# Guidance for understanding the

**2022** [**Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education**](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/22257/birmingham_agreed_syllabus_for_religious_education)**:**

**Primary Schools**

**The key requirements of the 2022 Birmingham RE syllabus**

1)There are four ‘Dimensions of Learning’: *Learning from Experience, Learning about Religious Traditions and Non-Religious Worldviews, Learning from faith and non-religious worldviews and Learning to Discern* throughout all four key stages.

2) There has been agreement between the traditions in the city (religious and non-religious) that the 24 dispositions, are qualities or marks of spiritual character they would wish to see developed in pupils.

The dispositions are based on a spiral curriculum approach, which are encountered by pupils in each phase of their education. Teaching should be focussed on each disposition:

once in KS1;

once every two years in KS2;

once in KS3; and

once in KS4.

Non-statutory key questions have been written for each dimension of learning, for each disposition, in each phase, to ensure progression. These can also be used for assessment.

3) Pupils are to be taught about the historic faith of nation and city; their own religion; and wider pool of faith traditions and non-religious worldviews across the city.  Particular attention should be given to the traditions from which the pupils come. *Content Overviews* demonstrate and identify religious and non-religious world-view content which can be used during planning in order to illustrate each disposition at each key stage. There is a *Content Overview* for each of the 24 dispositions.

4) Including lesson content about certain aspects of Christian belief is considered essential, for example:

* Easter and Christmas every year in both KS1 & KS2;
* Holy Communion and the Lord's Prayer at least once in KS2.

**The exemplar lesson planning**

i) The exemplar lesson planning meets all of the requirements of the 2022 Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education as outlined. In order to meet requirement 3) there are 3 routes through the exemplar material. These differ slightly in content and in the order in which material is presented. All routes comply with the legal requirement to ensure that RE is, in the main, Christian and also gives equal respect to the teaching of non-religious worldviews.

ii) The exemplar lesson planning was written and developed by members of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) curriculum group. It meets the requirement regarding which religious traditions are to be taught, by starting simply and developing the number of traditions taught as pupils grow.  The starting point of each unit or module of work is universal principles and shared human experience; *learning from experience*.

iii) It is important that pupils are not confused by all the different religious traditions and non-religious worldviews and grow with a clear understanding of their distinctiveness as well as their similarities.  Therefore, when allocating syllabus time to material from different traditions, emphasis in KS1 & KS2 is placed on the historic faith of nation and city and the pupils’ own faith. As pupils progress from Y1 to Y6, lesson material is gradually drawn from an increasing number of traditions to ensure cognitive overload does not take place, and confusion does not occur.

iv) Providing pupils with an understanding of the basic beliefs and practices of their own will act as a safeguarding measure, making it more difficult for pupils to be misled by a radical version of their religion or non-religious worldview. It will create a good platform for looking wider at the beliefs and practices of other traditions and non-religious worldviews in the city.

v) A school may choose to deviate from the exemplar lesson planning. However, care should be taken to ensure that a balanced approach to teaching about faith traditions and non-religious worldviews (as outlined in point ii) is both delivered and documented. The non-statutory *Content Overviews* give an overview of the content which could be used by schools to generate their own planning.

vi) The exemplar lesson planning has been constructed as a spiral curriculum to ensure progression, with learning for older pupils building upon, rather than simply repeating, what has gone before.

vii) Units or modules of work are designed to ~~facilitate~~ engineer cognitive, affective and conative (a will to act) pupil development. Starting from pupils’ personal experiences, progress will be achieved through increased spiritual awareness and understanding, over usually 3 lessons. Thus, regardless of which tradition any particular lesson's material is drawn from, there is a valid outcome for pupils of all faiths and none, as it will have caused them to think about and engage with a disposition, for example being open, honest and truthful.

**Additional Information:**

In Birmingham there are significant numbers of people from nine faith groups:

Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, the Sikh faith, Jainism, Judaism, and Rastafarianism. In addition, the 2022 syllabus gives equal respect to the teaching of non-religious worldviews. The main example used in the planning materials is Humanism; allowing for concrete examples to be taught.

**The 24 dispositions are:**

Being imaginative and exploratory

Appreciating beauty

Expressing joy

Being thankful

Caring for others, animals and the environment

Sharing and being generous

Responding to suffering

Being merciful and forgiving

Being fair and just

Living by rules

Being accountable and living with integrity

Being temperate, self-disciplined and seeking contentment

Being modest and listening to others

Creating inclusion, identity and belonging

Creating unity and harmony

Participating and willing to lead

Remembering roots

Being loyal and steadfast

Being hopeful and visionary

Being courageous and confident

Being curious and valuing knowledge

Being open, honest and truthful

Being reflective and self-critical

Being attentive to the sacred, as well as the precious

For context and further reading, the recent Census results may be of use:

[Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion - Census 2021](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcensus.gov.uk%2Fcensus-2021-results%2Fphase-one-topic-summaries%2Fethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion&data=05%7C01%7Csimone.whitehouse-james%40servicesforeducation.co.uk%7Cb475eea3b77941226fdc08dac8ad085d%7C567284808393450bbf51c54ca633cae6%7C0%7C0%7C638042943088848029%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jGizOVnOye1KjjdbgPlWqD9WnxGN2dsWxqCqrVmUHx4%3D&reserved=0)