



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority

Religious education units of work

A guide for using new units at foundation stage and key stages 1, 2 and 3

September 2006

QCA/06/2728

Contents

Introduction	3
Religious education in the curriculum	3
What is this guidance for?	7
Who is this guidance for?	8
What does this guidance include?	8
Section 1: About the units	10
The units	10
Content of the units	10
Collecting evidence of pupils' work for assessment	13
Section 2: Teaching the units	15
Planning and developing a religious education programme	15
Planning for progression	15
Measuring attainment	16
Dealing with discussion and pupils' questions and disclosures	18
Appendices	22
Appendix A: Attainment targets	22

Introduction

Religious education in the curriculum

Religious education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools¹, including those in the sixth form, except to those withdrawn by their parents. This requirement does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools.

Religious education is a component of the basic curriculum, to be taught alongside the National Curriculum in all maintained schools. In all maintained schools, other than voluntary aided schools with a religious character, it must be taught according to a locally agreed syllabus².

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 10

The units discussed in this guidance can be used as a basis for work in religious education (RE) if a school is satisfied that the units will enable it to fulfil the requirements of their locally agreed syllabus or, in a school not subject to an agreed syllabus, their governing body policy for religious education.

Why is religious education important?

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. 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

¹ The legal requirements for teaching religious education are set out in the Education Act 1996 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of religious education lessons.

² See School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for variations on this requirement.

ethics and to communicate their responses. Religious education encourages pupils to develop their sense of identity and 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.

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 7

Religious education at the foundation stage (ages 3–5)

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.

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 21

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, 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.

- 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.

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 21

Religious education at key stages 1, 2 and 3

Throughout key stage 1, pupils:

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

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 24

During the key stage children acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of:

- Christianity
- At least one other principal religion
- A religious community with a significant local presence, where appropriate
- A secular world view where appropriate.

Throughout key stage 2, pupils:

- learn about Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions, recognising the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally

- make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression
- consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion
- learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings
- begin to recognise diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs and the importance of dialogue between them
- extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary
- recognise the challenges involved in distinguishing between ideas of right and wrong, and valuing what is good and true
- communicate their ideas, recognising other people's viewpoints
- consider their own beliefs and values and those of others in the light of their learning in religious education.

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 26

During the key stage children acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of:

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

Throughout key stage 3, pupils:

- extend their understanding of Christianity and at least two of the other principal religions in a local, national and global context
- deepen their understanding of important beliefs, concepts and issues of truth and authority in religion
- apply their understanding of religious and philosophical beliefs, teachings and practices to a range of ultimate questions and ethical issues, with a focus on self awareness, relationships, rights and responsibilities
- enquire into and explain some personal, philosophical, theological and cultural reasons for similarities and differences in religious beliefs and values, both within and between religions
- interpret religious texts and other sources, recognising both the power and limitations of language and other forms of communication in expressing ideas and beliefs

- reflect on the impact of religion and belief in the world, considering both the importance of interfaith dialogue and the tensions that exist within and between religions and beliefs.
- develop their evaluative skills, showing reasoned and balanced viewpoints when considering their own and others' responses to religious, philosophical and spiritual issues.

Non-statutory national framework for RE, page 28

During the key stage children acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of:

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

What is this guidance for?

In October 2004 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*. This framework sets out guidelines for RE in England. It also provides information to help those with responsibility for the provision and quality of RE through the whole of the maintained school system of education.

The material in this guidance, and the accompanying units, illustrates how RE – based on an agreed syllabus or other guidelines (eg in a school with a religious character) – might be structured for the classroom. There is no legal requirement to use these units. In fulfilling the requirements of their agreed syllabuses or other guidelines, schools should feel free to use as little or as much of this guidance as they find helpful, adapting it to meet their pupils' needs and their school and local priorities.

Some units show what could be taught in relation to a specific religion, while others are illustrated by two or more religions. To increase flexibility, the guidance indicates places where schools can adapt the content to suit the requirements of their own agreed syllabuses, especially where particular religions are specified for study at each key stage.

Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain are featured in the units. This does not mean that they should be taught in this way in every school. By drawing on a diversity of religions and beliefs to illustrate teaching and learning, the units exemplify how schools can meet the varying requirements for study of different religions specified in agreed syllabuses or other requirements. For further guidance, see the *Non-statutory national framework for religious education*, pages 21–29.

While the material in this guidance and the accompanying units is optional, QCA hopes it will provide stimulating examples of classroom implementation. In addition, it should help schools to link their RE to the primary and secondary strategies, and include information and communication technology (ICT), inclusion, literacy and thinking skills.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance has been mainly written for:

- agreed syllabus conferences
- standing advisory councils on religious education
- relevant authorities within faith communities
- teachers following an agreed syllabus or other requirements based on the *Non-statutory national framework for religious education*.

It relates to RE, taught according to a locally agreed syllabus or other requirements that are based on the *Non-statutory national framework for religious education*. It might also be useful to those planning RE in other schools.

What does this guidance include?

This guidance includes:

- information for planning and providing work on RE
- suggestions for appropriate teaching and learning approaches
- information on how to use the units of work
- provides guidance on dealing with sensitive and controversial issues.

It consists of 11 units of work that demonstrate:

- how the requirements of an agreed syllabus or other programme based on the *Non-statutory national framework for religious education* can be divided into units to be taught in different years
- the features of progression in RE that need to be considered when planning work within a unit and across each key stage
- the differentiated outcomes of pupils' attainment within units
- how RE can be taught through the use of systematic units and units that can be adapted for different religions in order to meet local syllabus requirements
- how RE can be provided within a context of pupils' developing knowledge and understanding of religion, philosophy and ethics
- links with work on ICT, literacy, numeracy, key skills, thinking skills and other areas of the curriculum
- how out-of-school activities can enhance learning in school
- how evidence can be gathered for assessment.

Section 1: About the units

The units

There are 11 units of work covering the foundation stage and key stages 1 to 3:

- two units for the foundation stage
- one unit for each year group in key stages 1 to 3 (except years 6 and 7)
- two transition units that model how pupils might begin a unit of study in year 6 and continue in year 7.

Choosing religions to be studied is a matter for those formulating the syllabuses or other requirements. The religions and beliefs explored in these units are only meant to serve as examples and are not intended to specify which religions/beliefs, or how many, should be studied in a year. Guidance in choosing religions is provided in the breadth of study sections of the programmes of study in the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*.

Content of the units

The following elements appear in each unit, although there is variation in the foundation stage units to enable practitioners to make links to the curriculum guidance for this stage.

Year group

This shows the recommended age groups for these units. However, the units may be adapted for different age groups.

'About the unit'

This sets out the focus of the teaching and learning. It outlines the knowledge, skills and understanding that will be developed. In accordance with the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*, this element identifies the themes, experiences and opportunities as well as the breadth of study of the unit.

Estimated time for this unit

This is based on the assumption that the following amounts of time are allocated to RE:

- key stage 1 – 36 hours per year
- key stage 2 – 45 hours per year
- key stage 3 – 45 hours per year.

These indicative time allocations are in line with the guidance issued by QCA on planning the curriculum in key stages 1, 2 and 3.

‘Where the unit fits in’

This indicates the aspects of the programme of study in the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*. It begins with a general description of the focus of the unit and then sets out the breadth of study through which pupils will be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding: religions and beliefs, themes and experiences and opportunities.

‘Prior learning’

This describes previous learning, experience and skills that might be helpful to pupils who are undertaking the unit.

‘Future learning’

This describes possible learning experiences or units that pupils could pursue after this unit.

‘Attitudes in the unit’

This describes the aspects of the following four attitudes developed in the unit:

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

‘Differentiated outcomes’

This describes the knowledge, skills and understanding that most pupils should achieve after completing the unit, as well as what pupils working at a lower or higher standard should achieve. These are set out in terms of the levels of the attainment targets set out on pages 36–37 of the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*.

Teachers working with mixed-age groups will need to adjust differentiated outcomes according to the different ages of the pupils following the same unit. The range of differentiated outcomes identified in these units should assist teachers in this process.

‘Vocabulary’

This sets out key vocabulary in three categories:

- religion in general, eg creation, sacred
- the religion(s) studied, eg Bible, Guru
- religious and human experience, eg story, proof.

‘Resources’

This lists materials and sources of information that might be helpful in delivering the unit or planning for further work.

‘Learning objectives’

This outlines the knowledge, skills and understanding that are the focus of the activities in each unit. Teachers should share these objectives with pupils to ensure that they know what they are intended to achieve by the end of the lesson.

‘Teaching and learning’

This is designed to help pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the objectives. They may be adapted and amended to fit in with the agreed syllabus or other requirements as well as the school’s priorities and provision for RE.

‘Learning outcomes’

This indicates the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils should develop through the teaching and learning activities. They provide opportunities for checking progress and reviewing work with pupils as apart of formative assessment.

‘Points to note’

This includes advice on teaching the unit, planning and managing the work and including alternative or extension activities. Links with other subjects and references to appropriate sections of the primary and secondary strategy publications are provided.

Collecting evidence of pupils’ work for assessment

Additionally, in some activities evidence of pupils’ work could be used for assessment.

Using learning objectives and outcomes

A key aspect of successful assessment for learning is that learning objectives are shared with pupils. These learning objectives for each session are set out in the units of work. The objectives use common stems – know, understand, reflect on – to ensure that the planning focus is on learning and not on the activities.

The learning objectives are clearly mapped to the learning outcomes, against which the success of the teaching and learning activities can be evaluated. The outcomes are related to the level descriptions of the attainment targets in the *Non-statutory national framework for RE*. It is important for assessment purposes to collect evidence of what pupils know, understand and can do. The outcomes, as outlined in these units, provide useful examples of such evidence.

When planning, teachers should be clear about how pupils will receive feedback on their work. Teachers must know how they will judge pupils’ performance and progress and how they will identify what the pupils need to do next in order to improve. Pupils should be

involved in assessing their own work. In addition to teachers, peers and other audiences may provide feedback and assessment of pupils' work.

It takes time for pupils to build up the skills and confidence to assess their own work and to learn how to provide constructive feedback to others. However, teachers have found that it is worthwhile, both in improving pupils' motivation and self-esteem as well as in raising standards.

Using assessment at key stages 1 to 3

One activity in each unit has been flagged to suggest an opportunity to gather evidence for assessment. This assessment is designed to inform the teacher and the pupil how much the pupil has learnt at a particular point in time, and is designed to be used in a formative way. This means that the purpose of the assessment is also to help pupils identify what they need to do next in order to improve and to set appropriate targets.

Section 2: Teaching the units

Planning and developing a religious education programme

The activities within each unit could be adapted in the planning process. They will need to be supplemented with lesson plans that meet individual class requirements, taking into account pupils' different abilities and the resources available.

Short-term planning is the responsibility of individual teachers who build on the school's medium-term plan by taking account of the needs of pupils.

Planning for progression

Progression in RE includes progression in:

- Learning about religion (attainment target 1)
- Learning from religion (attainment target 2).

Progress in RE can be characterised by:

- acquiring wider and more detailed knowledge of religious beliefs and practices
- deepening understanding of the meaning of stories, symbols, events and practices
- more fluent and competent use of religious terminology
- increased levels in skills of responding to questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitment.

The units exemplify a number of strategies to ensure appropriate progression both within and between key stages:

- 'Where the unit fits in' indicates which parts of the *Non-statutory national framework for religious education* are delivered. It also identifies pupils' possible prior learning and how one unit could link to another
- 'Differentiated outcomes' differentiates the expected level of knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils at different levels of attainment should achieve after completing the unit

- 'Prior learning' and 'Future learning' suggest links to other work that may be provided by local requirements.

Measuring attainment

The attainment targets for RE set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3.

As with the national curriculum, the attainment targets consist of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description for exceptional performance above level 8. Each description describes the types and range of performance that pupils working at that level should characteristically demonstrate.

The key indicators of attainment in RE are presented in two attainment targets:

- Attainment target 1: Learning about religion
- Attainment target 2: Learning from religion.

Learning about religion includes enquiry into, and investigation of, the nature of religion. It focuses on beliefs, teachings and sources, practices and ways of life 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 includes identifying and developing an understanding of ultimate questions and ethical issues.

Learning from religion is concerned with developing pupils' reflections on, and responses to, their own experiences and learning about religion. It develops pupils' skills of application, interpretation and evaluation of what they learn about religion, particularly questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments, and communicating their responses.

Each attainment target has been given three strands:

- '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.

- '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.

The level descriptions can provide the basis for making judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications (such as GCSE and GCSE short course) are the main means of assessing attainment in RE.

The two attainment targets, 'Learning about religion' and 'Learning from religion', are closely related and should not be taught in isolation. Therefore, assessment needs to take place in relation to both attainment targets.

In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of the key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside the descriptions for adjacent levels.

The scale does not represent all aspects of teaching and learning in RE. Areas such as personal beliefs, opinions and reflections are not included because they are not appropriate for assessment.

While there are no national statutory assessment requirements in RE, schools must report to parents on pupils' progress. Agreed syllabuses may recommend that schools use the attainment targets and level descriptors for assessing and reporting attainment and progress in religious education. Similarly, in schools not required to provide RE in accordance with an agreed syllabus, the governing body might adopt a policy of using the attainment targets and level descriptors.

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

Using the scale

The scale has two main uses:

- assessment for learning – a tool to help teachers explain and pupils recognise the strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge, skills and understanding, so that they can agree on targets for future progress
- assessment of learning – summative assessment of pupils' achievements, so that teachers can identify more consistently the standards that pupils achieve, using a 'best-fit' approach.

The scale may also be used in other ways, including:

- a basis for an assessment policy in RE by local authorities and schools
- a basis for exemplification of standards in RE by a local authority
- training in assessment processes
- a basis for setting targets in RE in schools and local authorities.

Dealing with discussion and pupils' questions and disclosures

Discussion of sensitive, controversial and challenging religious, philosophical, social and moral issues is vital to RE, as is the need to make sense of such issues in the context of pupils' own life experiences. It is important that all class discussions take place in a climate of trust, cooperation and support.

Teachers need to create a safe environment in which pupils can share their beliefs and feelings, explore their values and attitudes, express their opinions and consider those of others without attracting hostile comment directed to them personally or to their family or

a community to which they belong. This will encourage open discussion, enhance pupils' self-esteem and help them develop positive attitudes towards their learning and the beliefs and values of others.

RE, and particularly the second attainment target, 'Learning from religion', might lead pupils to ask difficult questions or even make personal disclosures about their own beliefs or experiences. Understandably, teachers might find such situations difficult to handle; it would seem easy to say the wrong thing. Teachers might be tempted to focus on the first attainment target, 'Learning about religion', in order to avoid potentially difficult situations. However, this denies pupils access to those aspects of RE that are the most educationally rewarding.

Examples of difficult situations that might arise in the course of RE include pupils:

- asking questions to which different religions give different and/or opposing answers, eg 'Was Jesus the Son of God?'
- raising difficult philosophical or theological issues, eg 'Why does a supposedly good God allow suffering?', or a more specific or personal version of such a question
- asking what the teacher believes, eg 'Do you believe in God?'
- raising spiritual or moral issues in a personal or political context, eg 'we can't always forgive people, can we?'
- making comments or asking questions that reflect an offensive or unreflective approach to religion, eg 'Are you one of the God squad?'
- making inappropriate value judgements about the faith of other people, eg 'People who believe that are stupid!'
- making disclosures that reveal personal faith commitments, eg 'I believe that the Qur'an is the absolute word of God'
- making personal disclosures, eg 'My grandma died yesterday'.

Such situations might be difficult for one or more reasons:

- they might cause upset or offence to other pupils
- they might expose the pupil to upsetting comments
- they might reveal misunderstandings that seem in need of correction
- there might be no straightforward answer to pupils' questions
- they might reveal an inability to cope with differences of opinion on the part of some pupils

- they might be embarrassing
- there might not be time to deal with them
- the teacher might not have the training or knowledge needed to deal with them.

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

Suggestions

- Encourage the use of 'owning and grounding' language such as 'in my opinion' or 'some Hindus would say'. This allows belief statements to be made in the classroom without everyone feeling they have to agree.
- Treat the difficult question or incident as a positive rather than negative event. Remember, it is the way the incident is dealt with and how the class response is managed that matters most.
- Affirm the importance of pupils' contributions, even if you don't agree with them, with phrases like 'That is an excellent question – I've often wondered about that too' or 'You're not the only one who doesn't know the answer to that'.
- Help pupils to understand that diversity of opinion and the existence of unanswerable questions are aspects of life that we all have to accept, and that they do not disappear as they grow older or wiser.
- Encourage an awareness of diversity without undermining the pupil's own beliefs. Allow for the possibility of a range of answers or opinions, eg use 'most Christians would probably say...but some Muslims would think differently....'
- Encourage a 'let's explore this together' approach in which the teacher is a participant, not an expert, eg use the situation to open up rather than close down conversation or thinking.
- Encourage further exploration by suggesting that pupils ask their questions of others, including faith community leaders, or look for help in resource centres or other places. Advise pupils that their family, faith community and friends can play important roles in helping to provide answers and information.
- Correct factual misinformation factual errors or misinformation, wherever possible, without confrontation. At the same time, always respect the rights of pupils, their families and members of their communities to hold their own beliefs.
- Pupils might make personal disclosures out of a need for comfort. It might be possible in some cases to suggest a follow-up to the pupil's disclosure (eg personal tutor) without 'fobbing-off' the importance of it. If this is not possible, assign the class an activity that provides time to attend to the pupil or gives the pupil some personal space.

- Aim to keep pupils pondering, rather than giving answers that seem clear-cut. Draw out pupils' responses by asking for further clarification with phrases such as: 'What do you think?', 'Can you clarify...?', 'What would happen if...?', 'Give an example of...'
- Be as honest as possible, but also sensitive to the pupil's situation and needs. Don't challenge a pupil's belief. For example, don't tell a pupil that her grandma has gone to heaven if you don't believe that or if it would be offensive to the pupil. Rather, tell the pupil that many religious people believe that to be the case.
- Let a discussion develop but have a quiet or reflective activity ready to provide a suitable close to discussion if required, eg ask the pupils to make a private diary entry or a personal resolution based on the lesson.
- Never intrude into a pupil's personal life. Pupils should always be free to remain silent in lessons where the discussion is intimate or emotional. Teaching the whole class rather than small groups might reduce the risk of particular pupils being exposed to such intrusions.
- Establish ground rules with the class for discussing controversial issues, eg each pupil's opinion must be treated seriously by others, pupils must listen carefully to each other.
- If a difficult issue arises at a time when it is not possible to deal with it properly, return to it later when it can be addressed in a considered manner, eg say 'that is such an important issue that I would like to look at it later'.

Appendices

Appendix A: Attainment targets

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 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.

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.

Level 7

Attainment target 1

Pupils use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of a range of religions and beliefs. They analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. They explain why the consequences of belonging to a faith are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition. They use some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied, including the use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils articulate personal and critical responses to questions of meaning, purpose and truth and ethical issues. They evaluate the significance of religious and other views for understanding questions of human relationships, belonging, identity, society, values and commitments, using appropriate evidence and examples.

Level 8

Attainment target 1

Pupils use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse a range of religions and beliefs. They contextualise interpretations of religion with reference to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied. They interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils coherently analyse a wide range of viewpoints on questions of identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. They synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples, fully justifying their own views and ideas and providing a detailed evaluation of the perspectives of others.

Exceptional performance

Attainment target 1

Pupils use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary to provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs. They evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society. They clearly recognise the extent to which the impact of religion and beliefs on different communities and societies has changed over time. They provide a detailed analysis of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, evaluating the principal methods by which religion and spirituality are studied. They synthesise effectively their accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.

Attainment target 2

Pupils analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity and belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, and values and commitments. They give independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, providing well-substantiated and balanced conclusions.