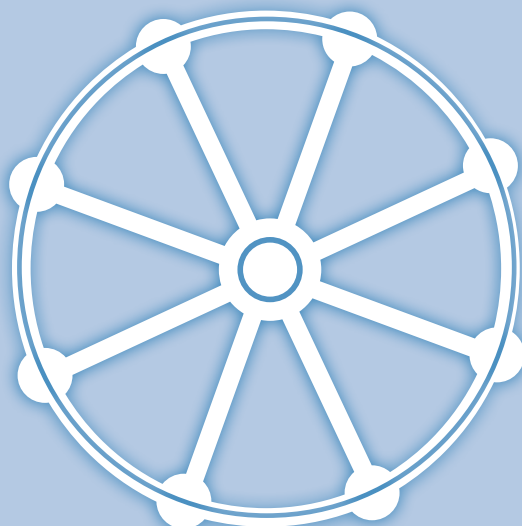


Hillingdon Religious Education Syllabus

Hillingdon Standing Advisory Council
for Religious Education





Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>The purpose of Religious Education</u>	2
<u>The aims of Religious Education in Hillingdon</u>	3
<u>Religious Education – inclusion issues – SEN and gifted and talented</u>	4
<u>Key Stage 1</u>	9
<u>Key Stage 2</u>	15
<u>Key Stage 3</u>	21
Appendix 1	29
<u>Assessment and Attainment Levels</u>	30
<u>Special Educational Needs Assessment in Religious Education</u>	36
Appendix 2	39
<u>Religious Education statutory obligations</u>	40
<u>Glossary</u>	43
<u>Acknowledgements</u>	54

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In the Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus, references are made to, and the spelling of religion-specific terms is consistent with, the nationally agreed spelling in the 'Religious Education: Glossary of Terms' copyrighted to QCA/SCAA.

Introduction

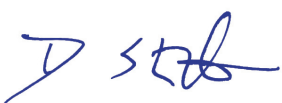
The timing of this new Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus follows the introduction of a secondary and more recently primary revised National Curriculum and an Early Years Curriculum. Members of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) of the Hillingdon Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (HSACRE) warmly recommend this revised syllabus to schools. With the National Curriculum now focusing on stage rather than age this flexibility is reflected in this syllabus and given the increasing focus on the Early Years, the Foundation Stage content is now made statutory for this new syllabus.

Faith and Values is a compulsory new and innovative strand that contains material shared by everyone with a faith background but also by others who would claim not to have a faith.

We trust that our Agreed Syllabus will greatly assist schools in this task of delivering Religious Education.

It has been my privilege and honour to chair the conference. It has taken many hours of devoted voluntary work from both faith group representatives and teachers, always working in harmony to reach this stage. Throughout, there was a sense of unity and commitment and those times of heated discussion were always spiced with realism and determination to reach an understanding that would equip teachers to deliver the Agreed Syllabus.

Members of SACRE will continue to offer support to schools as they implement this syllabus, working to make Religious Education both rewarding and exciting to all pupils. SACRE is also determined to continue on an increasing drive in support of a thorough agreed provision for young people participating in learning from 16 to 18.



Duncan Struthers

Chair, Agreed Syllabus Conference, 1997-2010

We are delighted to introduce this new Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. This new syllabus will now replace the existing syllabus from 2000 to assist schools in delivering exciting and effective religious education. This syllabus is the culmination of hard work by teachers, faith group representatives, councillors and officers of the local authority and reflects the drive for inclusivity across our ever more diverse faith communities. It supports our commitment to education, community cohesion and inter-faith networking and seeks to encourage pupils to reflect upon and develop their own values and to learn from one another. It focuses on the skills that are important to religious education whilst encouraging young people to interpret and analyse this learning experience to help develop pupils qualities essential for their future citizenship.

This syllabus is the result of first class thinking and extensive consultation among all groups, particularly young people.



Chris Spencer

Corporate Director: Children Services



David Simmonds

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services

The purpose of Religious Education

The place of Religious Education (RE) in the curriculum of maintained schools in England has not changed since the 1944 Education Act. While the National Curriculum excluding RE was first introduced in 1988 the distinctive place of Religious Education whose content is determined by a locally agreed syllabus for maintained schools that do not have a particular faith character has remained. For details, see Appendix 2, School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Religious Education and physical education are the only curriculum subjects that have to be taken throughout the years of statutory education, and within schools up to the age of 19, unless parents withdraw their children from RE or the young people over 18 seek to do so themselves. The governments of the United Kingdom have continued to state that RE “is a very important subject in the school curriculum”. Along with sex education and the National Curriculum, RE forms the basic curriculum of every maintained school in England for children and young people from 5 to 16.

For most people throughout the world, religious beliefs embedded in a vast array of faiths provides the underpinning for the ways they live their lives and provides a significant contribution to their

decision making with regard to right and wrong action. Given this, the study of religion both in terms of its content and its practices is crucial to the achievement of an educated person in England today. RE can thus make a fundamental contribution to community cohesion, citizenship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Nevertheless, children and young people must have also an understanding of what it is to be someone of no religious faith. Furthermore, the fact that the locally agreed syllabus is produced with the involvement of all aspects of the local community and its schools, including those that are not tied to the locally agreed syllabus, helps ensure that it supports community cohesion, including inter-faith working. To achieve this RE must be taught in an objective and pluralistic manner, and not as indoctrination into a particular faith or belief.

A number of legislative changes within and beyond the world of education in both Britain and Europe have implications for RE. The Human Rights Act 1998, the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2006 contribute to the ‘bigger picture’ within which RE is provided in schools and experienced by children and young people.

The aims of Religious Education in Hillingdon

The following aims will be delivered in all maintained schools and academies in Hillingdon unless their trust deeds identify an alternative syllabus or the school's designated denomination links to another syllabus.

To enable children and young people, according to their ability and level of development to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions, principally Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism all of which are represented in Hillingdon
- learn from different world religions and provide opportunities to explore and express their own responses and personal beliefs
- understand the relationship between beliefs and practices
- develop an understanding of the influence of faiths, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures
- develop personal learning and thinking skills pertinent to Religious Education, such as questioning, investigation, communication, expression and evaluation and to promote the ability to make reasoned, critical and informed moral judgements
- combat prejudice.

Further we expect Religious Education to:

- encourage children and young people to respect and value the right of people to hold differing beliefs, including those with no faith, and to cultivate understanding and respect in a society with a diversity of faiths.

And in line with Section 78(1) of the 2002 Education Act to:

- contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and help prepare children and young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Religious Education – inclusion issues

– SEN and gifted and talented

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

All students in mainstream schools should have access to the Religious Education curriculum which should be differentiated according to individual learning needs. This includes SEN pupils where their needs in Religious Education will be similar to their needs in other subjects.

Identifying gifted pupils in Religious Education

Some pupils with good ability in RE do much less well in other subjects. These pupils may be nurtured within a faith community or have a religious world view of their own, bringing particular knowledge, sensitivity and experience to RE. Some pupils might have particular spiritual giftedness, whether or not they are part of a religious tradition. These pupils can generally be identified through discussion, held within an ethos of respect, which can also be used to stimulate further learning and progress.

Pupils who are gifted in RE are likely to:

- show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary
- make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices
- be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts.

In more general terms, they may also:

- have highly-developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research
- show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

The identification of pupils who are gifted in RE should be approached on the basis of distinct RE ability, skills, competencies and insights. The teacher's professional judgement is crucial.

RE teachers who know their pupils and their work, and bring professional talent, expertise and awareness to the subject, are best placed to identify gifted pupils. However, especially if not RE specialists themselves, they will probably find it helpful to talk to other teachers.

It is important that the full range and scope of RE activities and learning experiences give pupils access to high levels of attainment. When planning activities, teachers will need to be sensitive to pupils' preferred learning styles and give them a variety of opportunities to learn. Pupils with high levels of language skills may need to develop a conceptual framework through which to acquire relevant information and understand its significance and use.

(Based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency guidance - November 2009)

Assessment in Religious Education

(see [appendix 1](#) for additional non-statutory guidance)

Attainment Targets

There are two Attainment Targets for Religious Education in Hillingdon:

AT 1, **Learning about religions**, is concerned with giving pupils knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings, customs and practices of different world faiths.

AT 2, **Learning from religion**, is concerned with enabling pupils to explore the ideas and beliefs of different world faiths and their own ideas, attitudes and beliefs.

RE seeks to teach pupils specific skills related to these processes and to foster key attitudes. It covers fundamental questions about life and different responses to them and provides the opportunity for pupils to apply what they have learnt about the different world faiths to their lives and their communities.

Assessment in Religious Education

Assessment is an integral part of a pupils learning curve: levels according to the Qualifications and Development Agency (QCD A) model should be awarded both for AT1 - learning about religion and AT2 - learning from religion. It is important to recognise that in Religious Education pupils are taken on a journey, especially in terms of AT2 and with this in mind there will be occasions where it may not be possible to award levels to all pieces of work.

Assessment guidance for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3

A good assessment framework raises the expectations of teachers and makes them aware of the potentially high standards their pupils might achieve. It helps teachers sharpen the focus on what is being taught and why. It enables them to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainments and plan the next steps in their learning. It provides the means to chart progress, and makes pupils and their parents, carers and guardians clear about particular achievements and targets for improvement.

Assessment should therefore help pupils and teachers recognise and celebrate achievement, and should motivate the learner.

Effective assessment requires:

- identification of a clear focus for a unit or lesson
- clear planning of objectives
- careful consideration of learning experiences
- opportunities to demonstrate achievement
- regular evaluation.

A range of assessment models should be applied across the Religious Education curriculum.

Reporting on Religious Education Schools

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCD A) and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) jointly publish Assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) booklets for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. These are updated annually.

Headteachers of maintained schools have a duty to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum in their schools. This includes assessment and reporting for all students, including those following Diploma courses of study.

Therefore, schools will need to ensure that, as a minimum, annual reports to parents, carers and guardians include a statement about the pupil's progress and achievement in Religious Education, and that a copy of the annual report is retained within the pupil's file.

Information based on such reports must be given to the Governing Body and that statutory requirements, as laid down by the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual), with regard to the transfer of information between schools is met.

Academies

Academies should fully comply with these assessment and reporting arrangements.

Governing Bodies

Governing Bodies of maintained schools have a duty to ensure the school meets the requirements of the EYFS and the National Curriculum, including assessment and reporting arrangements.

London Borough of Hillingdon

Local authorities have a duty to ensure that maintained schools and other EYFS providers administer the Ofqual statutory assessment and reporting arrangements appropriately. They must ensure schools and other EYFS providers understand and follow the requirements set out in the ARA.

Religious Education in the Early Years Foundation Stage

While the EYFS Framework does not identify RE as statutory it includes statutory standards with regard to a child's Personal, Emotional and Social Development that encompass understanding and respect for different beliefs. Furthermore in relation to Knowledge and Understanding of the World there is a requirement that these children should begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Within the two areas, Specialness and Belonging and Community children need to explore their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs and be introduced to those of other people, learning to value diversity and to respect other people's beliefs and practices.

It is important that the children's own experiences are the starting point for learning and that they all feel secure and valued. The children in this stage will have varied experiences, beliefs, cultures and

ideas. They need to know that their own background and beliefs are recognised and valued while also learning to recognise and value those of other people. Good Religious Education at this stage should provide a forum for everybody to share from his or her culture and beliefs.

The following should be covered in the foundation stage:

EYFS RE - Stepping Stones

Specialness

Step 1 – Be aware that some places/things/people and times are special. Know some of these that are special for them and their families.

Step 2 – Be aware that different things/places/people and times can be special for different people. Know about some of these.

Step 3 – Know about some festivals, rituals, people, places and things, the stories behind them and the way they are celebrated or respected.

Belonging and Community

Step 1 – Know some of the groups they personally belong to (eg. Class, school, family, faith, club etc) and their key features.

Step 2 – Know some of the groups other children belong to and some of their key features.

Step 3 – Know about some faith communities and know about a place, story, person from those communities. Know that things change and that some changes are marked with ceremony.

Curriculum provision for Religious Education

Curricular requirements

The revised Agreed Syllabus continues to be based on the recommended minimum time allowance for the teaching of Religious Education in schools of 5% of curriculum time, identified in the Dearing Report (1993).

In practice this generally works out as about:

30-36 hours per year Key Stage 1

38-45 hours per year Key Stage 2

38-45 hours per year Key Stage 3

30-36 hours per year Key Stage 4

No specific proposal is made for Key Stage 5 although a minimum of 30 hours of curriculum time should be allocated to Religious Education across each year.

Normally, Key Stage 3 covers years 7, 8 and 9 with Key Stage 4 covering years 10 and 11 although some schools have redefined this, normally starting Key Stage 4 in year 9.

Schools should use the above as a guide both across and within Key Stages.

Where Key Stages are redefined, the guidance should be taken across the years involved.

This also applies to the revised National Curriculum where although not a part of the National Curriculum, the proposals are for Religious Education to be delivered within a cross-curricular approach.

Care is needed in adopting a cross curricular approach to ensure that there is a specialist Religious Education staff member involved with the planning and delivery.

There is no requirement for the teaching of Religious Education in nursery classes, but it is statutory that children under five in reception classes are taught Religious Education. For students in post-16 education Religious Education is also compulsory for those at school. Schools have considerable freedom as to how that may be delivered.

Collective worship is not Religious Education though it may contribute to the delivery of the subject.

Faith and Values Strand

Faith and Values is seen as an important new strand in teaching Religious Education. It contains material shared by everyone with a faith or faith background but also by others who would perhaps claim not to have a faith. It is a compulsory new strand at each Key Stage.

Schools may wish to consider if this strand meets the Community Cohesion requirements of the SEF and how best this strand can be used to engage all students.

In addition to the religions below, other religions, philosophies and belief systems may be referred to within this strand. Schools should consider the needs of their communities in both extending their knowledge and understanding of the wide and divergent faiths throughout the known history of man as well as those beliefs and practices within our own cultures.

Other strands

The syllabus identifies six world religions as central to the study of Religious Education: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism.

Faith and Values and Christianity must be taught at each key stage.

Schools are free to determine which of the other religions, in addition to Christianity, they will teach at each key stage, subject to the following recommendations.

In order that pupils encounter a wide range of faith beliefs, at least one non-Abrahamic faith should be studied at Key Stage 1-2 and at least one in Key Stage 3.

The Faith and Values Strand will require time and schools should ensure that the whole syllabus is covered in the depth required for the faiths included.

Schools should not attempt to cover more than those recommended at each key stage.

Key Stage 1

Faith and Values, Christianity and **only one other**, from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism.

Key Stage 2

Faith and Values, Christianity and **at least two, but no more than three**, other religious traditions should be taught.

Schools should monitor to ensure that at least one non-Abrahamic faith has been studied within Key Stages 1 and 2

Key Stage 3

Faith and Values, Christianity and **at least one, but no more than four**, other religious traditions should be taught.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents, should pursue a course in Religious Education. Some schools have translated this in delivering the subject within a GCSE course in either year 10 or 11. This is acceptable as long as it meets the criteria required in covering the external examination syllabus within the time allowed.

Strands delivered at Key Stages 1-4

In planning for the curriculum delivery, the aim should be for a transparent delivery of both attainment targets for each strand.

Whilst this can be realistic for AT 1, the Attainment Target 2 – Learning from religion, is concerned with enabling pupils to explore the ideas and beliefs of different world faiths and their own ideas, attitudes and beliefs. This often takes longer to deliver.

Schools will have to balance the opportunities in sharing and learning about their own widening faith communities whilst ensuring that Religious Education maintains depth and rigour.

In determining which religious traditions are to be studied, schools should consider the nature of the pupil intake, the ethos of the school and, if a high school, where possible, the practice of 'feeder' schools.

The time devoted to teaching about any one religious tradition will depend on a number of factors, most notably the number of different religious traditions to be studied. For each of the six world religions this syllabus determines the essential or core body of material to be taught at each key stage.

The syllabus is not a scheme of work and additional topics may have to be included in order for the relevance of the syllabus topic to be properly understood and should be thought of as the minimum to be covered.

As with the previous syllabus, schools may wish to teach the different religious traditions either systematically or thematically. They may prefer to create a scheme of work that offers a mixture of the two methods. In making their decision they should be aware that pupils need a reasonable working knowledge of one religious tradition before it is compared to another. If false comparisons, confusion and superficial judgements are not to be made when teaching thematically there is a need to bring out differences between religions as well as similarities. Teachers need to beware of drawing unhelpful or misleading parallels. Pupils' understanding of and reflection on different religions and religious issues is often greatly enhanced by some comparative study.

In changing from the previous syllabus, the 'Attitudes and Links to Human Experience' has generally been reflected in the new 'Faith and Values Strand'. Relating religious belief and experience to human experience, in general, and the pupils' own experiences, in

particular, is considered vital to allow them to receive a full Religious Education.

At Key Stage 4 pupils should follow a recognised external examination course for Religious Education or Religious Studies.

Key Stage 5

Post-16 Religious Education

It is a requirement that all registered 16-19 year old pupils in maintained schools study Religious Education unless withdrawn by parents or by request from students themselves, if over 18 years of age.

Schools must ensure that all students have the opportunity to access Diploma courses which include Religious Education, A/S and 'A' level courses in Religious Studies or similar.

Religious Education offers students a great deal. Carefully planned and thoughtfully delivered it can allow students an opportunity to reflect on religious, philosophical, moral and ethical issues and relate these to the work they are doing within other areas of the curriculum. Equally, they may be given the opportunity to develop their own beliefs and opinions and the ability to make sound and reasoned judgements in preparation for life beyond school. The aims of Religious Education remain the same as for pupils in other key stages, however as there is considerable diversity of needs, interests and attitudes among this age group there is no prescribed programme of study. Schools must determine the most appropriate courses for their pupils.

The time allocation for Religious Education for pupils in years 12 and 13 should be flexible, but Religious Education must be delivered as part of a coherent and identifiable programme. Schools might consider offering various Religious Education topics as modules within a cycle of complementary studies units, as weekly sessions or as day conferences, but needs to be alongside or within a general programme of Religious Education.

Schools are free to use any of the material set out in earlier key stages or to devise a course based on the themes mentioned in the Post 16 section. Similar recommendations are that schools review the diplomas on offer.

The ASC recommends that the SACRE produce a non-statutory document on current post 16 practice for Religious Education.

Faith experience

Previous Agreed Syllabi have strongly recommended the benefit from visiting faith communities. This continues to be the advice of this revision, specifically that all students should have opportunities to visit at least two places of worship at each of the Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Where this contributes to an understanding that the faith is a vibrant important part of the lives of the participants, the visit helps appreciate the importance of the building in the community.

On a more pragmatic level, there are a limited number of non-Christian buildings within easy reach of most schools in the borough.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference recommend another way of helping students appreciate that religion is an important part of people's lives; by inviting colleagues, parents, members of faith communities as well as faith leaders to come into school and be asked to talk about their personal faith journeys within lessons.

The syllabus review recommends that the SACRE investigate how best this route can be achieved, possibly by providing training and resource materials for visitors.

An additional route is for schools to consider holding their own Inter Faith Networking events. The borough Youth Inter Faith Networks are becoming increasingly welcomed with the majority of schools now participating.

Religious Education

Key Stage 1

Religious Education

Key Stage 1

Faith and Values Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Life stances – what makes me 'ME'?
- The communities where I belong
- Keeping a perspective on life
- BIG questions – 'Dealing with *stuff*'

Key ideas

Life stances – what makes me 'ME'?

- Knowing that what I believe may be different to what others believe.
- What do I value – have I a choice and do I exercise it?
- Being happy and secure.

The communities where I belong

- Sharing.
- How do I know what you are thinking and what makes a community different?
- Awareness of the ways faiths relate to the community and the wide range of places of worship.
- Rites of passage – the families I belong to.
- Keeping a perspective on life.
- An understanding that a belief can be a journey for people.

BIG questions – 'Dealing with *stuff*'

- What do we do to make others happy?
- Do animals have feelings like us?

Christianity Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Christians believe in a God who is like a loving father/parent who created the world.
- Christians believe God's love is for everybody as shown through parables.
- Christians believe that Jesus (God's son) is God's gift to the world.

Teachings

- Jesus is God's son, who lived on earth and showed the Father's love to all. What is known about his life reflects this love.
- Jesus was a healer and showed that people need to be free from pain and misery.
- The Bible is a very special book for Christians. It contains teachings about God and Jesus.

Response from a believer

- Christians are followers of Jesus, knowing that following Jesus affects the way people live.
- Forgiveness is at the basis for Christian belief.
- Jesus taught that humans should care for each other and share their belongings.

Festivals and celebrations

- Christmas and Easter are significant Christian festivals, in terms of God's gift to humankind and how it is celebrated.
- Understanding the themes and symbols associated with Christmas, such as birth, light and journeys.
- Different ways in which Christian festivals are celebrated in various parts of the world.

Place of worship

- Christians get support and encouragement through worshiping in communities (churches) where they are encouraged in their faith.

Christianity is a major world faith.

Buddhism Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

Siddhartha Gautama – the Buddha's life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

Teachings

Stories of the Buddha, a human prince who lived in northern India a long time ago, who gave up wealth and status to achieve understanding of human experience and enlightenment.

Introduction to the Tipitaka.

Response from a believer

- Buddha – his values and teachings.
- Happiness comes through behaving in a particular way by:
 - kindness
 - generosity
 - truthfulness
 - patience
 - not harming any living thing.
- Features about Buddhist communities, supportive of each other, living out the teachings of Buddha.

Festivals and celebrations

- Celebrations of life and knowledge.

Place of worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

Buddhism is a major world faith.

Hinduism Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Different ways in which [Brahman](#) is represented. Brahman as an impersonal supreme being. That there are not many Gods but many ways to think of the God as different personalities fulfilling different roles (Pluralism).

Teachings

- The followers of Hinduism are known as Hindus.
- Stories associated with deities, including [Rama](#), [Sita](#) and [Ganesh](#), found in the Hindu scriptures.

Response from a believer

- Devotion to God, respect for all things and all people.
- Love and family respect. [Dharma](#) – learning how to live with others, both in family and society.
- Vegetarianism. Not harming or hurting any living thing.

Festivals and celebrations

- Various rites of passage – particularly including birth and marriage.
- [Divali](#) and some details of how it is celebrated.

Place of worship

- A shrine is a focus for daily worship.
- Know what might be found in a Hindu shrine and understand the purpose of each object.
- The idea of devotion to a particular deity.
- Dress codes (covering of heads and removal of shoes as marks of respect).

Hinduism is a major world faith.

Islam Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Allah, the one true God, the basis of the faith. Creator of all good things.

Teachings

- The followers of Islam are known as Muslims.
- The [Qur'an](#) is the holy book and contains:
 - a) stories about prophets of [Allah](#)
 - b) guidance about how people should behave.
- Know some key facts about [Muhammad](#) and his life, the messenger of God, the most important prophet of Allah.

Response from a believer

- Muslims are obliged to perform prayers and this entails five daily prayers.
- The Qur'an is written in Arabic and that the words are special so the book is treated very carefully.
- The Qur'an is read and recited in Arabic.
- Muslims have choices in the ways they behave and efforts should be made to be in communication with Allah at all times.
- Respect for the Qur'an and of drawings and images.

Festivals and celebrations

- The festivals of Eid – following [Ramadan](#) and [Haji](#).

Place of worship

- The importance of the mosque as a centre of the community.
- Dress codes (removal of shoes) and codes of conduct (separate areas of worship for women and men).

Islam is a major world faith.

"This Arabic 'logo-type' is composed of the words 'Salla-llahu alaihi wa sallam' – peace and blessings of Allah upon him. They are used by Muslims every time the Prophet Muhammad is mentioned. Similar respect is accorded to the other Prophets.

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

Judaism Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- God forgives those who are sorry and expects his laws to be obeyed.
- Belief in one God who created the world and who provides for people.

Teachings

- Followers of Judaism are known as Jews, whose early history is in the [Torah](#).
- Stories of the Torah, including those of creation, Noah, Moses and Joseph.
- The story of Moses' birth and how he became a leader of his people.
- The Ten Commandments.
- Jews remind themselves to teach children and to pray by having [mezuzot](#) on their doorposts.

Response from a believer

- Praying is having respect for knowing that they are in the presence of God.
- Children are taught to love God and their neighbour.
- The importance of the Sefer-Torah and the use of the Yad for showing respect. Other key leaders from the Torah, revealing how real people showed their love for God.
- Various symbols and processes are used to remind people of the need for prayer.
- Most men and women will cover their heads when praying.
- There are prayers when Jewish men may wear a [kippah](#), [tallit](#) and [tefillin](#).
- The importance of family life.

Festivals and celebrations

- The celebration of [Rosh Hashanah](#) (the Jewish new year).
- The festival of [Shabbat](#), a fundamental part of family life, is celebrated both at home and in the synagogue.
- Festivals like Passover are important reminders of God's love for His people.

Place of worship

- The [synagogue](#), as well as the home, is the place of worship for Jewish people.
- The [Rabbi](#), the spiritual leader and teacher of the congregation.

Judaism is a major world faith.

Sikhism Key Stage 1

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one God.

Teachings

- The ten teachers are called Gurus, Guru Nanak was the first.
- The story of Guru Nanak's call to be 'a minstrel of God'.
- Some of the key teachings of Guru Nanak through stories about his actions, e.g. Guru Nanak and the 20 Rupees, Guru Nanak and Bhai Lalo.
- The teachings written in a book called the Guru Granth Sahib, a holy scripture.
- The 5 Ks. Know that the 5 Ks are part of the Sikh rahit (code of conduct).

Response from a believer

- Guru Nanak's hymns, teaching people about God and how to behave.
- The importance of the 5 Ks (origin, meaning and significance – they are referred to as symbols or articles of faith). Know that the Sikh turban is an essential part of Sikh dress.

Festivals and celebrations

- The birthday of Guru Nanak.

Place of worship

- Know that the Guru Granth Sahib is kept in the Gurdwara, a place of worship.
- On entering a Gurdwara, people cover their heads and take off their shoes as a sign of respect to the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The importance of community in Sikhi and the gurdwara as a centre for religious, cultural and social foci, for example, the classrooms, langar, charity and service in the wider community.

Sikhism is a major world faith.

Religious Education

Key Stage 2

Religious Education

Key Stage 2

Faith and Values Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Life stances – what makes me ‘ME’
- The communities where I belong
- BIG questions
- ‘Dealing with *stuff*’
- Keeping a perspective on life

Key ideas

Life stances – what makes me ‘ME’

- A consideration of what individuals believed when they were younger.
- Have individuals changed their beliefs? If so what made them change their beliefs?

The communities where I belong

- How different faiths have developed and changed within their timescales.
- Community Cohesion.

BIG questions

- What is ‘truth’? Should we always accept what we are told?
- Can you ‘prove’ that what you believe is the case?
- What is meant by faith?

Dealing with stuff

- What about those with no faith?

Keeping a perspective on life

- Investigation through discussions (from a wide range of age groups) to find out if experience of life makes you more certain of what you understand and believe?
- Some ideologies teach that governments should be run by faith leaders, others that there should be no connections.
- What happens when there is a conflict between faith and the law?
- Should different faiths be allowed to have their own laws?

Christianity Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Christians believe that there is one God, who is the creator of the world, like a father to human beings and a source of comfort and strength.
- Miracles that show [Jesus](#)' power over nature (for example, the calming of the storm).
- The events of Holy Week and of Jesus' resurrection appearances.
- The stories that suggest Jesus' divinity and which teach beliefs about him, including the Christian belief that Jesus is still present in the world.
- God in human lives – miracles. Ways in which God cares for human beings. God communicating with human beings.

Teachings

- The creation stories from the [Bible](#) with particular reference to the relationship between God and mankind.
- Events from the life of Jesus:
 - the story of his nativity, his baptism and the events of his [baptism](#), his temptations
 - his ministry as recorded in the [Gospels](#).
 - the significance of his death.

Response from a believer

- Christians believe themselves to be followers of Jesus and regard their duty to follow his teaching and ideals to the best of their ability. This is discipleship. The teachings of Jesus as recorded in the [New Testament](#).
- The lives of some well-known Christians whose faith has shaped their lives, both national and international but also local people who may well be known to the community, including the young.
- Christians believe they are responsible stewards of the planet, including loving your neighbour.

Festivals and celebrations

- The [Eucharist](#), how and why it is celebrated in at least one denomination and understand its meaning.
- The significance of [Christmas](#), [Easter](#) and [Pentecost](#) and know the biblical events that they celebrate. Know that these festivals are celebrated differently around the world.

Place of worship

- Church as a Christian place of worship and key elements of a church.
- Know and understand the major differences between the church buildings of at least two different Christian denominations.
- How Christians worship.

Buddhism Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Places of Worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- [Siddhartha Gautama](#) – the Buddha's life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

Teachings

- The life story of Siddhartha Gautama who became the [Buddha](#) including his birth and upbringing, the four sights which led to his renunciation, his years in the forest, and his final enlightenment (Bodhi tree).
- The Buddha is represented in many different forms and that these reflect different aspects of his nature.

Response from a believer

- The Buddha formulated a four-part understanding of the nature of life, which is known as the four noble truths.
- Buddhists promise not to harm living beings; take what is not given; misuse the senses; use wrong speech or take drugs or alcohol.
- Understand how Buddhist values permeate a Buddhist lifestyle.

Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate how the Buddhist community (Sangha) is made up. Know about the lifestyle of monks and nuns, and understand the symbols of the robes, shaven heads and alms bowls.
- Know how an alms bowl is used and understand its significance.

Places of Worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

Hinduism Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- [Brahman](#) is one but can be worshipped in many different forms, as different deities.
- Some of the deities are male and others female. The different characteristics and family connections, including [Shiva](#), [Parvati](#) and [Ganesha](#). Pluralism in practice – plural ways to reach God.

Teachings

- Ideas behind the cycle of life. The individual soul. Finding your inner self.
- The important stories of the deities, [Rama](#) and [Sita](#) (from the [Ramayana](#)).
- Family values and living with others.

Response from a believer

- Respect for life in all its forms – non violence, the concept of ahimsa and its implications.
- Belief that respect for life is important, God, other people, all forms of life and particularly the cow.

Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate that there are diverse communities each celebrating in diverse ways.
- Celebrations to include [Divali](#), [Havan](#) and [Navratiri](#).

Place of worship

- The family shrine and [puja](#) in the [mandir](#).
- Understand the role of murtis in worship, the importance of devotion to deities.

Islam Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Values and teaching
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- [Allah](#), the one incomparable, indivisible God.
- Some of the attributes/names of Allah, e.g. the Compassionate One, along with appreciation of the 99 names of God.
- That Allah is the Owner and Provider of all things.

Teachings

- The purpose of creation is to serve Allah.
- The importance of the 5 pillars of faith.
- [Muhammad](#), his life and calling to be a prophet, the first revelations of the [Qur'an](#), the [Hijrah](#), and the return to [Makkah](#).
- The Qur'an, the revealed word of Allah and therefore is very special. Know the different ways in which respect is accorded to it.

Response from a believer

- Muslims pray five times a day (Salat), how Muslims prepare, by wudu and in their heart and prayer positions.
- Muslims seek to submit to the will of Allah in all things and by doing so achieve peace, and harmony with others and the environment.
- Muslims must share and be generous with their possessions.

Festivals and celebrations

- Muslims are obliged to fast annually during the month of Ramadan. The purpose and benefits of fasting (sawm), both physical and spiritual. Know that the end of the fast is celebrated at [Id ul Fitr](#).
- The rite of [Hajj](#); understand the significance of Hajj and various rites within it.

Place of worship

- The mosque is the place of worship and a community centre, the basic parts of a mosque and their uses.

"This Arabic 'logo-type' is composed of the words 'Salla-llahu alaihi wa sallam' – peace and blessings of Allah upon him. They are used by Muslims every time the Prophet Muhammad is mentioned. Similar respect is accorded to the other Prophets.

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

Judaism Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- God is the creator who reveals himself through his chosen people.

Teachings

- The history of the people, as recorded in the [Torah](#) – the call of Abraham, the call of Moses, the plagues of Egypt and the exodus of the Israelites, and entry into the promised land
- The Ten Commandments.
- Understanding the meaning of the covenant.

Response from a believer

- Following the commandment, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'.
- Many Jews are members of orthodox congregations whilst there are other congregations with different interpretations and observances.

Festivals and celebrations

- The Passover festival, [Pesach](#) and [Seder](#).
- Love of God is celebrated through prayer, particularly on [Shabbat](#).
- [Yom Kippur](#) – Day of Atonement and concept of forgiveness.
- Family life and its values, Shabbat and the Friday night meal.
- The work of the scribe, the reading of the weekly portion, the annual cycle of readings, the festivals associated with the Torah and the importance of regular Torah study.

Place of worship

- The synagogue is the place of worship for Jewish people, its features and the role of the rabbi.
- How the Torah is treated in the synagogue. The [menorah](#) and the Ark.

Sikhism Key Stage 2

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one God ([Ik Onkar](#)) and that God is described as the Creator and Sustainer, the Universal Truth.

Teachings

- Belief in life, birth and actions.
- Understand the particular meaning of the word Guru.
- [Guru Nanak](#) (1469-1539) founded Sikhism.
- The symbol of the Khanda. Know that the [Nishan Sahib](#) is the Sikh flag and has the symbol of the [Khanda](#) on it.

Response from a believer

- The Guru Granth Sahib is the revelation of God's message and understand that Sikhs live in obedience to it at all times. Know how respect is accorded to it.
- Sikhs believe that everyone should work honestly to earn their living. The importance of service and honesty.
- The importance of equality (both by race and sex) in Sikhism and how this value is reflected in Sikh lives.

Festivals and celebrations

- The significance of holy days, ceremonies and stories. Birthdays of Guru Nanak, [Guru Gobind Singh](#) and [Vaisakhi](#).

Place of worship

- The importance of the [Gurdwara](#) as the centre of the community, The langar and its example of charity to the wider community.

Religious Education

Key Stage 3

Religious Education

Key Stage 3

Faith and Values Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Life stances – what makes me ‘ME’
- The communities where I belong
- BIG questions
- ‘Dealing with *stuff*’
- Keeping a perspective on life

Key ideas

Life stances – what makes me ‘ME’

- Life choices.
- Which comes first, me, my faith or my role as a citizen?

The communities where I belong

- The history of religion through investigations of different cultures.
- Citizenship and community cohesion.

BIG questions

- How different faiths deal with the issue of death and the end?
- An investigation on what different faith stances teach about life after death.
- Are we really free?

Dealing with stuff

- West and East.
- An adventure into alternative ideologies and systems other than those in the west, including the dependence on commerce and wealth as important life stances.
- Consideration of the role of post-modernism on faiths. To consider the effect of the 20th century history, philosophies and science has had on belief systems.

Keeping a perspective on life

- Culture and faith.
- The place of faith in a democracy.

Christianity Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Belief in a loving God who is understood as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God is both the creator and the sustainer of all life.
- Christians believe that Jesus is both human and divine, that he reveals the will of God and is the saviour of humanity. That Jesus is a historical figure as shown in contemporary writings.
- Jesus as part of the Trinity, as shown through his baptism and transfiguration.
- The Holy Spirit its significance and application to life.
- Analysis of the biblical passages about the Holy Spirit.

Teachings

- The creation stories of Genesis showing the relationship between God and mankind. Further investigations of the Old Testament exploring this relationship.
- The miracles of Jesus and their teaching significance.
- Selected passages about Jesus, including his birth, baptism, temptations, transfiguration, relationships with people, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension.
- Events from the life of Jesus are recorded by the Gospel writers. Know that different writers had different emphasis. Understand that these accounts are open to interpretation.
- The teachings of Jesus shown through parables, with particular reference to the Sermon on the Mount.
- The importance of the Bible and different ways in which it was both written and is now interpreted by various different Christian denominations.

Response from a believer

- Humankind is in need of God's loving forgiveness.
- Christians regard themselves as disciples of Jesus and understand some of the implications of discipleship.
- The implication of Christendom to the culture and of the significant differences for those churches outside of chistendom, reflecting on the tension between personal faith values and the surrounding culture.

Festivals and celebrations

- Rites of passage (confirmation, membership and baptism as statements of parts of discipleship).
- Christians celebrate and commemorate important festivals in the Christian calendar including Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas and Pentecost.

Place of worship

- Christians worship in many ways both within the country and across the world showing a wide range of traditions.
- Christians express their understanding of God through a rich symbolic tradition with reference to a wide range of different ways of worship.

Buddhism Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- [Siddhartha Gautama](#) – the [Buddha](#)'s life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

Teachings

- Siddhartha Gautama was a human prince and know stories from his life including the four sights, his renunciation, his years in the forest and his final enlightenment, when he became Buddha.
- Siddhartha Gautama overcame suffering and achieved enlightenment.
- Out of compassion Siddhartha Gautama chose to teach others how they could overcome suffering.

Response from a believer

- The Buddha realised that life is [dukkha](#), and understand what this means. Understand what Buddhists mean by the four noble truths.
- Buddhists try to become free from hatred, greed and ignorance.
- There are different Buddhist philosophies and approaches each with its own character and begin to differentiate between them.
- Buddhists believe in [kamma](#) and understand that this means they believe that for every intentional thought, word and deed there is an effect.
- Know the five moral precepts and how Buddhists express these in their own lives.

Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate how the Buddhist community ([Sangha](#)) is made up. Know about the lifestyle of monks and nuns, and understand the symbols of the robes, shaven heads and alms bowls.
- Know how an alms bowl is used and understand its significance.

Place of worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

Hinduism Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- [Brahman](#) is the ultimate impersonal, formless and supreme being.
- Brahman is worshipped in many diverse forms each reflecting a different aspect.
- Interpret symbols associated with a limited number of deities. e.g. [Shiva Natarajah](#), [Vishnu](#) and Brahman. The essential nature's 'spirit', rather than body and mind, respecting all as the *spark* of God.

Teachings

- The Hindu scriptures, making clear the distinction between myth and philosophy.
- The Hindu concept of time as an endless cycle of creation, preservation and destruction.
- Idea of [moksha](#) and [samsara](#) (ie reincarnation).
- The characters and central stories of some of the following: [Krishna](#), [Vishnu](#), [Shiva](#), [Kali](#), [Durga](#), [Lakshmi](#), [Ganesha](#), [Rama](#), and [Hanuman](#).

Response from a believer

- [Dharma](#) and [karma](#). Seeing and serving God in man.
- Hindu society and the diversity. Seeing and serving God in man.
- The importance of vegetarianism, vows, yoga and fasting.
- Taking responsibility and accepting the consequences

Festivals and celebrations

- Family roles and customs.

Place of worship

- Worship in the home and in the [mandir](#) including [Havan](#), [Arti](#) and [Puja](#)
- Pilgrimage in India.

Islam Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- There is one God, Supreme and Unique, and that the revelation given to the Prophet [Muhammad](#) is the final and complete revelation of [Allah](#) for all humans.
- Allah is both immanent and transcendent. Understand the meaning of the terms transcendent and immanent.

Teachings

- Key events from the life of Muhammad.
- The importance of the [Qur'an](#).

Response from a believer

- Worship is obedience to God in all aspects of life.
- Muslims worship Allah by [Taqwa](#): an awareness of God all day every day, and an effort to be in communication with Allah at all times.
- Dietary laws and rules of modesty and equality, including the [Hijab](#).

Festivals and celebrations

- The rite of [Hajj](#) – understand the significance of Hajj and various rites within it.
- The obligation to fast annually during the month of [Ramadan](#).
- Understand the trials and benefits of this, both physical and spiritual.
- Know how the end of the fast is celebrated at [Eid ul Fitr](#).
- The rites of birth, marriage and death are marked and celebrated in [Islam](#) and the key beliefs associated with each.

Place of worship

- Know the purpose, parts of and basic architecture of mosques.
- The importance of the mosque, Muslim community and the extended family.

“This Arabic ‘logo-type’ is composed of the words ‘Salla-llahu alaihi wa sallam’ – peace and blessings of Allah upon him. They are used by Muslims every time the Prophet Muhammad is mentioned. Similar respect is accorded to the other Prophets.

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

Judaism Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Creator God, as described in psalms, [Shema](#) and other stories. The divine presence of God (Shekhina) and action in history.

Teachings

- Creation stories as an example of God's relationship with creation.
- The [Torah](#) and [Tenakh](#) are of great importance to Jews.
- Understand how respect is shown to the [Sefer Torah](#), in its use in worship and study and in the manner in which it is treated in the synagogue and during the festivals of [Shavuot](#) and [Simhat Torah](#).
- Actions of God in history have served to liberate and support the Jewish people in exchange for their allegiance, and also on occasion to punish them.
- Jews use the [Shema](#) to remind them of their faith through [tefillin](#) and the presence of [mezuzot](#).
- Key symbols of Judaism: [menorah](#), [mezuzah](#) and [Magen David](#).

Response from a believer

- Jews seek to obey commandments set out in the Torah as a way of serving God and understand the nature and effect of these laws.
- The [mizvot](#) ensures that Jews are engaged in tzedaka (charity). Key values of tefillah, repentance and [tzedaka](#).

Festivals and celebrations

- Family life and its values, [Shabbat](#) and the Friday night meal. Symbols of Sabbath candles and loaves of bread (cholas).
- The major festivals including Succoth, Rosh Hashanah, [Yom Kippur](#) and [Shavuot](#).
- Understand what is remembered and celebrated during the [Pesach](#) festival.
- The place of family and tradition, the sense of identity. The rites of passage are celebrated in Judaism and understand the central issues surrounding each one, including [Brit Milah](#), Bar/Bat Mizvah, Kiddushin (marriage), and death.

Place of worship

- The synagogue is the Jewish place of worship and understand the role of the synagogue and the rabbi in the community. Understand the meaning of the ark and the temple in Jewish worship.

Sikhism Key Stage 3

Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

Key ideas

Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one universal God ([Ik Onkar](#)), who is self revealing, the enlightener or [Guru](#), self-consistent, immanent, and the Creator.
- Description of God in the Mool Mantra.

Teachings

- The importance of Guru Granth Sahib, the vak, the akhand path and its presence at important ceremonies.
- The teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib that are revered rather than the scripture itself.
- The outlines of the lives of [Guru Nanak](#) and some of the other ten Gurus and an understanding of their significance.

Response from a believer

- That Sikhs seek freedom from self-centredness and aim towards God-centredness.
- The symbolism of the 5Ks as Sikh articles of faith.
- Issues of prohibitions (ritually slaughtered meat, narcotics...).
- Principles of living, honesty, sharing of time and talents.
- Key values of equality.
- [Sewa](#) is a key value for Sikhs and how it is manifested in Sikh lives.

Festivals and celebrations

- Pattern and significance of naming, turban tying and other ceremonies.
- The significance of [Vaisakhi](#) as confirmation of the independent religion and nation by [Guru Gobind Singh](#).
- Worship and ceremony; prayer, contemplation, importance of the hymns of Guru Granth Sahib.
- Rites of passage.

Place of worship

- The parts of a [gurdwara](#) and understand the importance of the [sangat](#), the langar, the [nishan sahib](#), [khanda](#).
- Understand the importance of the gurdwaras as a focus for life within the [Khalsa](#) and as the place that houses the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The langar is used and the various rationales behind it, e.g. sewa (selfless service with humility), equality, sharing with others, non-discrimination, community.

Appendix 1

Assessment and Attainment Levels

Attainment target scale

In order to support teachers in judging attainment, this guidance is linked to the latest national guidance on standards in Religious Education from QCDA, an eight level scale of attainment in Religious Education, which is published as part of DCSF/QCDA's Religious Education: non-statutory guidance in Religious Education document.

The scale is based on two Religious Education attainment targets that describe the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to have reached by the end of the key stage.

The attainment targets consist of eight levels of increasing difficulty, plus a description of exceptional performance above level eight. Each level describes the type and range of performance that pupils should demonstrate.

In summary, the approach to assessment described here is principally designed to:

- maximise the progress and achievement of all pupils;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- inform and improve reports to parents, carers and guardians; and
- be manageable and effective for teachers in the classroom.

Identifying opportunities for summative assessment

A Religious Education scheme of work organises the content of the agreed syllabus into manageable units of work across the year groups of each key stage. Pupils should be given credit for achievement whenever it is demonstrated, whether informally or through planned activities. Each unit of work will provide information about pupils' attainment. Any classroom activity can be seen as an assessment opportunity, though not necessarily for all pupils at the same time. Therefore, teachers will frequently be using a range of formative and diagnostic assessment strategies throughout these units, to make sure that the next steps of learning are at a level appropriate for each pupil.

Schools will also need to consider how often they intend to make summative assessments linked to the eight level scale. This should be done either at the end of each half-term unit, or each full-term unit of work depending on the scheme of work.

Beginning and end of unit assessment

At the start, or before the start, of a new unit of work, it is invaluable for both teachers and pupils to be aware of what pupils already know and understand. In this way, pupils recognise when they are adding new learning to their existing knowledge and understanding. Also, teachers are better informed of different pupils' starting points and can plan more effectively for every pupil. At the end of the unit, teacher and pupils are able to recognise and celebrate progress and achievement.

Before the unit this is what I know about...

Name:

Date:

At the end of the unit this is what I have learned...

Name:

Date:

Pupil self-assessment

The involvement of pupils through reflection and self-evaluation is an essential part, not only of good assessment practice, but also of reaching a deeper understanding of Religious Education.

The following self-assessment frames are designed to fulfil both these objectives, and are particularly useful in providing evidence for attainment target 2. Short response sheets like these can help pupils to record their reflections and responses to experiences.

We talked about...

And at the end I thought...

We discussed...

My opinion is...

At the end of the school year, the teacher can select from the range of evidence that exists, and those pieces that provide the most useful evidence of achievement and progress for the next teacher.

AT1 Learning about religion

How pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

Level	<i>beliefs, teachings and sources</i>	<i>practices and ways of life</i>	<i>forms of expression</i>
	I can	I can	I can
1	remember a Christian (Hindu, etc.) story and talk about it e.g. talk about the story of Diwali	use the right names for things that are special to Buddhists (Jews, etc) e.g. say "That is a Church", or "She's praying" when my teacher shows me a picture	recognise religious art, symbols and words and talk about them e.g. say "That is a Star of David" when my teacher shows me a picture
2	tell a Christian (Sikh, etc.) story and say some things that people believe e.g. tell the story of the birth of Jesus say that Christians believe in God	talk about some of the things that that are the same for different religious people e.g. say that Christians and Sikhs both have holy books	say what some Christian (Muslim, etc) symbols stand for and say what some of the art (music, etc) is about e.g. say that the cross reminds Christians that Jesus died on a cross
3	describe what a believer might learn from a religious story e.g. make a connection between the story of the forming of the Khalsa and the need for Sikhs to be brave in times of trouble	describe some of the things that are the same and different for religious people e.g. note how Muslims and Sikhs both treat their holy books with respect by keeping them higher than other books e.g. note that Muslims and Christians both pray but in different ways	use religious words to describe some of the different ways in which people show their beliefs e.g. label a picture of Shiva Nataraja to show links with Hindu beliefs about God
4	make links between the beliefs (teachings, sources, etc.) of different religious groups and show how they are connected to believers' lives e.g. make links between Qur'anic and Biblical sources and Muslim and Jewish charities e.g. connect some sayings of Jesus with different Christian beliefs about animals	use the right religious words to describe and compare what practices and experiences may be involved in belonging to different religious groups e.g. use some Pali or Sanskrit terms in describing two different Buddhist types of meditation e.g. compare the way that Hindus and Buddhists might meditate	express religious beliefs (ideas, feelings, etc) in a range of styles and words used by believers and suggest what they mean e.g. draw and label the key features inside two churches, indicating their meaning for those who worship there
5	suggest reasons for the similar and different beliefs which people hold, and explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to important questions about life and morality e.g. compare different Jewish beliefs about the Messiah and say how different interpretations may come about, using biblical and other texts to illustrate their answers	describe why people belong to religions and explain how similarities and differences within and between religions can make a difference to the lives of individuals and communities e.g. write an account of Hajj which explains why many Shi'a Muslims will go on to visit the tomb of Ali because they believe that he was the rightful successor to the Prophet Muhammad	use a wide religious vocabulary in suggesting reasons for the similarities and differences in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression found within and between religions e.g. produce a survey of different forms of creative religious expression and suggestions for similarities and differences between them

AT1 Learning about religion

How pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

Level	<i>beliefs, teachings and sources</i>	<i>practices and ways of life</i>	<i>forms of expression</i>
	I can	I can	I can
6	<p>say what religions teach about some of the big questions of life, using different sources and arguments to explain the reasons for diversity within and between them</p> <p>e.g. complete a poster demonstrating two contrasting religious views on astrology and making reference to religious texts and teachings which support the alternative teachings</p>	<p>say what different practices and ways of life followers of religions have developed, explaining how beliefs have had different effects on individuals, communities and societies</p> <p>e.g. prepare a guide for Anglican Christians on the celebration of Easter in the Orthodox Church, showing how resurrection belief is expressed in different ways</p>	<p>use correct religious and philosophical vocabulary in explaining what the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression might be for believers</p> <p>e.g. produce a booklet illustrating and explaining different sorts of symbolic expression involved in the life of a Buddhist monk or nun</p>
7	<p>present a coherent picture of religious beliefs, values and responses to questions of meaning and truth which takes account of personal research on different religious topics and a variety of sources and evidence</p> <p>e.g. using books and the internet, investigate Sikh beliefs about the importance of the Guru and do a presentation which coherently illustrates a variety of views</p>	<p>show how religious activity in today's world has been affected by the past and by traditions, and how belonging to a religion may mean different things to different people, even within the same religion</p> <p>e.g. produce two 'pen-pictures' of Muslims from different communities and explain how history and culture have influenced the way they put their faith into practice in different ways</p>	<p>use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary as well as different of forms of expression in presenting a clear picture of how people express their religious, spiritual and ethical beliefs in a variety of way</p> <p>e.g. produce an illustrated guide to representations of Jesus from different times and cultures, explaining the Christian beliefs and values presented through the different media</p>
8	<p>analyse the results of different sorts of research and place different interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources in their historical, cultural, social and philosophical contexts</p> <p>e.g. research the internet and interview individuals to produce a contextual comparison of interpretations of the resurrection of Jesus</p>	<p>weigh up different points of view and come to a conclusion on how religions and beliefs make a difference to communities and societies in different times and places</p> <p>e.g. conduct a questionnaire and produce findings on whether religion has had a mostly good or bad effect on different local communities</p>	<p>use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary in weighing up the meaning and importance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression</p> <p>e.g. select some items of Buddhist artistic expression for an exhibition and produce a booklet of explanations of the symbolism and impact of the items for Buddhist belief and practice over time</p>
EP	<p>provide a consistent and detailed analysis of religions and beliefs and of how religious, spiritual and moral sources are interpreted in different ways, with an evaluation of the different methods of study used to conduct the analysis</p> <p>e.g. write an article on 'mystical experience' which includes an evaluation of the research techniques used to gather information about it</p>	<p>evaluate in depth the importance of religious diversity in a pluralistic society and demonstrate how religion and beliefs have had a changing impact on different communities over time</p> <p>e.g. write a report on a local religious community which analyses their place within wider society and evaluates the factors which have affected how relations with other local groups have changed over time</p>	<p>use a complex religious, moral and philosophical vocabulary in effectively synthesising my accounts of the varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression</p> <p>e.g. prepare a 'virtual' tour of a local Place of worship which uses digital pictures of artefacts and architecture and includes consistent explanations of the symbolism employed in expressing religious, spiritual and moral beliefs ideas and feelings</p>

AT2 Learning from religion

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

Level	<i>identity and belonging</i>	<i>meaning, purpose and truth</i>	<i>values and commitments</i>
	I can	I can	I can
1	talk about things that happen to me e.g. talk about how I felt when my baby brother was born	talk about what I find interesting or puzzling e.g. say "I like the bit when Krishna helped his friend"	talk about what is important to me and to other people e.g. talk about how I felt when I gave a present to my friend and how I think that made my friend feel
2	ask about what happens to others with respect for their feelings e.g. say that some people dance, sing, recite for God	talk about some things in stories that make people ask questions e.g. say "Was Jonah hurt after being inside the big fish?"	talk about what is important to me and to others with respect for their feelings e.g. say "I agree with the rule about not stealing as stealing is not fair"
3	compare some of the things that influence me with those that influence other people e.g. talk about how Jesus influenced his disciples and how friends influence them	ask important questions about life and compare my ideas with those of other people e.g. ask why many people believe in life after death, give their view and compare with a particular religious view	link things that are important to me and other people with the way I think and behave e.g. talk about how listening to a story about generosity might make them behave when they hear about people who are suffering
4	ask questions about who we are and where we belong, and suggest answers which refer to people who have inspired and influenced myself and others e.g. write an imaginary interview with a member of a minority religious community, referring to the beliefs which sustain them	ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life, and suggest a range of answers which might be given by me as well as members of different religious groups or individuals e.g. write some questions about life after death and provide answers that refer to resurrection and reincarnation	ask questions about the moral decisions I and other people make, and suggest what might happen as a result of different decisions, including those made with reference to religious beliefs/values e.g. write a report about the environment and suggest what might happen depending on different moral choices that could be made
5	give my own and others' views on questions about who we are and where we belong and on the challenges of belonging to a religion and explain what inspires and influences me e.g. write a 'question and answer' style report on what it may like to be a member of a religious community in Britain today and outline what impresses them about this religious identity and community	ask questions about the meaning and purpose of life and suggest answers which relate to the search for truth and my own and others' lives e.g. write a short story which raises questions about what is 'true' and which relates to their own personal search for meaning in life	ask questions about things that are important to me and to other people and suggest answers which relate to my own and others' lives e.g. write a report on a moral issue in the news, interviewing key people in the debate and including religious views and the potential impact of those views on their own and others' lives
6	consider the challenges of belonging to a religion today with reference to my own and other people's views on human nature and society, supporting those views with reasons and examples	use reasoning and examples to express insights into my own and others' views on questions about the meaning and purpose of life and the search for truth	use reasoning and examples to express insights into the relationship between beliefs, teachings and world issues, focusing on things that are important to me

AT2 Learning from religion

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

Level	<i>identity and belonging</i>	<i>meaning, purpose and truth</i>	<i>values and commitments</i>
	I can	I can	I can
6	e.g. write a news report on different Sikh attitudes to aspects of 'British' culture, explaining how Sikh views of human nature and society affect their views	e.g. produce a booklet of ideas about the 'Good Life' with reference to religious and non-religious points of view and their own conclusions	e.g. produce an e-media presentation on religious views of 'terrorism' with reference to religious and non-religious points of view and their own conclusions
7	give my personal view with reasons and examples on what value religious and other views might have for understanding myself and others e.g. produce a summary of my own personal and social relationships alongside an analysis of Hindu and other insights into human nature and community	give my personal view with reasons and examples on what value religious and other views might have for understanding questions about the meaning and purpose of life e.g. following research into samsara and nirvana, produce a dialogue I might have with a(nother) Buddhist about the future of humanity	give my personal view with reasons and examples on what value religious and other views might have for understanding what is important to me and to other people e.g. following research into Jewish and Humanist views on 'faith' schools, produce a report with my recommendations on an application for a new Jewish foundation school
8	weigh up in detail a wide range of viewpoints on questions about who we are and where we belong, and come to my own conclusions based on evidence, arguments, reflections and examples e.g. write an article entitled, 'What is a Jew'? making use of Jewish and non-Jewish points of view and coming to a conclusion that takes account of religious, cultural and philosophical perspectives	weigh up in detail a wide range of viewpoints on questions about truth and the meaning and purpose of life, and come to my own conclusions based on evidence, arguments, reflections and examples e.g. write a speech for or against the motion that 'science will one day remove all need for religion', and coming to a conclusion that takes account of religious, philosophical and historical perspectives	weigh up in detail a wide range of viewpoints on questions about values and commitments, and come to my own conclusions based on evidence, arguments, reflections and examples e.g. write a dialogue between a Muslim and Hindu on how religious insights might save us from environmental disaster and write a conclusion that takes account of religious and social perspectives
EP	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions about who we are and where we belong and provide independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into my own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, with well-substantiated and balanced conclusions e.g. research one 'Eastern' and one 'Western' religious view of human nature and write a report with conclusions on how far the two can be harmonised	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions about truth and the meaning and purpose of life, and provide independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into my own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, with well-substantiated and balanced conclusions e.g. research the history of human achievement and kindness within two religions/ belief systems and write a message in defence of human beings to an alien species who think it would be better to wipe us off the face of the planet	analyse in depth a wide range of perspectives on questions about values and commitments and provide independent, well informed and highly reasoned insights into my own and others' perspectives on religious and spiritual issues, with well-substantiated and balanced conclusions e.g. conduct research on different attitudes to religious believers and write a report with conclusions on whether there should be a law against religious discrimination

Special Educational Needs Assessment in Religious Education

P scales

Although the use of P scales is statutory for children with special educational needs who are working below level 1 of the National Curriculum, **it is recognised that they are not helpful in assessing AT1**, in that they are all content free. Schools will need to use P scales along with the National Attainment levels to reach a 'best fit' level.

The P scales are not to be used to assess children with EAL at any age unless they have additional special educational needs.

Performance - P level - descriptions:

P1 (i)

Pupils encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, [for example, startling at sudden noises or movements]. Any participation is fully prompted.

P1 (ii)

Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, [for example, becoming still in response to silence]. They may give intermittent reactions, [for example, vocalising occasionally during group celebrations and acts of worship].

P2 (i)

Pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, [for example, briefly looking around in unfamiliar natural and manmade environments]. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, [for example, leaning towards the source of a light, sound or scent]. They accept and engage in coactive exploration, [for example, touching a range of religious artefacts and found objects in partnership with a member of staff].

P2 (ii)

Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, [for example, showing that

they have enjoyed an experience or interaction]. They recognise familiar people, events and objects, [for example, becoming quiet and attentive during a certain piece of music]. They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, [for example, repeating a simple action with an artefact]. They cooperate with shared exploration and supported participation, [for example, performing gestures during ritual exchanges with another person performing gestures].

P3 (i)

Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, [for example, prompting a visitor to prolong an interaction]. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, [for example, stroking or shaking artefacts or found objects]. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, [for example, when vocalising in a quiet place]. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, [for example, following a familiar ritual and responding appropriately].

P3 (ii)

Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may

Initiate interactions and activities, [for example, prompting an adult to sing or play a favourite song]. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, [for example, celebrating the achievements of their peers in assembly]. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, [for example, choosing to participate in activities]. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, [for example, contemplating the flickering of a candle flame]. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, [for example, passing an artefact to a peer in order to prompt participation in a group activity].

P4

Pupils use single elements of communication, [for example, words, gestures, signs or symbols, to express their feelings]. They show they understand 'yes' and 'no'. They begin to respond to the feelings of others, [for example, matching their emotions and laughing when another pupil is laughing]. They join in with activities by initiating ritual actions or sounds. They may demonstrate an appreciation of stillness and quietness.

P5

Pupils respond appropriately to simple questions about familiar religious events or Experiences and communicate simple meanings. They respond to a variety of new religious experiences, [for example, involving music, drama colour, lights, food, or tactile objects]. They take part in activities involving two or three other learners. They may also engage in moments of individual reflection.

P6

Pupils express and communicate their feelings in different ways. They respond to others in group situations and cooperate when working in small groups. Pupils listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals. They carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances. They show concern and sympathy for others in distress, [for example, through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort]. They start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.

P7

Pupils listen to and follow religious stories. They communicate their ideas about religion, life events and experiences in simple phrases. They evaluate their own work and behaviour in simple ways, beginning to identify some actions as right or wrong on the basis of the consequences. They find out about aspects of religion through stories, music or drama, answer questions and communicate their responses. They may communicate their feelings about what is special to them, [for example, using role play]. They begin to understand that other people have needs and to respect these. They make purposeful relationships with others in group activity.

P8

Pupils listen attentively to religious stories or to people talking about religion. They begin to understand that religious and other stories carry moral and religious meaning. They are increasingly able to communicate ideas, feelings or responses to experiences or to retell religious stories. They communicate simple facts about religion and important people in religions.

They begin to realise the significance of religious artefacts, symbols and places. They reflect on what makes them happy, sad, excited or lonely. They demonstrate a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations. They are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others. They treat living things and their environment with care and concern.

Appendix 2

Religious Education statutory obligations

Section 69 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Duty to secure due provision of Religious Education

- (1) Subject to section 71, in relation to any community, foundation or voluntary school:
 - (a) the local education authority and the Governing Body shall exercise their functions with a view to securing, and
 - (b) the head teacher shall secure, that Religious Education is given in accordance with the provision for such education included in the school's basic curriculum by virtue of section 352(1)(a) of the [1996 c. 56.] Education Act 1996.
- (2) Schedule 19 has effect for determining the provision for Religious Education which is required by section 352(1)(a) of that Act to be included in the basic curriculum of schools within each of the following categories, namely:
 - (a) community schools and foundation and voluntary schools which do not have a religious character,
 - (b) foundation and voluntary controlled schools which have a religious character, and
 - (c) voluntary aided schools which have a religious character.
- (3) For the purposes of this Part a foundation or voluntary school has a religious character if it is designated as a school having such a character by an order made by the Secretary of State.
- (4) An order under subsection (3) shall state, in relation to each school designated by the order, the religion or religious denomination in accordance with whose tenets Religious Education is, or may be, required to be provided at the school in accordance with Schedule 19 (or, as the case may be, each such religion or religious denomination).
- (5) The procedure to be followed in connection with:
 - (a) the designation of a school in an order under subsection (3), and
 - (b) the inclusion in such an order, in relation to a school, of the statement required by subsection (4),
 shall be specified in regulations.

Provision of Religious Education

Provisions concerning RE can be found in sections 69 and 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 19.

All maintained schools should provide Religious Education (RE) and collective worship for their pupils, unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and sixth-form pupils are able to withdraw themselves. The right of withdrawal from RE and collective worship is set out in section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

RE in all community schools and all foundation and voluntary schools without a religious character must follow the agreed syllabus for the area. The agreed syllabus is drawn up by the LA, taking advice from local bodies. The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), a local body made up of representatives from faith groups, teachers and the LA advise on RE and collective worship issues, whereas the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), a subset of the SACRE, recommend new syllabuses.

The headteacher shares responsibility with the LA and the Governing Body for making sure that the RE requirements are met.

All locally agreed syllabuses must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) has issued non-statutory guidance on RE for schools.

The precise nature of RE at a foundation or voluntary school will depend on the religious character of the school. Whether a foundation or voluntary school has a religious character and the particular religion or religious denomination concerned is set out in The Designation of Schools Having a Religious Character (England) Order 1999 (SI 1999 No. 2432), or, for schools approved to enter the maintained sector after 1 September 1999, the Order designating the school. There are no foundation special schools which have a religious character.

Voluntary-aided schools with a religious character

RE in a voluntary-aided school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the schools trust deed or, where provision is not made by a trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the Order referred to above.

Where parents ask for RE to be provided for any pupils according to the locally agreed syllabus, and it is not convenient for them to attend a school at which the syllabus is in use, the Governing Body must make arrangements. This requirement is lifted if, because of any special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so.

Foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character

RE in a foundation or voluntary-controlled school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for the area. However, where parents request it, provision may be made in accordance with the schools trust deed or, where provision is not made by trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the Order referred to above. This requirement is lifted if, because of any special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that such Religious Education is provided for not more than two periods in each week. The headteacher shares responsibility with the LA and the Governing Body for making sure that the RE requirements are met.

Teachers

Teachers cannot be required to teach RE except where the law provides otherwise. This would normally only apply in a maintained school with a religious designation.

Provisions concerning RE can be found in sections 69 and 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 19.

Glossary

Christianity

Advent

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

Altar

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

Anglican

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

Apostle

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

Ascension

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

Ash Wednesday

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

Atonement

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

Baptism

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

Baptist

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

BCE

Before Christian Era.

Bible

Christian holy book made up of both Old Testament and New Testament.

CE

Christian Era. The Christian calendar dates from the estimated date of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Christ

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

Christmas

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

Church

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

Crucifixion

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

Disciple

One of the biblical followers of Jesus Christ, one who follows Jesus today.

Easter

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

Epistle

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

Eucharist

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

Evangelical

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

Evangelist

A writer of one of the four New Testament Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; a preacher of the Gospel.

Father

Term used to describe God and his relationship with people.

Font

Receptacle to hold water used in baptism.

Forgiveness

Act of forgiving, pardoning.

Good Friday

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

Gospel

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

Holy Communion

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

Holy Spirit

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

Holy Week

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

Icon/Ikon

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

Incarnation

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

Jesus Christ

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

Lectern

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

Lent

Penitential season. The 40 days leading up to Easter.

Lord

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

Love

Doctrine of charity and care towards all.

Mass

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

Messiah

Redeemer. Jesus Christ

Miracle

Supernatural act of power and often compassion.

Nave

Main aisle of a church.

New Testament

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

Old Testament

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

Orthodox

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

(ii) Conforming to the creeds sanctioned by the ecumenical councils, e.g. Nicaea, Chalcedon.

Palm Sunday

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

Paschal Candle

Candle lit during Eastertide to recall the resurrected presence of Jesus.

Parable

Narrative designed to elucidate meaning.

Passion

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

Pentecost

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

Pew

Bench in a church, sometimes enclosed.

Protestant

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

Pulpit

An elevated platform from which sermons are preached.

Redemption

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

Resurrection

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

The rising from the dead of believers at the Last Day.

The new, or risen, life of Christians.

Rosary

Beads used as an aid to meditation or prayer.

Sacrament

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

Lord's Supper

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

Sanctuary

The part of the church considered most holy and containing the high altar.

Sin

Sin (original)

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

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

Son

Description of Jesus Christ as Son of God

Transfiguration

Jesus Christ's change in form from earthly to heavenly.

Trinity

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

Buddhism

Anatta

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

Anicca

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

Atta

Self; soul.

Bhikkhu

Fully ordained Buddhist monk.

Bhikkhuni

Fully ordained Buddhist nun.

Bodhi Tree

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

Bodhisatta

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

Buddha

Awakened or Enlightened One.

Dalai Lama (Tibetan)

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

Dhamma

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

Dukkha

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

Dhammapada

Famous scripture of 423 verses.

Enlightenment

As nibbana, a state of secure, perfect peace that follows complete freedom from greed, hatred and ignorance.

Gautama

Family name of the Buddha

Ihara

Dwelling place; monastery.

Jataka

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

Kamma

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

Khandas

Heap, Aggregate. The five khandas together make up the 'person' (form, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness).

Nirodha

Cessation (of suffering). The third Noble Truth.

Noble Truths

Four Noble Truths consist of the Buddha's understanding of the human condition: (i) what is wrong with life; (ii) why is it wrong; (iii) the good news that something can be done; (iv) what needs to be done.

Magga

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

Mahayana

Great Vehicle. One of the two main branches of the Buddhist tradition. The teachings that spread from India into Tibet, parts of Asia and the Far East.

Mala

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

Metta

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

Mudda

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

Nibbana

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

Panna

Wisdom. Understanding the trust nature of things.

Sakyamuni

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

Samadhi

Meditative absorption. A state of deep meditation.

Samatha

One of the two forms of meditation.

Samsara

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

Sanatha

A state of concentrated calmness.

Sangha

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

Sankhara

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

Sanna

Perception. Third of the five khandas.

Siddhattha

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

Sutta

Text. The word of the Buddha.

Tanha

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

Theravada

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

Tipitaka

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

Vedana

Feeling. The second of the five khandas.

Vinnana

Consciousness. The fifth of the five khandas.

Vipassana

Insight into the true nature of things; a particular form of meditation.

Wesak or Vesak (Sinhalese)

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

Zen

Meditation. A school of Mahayana Buddhism that has developed in China and Japan

Hinduism**Advaita**

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

Ahimsa

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

Arti

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

Ashram

A place set up for spiritual development.

Ashrama

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

Atman

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

Aum

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

Avatar

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

Bhagavad

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

Bhajan

Devotional hymn or song.

Bhakti

Devotion; love. Devotional form of Hinduism.

Bhakti-yoga

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

Brahma

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

Brahman

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

Brahmin

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

Dharma

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

Diva

Light, normally ghee lamp, lit as offering to deity/ies.

Divali

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

Durga

Female Hindu deity, form of the goddess Parvati, wife of Shiva.

Ganesha

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

Ganga

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

Hanuman

The monkey warrior who faithfully served Rama and Sita.

Havan

Act of worship in which offerings of ghee and grains are made into a fire.

Holi

The festival of colours, celebrated in spring.

Jati

Caste is the usual translation, meaning occupational kinship group.

Jnana

Knowledge.

Kali

Name given for the power of God that delivers justice – often represented by the goddess Kali.

Karma

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

Krishna

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

Lakshmi

The goddess of fortune

Lotus

Flower Symbol of spirituality

Madurai

Place of pilgrimage in South India.

Mandala

A circle, area or community/group, may be a complex design to aid meditation.

Mandir

Temple.

Mantra

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

Moksha

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

Murti

Form. The image or deity used as a focus of worship.

Navaratri

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

Nirvana

The cessation of material existence.

Parvati

The consort of Shiva, also known by other names such as Durga, Devi, etc.

Prahlada

Devotee of Vishnu, connected with the festival of Holi.

Prashad

Sacred or sanctified food

Puja

Worship. General term referring to a variety of practices in the home or mandir.

Raja Yoga

Path of self-control and meditation to realise God.

Rakhi

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

Raksha Bandhan

The birthday festival of Rama

Rama

The incarnation of the Lord, and hero of the Ramayana.

Ramayana

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

Rangoli Patterns

Elaborate patterns made to celebrate Divali.

Rig Veda

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

Samsara

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

Samskar

Sacraments designed to initiate a new stage of life.

Seva

Service, either to the divine or to humanity.

Shiva

A Hindu god. The name means kindly or auspicious.

Shiva Natarajah

An image of Shiva involved in a cosmic dance of destruction.

Sita

The divine consort of Rama.

Trimurti

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

Varanasi

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

Varnas

The four main visions in Hindu Society.

Vishnu

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

Yoga

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

Islam

Adhan

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

Allah

The Islamic name for God in the Arabic language. Used in preference to the word God, this Arabic term is singular, has no plural, nor is it associated with masculine, feminine or neuter characteristics. (See Qur'an 2:255, 112:1-4) Pronounced Al-laah.

Allahu Akbar

Allah is the greatest.

Arafat

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

Bilal

The first Mu'adhin of Islam (see Adhan), a companion of Prophet Muhammad, formerly an Abyssinian slave.

Bismillah

In the name of Allah – phrase spoken prior to every action/deed.

Dawud

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

Din

'Life transaction' or 'religion' of Allah – transaction between every being and Allah. Pronounced deen.

Du'a

Varying forms of personal prayer and supplication.

Fard

Obligatory duty according to divine law, e.g. offering Salah five times a day.

Ghusl

Greater ablution. Formal washing of the whole body prior to worship (see wudu)

Hadith

Saying; report; account. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, as recounted by his household, progeny and companions. These are a major source of Islamic law.

Hajj

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

Halal

Any action or thing which is permitted or lawful.

Haram

Anything unlawful or forbidden.

Hijab

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

Hijrah

Departure; flight; migration. The migration of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE. The Islamic calendar commences from this event.

Id

Happy occasion shared by all the community

Ihram

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

Ibrahim

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

Id ul Adha

Celebration of the sacrifice, commemorating the Prophet Ibrahim's obedience to Allah and his willingness to sacrifice his son Isma'il.

Id ul Fitr

Celebration of the completion of the fast of Ramadan, which is also the first day of Shawal, the tenth Islamic month

Imam

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

Isa

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

Islam

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

Jibril

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

Jihad

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

Jinn

Being created by Allah from fire.

Ka'bah

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

Makkah (Mecca)

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

Masjid

Place of prostration. Mosque.

Mihrab

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

Mina

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

Minaret

Tower or turret, connected to a mosque from which the call to prayer is made.

Minbar

Rostrum; platform; dais. The stand from which the Imam delivers the khutbah or speech in the mosque or praying ground. Mu'adhin Caller to prayer (see Adhan), also written as 'muezzin'.

Muhammad

Praiseworthy. Name of the final Prophet.

MusaMoses

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

Muslim

One who accepts Islam by professing the Shahadah and willfully commits/ submits to the will of Allah. Pronounced mooslim.

Muzdalifah

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

Niyyah

Intention. A legally required statement of intent, made prior to all acts of devotion such as Salah, Hajj, Sawm or ablutions.

Pbuh

Peace be upon him, expression of respect made after mention of the Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets of Allah.

Qadar

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

Qiblah

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

Qur'an

That which is read or recited. The Divine Book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Allah's final revelation to humankind. Pronounced Qur'aan.

Rak'ah

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

Ramadan

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

Sadaqah

Voluntary payment or good action for charitable purposes.

Salah

Prescribed communication with, and worship of, Allah, performed under specific conditions, in the manner taught by the Prophet Muhammad and recited in the Arabic language.

The five daily times of Salah are fixed by Allah.

Sawm

An act of worship: fasting from just before dawn until sunset. Abstinence is required from all food and drink (including water) as well as smoking and conjugal relations during the fasting hours in Ramadan.

Shahadah

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

Shari'ah

Islamic law based upon the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Sunnah

All the traditions and practices of Allah, observed and recorded by his companions and followers.

Surah

Chapter of the Qur'an.

Taqwa

An awareness of Allah that permeates every aspect of life. Piety.

Tawhid

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

Wudu

Ablution before salah, a ritual washing of hands, face and feet.

Zakah

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

Zakat

Money given as Zakah.

Zakat-ul-Fitr

Welfare payment during Ramadan.

Judaism**Agadah**

Telling. Rabbinical teachings on moral values.

Aron Hakodesh

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

Bar Mitzvah

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

Bat Mitzvah

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

Bimah

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

Brit Milah

Circumcision.

Challah

Enriched bread used particularly on Shabbat and during festivals.

Circumcision

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

Covenant

Compact (between God and the Israelites).

Gregger

Rattle sounded at the mention of Hannah's during Purim services.

Hagadah

Telling. A book used at Seder.

Halakhah

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

Hanukah

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

Hanukiah

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

Havdalah

Distinction. Ceremony marking the conclusion of Shabbat.

Hebrew

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

Huppah

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

Kashrut

Laws relating to keeping a kosher home and lifestyle.

Ketubah

Document that defines rights and obligations within Jewish marriage.

Ketuvim

Writings. Third section of the Tenakh.

Kiddush

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

Kippah

Skull cap.

Kosher

Fit; proper. Foods permitted by Jewish dietary laws.

Magen David

Shield of David, popularly called Star of David.

Matzah

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

Menorah

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

Mezuzah

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

Mezuzot

Plural of mezuzah.

Mishnah

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

Mitzvah

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

Mitzvot

Plural of Mitzvah.

Noachide Laws

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

Pesach

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

Purim

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

Rabbi

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

Rosh Hashanah

Head of the Year. Jewish New Year.

Seder

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

Sefer Torah

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

Shabbat

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

Shavuot

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

Shema

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

Shiva

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

Shofar

Ram's horn blown at the season of Rosh Hashanah.

Siddur

Order. Daily prayer book.

Simchat Torah

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

Sukkah

Tabernacle; booth. A temporary dwelling used during Sukkot.

Sukkot

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

Synagogue

Building for Jewish public prayer, study and assembly.

Tallit

Prayer shawl. Four-cornered garment with fringes.

Talmud

Mishnah and Gemorra, collected together.

Tefillah

Self-judgement. Jewish prayer and meditation.

Tefillin

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

Tenakh

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

Teshuva

Repentance. Returning to God.

Torah

Law; teaching. The Five Books of Moses.

Tzedaka

Righteousness. An act of charity.

Yom Kippur

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

Sikhism

Akhand Path

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

Akal Purukh

Timeless being. A Sikh name for God.

Amrit

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

Amrit ceremony

The Sikh rite of initiation into the Khalsa.

Anand karaj

Ceremony of bliss. Wedding ceremony.

Ardas

Prayer. The formal prayer offered at most religious acts.

Bandi Chhor Diwas

The Sikh festival which falls on the same day as the Hindu Divali.

Bhai Lalo

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

Bhai Kanhaya (Ghanaya)

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

Chanani

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

Chauri

Symbol of authority of the Guru Granth Sahib. Fan waved over scriptures, made of yak hairs

Darbar

Court. Place where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept and where people sit as the holy congregation (sangat).

Gurbani

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

Gurdwara

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

Gurmukh

One who lives by the Guru's teaching.

Gurmukhi

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

Gurpurb

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

Guru

The giver of light or teacher. In Sikhism, the title of Guru is reserved for the ten human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib. Ultimately through the Guru's word, the Guru or Enlightener is God.

Guru Arjan

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

Guru Gobind Singh

Tenth Sikh Guru. It is important to note that the title 'Guru' must be used with all the Gurus' names. Sikhs usually use further terms of respect, e.g. Guru Gobind Singh Ji or Guru Nanak Dev Ji, or prefix the name with the title Sri. Guru Granth Sahib

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

Guru Nanak

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

Haumai

Egoism. The major spiritual defect.

Hukam

God's will.

Ik Onkar

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

Japji Sahib

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

Jivan Mukh

Liberation from self-centeredness.

Kachera

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

Kakka

A letter of the Punjabi alphabet. See panj kakke.

Kangha

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

Kara

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

Karah parshad

Sanctified food distributed at Sikh ceremonies

Kaur

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

Kesh

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

Khalsa

The pure. The Sikh community who have taken amrit. Also the Sikh community. or nylon. It should not be called a 'fly whisk'.

Khanda

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

Kirat karna

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

Kirpan

Benevolent protector of honour. Sikh sword; one of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Kirtan

Devotional singing of the hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib.

Kurahit

Breach of discipline. Examples are adultery, smoking and use of intoxicants etc.

Langar

Guru's kitchen. The gurdwara dining hall where food is served without distinction. Symbolises human equality and sharing.

Manji Sahib

Small wooden platform on which the Guru Granth Sahib is placed.

Manmukh

Self-orientated (as opposed to gurmukh).

Mela

Fair. Used of Sikh cultural festivals that are not gurpurbs.

Mool Mantar

Basic mystical formula. The basic precept or statement of belief at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib.

Nam simran

Meditation of the divine Name (God Being) by repeating Sikh words for God "Waheguru" or "Satnaam".

Nishan Sahib

Sikh flag flown at gurdwaras.

Panj kakke

The five Ks. The five articles of faith worn by Sikhs. "Symbols", although used sometimes, should be avoided.

Panj piare

The five beloved ones. The first five Sikhs initiated into the Khalsa in 1699. Those who perform the Amrit ceremony today and lead Sikh religious processions (nagar kirtans), especially at major Gurpurbs.

Punjab

Land of five rivers. Also spelt Panjab. The area of the Indian sub-continent now divided between India and Pakistan.

Panth

Path. Panth or Khalsa Panth is the Sikh nation.

Ragi

Sikh musician who sings compositions from the Guru Granth Sahib.

Rahit

Sikh internal and external disciplines representing the Sikh way of life, e.g. keeping the five Ks and reciting daily prayers.

Sangat

Holy Congregation.

Sewa

Service without expectation of reward directed at the sangat and gurdwara, but also humanity in general.

Shabad Word

Hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib; the divine word.

Sikh

Disciple, seeker after Truth. A person who believes in the ten Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib, and who has no other religion. For the Sikhs the word also means seeker after the Truth.

Vak

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

Vaisakhi

A major Sikh festival celebrating the anniversary of the formal confirmation of Sikh Khalsa Panth as an independent religion and nationality in 1699 CE.

Waheguru

Wonderful Lord. A Sikh name for God.

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