

## Appendices

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# Appendix A – Principles behind the Agreed Syllabus

At an early stage of their work, members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) discussed the Aims of RE in Lewisham schools (to be found in the Introduction section to the syllabus) and the scope of the work they were engaged upon. The diagram that is set out on the next page illustrates the principles that they believe the syllabus is based upon.

### Inside the triangle

The Agreed Syllabus Conference members want the Lewisham Agreed Syllabus for RE 2018 to support pupils as they acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to play a full and active part in society. Teaching RE through the Syllabus should equip pupils with the necessary skills and knowledge to explore religious, spiritual and social issues sensitively, reflectively and critically, to consider evidence and personal experiences and to debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare pupils to take their place in society as informed and reflective adults, able to live in respectful disagreement with those with different beliefs from their own.

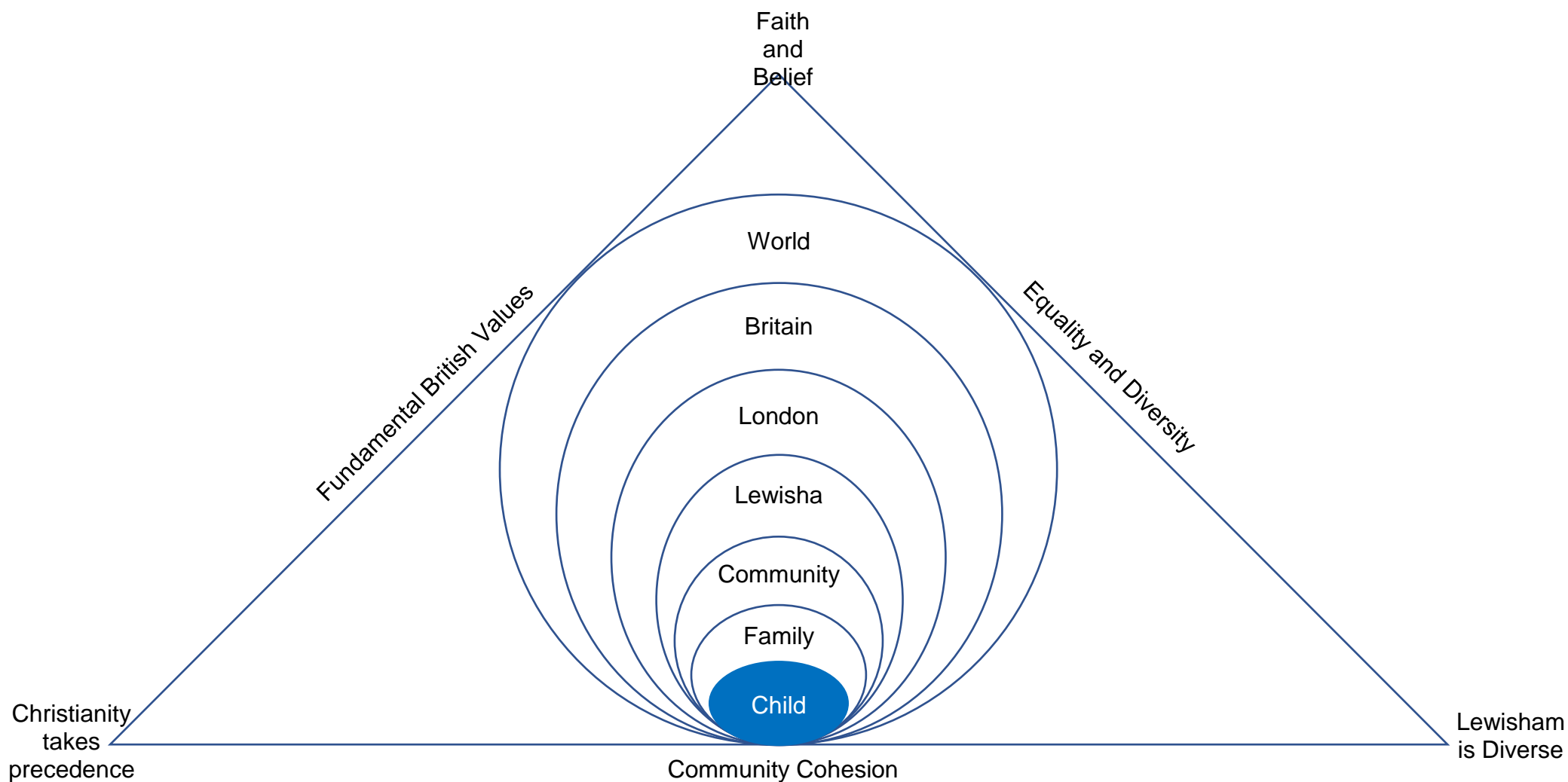
From the start of their educational journey RE should help pupils to learn about themselves as developing individuals and as members of their families and communities, building on their own experiences. As they grow this awareness and knowledge will develop to encompass the diversity of their Borough, their city, their country and the world. They will look at how faiths and beliefs hold some things in common and disagree about others, about how culture influences practices and about world families of faith and belief including those of the past.

### Outside the triangle

Agreed Syllabus Conference members wanted the syllabus to include study of both faith and belief. The community of Lewisham includes people from a diverse range of faiths and beliefs including non-religious worldviews. Working within the legal framework underpinning their work members agreed the syllabus should ensure equal respect (not necessarily equal time allocation) should be paid to those faiths and beliefs featuring in the programmes of study whilst demonstrating that Christianity is the predominant religion in the UK. The diversity of the community of Lewisham and how it has developed and changed should also be a feature in the syllabus.

The syllabus has been written to support RE's Contribution to promoting Fundamental British Values - democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respects for and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs - and should support and promote community cohesion.

## Appendix A – Principles behind the Agreed Syllabus



# Appendix B – The legal position of the Agreed Syllabus

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 Syllabus.

Each LA must convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to produce a syllabus. Once adopted by the LA, the programme of study of the Agreed Syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught. The attainment levels set out the expected standards of pupils' performance at different ages.

The Education Act 1996 states that an Agreed Syllabus must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Each LA must have a SACRE. The SACRE may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus at any time. This is in addition to the requirement on LAs to convene a conference to reconsider the Agreed Syllabus every five years.

Religious Education must be taught to all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in the sixth form, except to those withdrawn by their parents. Parents have the statutory right to withdraw their child from RE. This requirement does not apply to nursery classes in maintained schools.

Academies must provide RE in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses and have regard to the requirements of the non-statutory National Framework for RE (DFE, 2010) or, where the academy is designated as a school with a religious character, in accordance with the tenets of the specified religion or religious denomination (Academies Funding Agreement, DCSF, October 2006, pp.10-11)

In community, foundation or voluntary schools without a religious character, RE is taught in accordance with the local Agreed Syllabus.

For foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character, RE must be taught according to the agreed syllabus unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed of the school. In voluntary aided schools RE must be taught in accordance with the trust deed.

RE must therefore be provided for:

- pupils in nursery schools or nursery classes in primary schools;
- any person aged nineteen or above for whom further education is being provided at school;
- any person over compulsory school age who is receiving part-time education; and
- A school prospectus and website must include details of:
  - the RE provided; and
  - the parents' right to withdraw their child from RE.

Pupils progress in RE should be reported to parents according to current yearly requirements. In all schools, the policy for teaching RE is the responsibility of the governing body and, as with all other curriculum subjects, the delivery is the responsibility of the teachers led by the head teacher.

This legal framework underpins the Agreed Syllabus and the process that has been undertaken to review it.

## Appendix C – Inclusion

### Providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The National Curriculum and the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education are the starting points for planning a school curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

There are three principles that are essential to developing a more inclusive curriculum:

- A. Setting suitable learning challenges
- B. Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- C. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of people.

Applying these principles should keep to a minimum the need for aspects of the National Curriculum or the Agreed Syllabus to be disapplied for a pupil. Schools are able to provide other curriculum opportunities outside the Curriculum to meet the needs of individuals or groups of pupils such as speech and language therapy and mobility training.

#### Three principles for inclusion.

In planning and teaching the Agreed Syllabus, teachers are required to have due regard to the following principles:

#### A. Setting suitable learning challenges

- 1 Teachers should aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. The Agreed Syllabus sets out what most pupils should be taught at each key stage - but teachers should teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit their pupils' abilities. This may mean choosing knowledge, skills and understanding from earlier or later key stages so that individual pupils can 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 age-related programmes of study. A similarly flexible approach will be needed to take account of any gaps in pupils' learning resulting from missed or interrupted schooling [for example, that may be experienced by travellers, refugees, those in care with long term medical problems, such as head injuries, and those with degenerative conditions].
- 2 For pupils whose attainments fall significantly below the expected levels at a particular key stage, a much greater degree of differentiation will be necessary. In these circumstances, teachers may need to use the content of the Agreed Syllabus as a resource or to provide a context, in planning learning appropriate to the age and requirements of their pupils. For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected level of attainment during a particular key stage, teachers will need to plan suitably challenging work. Teachers should plan to extend the breadth and depth of study with individually challenging tasks devised particularly to meet the needs of those pupils.

# Appendix C – Inclusion

### **B Responding to pupil's diverse learning needs.**

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 Teachers should take specific action to respond to pupils' diverse needs by:
  - a. creating effective learning environments;
  - b. securing their motivation and concentration;
  - c. providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches;
  - d. using appropriate assessment approaches; and
  - e. setting targets for learning.

### **Examples for B/3a - creating effective learning environments in which:**

- the contributions of all pupils are valued;
- all pupils feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately;
- stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, religion, ability or disability;
- pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community;
- all forms of bullying and harassment, including racial harassment are challenged; and
- pupils are enabled to participate safely in clothing appropriate to their religious beliefs.

# Appendix C – Inclusion

### Examples for B/3b - securing motivation and concentration by:

- using teaching approaches to different learning styles;
- using, where appropriate, a range of organisational approaches such as setting, grouping or individual work, to ensure that learning needs are properly addressed;
- varying subject content and presentation so that this matches their learning needs;
- planning work which builds on their interests and cultural experiences;
- planning appropriately challenging work for those whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language skills;
- using materials which reflect social and cultural diversity and provide positive images, gender, religions and disability;
- planning and monitoring the pace of work so that they all have a chance to learn effectively and achieve success; and
- taking action to maintain interest and continuity of learning for pupils who may be absent for extended periods of time.

### Examples for B/3c - providing equality of opportunity by:

- ensuring that boys and girls are able to participate in the same curriculum;
- taking account of the interests and concerns of boys and girls by using a range of activities and contexts for work and allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes;
- avoiding gender stereotyping when organising pupils into groups, assigning them to activities or arranging access to equipment;

- taking account of pupils' specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to the presentation of ideas or experiences or to the use of particular types of equipment; and
- enabling the fullest possible participation of pupils with disabilities or particular medical needs in all subjects, offering positive role models and making provision, where necessary, to facilitate access to activities with appropriate support, aids or adaptations.

### Examples for B/3d - using appropriate assessment approaches that:

- allow for different learning styles and ensure that pupils are given the chance and encouragement to demonstrate their competence and attainment through appropriate means;
- are familiar to the pupils and for which they have been adequately prepared;
- use materials which are free from discrimination and stereotyping in any form; and
- provide clear and unambiguous feedback to pupils to aid further learning.

### Examples for B/3e - setting targets for learning that:

- build on pupils' knowledge, experiences, interests and strengths to improve areas of weakness and demonstrate progression over time; and
- are attainable and yet challenging and help pupils to develop their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.

# Appendix C – Inclusion

### **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.

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.

#### **Pupils with special educational needs**

1 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 (see paragraphs C/4 and C/5). 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. A small number of pupils may need access. Teachers should, where appropriate, work closely with representatives of other agencies who may be supporting the pupil.

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

#### **Examples for C/2a - providing for pupils who need help with communication, language and literacy through:**

- using texts that pupils can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats, including large print, symbol, text and Braille;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative and augmentative communication, including signs and symbols; and
- using translators, communicators and amanuenses.



### Appendix C – Inclusion

#### **Examples for C/2b - developing pupils' understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences, by:**

- using materials and resources that pupils can access through sight, touch, taste or smell;
- using word descriptions and other stimuli to make up for lack of first-hand experiences;
- using ICT, visual and other materials to increase pupils' knowledge of the wider world; and
- encouraging pupils to take part in everyday activities such as play, drama, class visits and exploring the environment.

#### **Examples for C/2c - planning for pupils' full participation in learning and in practical activities through:**

- using specialist aids and equipment;
- providing support from adults or peers when needed;
- adapting tasks or environments; and
- providing alternative activities, where necessary.

#### **Examples for C/2d - helping pupils to manage their behaviour, take part in learning effectively and safely, and, at key stage 4, prepare for work by:**

- setting realistic demands and stating them explicitly;
- using positive behaviour management, including a clear structure of rewards and sanctions;
- giving pupils every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with a partner or a group; and
- teaching pupils to value and respect the contribution of others.

#### **Examples for C/2e - helping individuals manage their emotions and take part in learning through:**

- identifying aspects of learning in which the pupil will engage and plan short-term, easily achievable goals in selected activities;
- providing positive feedback to reinforce and encourage learning and build self-esteem;
- selecting tasks and materials sensitively to avoid unnecessary stress for the pupil;
- creating a supportive learning environment in which the pupil feels safe and is able to engage with learning; and
- allowing time for the pupil to engage with learning and gradually increasing the range of activities and demands.

# Appendix C – Inclusion

### **Pupils with disabilities**

- 3 Not all pupils with disabilities will necessarily have special educational needs. Many pupils with disabilities learn alongside their peers with little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life, such as a wheelchair, a hearing aid or equipment to aid vision. Teachers must take action, however, in their planning to ensure that these pupils are enabled to participate as fully and effectively as possible. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset of work.
- 4 Teachers should take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities by:
  - a. planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for the satisfactory completion of tasks;
  - b. planning opportunities, where necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum;
  - c. identifying aspects of programmes of study and attainment targets that may present specific difficulties for individuals.

### **Examples for C/4a - planning appropriate amounts of time to allow pupils to complete tasks satisfactorily through:**

- taking account of the very slow pace at which some pupils will be able to record work, either manually or with specialist equipment, and of the physical effort required;
- being aware of the high levels of concentration necessary for some pupils when following or interpreting text or graphics, particularly when using vision;

- allocating sufficient time, opportunity and access to equipment for pupils to gain information through experimental work and detailed observation, including the use of microscopes; and
- being aware of the effort required by some pupils to follow oral work, whether through use of residual hearing, lip reading or a signer, and of the tiredness or loss of concentration which may occur.

### **Examples for C/4b - creating opportunity for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum through:**

- providing adapted, modified or alternative activities and ensuring that these have integrity and enable pupils to make appropriate progress;
- providing alternative or adapted activities in practical activities for pupils who are unable to manipulate tools, equipment or materials or who may be allergic to certain types of materials;
- ensuring that all pupils can be included and participate safely in off-site visits, local studies, visits to museums, religious buildings and sites;

### **Examples for C/4c - overcoming specific difficulties for individuals presented by aspects of the programmes of study and attainment targets through:**

- using approaches to enable hearing impaired pupils to learn about sound in worship;
- helping visually impaired pupils to learn about the use of symbolism and light in religions, visual resources and to evaluate images in work linked to art and design.

# Appendix D – Learning outside the classroom

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. To make this a reality, a national *Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto* was launched that acted as a shared statement of intent for all who see the benefits to young people and want to help bring about this vision of high quality, meaningful learning experiences for all. The manifesto states that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

These, often the most memorable learning experiences, help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They stay with us into adulthood and affect our behaviour, lifestyle and work. They influence our values and the decisions we make. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside to the classroom and vice versa.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn.

Visits can be an excellent resource for religious education provided they are managed in a sensitive and thoughtful way. They can provide opportunities for pupils to learn by personal experiences that involve the sense of touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight:

- by meeting and talking to people from a faith community;
- by observing artwork created as a response to faith; and
- by acquiring the sensitivity to behave with appropriate respect.

Furthermore, visits provide an important link between schools and local faith communities.

Lewisham is fortunate in having a wealth and variety of places to visit available in the locality. It is also easy to organise excursions to places of worship further afield or galleries in London. Nevertheless, visits can raise issues for teachers, parents and faith leaders. Some of the pitfalls can be avoided by careful and thorough preparation and organisation.

The Agreed Syllabus includes many requirements where visits to local places of worship are recommended or are essential. However, teachers will appreciate that visits to places of worship are only one aspect of RE. They may be an interesting and helpful approach, but must be seen in the wider context of classroom activities rather than as a self-contained exercise. The purpose and value of suggested visits are clearly explained within each unit and ensure continuity and progression. There are opportunities to focus on different aspects, e.g. to look at internal and external features of a building, to explore symbols or to hear about the life and work of a community.

# Appendix D – Learning outside the classroom

### Practical Procedures and Preparation

#### When planning you must consider:

- The purpose of the proposed visit – what is the unit's precise aim and how does the visit contribute to this?
- Its place within the RE scheme of work/ Agreed Syllabus.
- Practical procedures, e.g. timing, travel, expense, etc. Teachers should check their school policy and consult their Educational Visits Co-ordinator. Letters to parents should explain the educational aims and the overall context and purpose of the visit. They should give details about times, expenses, dress, etc. and provide a reply slip for consent or refusal. They should also emphasise that the visit will not involve participation in any acts of worship. Wherever possible parents should be invited to accompany the pupils.
- The right of refusal – parents have the right to withdraw children from RE, and this includes visits to places of worship. However, there should always be an opportunity to discuss any issues, concerns and anxieties parents may have and to reassure them should their concerns be based on any misconceptions about the experience that has been planned. It is often useful to share planning with parents and to explain the context of this visit in the programme of visits that pupils will experience across the RE curriculum.
- How to prepare pupils to feel and show their respect to the place they are visiting and its community.

#### Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments should also be undertaken before every visit and should include consideration of potential exposure to promotion of political or religious extremism. Party leaders should conduct research and vetting ahead of the visit including checking of the published views of the place they are visiting. They could also obtain a letter of assurance from the site of the visit to ensure satisfaction that the place they are visiting will not undermine the school's duty to promote community cohesion.

#### Organising the experience

Phone or write to the nominated contact person at the place of worship. Remember that there may well not be someone available full time to speak to you and even if there is, they are often very busy, so allow them time to call back. Enquire about the possibility of a visit giving brief details, and where possible make arrangements for a preliminary visit. Remember that details about contacts at local places of worship change regularly so please check that you have the correct information about the person who will be able to host your visit.

# Appendix D – Learning outside the classroom

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### **A Preliminary visit**

This is important as it enables you to discuss the possibilities and to decide whether the building is the most appropriate in relation to the aims. Have a look around the building with the host and take notes. Discuss whether seeing other rooms in the building, e.g. kitchens, rooms used for playgroups or religious classes etc., would be worthwhile. Pupils should understand that places of worship often serve their communities in a variety of ways, but this may not be your main focus for this visit. Discuss aims with the host and negotiate an understanding of the purpose of the visit and what is expected.

You must make it clear that the pupils' role is as observers rather than participators in an act of worship, and discuss any implications this may have regarding acceptable behaviour, e.g. bowing as a way of showing respect, eating food offered etc. There are issues here around interpretation - pupils and families from different faith backgrounds or none. Please give the prospective 'guide' a copy of the relevant unit of work so that they can see how the visit fits into the unit.

# Appendix D – Learning outside the classroom

### Information checklist

#### You need to tell the 'host':

- the specific focus of the visit and what you would like the pupils to be able to do;
- the age, ability range and approximate numbers of the pupils;
- range of their religious / non-religious backgrounds;
- whether there are likely to be members of their own community present;
- the pupils' level of prior knowledge about the religion concerned and the place of the visit in the overall topic or scheme of work; and
- what time you will arrive and when you will leave.

#### You will need to ask the host:

- if there are special requirements or sensitivities regarding dress and whether these apply to both genders;
- if there are any requirements regarding general behaviour, e.g. where or how they should sit and remember that attitudes towards sacredness of the building will vary in different traditions;
- if any activities are prohibited in the place of worship, e.g. taking photographs or sketching;
- who will be hosting the particular visit - it is important that the person has some experience of communicating with children;
- suitable times for visits - dates to avoid or those that might be particularly interesting;

- if there are any specific extra topics they can talk about that would be of particular interest in the context of this unit of work;
- about the facilities for the disabled; and
- about the availability of toilet facilities.

Always confirm details with the host and make sure that there is a contact telephone number in case of difficulties.

#### You will need to ensure that students:

- are aware of appropriate conduct and dress required in the place of worship visited; and
- understand the need to show respect to the building, traditions and contents of the place visited and its community.

#### Sensitivities

In all places of worship teachers need to be aware that their party may meet members of the community, some of whom may be experiencing times of great sadness or engaged in private worship. Pupils need to be prepared to behave sensitively.

Some places of worship welcome photographs whilst others find this intrusive. Ask beforehand.

**N.B. Please avoid, wherever possible, taking all types of food into a place of worship.**

# Appendix E – Dealing with discussions, pupils’ questions and disclosures

Providing the opportunity for discussions about 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 in all Key Stages 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.

Religious Education, 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, e.g. ‘Was Jesus the Son of God?’;

- raising difficult philosophical or theological issues, e.g. ‘Why does a supposedly good God allow suffering?’, or a more specific or personal version of such a question;
- asking what the teacher believes, e.g. ‘Do you believe in God?’;
- raising spiritual or moral issues in a personal or political context, e.g. ‘we can’t always forgive people, can we?’;
- making comments or asking questions that reflect an offensive or unreflective approach to religion, e.g. ‘Are you one of the God squad?’;
- making inappropriate value judgements about the faith of other people, e.g. ‘People who believe that are stupid!’;
- making disclosures that reveal personal faith commitments, e.g. ‘I believe that the Qur’an is the absolute word of God’; and
- making personal disclosures, e.g. ‘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.

# Appendix E – Dealing with discussions, pupils’ questions and disclosures

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, e.g. 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, e.g. 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 from the SACRE, the Diocese 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 (e.g. 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.



## Appendix E – Dealing with discussions, pupils’ questions and disclosures

### Safeguarding with respect to religious practices (partially taken from NSPCC)

Understanding more about a child's faith and the role faith plays in family life is important for anyone working with children, families or communities. It can help when considering appropriate ways to approach conversations around child protection and child safety.

As well as education, safeguarding of children should still be the focus of all discussions as evidence of harmful practice may arise as part of these conversations. Staff must be aware that children need to be protected irrespective of cultural sensitivities. Under UK law, different practices are no excuse for child abuse or neglect and any concerns identified through classroom activities must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### Safeguarding Children from bullying

Undermining or ridiculing another child’s beliefs is another potential issue that could arise and staff would have a responsibility to safeguard children from this behaviour, which can be done in a number of ways, including:

- Setting clear guidelines about respect and acceptance of differences that there may be between other faith and belief systems and the respective consequences of making poor choices in opportunities for discussion
- Acknowledgement that no view is superior to another
- Explaining that a difference of opinion is not wrong and using any differences of opinion to develop a healthy discussion

Staff should take particular care to monitor behaviour and make professional judgements about any behaviour which could be perceived as bullying if it is repeated, deliberate or continuous over time.

