratra

The Nine Nights Festival preceding Dassehra, and held in honour of the goddess Durga.

Rakhi Raakhi

A bracelet, usually made out of silk or cotton, tied to give protection and to strengthen the bond of mutual love.

Raksha Bandhan

The festival when women tie a decorative bracelet on their brothers' wrists.

Rama

The incarnation of the Lord, and hero of the Ramayana (avoid using the variant 'Ram' for obvious reasons).

Ramayana Ramayan

The Hindu epic that relates the story of Rama and Sita, composed by the sage Valmiki thousands of years ago.

Ramnavami Ramnavmi

The birthday festival of Rama.

Rig Veda Rg or Rc Veda

The first scripture of Hinduism, containing spiritual and scientific knowledge.

Rishi Rsi Risi

A spiritually wise person. More specifically, one of the seven seers who received the divine wisdom.

Sadhana Sadhan

One's regulated spiritual practices or discipline.

Sadhu Saddhu

Holy man, ascetic.

Sama Veda

The Veda of chanting; material mainly from the Rig Veda, arranged for ritual chanting in worship.

Samsara Sansara

The world – the place where transmigration (the soul's passage through a series of lives in different species) occurs.

Samskar Sanskar Samskara

Sacraments designed to initiate a new stage of life. There is usually a total of sixteen such rites of passage (though many schools of thought do not practise them all).

Sanatan Dharma

The eternal or imperishable religion; also known as Vedic Dharma. Adherents often prefer this term to Hinduism since it characterises their belief in the revealed and universal nature of religion.

Sannyasa

The state of renunciation, the fourth stage of life.

Sannyasin Samyasin Samnyasin

A renunciate who, having given up worldly affairs and attachments, has entered the fourth stage of life, often as a mendicant.

Sanskrit

Sacred language of the Hindu scriptures.

Saraswati

The power of knowledge, often represented by the goddess Saraswati, the goddess of learning.

Sattva Sattwa

Goodness, or the potency to sustain and nourish; one of the three gunas.

Seva Sewa

Service, either to the divine or to humanity.

Shaivism Saivism

The religion of Hindus who are devotees of Shiva.

Shakti Sakti

Energy or power, especially of a Hindu feminine deity.

Shiva Siva

(many variants – even Civa – have been found)

A Hindu god. The name means kindly or auspicious.

Shivaratri Sivaratri

The annual festival celebrated in February/March in honour of Shiva. Also called Mahashivaratri.

Shraddha Sraddha

Ceremony in which sanctified food is offered to the poor and needy in memory of departed ancestors.

Shri Sri

Illustrious. Used as a title of respect, for example Shri Krishna. Also a respectful title for men. The feminine form is Shrimati (Mrs).

Shruti Srti

That which is remembered. Applicable to Hindu scriptures other than the Vedas.

Sita Seeta

The divine consort of Rama.

Smriti Srti Shruti

That which is heard. A term specifically applied to the four Vedas, including the Upanishads. Some Hindus believe that Smriti is subservient to Shruti, but other Hindus consider them to have equal importance.

Glossary: Hinduism

Sutra Sutta

Short sayings or verses relating to various rituals, or encapsulating profound philosophical meaning.

Swami Svami

Controller. Sometimes, more specifically, Goswami (one who can control his/her senses).

An honorific title applied to a religious teacher or holy person, particularly the sannyasi.

Swastika Svastika

From the Sanskrit for well-being; a mark of good fortune. The four arms signify the four directions (space), the four Vedas (knowledge), and the four stages (time) in the life cycle.

Not to be confused with the Nazi symbol.

Tamas

Ignorance or destructive potency; the lowest of the three gunas.

Trimurti

The three deities. Refers to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, who personify and control the three gunas. They represent and control the three functions of creation, preservation and destruction. 'Trinity' should be avoided.

Upanayana

Ceremony when the sacred thread is tied – to mark the start of learning with a guru.

Upanishad Upanisad

To sit down near. A sacred text based on the teaching of a guru to a disciple. The

Upanishads explain the teachings of the Vedas.

Vaishnavism Vaisnavism

The religion of Hindus who are devotees of the god Vishnu.

Vaishya Vaisya

The third of the four varnas of Hindu society, composed of merchants and farmers.

Vanaprastha

The third stage of life, typified by retirement and asceticism.

Vanaprasthi Vanaprastha

Forest dweller. One who is in the third stage of life.

Varanasi Banares Benares Kashi Kasi

City on the river Ganges, sacred to Shiva. It is one of the holiest pilgrimage sites and also an ancient centre of learning.

Varna

Colour. The four principal divisions of Hindu society. It is important to note that the word 'caste' refers strictly to sub-divisions within each varna, and not to varnas themselves.

Varnashrama Varnasrama Dharma

The system whereby society is divided into four varnas (divisions), and life into four ashramas (stages).

Varsha Pratipada

The day of Creation, celebrated as New Year's Day by many Hindus.

Veda

Knowledge. Specifically refers to the four Vedas, though any teaching which is consistent with the conclusions of these scriptures is also accepted as Vedic.

Vijay Dashmi Vijaya Dashami

Another name for Dassehra.

Vishnu Visnu

A Hindu god. With Brahma and Shiva forms the Trimurti.

Vrat Vratam

Vow. Often including abstention from certain foods.

Vrindavan Brindavan Vrindavana Brindaban

The sacred village connected with Krishna's pastimes as a youth.

Yajur Veda

One of the four Vedas, dealing with the knowledge of karma.

Yamuna Jamuna Jumna

Tributary of the river Ganga (Ganges), considered by many Hindus to be the most sacred of all holy rivers.

Yatra Jatra

Pilgrimage. Usually to important sacred places in India.

Yoga

Communion; union of the soul with the Supreme, or a process which promotes that relationship. The English word 'yoke' is derived from yoga.

Yuga

Age, or extended period of time, of which there are four

Glossary: Islam

The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. Therefore Arabic is the language of Islam, Islamic worship, theology, ethics and jurisprudence. Islam is inextricably linked with the Arabic language despite the variety of languages spoken by the believers.

For British teachers and pupils who have not encountered Islamic terms, this transliteration is a simplified version of that used by contemporary scholars. An apostrophe is used to indicate a pause. The reader will note that the words salah and zakah end in 'h' when they appear alone. When part of a phrase, these words are written with a 't' at the end, for example, Salat-ul-Zuhr, Zakat-ul-Fitr, as a guide to pronunciation.

Abd

Servant. As in Abdullah, servant of Allah.

Abu Bakr

The first Khalifah, successor to the leadership of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Adam

Adam (peace be upon him). The first man, and first Prophet of Allah.

Adhan

Call to prayer. From the same root, Mu'adhin (one who makes the call to prayer).

Aishah

One of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad, and daughter of Abu Bakr. (Radhi-Allahu-anhum – may Allah be pleased with them).

Akhirah

Everlasting life after death – the hereafter.

Akhlaq

Conduct, character, attitudes and ethics.

al-Amin

The Trustworthy. The name by which Prophet Muhammad was generally known, even before the revelation of Islam.

al-Aqsa

Masjid-ul-Aqsa (The Farthest Mosque) in Jerusalem, often known as the Dome of the Rock.

al-Fatihah

The Opener. Surah 1 of the Qur'an. Recited at least 17 times daily during the five times of salah. Also known as 'The Essence' of the Qur'an.

al-hamdu-li-Llah

All praise belongs to Allah. Frequently used as an expression of thanks to Allah.

al-Kafi

The title of the books of Hadith compiled by Muhammad ibn-Yaqub Koleini, a Shi'ah scholar.

al-Khulafa-ur-Rashidun

The Rightly Guided Khalifas. The first four successors to the leadership role of the Prophet Muhammad. They were Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali (Radhi-Allahu-anhum – may Allah be pleased with them).

al-Madinah

Madinatu'n-Nabi (The City of the Prophet). The name given to Yathrib after the Prophet Muhammad migrated there in 622 CE and founded the first Islamic state.

Ali

Cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad; husband of Fatimah Zahrah; father of Hassan, Hussein, and Zainab; the fourth of 'al-Khulafa-ur-Rashidun' according to Sunnis, and the first successor accepted by Shi'ah Islam (Radhi-Allahu-anhum – may Allah be pleased with them).

Allah

The Islamic name for God in the Arabic language. Used in preference to the word God, this Arabic term is singular, has no plural, nor is it associated with masculine, feminine or neuter characteristics.

Allahu Akbar

Allah is most great.

Angels

Beings created by Allah from light. They have no free will and are completely obedient to Allah.

Ansar

Supporters. The Muslims of al-Madinah, who welcomed, helped and supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.

Arafat

A plain, a few kilometres from Makkah, where pilgrims gather to worship, pray and ask for forgiveness. This takes place on the ninth day of the Islamic month of Dhul-Hijjah, the day before Id-ul-Adha.

Asr (Salat-ul-Asr)

Mid-afternoon salah which may be performed from late afternoon until a short while before sunset.

As-Salamu-Alaykum

Peace be upon you. An Islamic greeting.

Ayah (sing.)

A unit within a Surah of the Qur'an.

Barakah

Blessings.

Bilal

The first Mu'adhin of Islam (see Adhan), a companion of Prophet Muhammad, formerly an Abyssinian slave (Radhi-Allahu-anhu – may Allah be pleased with him).

Bismillah

In the name of Allah.

Bismillah-ir-Rahman ir-Rahim

In the name of Allah – All Gracious, All Merciful. The preface to all Surahs of the Qur'an except the ninth one. It is usually said by Muslims before eating or beginning any action.

Dar-ul-Islam

House or abode of Islam. Sometimes used to refer to lands ruled by Islamic Shari'ah. Islam

Glossary: Islam

Da'wah

Call. Inviting people to Islam, whether by literal invitation and preaching, or by the example of good actions.

Dawud

David . A Prophet of Allah to whom the Zabur (the Book of Psalms) was given.

Dhikr

Remembrance. Remembrance of Allah in one's heart or by reciting His names or sections from the Qur'an.

Dhimmi

A non-Muslim living freely under the protection of an Islamic state.

Dhul-Hijjah The month of the Hajj, last month of the Islamic year.

Din

Way of life, religion together with its practices.

Din-ul-Fitrah

A description of Islam as the natural way of life.

Du'a

Varying forms of personal prayer and supplication.

Fajr (Salat-ul-Fajr)

Dawn salah which may be performed from dawn until just before sunrise.

Fard

Obligatory duty according to divine law, for example, offering salah five times a day.

Fatihah

See al-Fatihah.

Fatimah (al-Zahrah)

Daughter of the Prophet Muhammad; wife of Ali; mother of Hassan, Hussein and Zainab

Fatwa

The legal guidance of a pious, just, knowledgeable Muslim scholar and jurist, based on the Qur'an, Sunnah and Islamic Shari'ah.

Fiqh

Understanding. Islamic jurisprudence.

Ghusl

Greater ablution. Form of washing of the whole body prior to worship (see Wudu).

Hadith

Saying; report; account. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, as recounted by his household, progeny and companions. These are a major source of Islamic law. Some Hadith are referred to as Hadith Qudsi (sacred Hadith) having been divinely communicated to the Prophet Muhammad .

Hafiz

Someone who knows the whole Qur'an by heart.

Hajar

Hagar. Wife of the Prophet Ibrahim, and mother of the Prophet Isma'il.

Hajj

Annual pilgrimage to Makkah, which each Muslim must undertake at least once in a lifetime if he or she has the health and wealth. A Muslim male who has completed Hajj is called Hajji, and a female, Hajjah.

Halal

Any action or thing which is permitted or lawful.

Haram

Anything unlawful or not permitted.

Haram Sharif

The grand mosque in Makkah, which encompasses the Ka'bah, the hills of Safa and Marwah and the well of Zamzam.

Hijab

Veil. Often used to describe the head scarf or modest dress worn by women, who are required to cover everything except face and hands in the sight of anyone other than immediate family.

Hijrah

Departure; exit; emigration. The emigration of the Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE. The Islamic calendar commences from this event.

Hira

The name of a place near Makkah, where the Prophet Muhammad went for solitude and worship. It was there that he received the first revelation of the Qur'an.

Ibadah

All acts of worship. Any permissible action performed with the intention to obey Allah.

Iblis

The Jinn who defied Allah by refusing to bow to Adam and later became the tempter of all human beings (see Shaytan).

Ibrahim

Abraham. A Prophet of Allah to whom the 'scrolls' were given.

Id

Recurring happiness. A religious holiday; a feast for thanking Allah and celebrating a happy occasion.

Id Mubarak Id blessings!

Greeting exchanged during Islamic celebrations.

Id-ul-Adha

Celebration of the sacrifice, commemorating the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son Isma'il for Allah. Also known as Id-ul-Kabir – the Greater Id – and Qurban Bayram (Turkish) - feast of sacrifice.

Id-ul-Fitr

Celebration of breaking the fast on the day after Ramadan ends, which is also the first day of Shawal, the tenth Islamic month. Also known as Id-ul-Saghir - the Lesser Id – and Sheker Bayram (Turkish) – sugar feast.

Ihram

The state or condition entered into to perform either Hajj or Umrah. During this period, many normally permitted actions are placed out of bounds to Muslims. Also, the name of the two plain white unsewn cloths worn by male pilgrims to indicate the brotherhood, equality and purity of the pilgrim. For women, the dress of Ihram consists of their normal modest clothing.

Ijma

General consensus of scholars, expressed or tacit, on matters of law and practice.

Glossary: Islam

Imam

Leader. A person who leads the communal prayer, or a founder of an Islamic school of jurisprudence. In Shi'ah Islam, Imam is also the title of Ali and his successors.

Imamah

Office and function of an Imam. Religious authority in Shi'ah Islam; successor to the Prophet Muhammad as leader of the Muslim community.

Iman

Faith.

Injil

Gospel. A book given to Prophet Isa .

Iqamah

Call to stand up for salah.

Isa

Jesus. A Prophet of Allah, born of the virgin Mary .

Isha (Salat-ul-Isha)

Evening salah which may be performed from just over an hour after sunset, until midnight.

Islam

Peace attained through willing obedience to Allah's divine guidance.

Isma'il

Ishmael. A Prophet of Allah. Son of the Prophet Ibrahim and Hajar.

Isnad

Chain of transmission of each Hadith.

Jibril

Gabriel. The angel who delivered Allah's messages to His Prophets.

Jihad

Personal individual struggle against evil in the way of Allah. It can also be collective defence of the Muslim community.

Jinn

Being created by Allah from fire.

Jumu'ah (Salat-ul-Jumu'ah)

The weekly communal salah and attendance at the khutbah performed shortly after midday on Fridays.

Ka'bah

A cube-shaped structure in the centre of the grand mosque in Makkah. The first house built for the worship of the One True God.

Khadijah

First wife of the Prophet Muhammad Mother of Fatimah Zahrah

Khalifah

Successor; inheritor; custodian; vice-regent (see al-Khulafa-ur-Rashidun).

Khilafah

The institution of the Khalifah.

Khums

Contribution (additional to zakah) of one fifth of surplus annual income paid by Shi'ah Muslims. Sunni Muslims only apply Khums to booty.

Khutbah

Speech. Talk delivered on special occasions such as the Jumu'ah and Id prayers.

Laylat-ul-Qadr

The Night of Power, when the first revelation of the Qur'an was made to Prophet Muhammad. It is believed to be one of the last ten nights of Ramadan.

Madinah See al-Madinah.

Maghrib (Salat-ul-Maghrib)

Sunset salah which is performed after sunset until daylight ends.

Mahdi, al-Muntazar

The (rightly) guided one who is awaited and will appear towards the end of time to lead the Ummah and restore justice on Earth. The one who is promised in the Judaic, Christian and Islamic traditions.

Makkah

City where the Prophet Muhammad was born, and where the Ka'bah is located.

Maryam

Mary. The virgin mother of the Prophet Isa.

Masjid

Place of prostration. Mosque.

Mihrab

Niche or alcove in a mosque wall, indicating the Qiblah – the direction of Makkah, towards which all Muslims face to perform salah.

Mina

Place near Makkah, where pilgrims stay on the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul-Hijjah and perform some of the activities of the Hajj.

Minbar

Rostrum; platform; dais. The stand from which the Imam delivers the khutbah or speech in the mosque or praying ground.

Miqat

Place appointed, at which pilgrims enter into the state of ihram.

Mi'raj

The ascent through the heavens of the Prophet Muhammad.

Mu'adhin

Caller to prayer (see Adhan). Known in English as 'muezzin'.

Muhammad

Name of the final Prophet.

Muharram

First month in the Islamic calendar, which is calculated from the time the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Yathrib (Madinah).

Musa

Moses. A Prophet of Allah to whom the Tawrah (Torah) was given.

Mumin

Faithful. A believer, a practising Muslim who wholeheartedly yields to Allah's guiding wisdom and is thus in harmony with His will and at peace with himself and fellow creatures.

Glossary: Islam

Muslim

One who claims to have accepted Islam by professing the Shahadah.

Muzdalifah

Place where pilgrims on Hajj stop for a time during the night of the day they spend at Arafat.

Nabi

Prophet of Allah.

Niyah

Intention. A legally required statement of intent, made prior to all acts of devotion such as salah, Hajj or sawm.

Qadar

Allah's complete and final control over the fulfilment of events or destiny.

Qiblah

Direction which Muslims face when performing salah – towards the Ka'bah (see Mihrab).

Qur'an

That which is read or recited. The Divine Book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Allah's final revelation to humankind.

Rak'ah

A unit of salah, made up of recitation, standing, bowing and two prostrations.

Ramadan

The ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which fasting is required from just before dawn until sunset, as ordered by Allah in the Qur'an.

Rasul

Messenger of Allah.

Sa'y

Walking and hastening between Safa and Marwah, as part of the Hajj, in remembrance of Hajar's search for water for her son Isma'il.

Sadaqah

Voluntary payment or good action for charitable purposes.

Safa and Marwah

Two hills in Makkah, near the Ka'bah, now included within the grand mosque (see Sa'y).

Sahih al-Bukhari

The title of the books of Hadith compiled by Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, a Sunni scholar. The collection is described as Sahih (authentic).

Sahih Muslim

The title of the books of Hadith compiled by Abul Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, a Sunni scholar. The collection is described as Sahih (authentic).

Salah

Prescribed communication with, and worship of, Allah, performed under specific conditions, in the manner taught by the Prophet Muhammad, and recited in the Arabic language. The five daily times of salah are fixed by Allah.

Sawm

Fasting from just before dawn until sunset. Abstinence is required from all food and drink (including water) as well as smoking and conjugal relations.

Shahadah

Declaration of faith, which consists of the statement, 'There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'.

Shari'ah

Islamic law based upon the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Shaytan

Rebellious; proud. The devil (see Iblis)

Shi'ah

Followers. Muslims who believe in the Imamah, successorship of Ali after the Prophet Muhammad and eleven of his most pious, knowledgeable descendants.

Shirk

Association. Regarding anything as being equal or partner to Allah. Shirk is forbidden in Islam.

Shura

Consultation of the people in the management of religious and worldly affairs. A duty prescribed in the Qur'an to leaders at all levels, from family to government.

Sirah

Biographical writings about the conduct and example of the Prophet Muhammad.

Subhah

String of beads used to count recitations in worship.

Sunnah

Model practices, customs and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad. This is found in both Hadith and Sirah.

Sunni

Muslims who believe in the successorship of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali after the Prophet Muhammad.

Surah

Division of the Qur'an (114 in all).

Takbir

Saying 'Allahu Akbar!' Recited during salah, Id and other celebratory occasions.

Tawaf

Walking seven times around the Ka'bah in worship of Allah. Also, a part of Hajj and Umrah.

Tawhid

Belief in the Oneness of Allah – absolute monotheism as practised in Islam.

Tawrah

The Torah. The book given to the Prophet Musa (Moses).

Ulama

Scholars of Islamic law and jurisprudence (sing. Alim).

Umar ibn ul-Khattab

The second Khalifah of Islam.

Ummah

Community. World-wide community of Muslims; the nation of Islam.

Umrah

Lesser pilgrimage which can be performed at any time of the year.

Glossary: Islam

Uthman

The third Khalifah of Islam.

Wudu

Ablution before salah.

Yathrib

Town to which the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Makkah (see al-Madinah).

Zabur

The Book of Psalms given to Prophet Dawud (David)

Zakah

Purification of wealth by payment of annual welfare due. An obligatory act of worship.

Zakat-ul-Fitr

Welfare payment at the end of Ramadan.

Zamzam

Name of the well adjacent to the Ka'bah in Makkah. The water first sprang in answer to Hajar's search and prayers (see Hajar and Sa'y).

Zuhr (Salat-ul-Zuhr)

Salah which can be performed after midday until afternoon.

Glossary: Judaism

Most of the terms included in this section are Hebrew in origin. However, since the Jewish diaspora, many terms reflect the different countries where Jews have settled. For example, many words are in Yiddish, a common language (a mixture of German, Russian and Hebrew) developed by Jews throughout Central and Eastern Europe. The preferred form in this glossary uses the Sephardic pronunciation, which is equivalent to modern Hebrew as spoken in Israel today. As with all transliterations, there may be acceptable differences in the ways in which words are spelt. The preferred form is given first, followed by any variants.

Afikomen (Greek)

Dessert. Portion of a matzah eaten near the end of the Seder.

Agadah Aggadah

Telling. Rabbinical teachings on moral values.

Aleinu

Key prayer at the conclusion of each service.

Aliyah

To go up. (i) Being called to read the Sefer Torah in the synagogue.

(ii) The migration of Jews to Israel.

Amidah

Standing. The standing prayer.

Aron Hakodesh

Holy Ark. The focal point of the synagogue, containing Torah scrolls.

Ashkenazim

Jews of Central and Eastern European origin.

Bar Mitzvah

Son of Commandment. A boy's coming of age at 13 years old, usually marked by a synagogue ceremony and family celebration.

Bat Mitzvah Bat Chayil

Daughter of Commandment. As above, but for girls from 12 years old. May be marked differently between communities.

Bet ha Knesset Beit ha Knesset

House of Assembly

Synagogue

Shul

Bimah

Dais. Raised platform primarily for reading the Torah in the synagogue.

Brit Milah Berit Milah Bris

Circumcision.

Challah Hallah

Enriched bread used particularly on Shabbat and during festivals.

Chazan Hazzan Cantor

Leader of reading, singing and chanting in the services of some synagogues.

Chumash

Five. The Torah in book form, used in the synagogue and the home.

Circumcision

Religious rite of Brit Milah, performed by a qualified mohel on all Jewish boys, usually on the eighth day after birth.

Gemara Gemarah

Commentary on the Mishnah included in the Talmud.

Genizah

Storage place for damaged religious texts.

Haftarah

Completion. Passages from Nevi'im (Prophets) read in the synagogue (linked to weekly Torah and festival readings).

Hagadah Haggadah

Telling. A book used at Seder.

Halakhah Halacha

The Way. The code of conduct encompassing all aspects of Jewish life.

Hanukiah Chanukiah Menorah

Nine-branched Hanukkah lamp used at the festival of Hanukkah.

Hanukkah Chanukah

Dedication. An eight-day festival of lights to celebrate the re-dedication of the temple following the Maccabean victory over the Greeks.

Hasid (plural Hasidim) Chasid (plural Chasidim)

Pious. Member of the Orthodox movement of Hasidism.

Hasidism Chasidism

A religious and social movement formed by Israel Baal Shem Tov (from the 18th century onwards).

Havdalah Distinction

Ceremony marking the conclusion of Shabbat.

Hebrew Ivrit

Ancient Semitic language; language of the Tenakh (Hebrew Scriptures) and used by Jews for prayer and study. Also, everyday language in Israel.

Huppah Chuppah

Canopy used for a wedding ceremony, under which the bride and groom stand.

Israel

One who struggles with God. The phrase refers to the world-wide Jewish community; the land of Israel and the modern state of Israel.

Kabbalah Cabala

Jewish mysticism.

Kaddish

Prayer publicly recited by mourners.

Kashrut

Laws relating to keeping a kosher home and lifestyle.

Ketubah Ketubbah

Document that defines rights and obligations within Jewish marriage.

Ketuvim

Writings. Third section of the Tenakh.

Glossary: Judaism

Kibbutz (plural Kibbutzim)

Israeli collective village based on socialist principles.

Kiddush

Holy. A prayer sanctifying Shabbat and festival days, usually recited over wine.

Kippah Yamulka Capel

Head covering worn during prayers, Torah study, etc. Some followers wear it constantly.

Knesset

Assembly. Israeli parliament.

Kol Nidrei Kol Nidre

All vows. Prayer recited on the evening of Yom Kippur.

Korach

Name of the leader who defied Moses in the wilderness

Kosher Kasher

Fit; proper. Foods permitted by Jewish dietary laws.

Ladino

Language used predominately by Sephardim.

Magen David

Shield of David, popularly called Star of David.

Maimonides

Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (1135–1204), a leading Jewish philosopher, medical writer and codifier of Jewish law.

Mashiach Moshiach Messiah

The anointed one who will herald in a new era for Judaism and all humankind.

Matzah (plural Matzot)

A flat cracker-like bread which has been baked before it rises; used at Pesach.

Menorah

Seven-branched candelabrum which was lit daily in the Temple.

Mezuzah

A scroll placed on door posts of Jewish homes, containing a section from the Torah and often enclosed in a decorative case.

Midrash

Collections of various Rabbinic commentaries on the Tenakh.

Mikveh

Ritual bath used for the immersion of people and objects.

Minyan

Quorum of ten men, over Bar Mitzvah age, required for a service. Progressive communities may include women but do not always require a minyan.

Mishnah

First writing down of the Oral Tradition. An authoritative document forming part of the Talmud, codified about 200 CE.

Mishkan

Dwelling. The original travelling sanctuary used prior to the building of the permanent Temple in Jerusalem.

Mitzvah (plural Mitzvot)

Commandment. The Torah contains 613 Mitzvot. Commonly used to describe good deeds.

Mohel

Person trained to perform Brit Milah.

Moshav (plural Moshavim)

Collective village or farm in Israel.

Ner Tamid

Eternal light. The perpetual light above the Aron Hakodesh.

Nevi'im

Prophets. Second section of the Tenakh.

Noachide Laws

Seven laws given to Noah after the flood, which are incumbent on all humankind. These laws form the foundation for a just society.

Parev Parveh

Neutral foods, which are neither milk nor meat, for example vegetables, eggs, fish.

Pesach

Passover Festival commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. One of the three biblical pilgrim festivals. Pesach is celebrated in the spring.

Pikei Avot Pirke Avoth

Sayings of the Fathers. Part of the Mishnah containing ethics of Rabbinical sages.

Pikuakh Nefesh

Save a soul. The setting aside of certain laws in order to save a life.

Pogrom

Organised attack on Jews, especially frequent in 19th and early 20th century Eastern Europe.

Purim

Festival commemorating the rescue of Persian Jewry as told in the book of Esther.

Rabbi

My teacher. An ordained Jewish teacher. Often the religious leader of a Jewish community.

Rashi Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzhak (1040 – 1105).

A French rabbinical scholar and leading commentator on the Torah and Talmud.

Rebbe Rabbi.

The term used by Hasidim for their religious leader.

Rosh Hashanah Rosh Ha-Shanah

Head of the Year. Jewish New Year.

Seder

Order. A home-based ceremonial meal during Pesach, at which the Exodus from Egypt is recounted using the Hagadah.

Sefer Torah

Torah scroll. The five books of Moses hand-written on parchment and rolled to form a scroll.

Sephardim Sefardim

Jews originating from Mediterranean countries, especially Spain, North Africa and the Middle East.

Glossary: Judaism

Shabbat Shabbos

Day of spiritual renewal and rest commencing at sunset on Friday, terminating at nightfall on Saturday.

Shatnez Shaatnez

Garments containing a forbidden mixture of wool and linen.

Shavuot

Weeks. One of three pilgrim festivals. Shavuot is celebrated in the summer, seven weeks after Pesach.

Shekhina

The divine presence.

Shema

Major Jewish prayer affirming belief in one God. The Shema is found in the Torah.

Shemot

Names. Seven holy names of God.

Shiva

Seven days of intense mourning following the burial of a close relation. During this period, all ordinary work is prohibited.

Shoah

Desolation. The suffering experienced by European Jews at the hands of the Nazis, including the systematic murder of six million Jews between 1933 and 1945.

Shofar

Ram's horn blown at the season of Rosh Hashanah

Siddur

Order. Daily prayer book.

Simchat Torah

Rejoicing of the law. Festival celebrating the completion and recommencement of the cycle of the weekly Torah reading.

Sukkah (plural Sukkot)

Tabernacle; booth. A temporary dwelling used during Sukkot.

Sukkot

One of three biblical pilgrim festivals, Sukkot is celebrated in the Autumn.

Synagogue

Shul

Bet Haknesset Bet Hamidrash

Building for Jewish public prayer, study and assembly.

Tallit Tallith

Prayer shawl. Four-cornered garment with fringes.

Talmud

Mishnah and Gemara, collected together.

Tefillah Tefila

Self-judgement. Jewish prayer and meditation.

Tefillin Tephilin T'filin

Phylacteries Small leather boxes containing passages from the Torah, strapped on the forehead and arm for morning prayers on weekdays.

Tenakh Tanakh

The collected 24 books of the Jewish Bible, comprising three sections: Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim (Te;Na;Kh).

Teshuva

Repentance. Returning to God.

Tikkun Olam Tikun

Care for the world and environment.

Torah

Law; teaching. The Five Books of Moses.

Tzedaka

Righteousness. An act of charity.

Tzitzit Tzitzit

Fringes on the corners of the Tallit. Also commonly refers to the fringed undervest worn by some Jewish males.

Yad

Hand-held pointer used in reading the Sefer Torah.

Yahrzeit

Year-time. Anniversary of a death.

Yeshiva

College for study of the Torah and Talmud.

Yiddish

Language used predominantly by Ashkenazim.

Yishuv

Ingathering. The Jewish community of Israel.

Yom Hashoah

Day to commemorate the Shoah.

Yom Kippur

Day of Atonement. Fast day occurring on the tenth day after Rosh Hashanah; a solemn day of Tefillah and Teshuva.

Zionism

Political movement securing the Jewish return to the land of Israel.

Glossary: Sikhism

Sikh terms are drawn from the Punjabi language, and the versions below are based upon that language. Many of these terms will also be found in books on Hinduism and Buddhism but with somewhat different meanings. As with all transliterations, there are problems which are difficult to resolve. This is particularly true when moving from the Gurmukhi script which has an alphabet of 35 letters, to the Roman alphabet which has only 26 letters. Names of persons and places are only included in this list if variant forms are commonly used.

Akal Purakh

The Eternal One. A designation frequently used of God by Guru Nanak.

Akal Takht Akal Takhat

Throne of the Eternal; throne of the Timeless One. Building facing the Golden Temple in Amritsar, where Sikhs gather for political purposes.

Akhand Path

Continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib from beginning to end.

Amrit

Nectar. Sanctified liquid made of sugar and water, used in initiation ceremonies.

Amrit ceremony Amrit Sanskar Amrit Pahul Khande di Pahul. Sometimes just 'Amrit' or 'Taking Amrit' ('Amrit Chhakna')

The Sikh rite of initiation into the Khalsa. 'Baptism' should not be used.

Anand karaj Anand Sanskar

Ceremony of bliss. Wedding ceremony.

Ardas

Prayer. The formal prayer offered at most religious acts.

Baisakhi Vaisakhi

A major Sikh festival celebrating the formation of the Khalsa, 1699 CE.

Bangla Sahib

The site of the martyrdom of Guru Har Krishan (Delhi).

Bhai Khanaya

A Sikh commended by Guru Gobind Singh for serving water to the enemy wounded.

Bhai Lalo

A humble carpenter who opened his house to Guru Nanak. The Guru preferred Bhai Lalo's simple food to the offerings of a local rich merchant.

Chanani Chandni

Canopy over the scriptures, used as a mark of respect.

Chauri Chaur

Symbol of the authority of the Guru Granth Sahib. Fan waved over scriptures, made of yak hairs or nylon. It should not be called a 'fly whisk'.

Dasam Granth

Collection of compositions, some of which are attributed to the tenth Sikh Guru, compiled some years after his death.

Giani

A person learned in the Sikh scriptures.

Granthi

Reader of the Guru Granth Sahib, who officiates at ceremonies.

Gurbani Bani Vani

Divine word revealed by the Gurus. The Shabads contained in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Gurdwara Gurudwara

Sikh place of worship. Literally the 'doorway to the Guru'.

Gurmat

The Guru's guidance.

Gurmukh

One who lives by the Guru's teaching.

Gurmukhi

From the Guru's mouth. Name given to the script in which the scriptures and the Punjabi language are written.

Gurpurb Gurpura

A Guru's anniversary (birth or death). Also used for other anniversaries, for example, of the installation of the Adi Granth, 1604 CE.

Guru

Teacher. In Sikhism, the title of Guru is reserved for the ten human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib.

Guru Arjan

The fifth Guru who was the first Sikh martyr (1563–1606).

Guru Gobind Singh Guru Govind Singh Original name: Guru Gobind Rai)

Tenth Sikh Guru. It is important to note that the title 'Guru' must be used with all the Gurus' names. Sikhs usually use further terms of respect, for example Guru Gobind Singh Ji or Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Guru Granth Sahib Adi Granth ('Granth' by itself should be avoided)

Primal collection of Sikh scriptures, compiled by Guru Arjan and given its final form by Guru Gobind Singh.

Guru Har Gobind Guru Hargobind Guru Hargovind

Sixth Sikh Guru.

Guru Har Krishan Guru Harkishan Guru Harkrishan

Eighth Sikh Guru.

Guru Nanak

The first Guru and the founder of the Sikh faith (1469–1539).

Guru Tegh Bahadur

The ninth Guru who was martyred for the principle of religious tolerance (1622–1675).

Haumai

Egoism. The major spiritual defect.

Hukam

God's will.

Hukam Vak

Random reading taken for guidance from the Guru Granth Sahib.

Ik Onkar

There is only One God. The first phrase of the Mool Mantar. It is also used as a symbol to decorate Sikh objects.

Janamsakh Janam Sakhi

Birth stories. Hagiographic life stories of a Guru, especially Guru Nanak.

Glossary: Sikhism

Japji Sahib

A morning prayer, composed by Guru Nanak, which forms the first chapter of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Jivan Mukht Jivan Mukht

Enlightened while in the material body; a spiritually enlightened person, freed from worldly bonds.

Kachera

Traditional underwear/shorts. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Kakka See panj kakke.

Singular of the Punjabi letter K (plural 'kakke')

Kangha Kanga

Comb worn in the hair. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Kara

Steel band worn on the right wrist. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Karah parshad Karah Prasad

Sanctified food distributed at Sikh ceremonies.

Kaur

Princess. Name given to all Sikh females by Guru Gobind Singh (see Singh).

Kesh Kes

Uncut hair. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Khalsa

The community of the pure. The Sikh community.

Khanda

Double-edged sword used in the initiation ceremony. Used as the emblem on the Sikh flag.

Kirat karna

Earning one's livelihood by one's own efforts.

Kirpan

Sword. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke). 'Dagger' should be avoided.

Kirtan

Devotional singing of the compositions found in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Kirtan Sohila

A prayer said before retiring for sleep. It is also used at the cremation ceremony and when the Guru Granth Sahib is laid to rest.

Kurahit Prohibitions, for example intoxicants.

Langar Guru ka Langar

Guru's kitchen. The gurdwara dining hall and the food served in it.

Mela

Fair. Used of Sikh festivals which are not gurpurbs.

Manji Manji Sahib

Small platform on which the scripture is placed.

Manmukh Munmukh

Self-orientated (as opposed to gurmukh).

Mool Mantar Mul Mantar

Basic teaching; essential teaching. The basic statement of belief at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Nam Simran Nam Simaran Naam Simran

Meditation on the divine name, using passages of scripture.

Nankana Sahib

Birthplace of Guru Nanak. Now in Pakistan.

Nishan Sahib

Sikh flag flown at gurdwaras.

Nit nem

The recitation of specified daily prayers.

Panj kakke

The five Ks. The symbols of Sikhism worn by Sikhs.

Panj piare Panj Pyare (other forms may also be found)

The five beloved ones. Those first initiated into the Khalsa; those who perform the rite today.

Panth

The Sikh community.

Patases Patashas

Sugar bubbles or crystals used to prepare Amrit.

Punjab Panjab

Land of five rivers. The area of India in which Sikhism originated.

Ragi

Sikh musician who sings compositions from the Guru Granth Sahib.

Rahoguru

Wonderful Lord. A Sikh name for God.

Rahit

Sikh obligations, for example to meditate on God.

Rahit Maryada Rehat Maryada

Sikh Code of Discipline.

Sadhsangat Sangat

Congregation or assembly of Sikhs.

Sewa Seva

Service directed at the sadhsangat and gurdwara, but also to humanity in general.

Shabad Sabad Shabd

Word. Hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib; the divine word.

Sikh

Learner; disciple. A person who believes in the ten Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib, and who has no other religion.

Singh

Lion. Name adopted by Sikh males (see kaur).

Sis Ganj Sahib

The site of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Delhi)

Vak Vaak

A random reading taken for guidance from the Guru Granth Sahib.

Vand chhakna

Sharing one's time, talents and earnings with the less fortunate.