

# How to use the Syllabus

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The syllabus offers a range of materials from which schools can construct their own RE curriculum. The units indicate content appropriate to each Key Stage and are not necessarily teaching units. It is expected that schools will use the units as a checklist for content, and will structure the teaching of that material in a form suited to their own circumstances.

In line with the aims of the syllabus, detailed guidance is offered on the teaching of Christianity. The material is divided into five core units - The Bible; Jesus Christ; The Church; Festivals; Christian Living. Suitable teaching material is offered in each unit for each Key Stage and appropriate levels of achievement for most pupils are indicated by the end of Key Stage Statements.

It is expected that all pupils will cover the content outlined in the units at some point during the relevant Key Stage.

For the teaching of World Faiths the syllabus offers teaching material for Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

In deciding what faiths to introduce when, and how much time to devote to each, this syllabus follows the policy of the General Synod's Board of Education:

*'In most schools, we would expect that about 66% of the RE time would be spent studying Christianity;*

*In some schools, however, notably those with significant numbers of pupils from faith backgrounds other than Christianity, it may be more appropriate to spend only 50% of the available RE time studying Christianity;*

*Where schools wish to devote more time to Christianity it is not possible to pay proper attention to a World Faiths component in less than 25% of the time available to RE.'*

These figures do not necessarily refer to the balance of work within any one year; it is more helpful to view them with reference to the work undertaken either over a Key Stage or even over a phase.

*'The syllabus further recommends that, especially at KS1 and 2, pupils should not attempt to study more than two faiths in depth in addition to Christianity. This is a maximum provision and leaves schools open to offering fewer than two other faiths.'*

The precise pattern of which faith to introduce at what point and in what way will depend largely on the circumstances of the school. Further guidance is offered in chapter 4: Teaching World Faiths.

Finally, we do not believe it is possible to deliver this syllabus in less than 5% of curriculum time. It may be that schools wish to use collective worship in support of the RE curriculum, but that should never be seen as the chief means of delivering RE.

## Key Stages 3 and 4

The above guidance provides a general framework for KS3 and 4. Where pupils follow a GCSE course that is exclusively Christian, clearly the World Faiths teaching will have to be encompassed within KS3, and it may then be acceptable to increase the number of faiths studied.

Choice of GCSE papers needs to be made with reference to the aims of the school or possibly some of the aspects of this syllabus.

Schools may wish to consider papers with some world faiths elements, particularly in the light of revised GCSE criteria and the more interesting syllabuses being drawn up. Pupils not taking GCSE RE are still required to follow a course of RE in Y10 and 11. Sometimes this is incorporated within PSE, but if that is the case the RE element must be clearly identified and assessed. This syllabus offers suitable material, especially in the Christian Living unit, to use in devising non-exam courses in RE.