

# WE ARE DIVERSE.



## EXPLORING BELIEFS, CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

### Newham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

#### Summary

Religious Education (RE) is part of the curriculum that all schools must provide for pupils aged four - 18. In contrast to other subjects in the curriculum, where there are national programmes of study, the programme for RE in each local authority (LA) is locally agreed. The document in which each LA sets out the RE programme for its schools is called a 'local agreed syllabus for religious education'.

In Newham, the local agreed syllabus must be followed by all community and foundation schools. Faith-based school

have their own separate RE programmes, but are welcome to use Newham's syllabus as well.

The title of the Newham local agreed syllabus is 'Exploring Beliefs, Celebrating Diversity'. It is called this because RE gives children and young people the opportunity to:

1. learn about religion and worldviews
2. express and communicate ideas about religion and worldviews
3. gain and deploy skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews.

RE also provides an opportunity for children and young people to understand each other's beliefs, practices and ways of life.

RE makes a valuable contribution to the personal development of children and young people, particularly their spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development.

RE makes a contribution to the development of all children and young people, regardless of whether they come from a religious family background or not. In the rare case that parents or carers do not want their child to take part in our Newham RE, they have the right to withdraw their child.

Alongside all other aspects of school life, RE should make a contribution for pupils to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

In order to provide challenge and to identify the progress that children and young people make in RE, the agreed syllabus suggests that, when appropriate, 'steps to progress' are used to chart progress in each of three areas of the subject:

1. Learning about religion and worldviews
2. Expressing and communicating ideas about religion and worldviews
3. Gaining and deploying skills needed for the study of religion and worldviews.

### RE in secondary schools:

At Key Stage 3 (ages 11 - 14), the agreed syllabus requires schools design schemes of work that:

- begin with a 'introductory unit' which is related to the local religious traditions and marks a transition in RE between the primary and secondary phases.
- Involve students in a thorough investigation of the Christian tradition.
- Involve students in an investigation of at least four other religious traditions, whether a major tradition (e.g. Hindu Dharmic religion, Muslim or Sikhi), a group within major tradition (e.g. Roman Catholic, Sai Baba movement, Muslim Sufi tradition) or a minority tradition (e.g. Jain, Baha'i or Rastafarian).
- Involve students in an investigation of secular/non-religious worldview (e.g. atheist, humanist).
- Engage students in an exploration of philosophical, theological and ethical issues through exploration of six key themes (ideas about humanity, ideas about God, ideas about sacred time and space, ideas about journeying, ideas about religion in the modern world, ideas about making moral decisions).
- Include assessment tasks which enable students by the end of the key stage to respond creatively to the

question 'What might it mean for a person to belong to this/these religious/worldview traditions today?'

- Provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their own religious/worldview alongside human experience.

At Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16), the agreed syllabus requires that schools provide a course of study in RE for all pupils in each year group. Schools might achieve this by enabling students to follow a publicly accredited course in Religious Education/Studies, such as a short or full GCSE course. Alternatively, a school might wish to design their own courses of study, which must meet the following criteria:

- The course must be studied in clearly discernible units in the curriculum of both Years 10 and 11.
- The course must be planned in units which follow the approach to RE/Religion and Worldviews set out in this document
- At least six units must be studied at Key Stage 4. Each unit should take about six hours of curriculum time.
- A unit might consist of either a series of taught activities or an event (such as a conference or visit) which takes an equivalent amount of time.
- Units must include exploration of material drawn from Christianity and some or all of the other principal religious traditions and worldviews.
- Units must encourage students to respond by way of analysis, reflection and synthesis, evaluation, and by drawing on their own experiences.

For students in their post-16 stage of secondary education (ages 16 - 19), the agreed syllabus requires that schools fulfil the aims outlined earlier in the syllabus to encourage pupils to continue developing a sense of self, their community and the world beyond leading on from Key Stage studies.

If you have any questions about RE at your child's school, then please do get in contact with the schools RE leader.



**SACRE**



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