

Setting the Scene

Religious Education (RE) is a statutory requirement for all schools but it is not part of the National Curriculum. The Syllabus used is the responsibility of the local authority which is why this leaflet has been produced locally.

The Kingston Agreed Syllabus for RE was reviewed in 2005/06 and the revised version launched in January 2007 for implementation in schools from September 2007 to July 2012. This can be found on the Royal Borough of Kingston website at <http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Education/Sacre/syllabus>.

Because Religious Education is a local responsibility, Kingston, like all local authorities has set up a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) to give advice on RE within Community and Foundation Schools in the Borough.

Religious Education should be accessible to those of all faiths and none.

Kingston SACRE is made up of representatives of the Christian and other faith communities within the Borough, teachers and members of Kingston upon Thames Council.

The SACRE meets 3 times a year in different parts of the Borough. Its meetings are open to the public, as is the annual SACRE lecture on a theme related to Religious Education.

Full details of the SACRE meetings are on the Kingston website which also houses the SACRE website with full details of its work. The web address is <http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Education/SACRE>. There is a separate leaflet which gives more details of the role and membership of the SACRE.

Aims of Religious Education

Religious Education should help pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain;
- develop an understanding of the influences of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- develop the ability to form reasoned opinions leading to informed judgements about religious and moral issues, with reference to the teachings of the principal religions represented in Great Britain;
- enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:
 - developing awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experiences, and how religious teachings can relate to them;
 - responding to such questions with references to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their understanding and experience; and
 - reflecting on their own beliefs, values & experiences in the light of their study;
- develop a positive attitude towards other people, respecting their right to hold different beliefs from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions.

Outline of Kingston's RE Agreed Syllabus

Foundation Stage

Links are made between the Early Learning Goals and Religious Education. The concepts that apply to human experience and those that apply to the world of religion can be experienced through the following themes: celebration, specialness, belonging and community. Suggested activities, experiences and opportunities from the National Framework for RE are provided.

Key Stage 1 Pupils should study:

- ❖ Christianity: special times, places, people, books and stories
- ❖ Introductory units on Islam and Judaism
- ❖ Two supplementary units:
 - A Candles and Cards for Special Times
 - B Homes, Families and Belonging

Key Stage 2 Pupils should study:

- ❖ Christianity : special times, places, people, books and stories
- ❖ Development units on Islam and Judaism
- ❖ Introductory unit on Hinduism
- ❖ Four supplementary units:
 - A: The Natural World; B: Evidence of Religion in the Local Community;
 - C: Rules and D: Telling our Stories
- ❖ 'Themed Days' (flexibility for cross-curricular innovation)
- ❖ Bridging Units (Rules / Responsibilities)

Key Stage 3 Pupils should study:

- ❖ Christianity in years 7, 8 and 9. The three programmes of study are:
 - Belief in God and the Life of Jesus; The Nature of the Church; and Jesus' teaching related to the contemporary world; and
- ❖ Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, taught systematically in an order chosen by the school; and
- ❖ Options, including further in-depth study of the six religions, thematic options (half term units) incorporating learning from religions already studied and from other world religions and world views on: Ethics / What is the importance of rules and guidelines for living today? How and why do religions and beliefs help us mark our passage through life? Using narrative to convey value and meaning; What answers are there to the big questions of life? Religion and science; Religion and the media.

Key Stage 4

All schools should seek to offer their pupils a GCSE full course or short course in Religious Studies examination programme. Such courses must be approved by the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority (QCA) and will be regarded as meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at Key Stage 4. Examination courses should include a study of Christianity and at least one other religion.

Post 16

It is a legal requirement that provision should be made for all 16-19 year olds in maintained schools to study Religious Education.

Religious Education in the School

All schools will have a designated Head of Department or Subject Leader.
All schools will have a scheme of work that is based on the statutory requirements of the Kingston Agreed Syllabus that is available on the Kingston website:
<http://www.kingston.gov.uk/Education/SACRE>.
Parents have the right to see the school's curriculum documentation.

Religious Education and the Law

The legal requirements governing Religious Education were set out in the Education Reform Act 1988 and confirmed by the 1996 and 1998 Education Acts.

- ❖ Religious Education must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools, including those in reception classes and sixth forms
- ❖ Religious Education in community and foundation schools must be provided in accordance with the local agreed syllabus
- ❖ Religious Education in voluntary aided schools must be provided in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school and the wishes of the Governing Body
- ❖ Special Schools are not required to teach Religious Education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus but are required to ensure that, 'so far as is practicable, every pupil should receive religious education'
- ❖ An agreed syllabus should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (Education Reform Act, 1988 Section 8 (3))
- ❖ An agreed syllabus 'must not be designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils'
- ❖ A local authority must review its agreed syllabus every five years
- ❖ Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and this right should be identified in the school prospectus
- ❖ Religious Education, as part of the curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

For further information or to request this leaflet in another language or format contact:

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Religious Education

in

Kingston Schools

