

# United Curriculum

## Primary Religion & Worldviews

Information for school websites



United Curriculum  
Primary  
Part of United Learning

# Principles of the Religion & Worldviews Curriculum



The United Curriculum for Religion & Worldviews provides all children, regardless of their background, with:

- **Coherent** and **sequenced substantive knowledge** of religion and worldviews represented in Britain and the wider world, selected to build pupils' understanding through three vertical concepts. These vertical concepts build a thematic narrative and provide context across diverse worldviews, as well as using small steps to help pupils gain a deep understanding of complex, abstract ideas:
  - **Sacrifice**  
Giving something up for the benefit of someone else is a recurring concept across religious & non-religious worldviews and takes many different forms. What motivates human action and what are the societal and personal consequences?
  - **Knowledge & Meaning**  
One of the unique qualities of human intelligence through time has been our quest for knowledge and meaning. How have religion and belief impacted on humanity's search for "Truth"? How do beliefs impact human behaviour? What is it reasonable to believe?
  - **Human Context**  
Human beings exist in, and are influenced by, their place in time and their geographical, political and social context (Person, Time & Place). Everyone is different, so how have our diversities been influenced by our personal context? What influences a personal worldview?
- A Worldviews approach provides opportunities for all pupils to **see themselves reflected** in the curriculum, but also to be taken **beyond their own experiences**. The Religion & Worldviews curriculum teaches pupils about diversity within and between beliefs, cultures and worldviews from across the world, and seeks to teach the skills and knowledge to hold respectful and informed conversations about religion and belief; to be **religiously literate**.
- A conscious inclusion of **vocabulary** and substantive content that recognises the need to **decolonise** teaching materials in a meaningful and accessible way.
- A scholarly approach to the core **disciplinary knowledge of theology, philosophy and social sciences**, developing pupils' ability to hold the **types of conversation** and to apply the **methods and processes of theologians, philosophers and social scientists**.
- A **curiosity and openminded** approach to the worldviews of others and a **reflective consciousness** of their own worldview.





## Why Religion & Worldviews?

Since the publication of the RE Council's [Commission on Religious Education \(CoRE\) Report in 2018](#), there has been a shift in the focus of Religious Education syllabuses and curriculums toward what is called a "religion and worldviews approach". This 1.15m [video](#) explains their thinking.

The approach suggests that everyone has (or 'inhabits' might be better) a worldview. Our worldview is our way of looking at, experiencing, interpreting and interacting with the world around us. It is personal to each of us and changes as we travel through life. Our worldview is influenced by our life experiences and external influences such as media and our parents and teachers. Our worldview will affect the way we respond to people and situations around us. This 2.34m [video](#) explains the concept of a worldview.

As well as **individual worldviews**, there can be institutional or **organised Worldviews** (capital W), these may be the collective values of a religious group, such as the Catholic Church or Sunni Islam. A person who chooses to belong or identify themselves with an organised religious Worldview will be influenced by that, however they may not adhere to everything that religious Worldview represents; they are still an individual within an organisation. In short, it's complicated!

The religion and worldviews approach to Religious Education has a number of benefits:

- It starts with people, seeking to put the significance of lived experience at the heart of pupils' learning.
- Everyone can recognise themselves in the curriculum, as we all inhabit a worldview whether we identify as religious or not.
- It opens-up our understanding of the lived diversity within religious and non-religious worldviews, rather than seeing a group as homogenous whole.
- Pupils approach substantive knowledge through the development of scholarly, disciplinary skills.
- If we learn to understand what influences a religious worldview, we can apply that understanding in our interpretation of religious text or belief in action; we can seek to see through a believer's eyes.
- As pupils develop an awareness of what influences their **personal worldview**, they can begin to accept challenges to their preconceptions and understand both themselves and others better. This is important in developing **personal knowledge** in the curriculum.



# United Curriculum: Religion & Worldviews



## Disciplinary Knowledge: Ways of Knowing

Religion & Worldviews is a multidisciplinary subject touching on many academic disciplines. In the United Curriculum for Religion & Worldviews, we focus on developing our disciplinary skills through the **types of conversation** and **methods and processes** required to be scholarly in the studies of **Theology**, **Philosophy** and **Social Sciences**. The statements below are developed at **progressive depth throughout the year groups**. The curriculum has been sequenced so that the disciplinary content is also reviewed in subsequent units and developed as scholarly tools to access a wide range of substantive content.

Theology (Beliefs) Theologians		Philosophy (Thinking) Philosophers		Social Sciences (Living) Social Scientists	
<p><b>Theologians</b> deal with <b>types of conversation</b> that consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where beliefs come from</li><li>• How beliefs change over time</li><li>• How beliefs relate to each other</li><li>• How beliefs shape the way believers see the world and each other</li></ul> <p><b>Methods and processes</b> used by theologians:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interpretation of story &amp; text</li><li>• Consideration of reliability of sources</li><li>• Considering unity &amp; diversity within and between worldviews</li><li>• Considering how beliefs change over time</li><li>• Considering impact of belief on practice</li></ul>		<p><b>Philosophers</b> deal with <b>types of conversation</b> that consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The nature of knowledge, meaning and existence</li><li>• How and whether things make sense</li><li>• Issues of right &amp; wrong, good &amp; bad</li></ul> <p><b>Methods and processes</b> used by philosophers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of the validity of "truth" claims (doubt)</li><li>• Development and use of coherent questioning</li><li>• Development of and analysis of coherent argument</li><li>• Understanding of the human quest for knowledge and meaning</li><li>• Connecting belief (motivation) with behaviour</li></ul>		<p><b>Social Scientists</b> deal with <b>types of conversation</b> that consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The diverse nature of religion</li><li>• The diverse ways in which people practice and express beliefs</li><li>• The ways in which beliefs shape individual identity, and impact on communities and society</li></ul> <p><b>Methods and processes</b> used by social scientists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seek evidence of belief in human behaviour and forms of expression</li><li>• Recognise similarities and differences within and between groups</li><li>• Consider forms of evidence and its reliability (e.g. data)</li><li>• Consider individual, local, national and global evidence of lived experience</li></ul>	



# United Curriculum: Religion & Worldviews



## Personal Knowledge: Pupil positionality

The [Ofsted Research review series: Religious Education](#) 2021, suggests personal knowledge should be developed alongside substantive and disciplinary knowledge in the curriculum. The review defines it as: **'personal knowledge': pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study.**

Through the United curriculum, as pupils develop an awareness of what influences their **personal worldview** (their positionality), they can begin to accept challenges to their preconceptions and understand both themselves and others better. This is important in developing **personal knowledge** in the curriculum.

Development of personal knowledge is difficult to define. All pupils are on a personal, lifelong journey and they will develop at different rates; new substantive or disciplinary knowledge may change (or not) their personal responses to the world in vastly different and sometimes unpredictable ways. For this reason, it is not recommended that teachers attempt to assess this progress. The curriculum includes progressive opportunities to explore personal knowledge in response to the substantive and disciplinary content.

Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own positionality will take many forms within the cumulative curriculum, some of these are implicit and others explicit. They may also appear at different places in different units. It is important that the teacher is aware of these opportunities and, where appropriate, give pupils the opportunity to apply their knowledge of religion and belief in their personal reflections. Some substantive content naturally lends itself more obviously to these opportunities than others.

Further suggestions can be found in the [RE Council's Religion and Worldviews Approach Handbook](#) (Pages 54-57).

In the United curriculum, personal knowledge is explored through different **values** (such as belonging, stewardship, justice and empathy) in relation to the substantive and disciplinary elements of the curriculum. It would be misleading to express these values in terms of a progression map because, as stated before, they represent an unpredictable, deeply subjective, and personal journey. Subject leaders should be aware of the importance of these opportunities as an integral part of the curriculum.

### Teachers should consider:

What influences **my** pupils?

What shapes their worldview?

Are pupils consciously aware of their worldview(s)?

Do pupils have certain preconceptions about religious and non-religious worldviews?





## Vertical Concepts

Vertical concepts build a thematic narrative and provide context across diverse worldviews, as well as using small steps to help pupils gain a deep understanding of complex, abstract ideas:



### Sacrifice

- **Giving something up for the benefit of someone else** is a recurring concept across religious & non-religious worldviews.
- Sacrifices can be for the benefit of people close to us or people we have never met.
- Sacrifices can be everyday commitments of time, money, material objects or service to others.
- Some worldviews see sacrifices as a way of pleasing God and may involve the motivation of future reward.
- Some people see sacrifices for the sake of others as altruistic acts, with no personal reward.
- Sacrifices can be on a higher level and involve risking or giving up a life for the sake of others.
- In Christianity, the Ultimate Sacrifice of Jesus – giving up his life for the people he loved – is a principal belief.



### Knowledge & Meaning

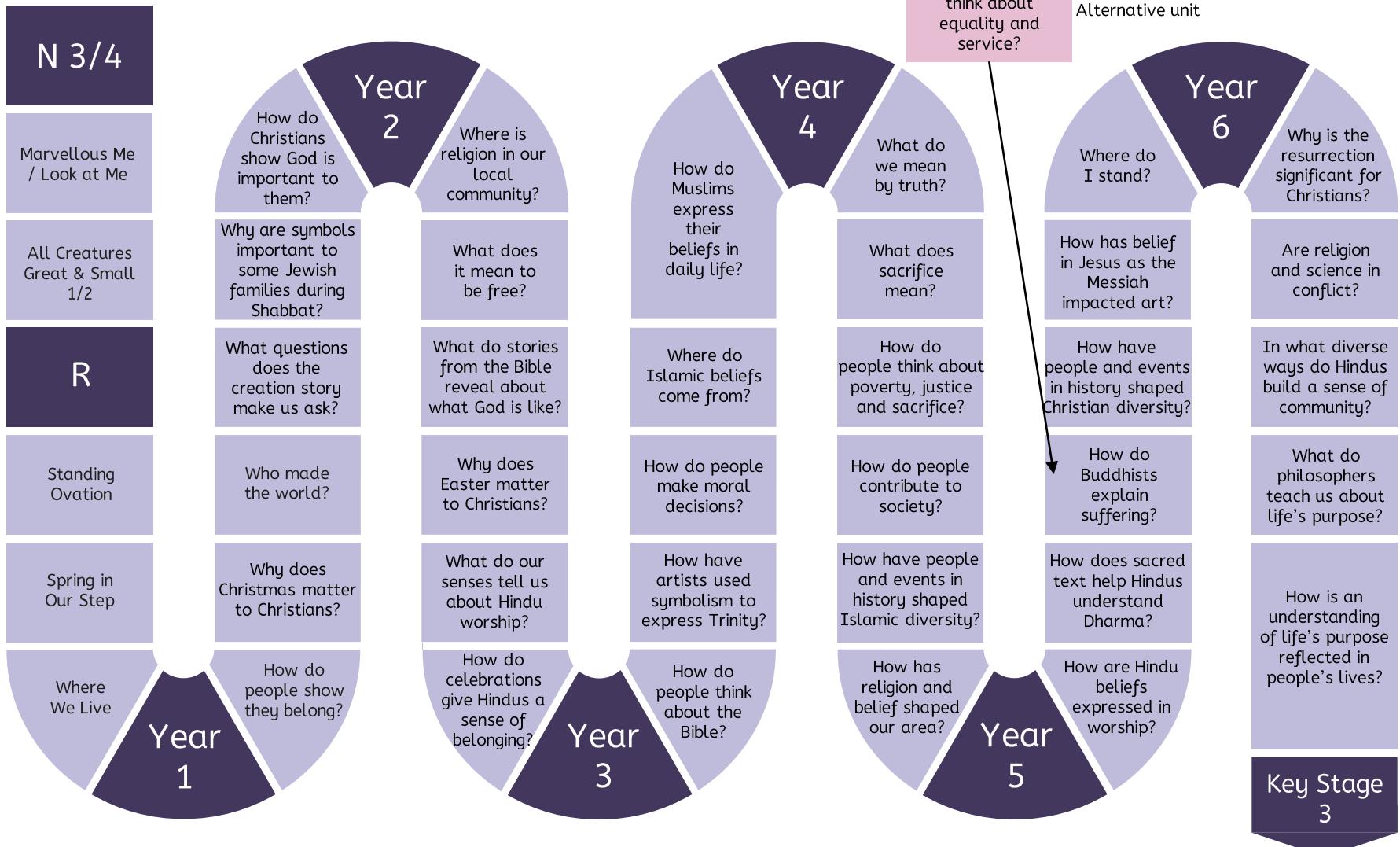
- Beliefs impact how people make sense of the world: humanity's ideas of right & wrong; truth, meaning & purpose.
- Beliefs impact human behaviour in diverse ways including how people and organisations exercise power.
- Some people seek to question how reasonable it is to believe certain aspects of religious and non-religious teachings.



### Human Context

- Human beings exist in, and are influenced by, their place in time and their geographical, political and social context (Person, Time & Place).
- Everyone is different; our diversities are influenced by our personal context which influences our personal worldview.

# United Curriculum: Religion & Worldviews



# United Curriculum: Religion & Worldviews



	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b> <p><b>Christianity &amp; Judaism</b></p> <p><b>How do people show they belong?</b></p> <p>Showing belonging through religious artefacts, places and actions.</p>	<b>THEOLOGY</b> <p><b>Christianity</b></p> <p><b>Why does Christmas matter to Christians?</b></p> <p>Christian beliefs about the Nativity story and incarnation.</p>	<b>THEOLOGY</b> <p><b>Christianity &amp; Judaism</b></p> <p><b>Who made the world?</b></p> <p>Religious text as origin of story of Creation. The Creator God and humans as stewards.</p>	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b> <p><b>Humanism</b></p> <p><b>What questions does the story of creation make us ask? Can we find any answers?</b></p> <p>Asking questions &amp; suggesting answers. Humanist / scientific explanation of creation.</p>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b> <p><b>Judaism</b></p> <p><b>Why are symbols and artefacts important to some Jewish families during Shabbat?</b></p> <p>Some diverse ways that different Jewish families mark Shabbat.</p>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b> <p><b>Christianity</b></p> <p><b>How do Christians show God is important to them?</b></p> <p>Prayer, praise and worship</p>
Year 2	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b> <p><b>Where is religion in our local community?</b></p> <p>Looking for evidence of lived religion in our local community.</p> <p><b>[Local Choice]</b></p>	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b> <p><b>Judaism</b></p> <p><b>What does it mean to be free?</b></p> <p>The significance of freedom in diverse Jewish practices at Passover (seder).</p>	<b>THEOLOGY</b> <p><b>Christianity</b></p> <p><b>What do stories from the Bible reveal about what God is like?</b></p> <p>Interpreting meaning in stories about Jesus and stories told by him (parables).</p>	<b>THEOLOGY</b> <p><b>Christianity</b></p> <p><b>Why does Easter matter to Christians?</b></p> <p>Beliefs about Jesus' life, death &amp; resurrection, and salvation.</p>	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b> <p><b>Hindu Dharma</b></p> <p><b>What do our senses tell us about Hindu worship?</b></p> <p>Senses in Hindu worship at home and in the Mandir.</p>	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b> <p><b>Hindu Dharma</b></p> <p><b>How do celebrations give Hindus a sense of belonging?</b></p> <p>Celebrations of Jatakarma, Raksha Bandhan &amp; Diwali</p>



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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 3	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Christianity</b> <b>How do people think about the Bible?</b> Origins, content, significance, construction and interpretation of the Bible.	<b>THEOLOGY &amp; SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Christianity</b> <b>What is the Trinity?</b> <b>How have artists used symbolism to express Trinity?</b> One God as Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Significance of metaphor and symbolism.	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b>  <b>Christianity &amp; Humanism</b> <b>How do people make moral decisions?</b> Rules and human choice.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Islam</b> <b>Where do Islamic beliefs come from?</b> History of Prophet Muhammad, revelation of the Qur'an, significance of Makkah.	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Islam</b> <b>How do Muslims express their beliefs in their daily lives? (1)</b> Expression of beliefs about Allah, Tawhid, and lived diversity of the hijab.	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Islam</b> <b>How do Muslims express their beliefs in their daily lives? (2)</b> Expression of beliefs through 5 Pillars of Sunni Islam. Lived diversity
Year 4	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b>  <b>What do we mean by truth?</b> Plato's cave, evidence and scientific reasoning.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Christianity/Judaism/Islam</b> <b>What does sacrifice mean?</b> Abraham/Ibrahim in sacred text, Eid-ul-Adha, animal sacrifice, Jesus as Ultimate Sacrifice.	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b>  <b>Christianity / Islam / Humanism</b> <b>How do people think about poverty, justice &amp; self-sacrifice?</b> Meaning of poverty & relative poverty, justice and everyday self-sacrifice.	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Islam / Christianity</b> <b>How do people contribute to society?</b> Self-sacrifice in form of charity or community action.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Islam</b> <b>How have people and events in history shaped Islamic diversity?</b> Succession after Muhammad, conflict, Qur'anic interpretation. Sunni, Shia, Sufi.	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>How has religion and belief shaped our local area?</b> International, national & local data. Lived expression in area.

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	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 5	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Hindu Dharma</b> How are Hindu beliefs expressed in artefacts and worship? One supreme being, Brahman Trimurti, avatars. Diverse worship as form of expression.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Hindu Dharma</b> How does sacred text help Hindus understand Dharma? Diverse interpretations of the Ramayana.	<b>THEOLOGY &amp; PHILOSOPHY</b>  <b>Buddhism</b> How do Buddhists explain suffering in the world? Spiritual journey of Siddhartha Gautama, enlightenment, 4 Noble Truths, 8-fold path.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Christianity</b> How have people and events in history shaped Christian diversity? Great commission, Roman Empire, Nicene Creed, Great Schism, Martin Luther, Henry VIII, present. [History]	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Christianity</b> How has belief in Jesus as the Messiah impacted art & music? Prophecy (Isaiah), fulfillment, New Testament, Ultimate Sacrifice. Global art and Handel's Messiah.	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b> Where do I stand? An exploration of pupils' personal worldviews, through artistic expression. (NATRE Spirited Arts link)
Year 6	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Christianity</b> Why is the resurrection significant for Christians? Different gospel narratives, truth claims, salvation.	<b>THEOLOGY</b>  <b>Christianity</b> Are religion & science in conflict? Creation, interpretation, diversity of opinion. [Science]	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>  <b>Hindu Dharma</b> In what diverse ways do Hindus build a sense of community? Festivals & Pilgrimage	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b> What do philosophers teach us about life's purpose? Self & Soul	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>      Christianity / Hindu Dharma / Islam / Humanism / Judaism (Buddhism & Sikhism) How is an understanding of life's purpose reflected in people's lives? Diverse expression of purpose in lived worldviews. [Local Choice]	



# Parental Right to Withdraw



Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of religious education.

For any requests to withdraw your child from religious education, please contact the school to arrange a meeting with the Principal / Head Teacher in the first instance.

