

CURRICULUM SUBJECT OVERVIEW – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



‘They are like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields fruit in season and whose leaves do not wither.’ - Psalm 1:3

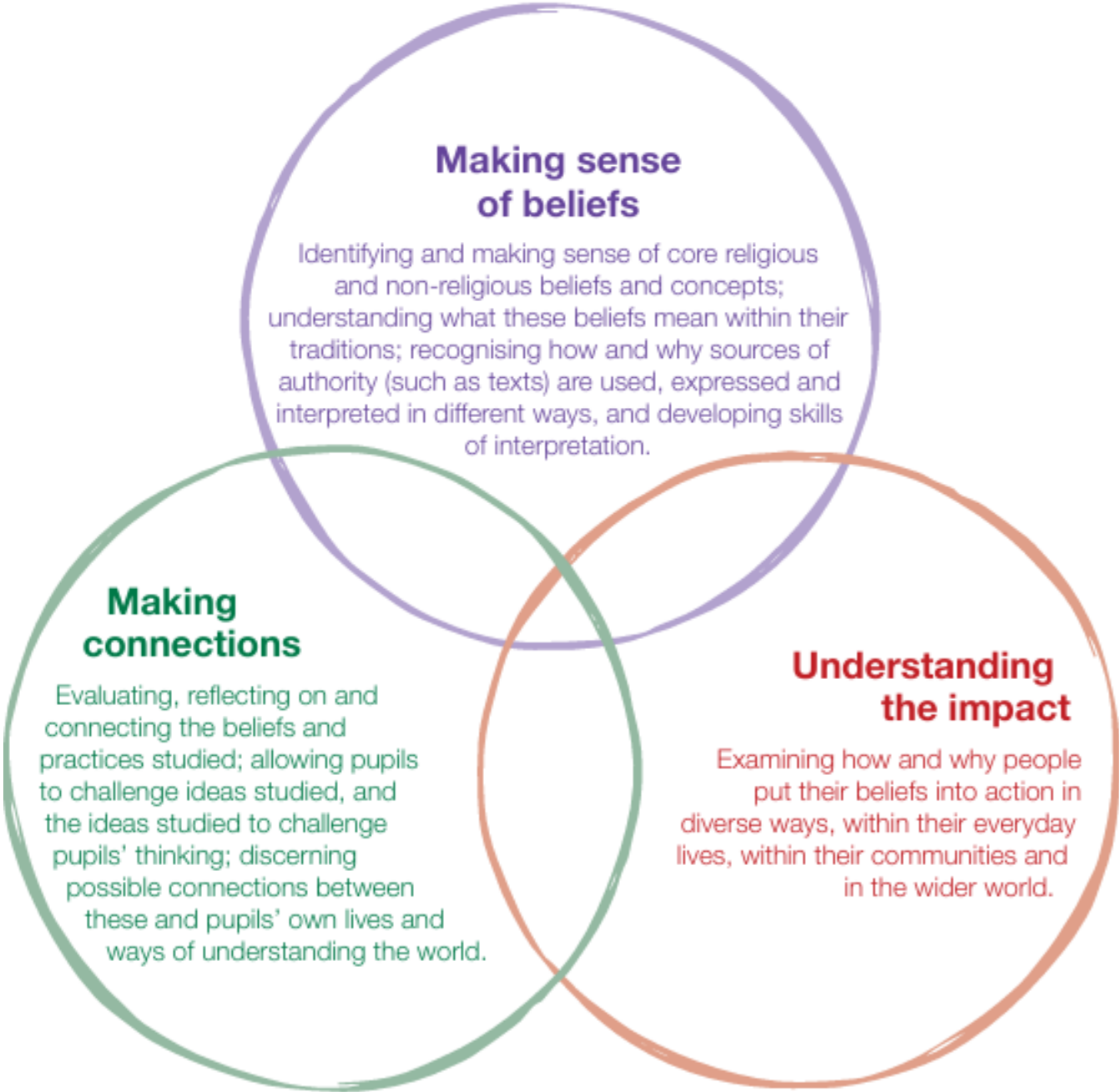
‘Through Faith, Friendship and Fun we Learn and Grow’

In Religious Education, this vision statement creates a powerful framework for exploring the sacred, where Faith is the core focus as pupils encounter diverse worldviews and contemplate their own relationship with the divine. Friendship is nurtured through respectful dialogue and "the encounter," as children learn to value different beliefs and build a community of mutual understanding and empathy. The subject embraces Fun by bringing learning to life through dramatic storytelling, exploring vibrant festivals, and using creative arts to express abstract spiritual concepts. As pupils Learn about sacred texts, rituals, and moral codes, they significantly Grow in their own identity; they develop the spiritual literacy and reflective skills needed to navigate life's big questions, fostering a mature and tolerant outlook on the world around them.

Spirituality

RE promotes spirituality by providing a profound "window" into the diverse ways people find meaning and purpose, sparking a sense of awe and wonder through the study of sacred texts, rituals, and symbols. It creates a "mirror" for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and the "big questions" of existence, fostering a deep sense of self-awareness and respect for the "inner life" of others. By engaging with various faith traditions, children develop the empathy to understand different worldviews, which strengthens their own sense of identity and belonging within a global community. Ultimately, the subject nurtures a reflective spirit, encouraging pupils to look beyond the surface of everyday life to contemplate the intangible and the divine, helping them to find their own place in the wider human story.

Intent	Implementation	Impact
At Defford we deliver a coherently planned sequence of lessons which ensure the children have progressively covered the skills and concepts required in the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus Curriculum. We aim to deepen pupils' knowledge about religions and for developing their 'religious literacy'. We want to have religiously literate children who enjoy RE lessons and see the importance of learning about it reflected in their everyday lives.	We will implement this by studying one religion at a time ('systematic' units), and then including 'thematic' units, which build on learning by comparing the religions, beliefs and practices studied. The teaching and learning approach we adopt will be whereby pupils encounter core concepts in religions and beliefs in a coherent way, developing their understanding and their ability to handle questions of religion and belief. The teaching and learning approach have three core elements, which are woven together to provide breadth and balance within teaching and learning about religions and beliefs. Teaching and learning in the classroom will encompass all three elements, allowing for overlap between elements as suits the religion, concept and question being explored.	The impact will be seen across the school with an increase in the profile of RE and the visibility of progression in the RE curriculum. The learning environment with RE displays will ensure RE is loved by children across the school. The children will have a developed understanding of the different worldviews and beliefs at an age-appropriate level. They will be confident in discussing RE, enjoying lessons and looking forward to finding out more. They will be curious to ask questions that will deepen their understanding of the different concepts covered.



Making sense of beliefs

Identifying and making sense of core religious and non-religious beliefs and concepts; understanding what these beliefs mean within their traditions; recognising how and why sources of authority (such as texts) are used, expressed and interpreted in different ways, and developing skills of interpretation.

Making connections

Evaluating, reflecting on and connecting the beliefs and practices studied; allowing pupils to challenge ideas studied, and the ideas studied to challenge pupils' thinking; discerning possible connections between these and pupils' own lives and ways of understanding the world.

Understanding the impact

Examining how and why people put their beliefs into action in diverse ways, within their everyday lives, within their communities and in the wider world.

Year A

Class	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Willow	Being special: where do we belong?	Why is Christmas special for Christians?	Why is the word ‘God’ so important to Christians?	Why is Easter special to Christians?	What places are special and why?	What times/stories are special and why?
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Builds understanding of identity and belonging, setting a foundation for exploring self and community. Taught first to help children connect RE to their own lives and settle into school, developing a sense of place and emotional security.</i>	<i>Introduces the concept of Jesus’ birth and why it is special to Christians, using a widely celebrated cultural event. Timed with Christmas so that RE is experiential and relevant, linking school and community celebrations.</i>	<i>Helps children explore theological language in simple terms, introducing the concept of a creator God. Scheduled before Easter to build foundational knowledge of Christian belief in God.</i>	<i>Introduces the idea of salvation and new life through the Easter story in an age-appropriate way. Timed with Easter, allowing children to experience the festival through stories and symbols.</i>	<i>Encourages reflection on the concept of sacred and special spaces, developing children’s sense of awe and respect. Positioned as children explore their school, community, and wider world. Links with trips and local places of worship.</i>	<i>Broadens experience by comparing religious stories and celebrations, developing narrative understanding and cultural awareness. Positioned last to consolidate learning from Christian stories and introduce those from other worldviews (e.g. Eid, Diwali).</i>
Birch	Who do Christians say made the world?	What do Christians believe God is like?	Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Part 1)	What is the ‘good news’ Christians believe Jesus brings?	Who is Jewish and how do they live? (Part 1)	How should we care for the world and for others, and why does it matter? (C, J, NR)
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Introduces Creation and the idea of God as Creator, laying groundwork for theological reflection. Ideal starting point for theological concepts; links well with the natural world focus in autumn.</i>	<i>Develops children’s understanding of Christian beliefs about God’s nature, love, and forgiveness. Deepens theological themes in the lead-up to Christmas.</i>	<i>Introduces Islam, promoting religious literacy and understanding of diversity in belief and practice. Follows Christianity with a new worldview, encouraging comparison and curiosity.</i>	<i>Builds on Jesus’ teachings and their relevance to Christian life today, focusing on kindness and forgiveness. Links with the Easter period, enabling reflection on Jesus’ role and message.</i>	<i>Introduces key aspects of Jewish belief and practice, fostering respect for difference and traditions. Positioned to give adequate time after Christian and Islamic studies, promoting interleaved learning.</i>	<i>Synthesises learning across the year through the lens of moral action. Encourages reflection on shared values and responsibility. Positioned as a thematic unit to consolidate belief-to-action links across all three traditions. Perfect for end-of-year reflection projects.</i>
Oak	What do Christians learn from the Creation story?	What is it like for someone to follow God?	What do Hindus believe God is like?	What kind of world did Jesus want?	How do festivals and family life show what matters to Jewish people?	How and why do people try to make the world a better place? (C, MJ, NR)
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Develops theological reflection on responsibility, creation, and stewardship. Encourages deeper thinking about the relationship between belief and action. Strong opener for KS2, connecting to science and environmental themes, while revisiting prior knowledge from KS1 with increased complexity.</i>	<i>Introduces key biblical figures and the idea of covenant, focusing on obedience, faith, and trust. Builds on Creation by exploring how belief in God shapes actions and relationships in real life. Works well ahead of the Christmas narrative.</i>	<i>Opens up a new religious tradition with focus on symbolism, deities, and belief in Brahman. Introduces non-Abrahamic perspectives. Begins the spring term with fresh ideas and colour-rich stories, capturing interest post-holidays. Promotes comparison with monotheistic faiths.</i>	<i>Focuses on Jesus’ teachings about justice, kindness, and the Kingdom of God. Introduces moral and ethical dimensions of belief. Positioned before Easter to highlight Jesus’ life and teachings, before later units explore his death and resurrection.</i>	<i>Reintroduces Judaism with a focus on lived experience, rituals, and community life. After learning about abstract ideas in Christianity and Hinduism, this unit grounds RE in daily practice and rhythm of life.</i>	<i>Explores moral action through a multi-faith lens, linking religious and non-religious values like justice and compassion. End-of-year reflective unit drawing together themes of belief-in-action. Offers opportunities for social action or school-wide RE projects.</i>
Ash	What does it mean if Christians believe God is holy and loving?	Why do Christians believe Jesus was the Messiah?	Why do Hindus want to be good?	Christians and how to live: ‘What would Jesus do?’ or How can following God	Why is the Torah so important to Jewish people?	What matters most to Humanists and Christians? (C, MJ, NR)

				bring freedom and justice?		
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Explores nuanced theological attributes of God, helping pupils evaluate how belief shapes moral choices and worship. A strong, reflective opener for upper KS2 that builds on earlier concepts of God, encouraging mature thinking about divine nature.</i>	<i>Introduces the idea of fulfilment of prophecy and links Old and New Testament narratives, developing biblical literacy and critical thinking. Timed with Advent to deepen theological understanding of the Christmas story beyond nativity narratives.</i>	<i>Explores karma, dharma, moksha, and reincarnation, deepening understanding of Hindu ethics and life purpose. Broadens worldview knowledge mid-year, balancing Abrahamic with Dharmic traditions. Allows time for reflection on values.</i>	<i>Applies Christian teachings to real-world justice issues, fostering ethical thinking and social awareness. A Lenten focus on Christian values of justice and sacrifice, supporting links with Easter. Good preparation for upper KS2 debates or writing.</i>	<i>Encourages theological engagement with scripture, law, and tradition. Builds respect for continuity and diversity in Jewish belief. Post-Easter timing allows shift back to Judaism, giving space for interleaving prior knowledge from lower KS2.</i>	<i>Offers comparative insight into moral frameworks without divine authority, developing evaluative skills and respectful dialogue. End-of-year thematic unit that consolidates understanding of belief and non-belief, offering scope for rich discussion and independent thinking.</i>

Year B

Class	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Willow	Being special: where do we belong?	Why is Christmas special for Christians?	Why is the word ‘God’ so important to Christians?	Why is Easter special to Christians?	What places are special and why?	What times/stories are special and why?
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Builds understanding of identity and belonging, setting a foundation for exploring self and community. Taught first to help children connect RE to their own lives and settle into school, developing a sense of place and emotional security.</i>	<i>Introduces the concept of Jesus’ birth and why it is special to Christians, using a widely celebrated cultural event. Timed with Christmas so that RE is experiential and relevant, linking school and community celebrations.</i>	<i>Helps children explore theological language in simple terms, introducing the concept of a creator God. Scheduled before Easter to build foundational knowledge of Christian belief in God.</i>	<i>Introduces the idea of salvation and new life through the Easter story in an age-appropriate way. Timed with Easter, allowing children to experience the festival through stories and symbols.</i>	<i>Encourages reflection on the concept of sacred and special spaces, developing children’s sense of awe and respect. Positioned as children explore their school, community, and wider world. Links with trips and local places of worship.</i>	<i>Broadens experience by comparing religious stories and celebrations, developing narrative understanding and cultural awareness. Positioned last to consolidate learning from Christian stories and introduce those from other worldviews (e.g. Eid, Diwali).</i>
Birch	What does it mean to belong to a faith or belief community?	Why does Christmas matter to Christians?	Who is a Muslim and how do they live? (Part 2)	Why does Easter matter to Christians?	Who is Jewish and how do they live? (Part 2)	What makes some places sacred to believers? (C, M)
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Explores belonging and identity through practices like worship, celebration, and symbols. Encourages empathy and understanding of community life. A strong start-of-year unit that connects RE with PSHE themes of friendship, identity, and inclusion. Sets the tone for respectful dialogue.</i>	<i>Builds on previous understanding of the Nativity, focusing more deeply on the significance of Jesus’ birth and the theme of incarnation. Timed with Advent and school/nativity celebrations. Builds cultural capital and deepens understanding of Christian traditions.</i>	<i>Deepens understanding of Islam through practices like prayer, charity, and fasting. Builds on Part 1 from Cycle A. Follows winter festivals and builds sequentially on the Muslim worldview introduced in the previous year.</i>	<i>Focuses on the meaning of Easter in Christian belief—sacrifice, hope, and resurrection. Reinforces theological concepts. Strategically placed to coincide with Easter, offering rich experiential opportunities and interconnections with school celebrations.</i>	<i>Builds on Part 1, exploring Jewish daily life, symbols, and celebrations like Shabbat and Passover. Returns to Judaism in the summer term for spaced repetition and deeper exploration. Good timing for Passover connections.</i>	<i>Develops awareness of sacred space and the emotional and spiritual value people place on places of worship. Positioned after learning about practices and beliefs across religions, enabling meaningful comparisons of how places express belief.</i>
Oak	What does it mean to be Hindu in Britain today?	What is the ‘Trinity’ and why is it important for Christians?	How do festivals and worship show what matters to a Muslim?	Why do Christians call the day Jesus died ‘Good Friday’?	For Christians, when Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost?	How and why do people mark the significant events of life? (C, H, NR)

<i>Reason</i>	<i>Builds on previous introduction to Hinduism, focusing on how beliefs shape everyday life in modern Britain. Promotes religious literacy and cultural awareness. An ideal early KS2 exploration of identity and lived religion, allowing for comparisons with learners' own lives as the year begins.</i>	<i>Explores complex Christian theology, deepening pupils' understanding of God's nature and relationship. Timed with Advent and Christmas to explore Jesus as God the Son in the context of the Trinity.</i>	<i>Deepens understanding of Islamic beliefs through the lens of practice and celebration. Encourages empathy and interfaith understanding. Follows Christian and Hindu focus, ensuring a broad multi-faith grounding. Positioned well ahead of Ramadan/Eid if relevant to local context.</i>	<i>Encourages theological and emotional engagement with the Easter story and the Christian concept of salvation. Appropriately timed with Easter; allows progression from Jesus' life (previous cycle) to the significance of his death.</i>	<i>Introduces the concept of the Holy Spirit and the Church. Develops understanding of continuity in Christian narrative and identity. Follows Easter chronologically and thematically; encourages exploration of Christian community and mission.</i>	<i>Thematic unit connecting religious and non-religious traditions around rites of passage (birth, marriage, death). Rounds off the year by synthesising beliefs, values, and practices across traditions. Supports reflection on change, life stages, and meaning.</i>
Ash	Creation and science: conflicting or complementary?	What does it mean to be a Humanist in Britain today? (NR)	What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?	What do Christians believe Jesus did to 'save' people? or – Resurrection	For Christians, what kind of king is Jesus?	How does faith help people when life gets hard?
<i>Reason</i>	<i>Encourages critical thinking around the relationship between science and religion. Develops understanding of worldview, interpretation, and complexity. Strong opener encouraging debate and respectful dialogue. Ties in well with science curriculum topics early in the year.</i>	<i>Deepens engagement with non-religious worldviews, ensuring balanced curriculum coverage and inclusive RE practice. Positioned to contrast with theological worldviews after deep inquiry into science and religion. Supports pluralistic understanding pre-Christmas.</i>	<i>Builds on earlier knowledge of Islam to examine lived religion, values, and diversity within British Islam. A rich, real-life application of belief into practice. Well placed early in the year before Lent/Easter topics.</i>	<i>Deep theological exploration of salvation, atonement, and resurrection. Develops evaluative and interpretive skills. Strategically placed to align with Easter, allowing deep reflection on suffering, hope, and meaning.</i>	<i>Challenges pupils to interpret biblical imagery and titles. Explores leadership, authority, and justice through a Christian lens. Positioned post-Easter to build on resurrection themes and prepare for comparisons with ethical leadership and values.</i>	<i>Synthesises personal, theological, and philosophical knowledge around suffering, hope, and resilience. Fosters empathy and reflection. A powerful end-of-year, end-of-phase unit. Encourages personal engagement with deep questions and prepares pupils for secondary RE.</i>