

# Religious Education

Key Stage 3 Non Statutory Guidance  
for Religious Education

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# Section 01

## Purpose of this Guidance

The statutory requirements for Religious Education are set out in the **Core Syllabus for Religious Education**. The core syllabus can be found at [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk).

This guidance for Religious Education is part of the support and implementation package for the Northern Ireland Curriculum already with your school that includes:

- The Statutory Curriculum at Key Stage 3: Supplementary Guidance; and
- The Curriculum Support and Implementation Box.

Both these resources and additional learning and teaching materials are also available at [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk).

Religious Education is part of the minimum requirement for every pupil at Key Stage 3. This guidance seeks to build on good practice and to provide heads of department with information and practical approaches to help them plan and roll-out the requirements for Religious Education within the context of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

There are departmental questions and activities after each section which can help you and the members of your department to reflect on and evaluate your current practice and identify actions for departmental planning.

The questions and activities follow *The 4A's Model for Planning* as documented in the booklet, *Planning for the Revised Curriculum at Key Stage 3*, in your school's Curriculum Support and Implementation Box. Working through this guidance and its accompanying activities means that your department will be well on course for rolling out the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

## 1.1 The Core Syllabus for Religious Education

The core syllabus for Religious Education has been developed by the four main Christian Churches and outlines statutory Religious Education content at all key stages. Teachers are encouraged to supplement the core syllabus with further provision which complements the ethos of the school and the society in which we live. The learning objectives of the core syllabus are:

- The Revelation of God;
- The Christian Church;
- Morality;
- World Religions other than Christianity (at Key Stage 3 only).

'Changes in the Core Syllabus for Religious Education' (Appendix 3) highlights the content changes in the core syllabus at Key Stage 3. Some of the language has changed making it difficult to completely align both syllabi. However this is a general approach to the changes that have been made under the objective headings of the syllabus.

The main development is the inclusion of learning objective 4, **World Religions other than Christianity**. Teachers should provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of two world faiths other than Christianity. The emphasis is on the beliefs, practices and lifestyles of the followers of these religious faiths within Northern Ireland giving a local and global dimension to the content base. In learning about various faiths pupils develop a number of skills and are able to value the beliefs and lifestyles of others in a positive way.

Departments can choose which religious faiths they wish to include in the key stage and how they will integrate them within their schemes of work. They may choose to focus on a religious faith within one specific unit or to integrate the teaching of religious traditions within broader unit contexts.

The following are six world religions other than Christianity that teachers may consider including in their schemes of work at Key Stage 3:

- Bahá'í;
- Buddhism;
- Hinduism;
- Islam;
- Judaism;
- Sikhism.

This is not an exhaustive list and teachers can include any world faith other than Christianity that may be represented within their school or local community.

## 1.2 The challenges of the Northern Ireland Curriculum for Religious Education

Along with the development of the core syllabus, teachers should take into account the development of the Northern Ireland Curriculum by CCEA.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum places an emphasis on the development of cross-curricular skills, thinking skills, personal capabilities and 'Assessment for Learning' to enhance motivation and ensure connected learning across the curriculum. This is an important development in education as it moves the emphasis from the teacher as an instructor to the teacher as a facilitator.

The aim and objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum are embedded in each subject strand through the statutory requirements. These are single page documents that outline the knowledge, understanding and skills that should be provided in each subject through the curriculum objectives and the learning outcomes.

In this guidance **Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum** (see inside back cover) is used to help align aspects of the core syllabus with the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The purpose of the page is to show how Religious Education can be developed through the Northern Ireland Curriculum objectives/key elements and how skills and capabilities are an integral part of learning in Religious Education.

The page highlights the statutory aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum that Religious Education should take account of. These are:

- **Learning for Life and Work;**
- **Cross-Curricular Skills (Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT);**
- **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.**



# Section 02

## Religious Education in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower pupils to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives. It is about helping all pupils prepare for life and work:

- as individuals;
- as contributors to society;
- as contributors to the economy and the environment.

Religious Education has a significant role to play in this. It provides pupils with the opportunities to learn about, discuss, evaluate and learn from religious beliefs, practices and values by supplying opportunities to engage with challenging questions about:

- the meaning and purpose of life;
- our place in society and the world around us.

This presents pupils with chances to develop their personal understanding, moral character and enhance their spiritual and ethical awareness.

### Meeting Curriculum Objectives

Religious Education **develops pupils as individuals** by:

- providing pupils with varying opportunities to develop a positive sense of themselves, their own beliefs, values and ideas;
- promoting the development of a sense of identity as individuals;
- challenging pupils to consider and analyse religious and moral issues, encouraging them to develop moral character and to communicate their responses in a sensitive and respectful manner.

Religious Education **develops pupils as contributors to society** by:

- enabling pupils to develop and reflect on their understanding and awareness of the influence religious beliefs have on themselves, others and society;
- highlighting the diversity of beliefs in our society;
- promoting cultural understanding and sensitivity towards the beliefs and values of others. By doing this it works against sectarianism, racism and prejudice, fostering a positive attitude towards reconciliation and inclusion.

Religious Education **develops pupils as contributors to the economy and environment** by:

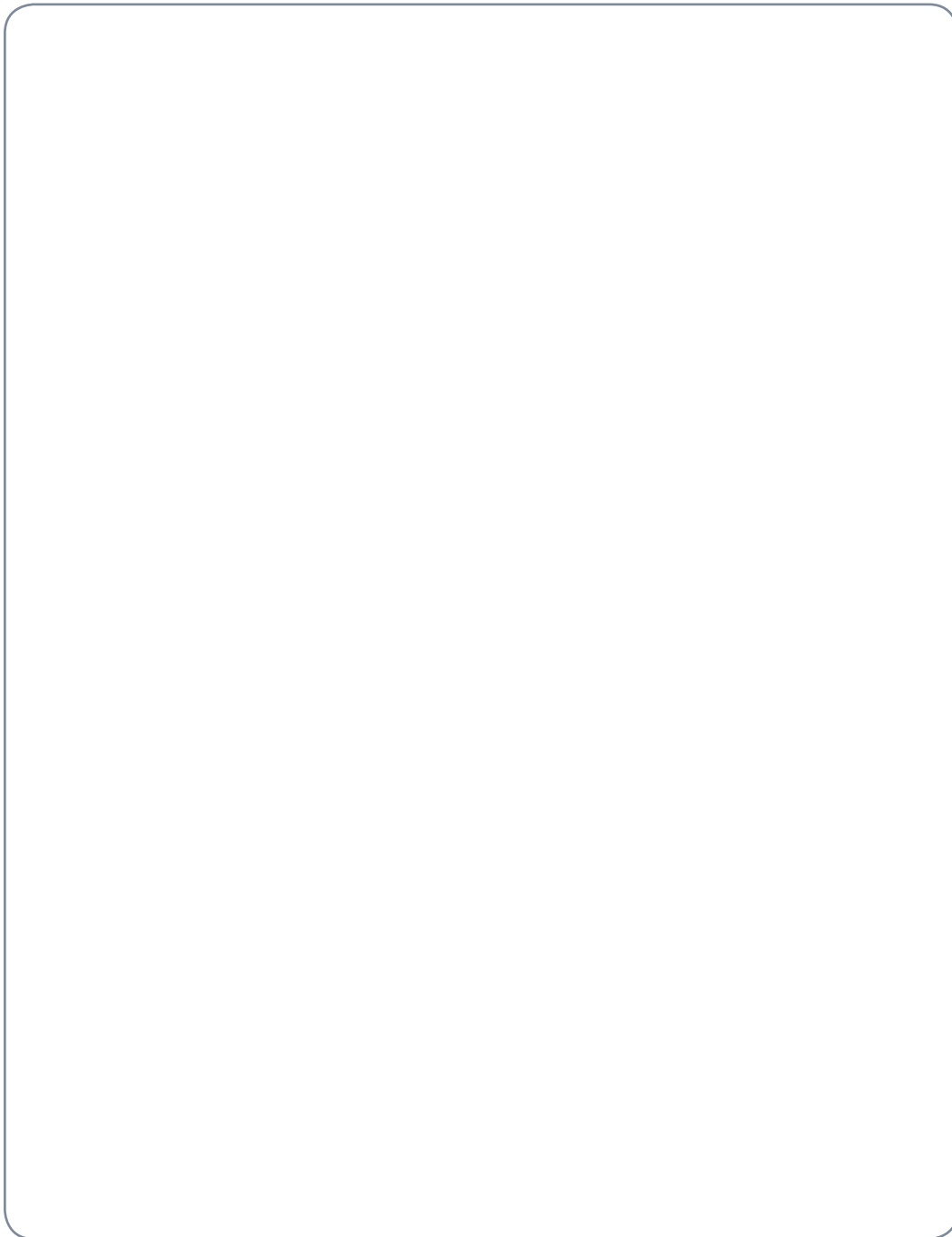
- empowering pupils and preparing them for life and work in a rapidly changing and challenging world;
- helping them to become more aware of the responsibilities they have towards the world;
- helping them to become more aware of the responsibilities they have towards those around them and how this can have an impact on their lives now and in the future.

## Questions for Departments

In order to contribute to the curriculum objectives during Key Stage 3 what do we want our pupils in Religious Education to:

- know (knowledge and understanding)?
- be able to do (skills)?
- be like (attitudes and dispositions)?

## Action

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# Section 03

## Links to Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4

### 3.1 Key Stage 2

It is important that pupils have an understanding of the links in their learning between and during the key stages. At Key Stage 3 the core syllabus builds on the learning from Key Stages 1 & 2.

The learning objectives 'Revelation of God', 'The Christian Church' and 'Morality' are developed with pupils enhancing their knowledge and understanding in these areas and further developing their own beliefs and values.

The learning objective 'World Religions (other than Christianity)' has been included at Key Stage 3 to encourage pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of and sensitivity towards two major world faiths other than Christianity.

Throughout **Key Stage 1 & 2** pupils are encouraged to develop the cross-curricular skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, along with Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. At Key Stage 3 these skills can be built upon through learning and teaching strategies in all subjects. This links Religious Education closely to the aim of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the other areas of learning/subject strands.

### 3.2 Key Stage 4

The flexible framework at Key Stage 3 allows:

- teachers to establish foundations for Key Stage 4 study by providing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate deeper understanding;
- pupils to become more independent learners who will be more adept and experienced in managing their own learning.

Key Stage 3 experiences should provide a robust basis for learning at Key Stage 4. The knowledge, understanding and skills outlined in Key Stage 3 Religious Education provide a framework that enables teachers to tailor the breadth and depth of coverage to meet the needs and interests of their pupils.

Religious Education is a statutory subject at Key Stage 4 and pupils continue to follow the **core syllabus**. At **Key Stage 4** pupils continue to develop their knowledge and understanding through the following learning objectives:

- Revelation of God;
- The Christian Church;
- Morality.

CCEA offers a range of qualifications, details of which are available on the CCEA website. At the time of writing, GCSE specifications in all subjects are currently being reviewed.



# Section 04

## Understanding Religious Education in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

This section includes explanation of:

- Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- Knowledge, Understanding and Skills;
- Curriculum Objectives and Key Elements;
- Learning Outcomes;
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

### 4.1 Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum

**Objectives**  
The curriculum objectives provide real and relevant contexts in which Religious Education knowledge, understanding and skills are developed. The objectives should be developed throughout the key stage.

Developing pupils' Knowledge, Understanding and Skills	<b>(Objective 1)</b> Developing pupils as Individuals	<b>(Objective 2)</b> Developing pupils as Contributors to Society	
<p>Through engagement with a range of stimuli including peers, poetry, prose, drama, non-fiction, media and multimedia which enhance creativity and stimulate curiosity and imagination, pupils should have opportunities to become critical, creative and effective communicators by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expressing meaning, feelings and viewpoints;</li> <li>• talking, to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions;</li> <li>• listening actively and reporting back;</li> <li>• reading and viewing for key ideas, engagement and empathy;</li> <li>• writing and presenting in different forms for different audiences and purposes;</li> <li>• participating in a range of drama;</li> <li>• interpreting visual stimuli including moving image;</li> <li>• developing an understanding of different forms, genres and methods of communication and an understanding of how media are created;</li> <li>• developing their knowledge of how language works and their competence using the conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils should have opportunities to:</p> <p>Engage, through language, with their peers and with fictional and real-life characters and situations, to explore their own emotions and develop creative potential, for example, discuss what they would have done or how they would have felt when faced with a situation in a novel; produce a digital portfolio highlighting their personal qualities etc. [Key Element: Personal Understanding]</p> <p>Engage and respond to others emotionally, for example, through drama, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions.</p> <p>Use literature, drama, poetry or the moving image to explore others' needs and rights, for example, consider the needs of a fictional character; participate in a role play involving conflicting rights etc. [Key Element: Citizenship]</p> <p>Explore how different cultures and beliefs are reflected in a range of communication methods, for example, investigate local oral traditions and dialects etc.; compare and contrast how the same issue is communicated in different media.</p> <p>Use techniques used to explore a relevant ethical issue, for example, track coverage of the same issue in a range of media; design and produce own current affairs programme/news sheet for a young audience etc. [Key Element: Ethical Awareness]</p> <p>Explore issues related to Moral Character : demonstrate a willingness to challenge typical, biased or distorted viewpoints; respond appropriately sensitive, informed and balanced responses, for example, discuss moral issues of real-life and fictional characters; take responsibility for choices and actions. [Key Element: Moral Character]</p> <p>Use the use of language and imagery in writing and evoking a variety of powerful feelings, for example, comment on a film, novel, performance or poem which has stimulated a personal insight. [Key Element: Spiritual Awareness]</p>	<p>Pupils should have opportunities to:</p> <p>Use literature, drama, poetry or the moving image to explore others' needs and rights, for example, consider the needs of a fictional character; participate in a role play involving conflicting rights etc. [Key Element: Citizenship]</p> <p>Explore how different cultures and beliefs are reflected in a range of communication methods, for example, investigate local oral traditions and dialects etc.; compare and contrast how the same issue is communicated in different media.</p> <p>Use techniques used to explore a relevant ethical issue, for example, track coverage of the same issue in a range of media; design and produce own current affairs programme/news sheet for a young audience etc. [Key Element: Ethical Awareness]</p> <p>Explore issues related to Economic Awareness : evaluate the impact of economics on the lives of people, debate whether you should be employed by child labour; consider consequences of financial difficulties in literature. [Key Element: Economic Awareness]</p> <p>Use an effective communication strategy, for example, produce promotional materials, design and produce own current affairs programme/news sheet for a young audience etc. [Key Element: Ethical Awareness]</p> <p>Explore issues related to Economic Awareness : evaluate the impact of economics on the lives of people, debate whether you should be employed by child labour; consider consequences of financial difficulties in literature. [Key Element: Economic Awareness]</p> <p>Use an effective communication strategy, for example, produce promotional materials, design and produce own current affairs programme/news sheet for a young audience etc. [Key Element: Ethical Awareness]</p> <p>Explore issues related to Economic Awareness : evaluate the impact of economics on the lives of people, debate whether you should be employed by child labour; consider consequences of financial difficulties in literature. 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<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>The learning outcomes require the demonstration of skills and application of knowledge and understanding of English and Media Education.</p> <p>Pupils should be able to:</p>	<p><b>Learning Outcomes</b></p> <p>These state the skills and capabilities pupils should be able to demonstrate throughout the key stage in the context of Religious Education.</p>		

**Exemplar**  
See back cover for an A3 version of Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum

This relates the **learning objectives from Core Syllabus for Religious Education** to the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Gives detail regarding the knowledge, understanding and skills to be developed during Key Stage 3.

The objectives are made up of **Key Elements**. These provide opportunities for subjects to connect with Learning for Life and Work and with other subjects.

**Learning Outcomes**  
These state the skills and capabilities pupils should be able to demonstrate throughout the key stage in the context of Religious Education.

NB: Teachers may develop activities that combine many of the statutory requirements. Key Elements highlighted in BOLD (including each of the Key Elements) are met.


## 4.2 Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

The first column in **Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum** is headed “Developing pupils’ Knowledge, Understanding and Skills.”

- Everything in bold in this column is a statutory requirement for the key stage as a whole, not for individual years within the key stage. In Religious Education the context for knowledge and understanding is the learning objectives of the core syllabus.
- It is intended that schools interpret and develop these requirements as appropriate to their own context.
- The recursive nature of Religious Education means that the bullet points in the knowledge, understanding and skills column are likely to be covered a number of times in each academic year within the key stage.

The table below seeks to explain, illustrate and expand on the bullet points under Knowledge, Understanding and Skills.

Developing pupils’ Knowledge, Understanding and Skills	Supporting notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>an awareness, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the key Christian teachings about God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), about Jesus Christ, and about the Bible; and develop an ability to interpret and relate the Bible to life.</b></li> <li>• <b>a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the growth of Christianity, of its worship, prayer and religious language; a growing awareness of the meaning of belonging to a Christian tradition, and sensitivity towards the beliefs of others.</b></li> </ul>	<p>The four <b>learning objectives of the core syllabus for Religious Education</b> encompass the knowledge and understanding that pupils should have opportunities to develop throughout the key stage. Further detail can be found in the <b>core syllabus document</b> available at <a href="http://www.deni.gov.uk">www.deni.gov.uk</a>. Religious Education departments have <b>flexibility</b> to develop materials that are not included within the core syllabus in line with the ethos of the school and the demographics of their area. The knowledge that pupils acquire throughout this key stage links closely to the development of their understanding of religious beliefs and practices.</p> <p>Through learning about Christian beliefs pupils can become more aware of the relevance of religious belief in the 21st century helping them to develop as individuals as they learn about their own beliefs as well as learning from the beliefs of others.</p> <p>Developing pupils knowledge and understanding of the role Christianity has played and continues to play in our society can help in the development of pupils as contributors to society. This draws on the rich diversity within Christian practice to develop pupil’s awareness of and sensitivity towards the beliefs of others.</p>

Developing pupils' Knowledge, Understanding and Skills	Supporting notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>their ability to think and judge about morality, to relate Christian moral principles to personal and social life, and to identify values and attitudes that influence behaviour.</b></li>   <li>• <b>a knowledge of two world religions other than Christianity and sensitivity towards the religious beliefs, practices and lifestyles of their followers in Northern Ireland.</b></li> </ul> <p>They should also have the opportunities to develop and practise the following <b>skills</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigate, explain and evaluate the impact of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and society;</li>   <li>• analyse, interpret, evaluate and present information from a range of sources, texts and authorities;</li>   <li>• develop critical and creative thinking in their approach to solving problems and making decisions;</li> </ul>	<p>By focusing on moral principles Religious Education plays an important role in the three curriculum objectives. This helps pupils to understand the varying influences on their own and others behaviour as well as showing how their own actions can have an effect on others – locally and globally.</p> <p>The most important development within the core syllabus is the inclusion of world religions other than Christianity at Key Stage 3. In this, Religious Education helps in the development of cultural understanding as society develops and changes. It is important for pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of world faiths other than Christianity promoting tolerance and sensitivity in all aspects of life.</p> <p>The skills referred to are seen as specifically relevant to Religious Education.</p> <p>Religious Education lends itself to an enquiry approach, both through visits and the exploration of relevant issues or events. This encourages active participation with pupils finding out for themselves, making choices and drawing conclusions based on evidence. The starting points for enquiry can be hypotheses or key questions that pupils can identify and devise.</p> <p>The variety of texts and sources relating to religious belief give pupils the opportunity to develop their skills in analyse and interpretation. Source analyse, questioning of the text, noting bias, recognising and appreciating different interpretations of religious belief are all important skills.</p> <p>There is often more than one answer to questions posed or issues investigated which gives pupils the opportunity to develop their problem-solving and decision-making skills. Pupils should be encouraged to think creatively when addressing religious/moral and ethical issues.</p>

Developing pupils' Knowledge, Understanding and Skills	Supporting notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to discuss, evaluate and empathise with how religious beliefs and teachings can inform answers to questions about the meaning and purpose of life as well as moral and ethical issues;</li> <li>• reflect on and evaluate their own and others' thoughts, feelings, experiences and beliefs on religious, spiritual and moral issues, using reasoned and balanced arguments, and consider how these might be applied to their lifestyle.</li> </ul>	<p>Religious Education provides opportunities for pupils to ask questions about life, moral and ethical issues that are often difficult to answer. This leads pupils to develop their own views through the knowledge and understanding of the opinions of others.</p> <p>The impact of religious beliefs on lifestyles in the modern world has placed importance on the role of Religious Education. Through Religious Education pupils develop skills relating to tolerance and respect for views and beliefs that differ from their own.</p>

### Questions for Departments

- What is the current balance between knowledge, understanding and skills in our department's provision?
- What are the implications for future learning and teaching at Key Stage 3?

### Action


### 4.3 Curriculum Objectives and Key Elements

The curriculum objectives are broken down into key elements. The key elements are a vehicle for ensuring that Religious Education directly connects to the curriculum objectives. The key elements also provide a means for connecting learning in Religious Education to other subjects and to Learning for Life and Work. Using Learning for Life and Work to make connections is explored further in 5.3 'Connecting the Learning'.

The table below shows how each curriculum objective is linked to specific key elements.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum should provide relevant learning opportunities to help each pupil develop as:		
Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
An individual	A contributor to society	A contributor to the economy and the environment
<b>Key Elements</b> Personal Understanding Mutual Understanding Personal Health Moral Character Spiritual Awareness	<b>Key Elements</b> Citizenship Cultural Understanding Media Awareness Ethical Awareness	<b>Key Elements</b> Employability Economic Awareness Education for Sustainable Development

For example developing the pupil as an individual (curriculum objective 1) will require a focus on the key elements of Personal Understanding, Mutual Understanding, Personal Health, Moral Character and Spiritual Awareness.

Every subject must contribute to all key elements across the key stage. Some subjects will have more naturally occurring opportunities to promote certain key elements.

The key elements that Religious Education contributes to more fully are:

- Spiritual Awareness;
- Moral Character;
- Cultural Understanding;
- Ethical Awareness;
- Education for Sustainable Development.

For example, Religious Education will have a leading role in the development of Moral Character. Although every other subject will address an aspect of it, much of what is already covered in Religious Education can be looked at through the development of Moral Character. This lends added relevance and significance to existing Religious Education content.

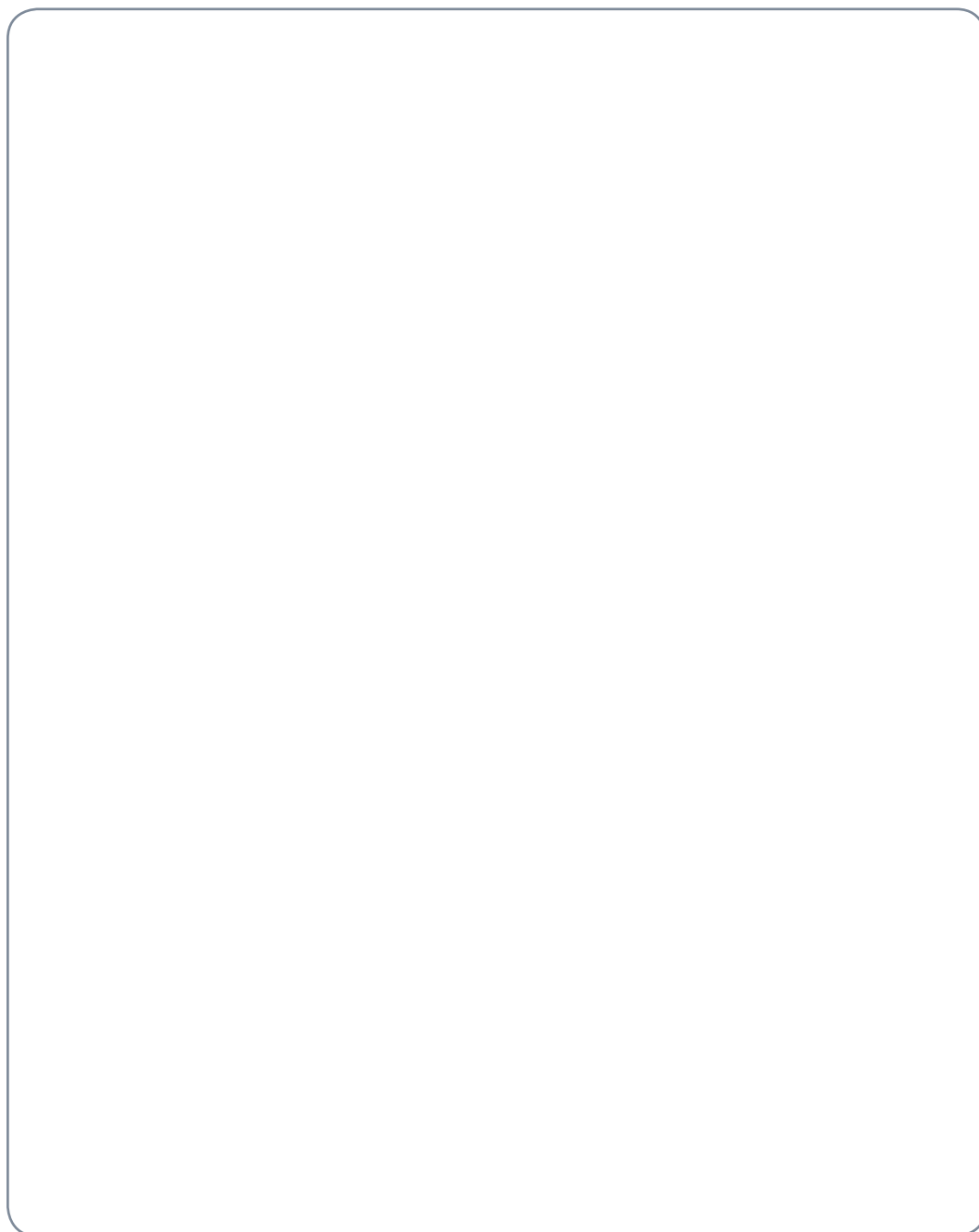
## Developing the Key Elements in Religious Education

Developing pupils as .... individuals	.... contributors to society	.... contributors to the economy and environment
<p><b>Personal Understanding</b>                      In what ways am I unique?                      How can I develop and grow?                      What role do I have in life?                      How do I relate to other people?</p> <p><b>Mutual Understanding</b>                      How do I/we view other people?                      What makes people different from me/us?                      How do I/we treat others?                      How can I/we sort out differences?                      What if I/we were in someone else's shoes?</p> <p><b>Personal Health</b>                      What do religions tell me/us about how to treat our bodies and minds?                      Why should I look after myself?</p> <p><b>Moral Character</b>                      What do I really think about this issue?                      What do religions tell me/us about this issue?                      How do I tell between right and wrong?</p> <p><b>Spiritual Awareness</b>                      What is the purpose of life?                      What inspires me in my life?                      Can religious rules guide me/us?                      How can I/we relate to God?</p>	<p><b>Citizenship</b>                      How can choices influence what happens in the world?                      What role can I/we play in the development of society?</p> <p><b>Cultural Understanding</b>                      What role has religion played in the development of the different cultures in the world?                      What would it be like to live in a different culture?                      What can I/we learn from different cultures?</p> <p><b>Media Awareness</b>                      What can I/we learn from different media sources?                      What is fact/opinion? How can I/we tell the difference?                      How are ethical debates developing in our world?</p> <p><b>Ethical Awareness</b>                      What has happened to develop ethical debates?                      How have religions reacted to different ethical issues?</p>	<p><b>Employability</b>                      What is vocation?                      What roles do people with a religious faith play in life/work?                      What values do people bring to where they work?</p> <p><b>Economic Awareness</b>                      How can my/our choices have an effect on other people?                      Do Fair Trade goods make a difference?                      What role do religions have in developing economic awareness?</p> <p><b>Education for Sustainable Development</b>                      Why is the world a special place?                      What problem have humans caused for the environment?                      Why do religions think that humans have a responsibility to look after the world?                      How can I/we make society a better place?</p>

## Questions for Departments

- What key elements do we
  - address well?
  - need to focus more on?
  - not address at all?
- Are there any key elements that we could develop with another department to promote connected learning?
- How could we use the curriculum objectives or key elements to move our departmental planning forward?
- What are the implications for our resources?

## Action




## 4.4 Learning Outcomes

**Learning Outcomes** incorporate the skills and capabilities pupils should be able to demonstrate throughout Key Stage 3 in each subject strand. These are similar across each subject strand and promote the infusion of the **cross-curricular skills** (Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT) (please refer to Appendix 1 for further guidance on the cross-curricular skills). The learning outcomes also promote the infusion of **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities** (also refer to Appendix 2 for further guidance on Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities).

As with all subjects, it is statutory for teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to **acquire** and **develop** the cross-curricular skills and the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities in Religious Education. Pupils should also be given opportunities to demonstrate their skills and application of knowledge and understanding of Religious Education to meet the learning outcomes.

### Evidence for Learning Outcomes

Evidence of the application of skills, knowledge and understanding for a learning outcome can be demonstrated at any point in the learning process. Learning outcomes can be based on process or product. They may be evidenced by teacher, pupil, or peer assessment of a range of pupils' work and performance, including work generated using ICT. The nature of feedback on learning outcomes can be qualitative, quantitative, verbal or written to suit the purpose of the assessment.

### Using and Recording Evidence

The number of occasions when learning outcomes are internally recorded, the system for internal recording and the use made of internal records is at the discretion of departments in line with whole school policy. Learning outcomes can be demonstrated through formal or informal assessment, formative and/or summative assessment.

Evidence of learning outcomes can be:

- recorded informally, that is, primarily for feedback to pupils and for teacher reference;
- recorded formally, that is, in line with departmental and internal whole school assessment policy requirements;
- used to inform reporting, for example, in relation to Pupil Profile requirements.

## Skills and the Learning Outcomes

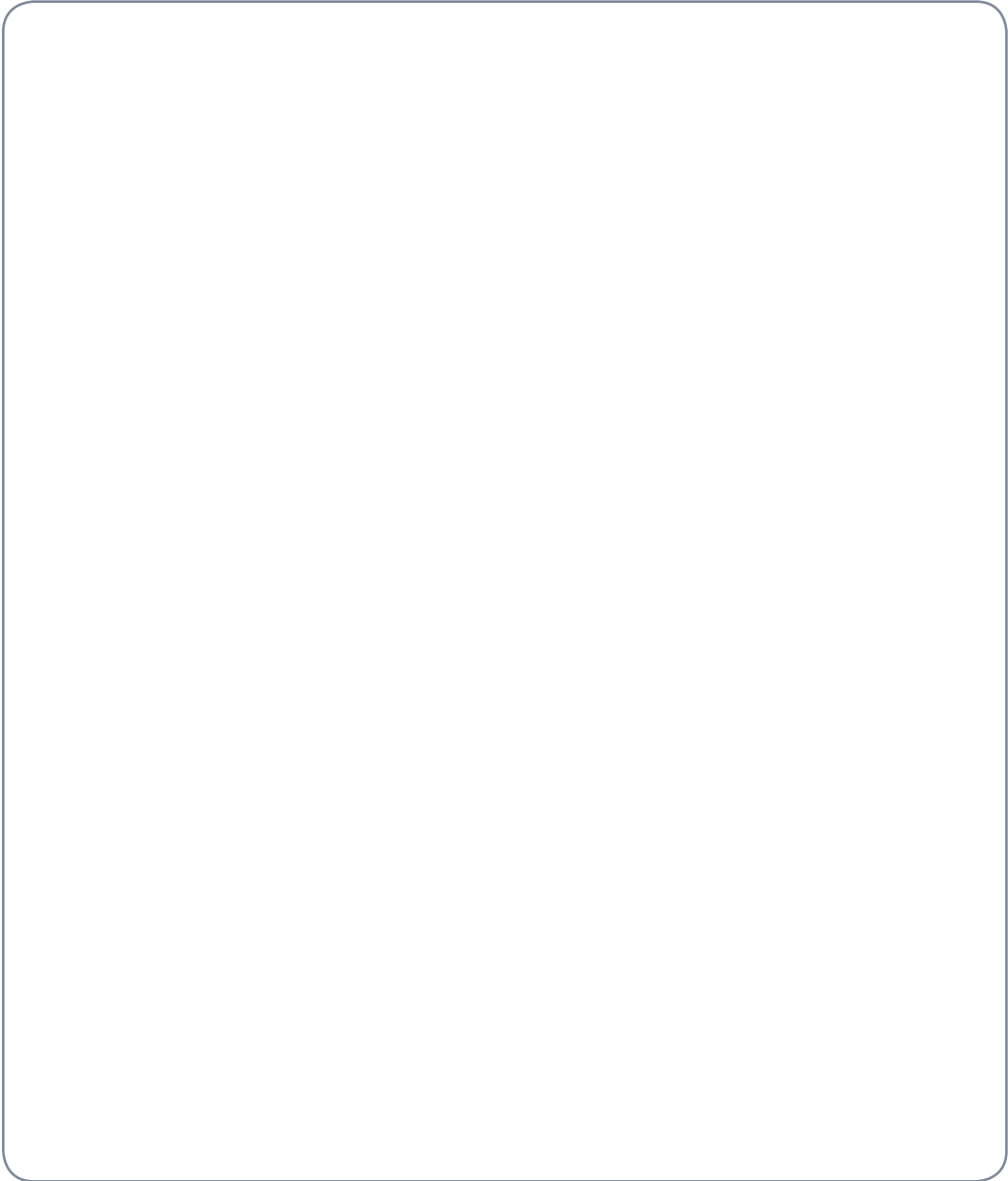
The relationship between the learning outcomes and the cross-curricular skills and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities is set out in the table below.

Learning Outcomes	Cross-Curricular Skills/Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities
<b>Research and manage information effectively to investigate religious, moral and ethical issues, including Using Mathematics and Using ICT where appropriate;</b>	Managing Information Communication Using Mathematics Using ICT
<b>Show deeper understanding by thinking critically and flexibly, solving problems and making informed decisions, demonstrating Using Mathematics and Using ICT where appropriate;</b>	Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making. Using Mathematics Using ICT
<b>Demonstrate creativity and initiative when developing ideas and following them through;</b>	Being Creative
<b>Work effectively with others;</b>	Working with Others
<b>Demonstrate self-management by working systematically, persisting with tasks, evaluating and improving own performance;</b>	Self-Management
<b>Communicate effectively in oral, visual, written and ICT formats, showing clear awareness of audience and purpose.</b>	Communication Using ICT

**Questions for Departments**

- How can we plan for learning outcomes?
- How can our existing departmental assessment policy be amended to make reference to the learning outcomes?
- Which learning outcomes will be the most challenging for our department?

**Action**

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## 4.5 Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

The Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework consists of five overlapping strands:

- Managing Information;
- Thinking, Problem-Solving, Decision-Making;
- Being Creative;
- Working with Others;
- Self-Management.

Each strand is broken down into further detail. These can facilitate lesson planning and provide criteria against which pupils' performances can be assessed and reported, for example linking cause and effect, examining evidence, planning a task, etc.

Many of the skills are not new and are already being developed across a range of subjects. This single framework aims to make the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities more structured and explicit, to encourage application across a range of contexts and to provide a common language that pupils and teachers can use to talk about their thinking and learning.

There are a number of teaching strategies that will promote the development of the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities generally, for example, setting open ended tasks, effective questioning, using thinking frames and diagrams, talking about thinking and learning, providing meaningful opportunities for collaborative learning etc. Many of these activities also support the principles of Assessment for Learning.

The big shift, however, is to focus on opportunities in **Religious Education** where a specific thinking skill or personal capability can be used to deepen understanding of a particular religious concept or context.

The context used provides opportunities for the development and practice of the thinking skill/personal capability.

This promotes lessons where there is the parallel development of subject knowledge and understanding as well as the development of a particular mode of thinking. This approach is referred to as infusion; adding one thing to another to give it a new significance.

**Planning for infusion involves**, for example:

- (a) looking across a series of units of work in a particular year group and identifying where the most appropriate contexts are to introduce and develop specific skills, such as evaluating most appropriate information, justifying opinions, reaching agreement within a group etc;
- (b) identifying the specific skills and capabilities best developed through Religious Education and setting up contexts to introduce and practice them, such as how exploring the key steps involved in skilful decision making (generating options, weighing up pros and cons) will help pupils to engage with and think through a religious/moral or ethical issue.

This explicit approach to developing the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities provides opportunities to observe, record, feedback and report on pupils' strengths and areas for future focus in terms of their development. It also enables pupils to transfer particular thinking skills or personal capabilities to other contexts. Progression in Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities is only made through practice and application in a range of contexts and at increasing levels of challenge and demand. Continuing Professional Development materials have been developed to promote the infusion of Thinking Skills

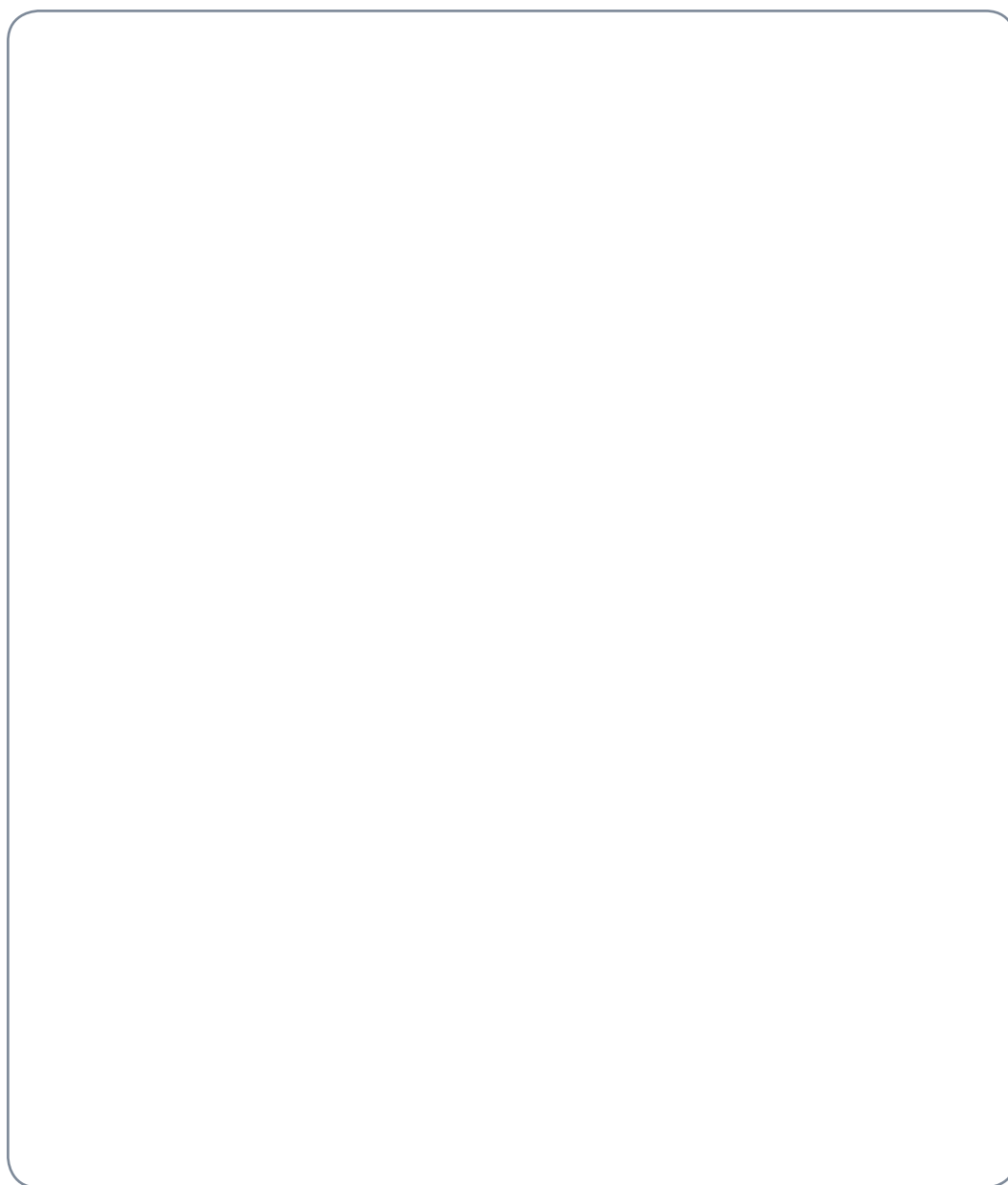
and Personal Capabilities across the curriculum. These materials are available at [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk).

See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for examples of skills and capabilities in a Religious Education context.

### Questions for Departments

- How can Religious Education meaningfully develop each strand of the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities framework?
- Where are the key opportunities in Religious Education for infusion?

### Action



# Section 05

## Approaches to Learning and Teaching

### 5.1 Key Messages

#### Flexibility

Teachers now have the opportunity to use the **core syllabus** and the **Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum** page to devise schemes and units of work in Religious Education that follow the needs and interests of the pupil. This does not mean throwing out schemes of work that have been carefully developed over the years. It provides opportunities for teachers to build on those units that best engage and develop their pupils and replace or revitalise those units that did not engage the pupils so much.

#### Relevance

Teachers have opportunities to look for themes or issues that are real and relevant to the lives of pupils today. The Religious Education skills in the first column of the **Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum** page can be developed through most of the current religious and moral issues locally and globally or in the media that pupils express an interest in.

#### Integrated

The **Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum** page is written to help teachers see alternatives to the teaching of discrete Religious Education themes such as The Bible/The Early Church and to form units of work that integrate the knowledge and understanding from discrete themes to help pupils gain a better understanding of the complexity of religious issues in today's world. For example – Belonging/Our World.

#### Value Based

The key elements provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on moral, ethical, spiritual, social and cultural dimensions of religious and moral issues relating to real people and real places and to consider their own views and opinions about them.

#### Action Orientated

There are also opportunities for pupils to be challenged about individual and collective social and environmental responsibilities. Furthermore opportunities are signposted for pupils to act – individually or as a whole class/school – on those areas of concern; for example developing and promoting a Fair Trade policy or involvement in charity work. Valuable links can be made here to the citizenship action project.

#### Future Focused

Pupils are challenged to think about the type of world they would like to share in years to come and how best to achieve it. They will also have opportunities to explore how the skills developed through Religious Education might help them in the future.

## 5.2 Assessment for Learning

'Assessment for Learning' is an approach that can support the learning and teaching process. Assessment for Learning focuses on the learning process (rather than the end product) and attempts not to prove learning, but rather improve it. It is formative assessment. It is a way for us to take stock of learning during the process and it can help inform us of how the learning is progressing.

In 'Assessment for Learning':

- there is a high emphasis on *transferable learning*;
- assessment becomes a much more *transparent* process because it is based on critical information that is shared with the learners;
- learners are able to *take responsibility* for their own learning, and for aspects of assessment.

'Assessment for Learning' is not something extra or 'bolted on.' It integrates with existing classroom practice. Assessment for Learning involves the following key actions:

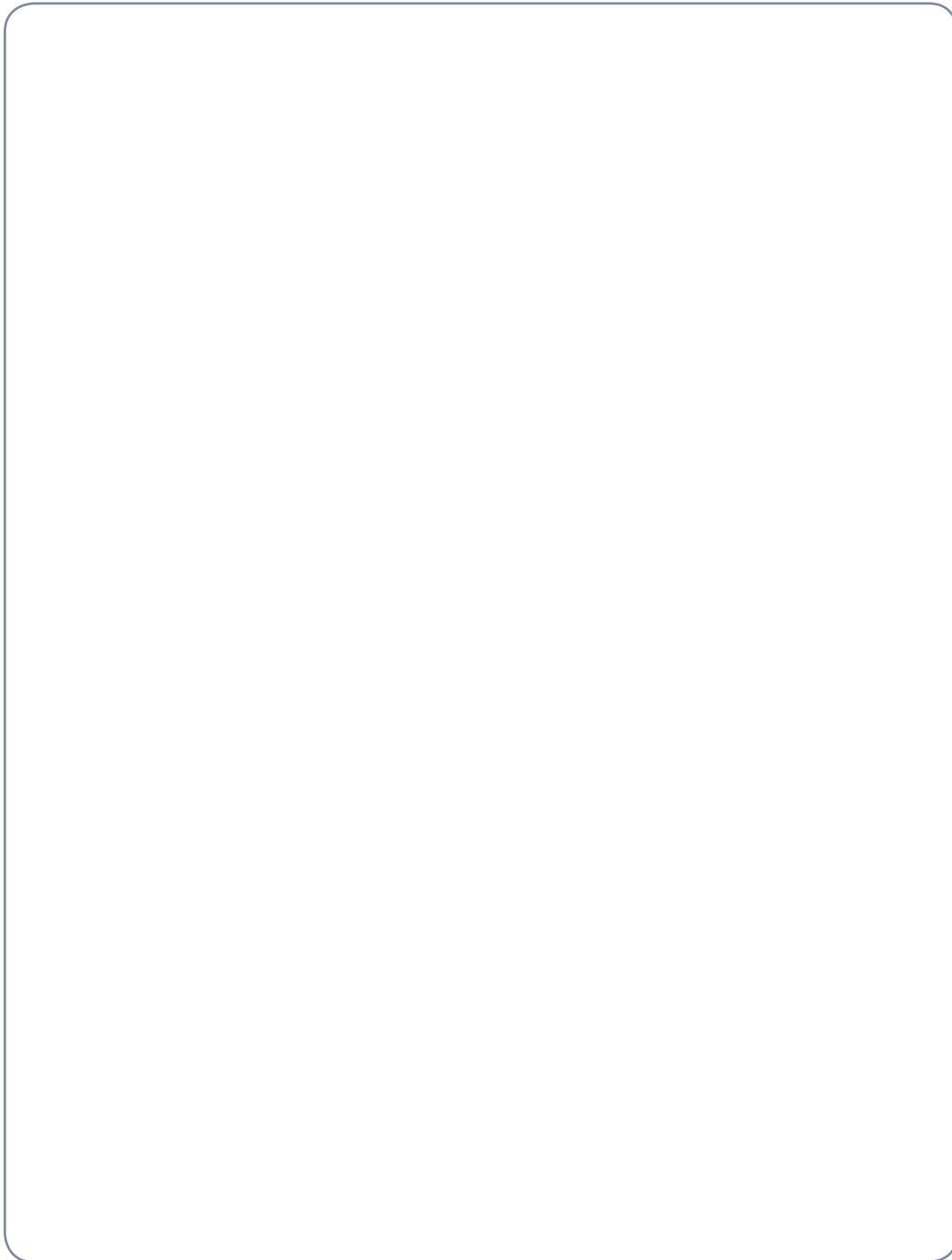
<b>Sharing learning intentions</b>	A learning intention is a description of what teachers want pupils to know, understand or be able to do by the end of an activity. It tells pupils what the focus for learning is going to be. It helps both teachers and pupils to focus on the learning rather than the activity, for example: Identify what pupils will be learning (We are learning to.....) Explain the reason for learning (We are learning this because.....)
<b>Sharing and negotiating success criteria</b>	Success criteria are statements that help pupils recognise if they have been successful in their learning. Pupils may be involved in deciding these. They summarise the processes or characteristics needed for success, and they always link directly to the learning intention. They essentially spell out the steps or ingredients required to achieve the learning intention, offering specific guidance on how to be successful.
<b>Giving feedback to pupils</b>	Quality feedback is essential for effective learning and teaching. Feedback can motivate pupils by building self-esteem and reinforcing the positive. To be truly formative the feedback must inform the next steps in the learning process. For example, when offering written feedback: 1.Find two occasions where they have achieved success (symbols can be used); 2.Identify an aspect of their work that they can immediately improve; 3.Provide them with a prompt or strategy on how to improve; 4.Give them time to make this improvement.
<b>Effective questioning</b>	Effective questioning is about asking questions in a way that elicits maximum feedback from pupils, which can then be used to evaluate, plan and extend learning, for example: • Ask better questions: ask 'open' questions or reframe questions where there is no single correct answer and pupils are rewarded for exploring options and sharing possible solutions; • Ask questions better: provide pupils with time to think; by increasing the wait time to 3 or 5 seconds between posing the question and asking for the answer, teachers can make a significant difference to the question's effectiveness.
<b>Self and peer assessment</b>	Pupil reflection promotes independent learning, communication and support in the classroom. Teachers can develop pupil reflection in the classroom through the use of peer and self-assessment and self-evaluation.

Continuing Professional Development materials have been provided for schools to promote Assessment for Learning. See Appendix 4 for examples of Assessment for Learning in Religious Education.

## Questions for Departments

- What are the benefits of Assessment for Learning actions in our classroom?
- Which of these Assessment for Learning key actions are part of our existing classroom practice?
- Which do we need to give more attention to?
- How do we do this?

## Action



## 5.3 Connecting the Learning

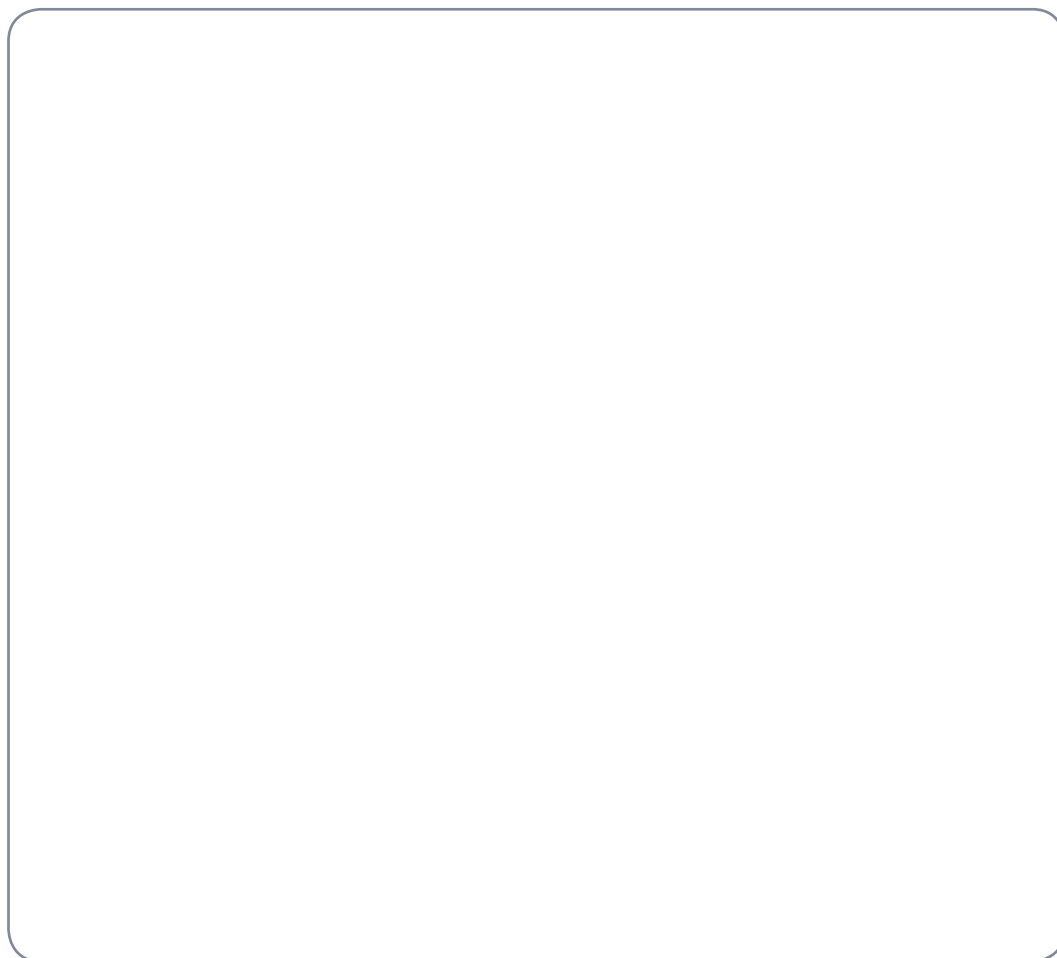
The Northern Ireland Curriculum is designed to accommodate links across subjects. Many natural links exist although they may be under-exploited. Where these links are identified and planned for, they have the potential to make learning more meaningful, informed and purposeful. Opportunities to connect the learning can range from small and informal activities to whole school and formally planned. Any of the following may be used as drivers for connected learning between two or more subjects:

- Skills/Learning Outcomes;
- Key Elements;
- Themes;
- Knowledge;
- Concepts;
- Learning experiences;
- Learning for Life Work;
- Other suitable approaches.

### Questions for Departments

- Which of these could best be used as a starting point to make meaningful connections with others subjects?

### Action



(Examples of connecting learning across subjects are available in the Thematic and Collaborative Units – see [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk) and the Curriculum Support and Implementation Box).

## Connecting to Learning for Life and Work (LLW)

One way of beginning to make connections is to use Learning for Life and Work. The four subject strands within Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development, Local and Global Citizenship, Home Economics and Employability) contribute directly to the three curriculum objectives. The other areas of learning **also** contribute to the curriculum objectives and Learning for Life and Work. Well planned and organised work within subjects make a distinctive and natural contribution to Learning for Life and Work and help to strengthen and enrich Learning for Life and Work provision as a whole. Relevant key elements within subjects can support learning related to Personal Development, Local and Global Citizenship, Home Economics and Employability.

Teachers have flexibility to enhance the breadth and depth of their subject's contribution to Learning for Life and Work. Subject teachers can therefore:

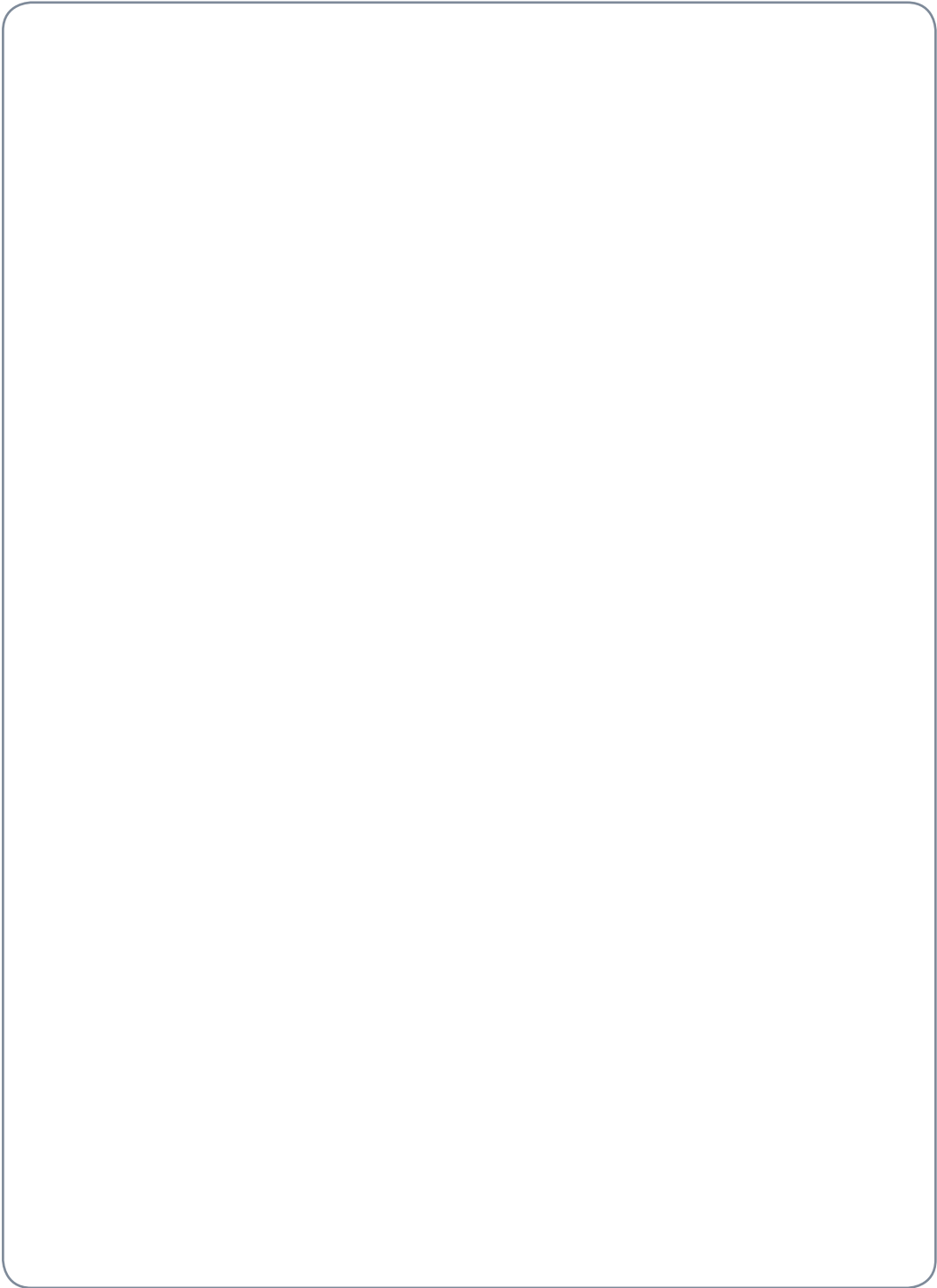
- raise awareness about the Learning for Life and Work key concepts;
- develop more detailed understanding about the Learning for Life and Work key concepts within their subject context;
- explore particular Learning for Life and Work key concepts. When delivered in sufficient depth, an Area of Learning/subject strand can take full responsibility for meeting a particular statement of requirement.

See Appendix 5 for specific examples in a Religious Education context.

**Questions for Departments**

- Which aspects of our current practice promote connected learning?
- What are the issues around the management of connected learning?
- How will we know that pupils are learning to make connections?

**Action**

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## 5.4 Active Learning

Engaging pupils more in their learning and providing them with opportunities to demonstrate thinking skills and personal capabilities requires an approach beyond traditional didactic methods.

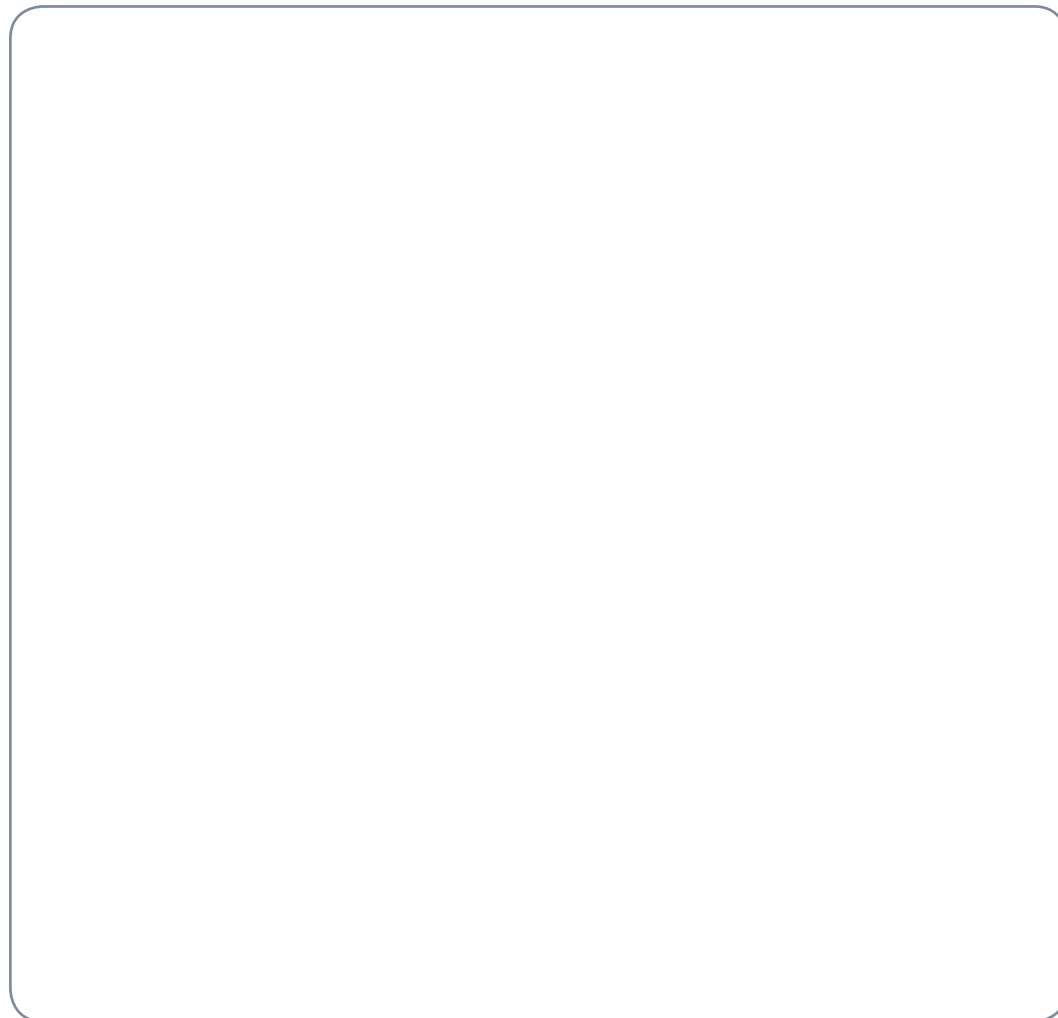
The glossary, *Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 3*, is available from [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk) and is included in the Curriculum Support and Implementation Box. This resource contains a wide range of active and experiential strategies to promote pupils' participation and engagement.

Religious Education particularly provides rich contexts to use a range of active learning strategies. For further information see Appendix 6.

### Questions for Departments

- What active learning strategies might work for us?
- How does the climate in our classrooms support the use of active learning?
- What are the implications for classroom management?

### Action





# Section 06

## Auditing and Planning

It is important to evaluate existing schemes of work in relation to the core syllabus and the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Departmental planning for the Northern Ireland Curriculum should be informed by an evaluation process and may result in a completely fresh approach.

### 6.1 Conducting a Departmental Audit

When planning to carry out a departmental audit, refer to the training materials *Planning for the Revised Curriculum at Key Stage 3*. Used in conjunction with the following guidance, departments can decide how to evaluate existing and planned provision.

Audits are a starting point for the long term planning process. There are a number of possible 'ways-in' to carrying out an audit. Some of these are outlined in the table below. Further details are available at [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk).

Starting Point for Audit	Description of Process
Curriculum Objectives	<b>What</b> do we teach and <b>why</b> ? Look at how the topics currently taught address the broad curriculum objectives. The objectives provide a rationale for the topic. The key elements can provide the footholds into the objectives.
Key Elements	Check where units of work contain aspects of the key elements, or could be re-focused to suit. Check for coverage across the Key Stage. Remove excessive duplication, add material to address any omissions.
Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities	Starting with current units of work it is possible to audit the provision of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities using the statements from the "From – To Progress Map". After completing an audit in this way, gaps in provision can easily be detected and it will then be possible to develop opportunities to ensure overall coverage in a year and progression across the Key Stage.
Learning Experiences	List the categories of learning experience from the 'Big Picture' document in a column. Beside each, match the units of work in your scheme which fit with the category. Assess the coverage: is there a good mixture and variety of experience planned?
'Blue Skies'	Begin with aspirations for a completely new scheme of work, and work up details so as to match planned experiences with the Northern Ireland Curriculum requirements.

## 6.2 Long, Medium and Short Term Planning

### Long Term Planning

In producing long term plans or schemes of work you need to think about:

- how Religious Education links with the wider curriculum objectives;
- how and when to develop specific skills and capabilities;
- what range of topics will be studied;
- how Religious Education can actively link with other curricular areas.

### Medium Term Planning

In planning units of work you need to think about:

- identifying big questions to engage pupils and promote an enquiry based approach;
- the teaching and learning activities and strategies to best develop the skills;
- how to build in time for review, reflection and remediation.

### Short Term Planning

In planning a lesson or series of lessons you need to think about:

- making the learning intentions explicit to clarify what you want the pupils to know, understand and/or be able to do;
- agreeing and negotiating with the pupils what success in this task, activity will look like;
- using a launch activity to engage the pupils and develop their sense of enquiry;
- using a range of actives/challenges;
- supporting and prompting pupil performance;
- planning plenaries to feedback, reflect on thinking and learning, make connections to other learning and set up next lesson(s).

Curriculum development is a process and requires ongoing evaluation. Try figuring out why some lessons work, while others don't succeed as we would like.

For any scheme of work, it might be useful to ask:

- How well did the pupils respond to that?
  - did they enjoy it?
  - did they see the relevance?
  - were they motivated to learn?
- How well did they achieve?
  - what evidence of achievement was there?
  - was there evidence of deep learning?
  - how did I collect it?
- What modifications could I make
  - in the content?
  - in the learning materials?
  - in the learning activities?
- When did you last experience a “buzz” in the classroom?
  - what theme/issue were the pupils learning about?
  - what was the big enquiry/key question?
  - what activity were they doing?
  - what was the purpose of their learning?
  - why had you chosen these particular resources to use in this session with those pupils?

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Cross-Curricular Skills

#### Communication Across the Curriculum

Communication is central to the whole curriculum. Pupils should be able to communicate in order to express themselves socially, emotionally and physically, to develop as individuals, engage with others and contribute as members of society.

Pupils should be given opportunities to engage with and demonstrate the skill of communication and to transfer their knowledge about communication concepts and skills to real-life meaningful contexts across the curriculum.

The modes of communication include talking and listening, reading and writing. However, effective communication also includes non-verbal modes of communication, wider literacy and the use of multimedia and ICT technologies which may combine different modes. Pupils are therefore encouraged to become effective communicators by using a range of techniques, forms and media to convey information and ideas creatively and appropriately.

The requirements for Communication are set out below.

Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be enabled to develop skills in:

#### Talking and Listening

Pupils should be enabled to:

- listen to and take part in discussions, explanations, role-plays and presentations;
- contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view;
- communicate information, ideas, opinions, feelings and imaginings, using an expanding vocabulary;
- structure their talk and speak clearly so that ideas can be understood by others;
- adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation;
- use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.

#### Reading

Pupils should be enabled to:

- read a range of texts\* for information, ideas and enjoyment;
- use a range of strategies to read with increasing independence;
- find, select and use information from a range of sources;
- understand and explore ideas, events and features in texts\*;
- use evidence from texts\* to explain opinions.

\* Texts refer to ideas that are organised to communicate and present a message in written, spoken, visual and symbolic forms.

#### Writing

Pupils should be enabled to:

- talk about, plan and edit work;
- communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way;
- develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats, using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes;
- write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.

## Using Mathematics Across the Curriculum

Using Mathematics is the skill of applying mathematical concepts, processes and understanding appropriately in a variety of contexts. Ideally these should be in relevant real life situations that require a mathematical dimension.

Pupils are likely to acquire and consolidate their mathematical knowledge, concepts and skills within the area of learning for Mathematics and Numeracy. However, they should be given opportunities to transfer their understanding, as appropriate, to other contexts across the curriculum. Pupils can demonstrate their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of ways to communicate, manage information, think critically, solve problems and make decisions.

The requirements for Using Mathematics are set out below.

Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be enabled to:

- choose the appropriate materials, equipment and mathematics to use in a particular situation;
- use mathematical knowledge and concepts accurately;
- work systematically and check their work;
- use mathematics to solve problems and make decisions;
- develop methods and strategies, including mental mathematics;
- explore ideas, make and test predictions and think creatively;
- identify and collect information;
- read, interpret, organise and present information in mathematical formats;
- use mathematical understanding and language to ask and answer questions, talk about and discuss ideas and explain way of working;
- develop financial capability;
- use ICT to solve problems and/or present their work.

## Using Information and Communications Technology Across the Curriculum

Using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) provides powerful tools and contexts to support meaningful learning and has the potential to transform and enrich pupils' learning experiences and environments across the curriculum. The creative use of ICT can empower learners to become independent, self-motivated and flexible, helping in turn to develop self-esteem and positive attitudes to learning, with which to realise their full potential. It also provides opportunities to collaborate within and beyond the classroom to pose questions, take risks and respond positively to 'what if' questions.

To help develop skills in researching, handling and communicating information pupils should have opportunities, using ICT, to engage in genuine research and purposeful tasks set in meaningful contexts. They should be encouraged to re-work information, present and exchange their ideas and translate their thinking into creative products and productions which show an awareness of audience and purpose.

The requirements for Using ICT are set out below.

Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be enabled to develop skills to:

### Explore

Pupils should be enabled to:

- access and manage data and information;
- research, select, process and interpret information;
- investigate, make predictions and solve problems through interaction with digital tools;
- understand how to keep safe and display acceptable online behaviour.

### Express

Pupils should be enabled to:

- create, develop, present and publish ideas and information using a range of digital media;
- create information and multimedia products using a range of assets.

### Exchange

Pupils should be enabled to:

- communicate using a range of contemporary methods and tools;
- share, collaborate, exchange and develop ideas digitally.

### Evaluate

Pupils should be enabled to:

- talk about, review and make improvements to work, reflecting on the process and outcome;
- consider the sources and resources used.

### Exhibit

Pupils should be enabled to:

- manage and present their stored work;
- showcase their learning across the curriculum.

## Cross-Curricular Skills in Religious Education

Cross-curricular skill	Communication	Using Mathematics	Using ICT
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire, develop and demonstrate the cross-curricular skill of Communication	To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire, develop and demonstrate the cross-curricular skill of Using Mathematics	To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire, develop and demonstrate the cross-curricular skill of Using ICT
<b>Examples of processes</b>	Discussion, presentation, demonstration, asking questions, reading text for information, using evidence from text to explain opinion, communicate information in a clear and organised way, present ideas in a variety of formats for different audiences and purposes, etc.	Use mathematical knowledge and concepts, use mathematics to solve problems and make decisions, mental mathematics, make and test predictions, data handling, using statistics, developing financial capability, etc.	Explore information using electronic tools, create, develop, present and publish ideas using a range of digital media, communicate electronically, etc.
<b>Examples of contexts in Religious Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss issues and key questions on gender equality/minority groups in pairs/group and feed back to class.</li> <li>• Plan, write and present a talk to the class or group on what we can learn from the miracles of Jesus; life of Muhammad.</li> <li>• Hold a class or group debate about a current topical issue e.g. religious views on family relationships.</li> <li>• Analyse and discuss different texts showing varying opinions on an environmental issue, role of stewardship.</li> <li>• Plan, research and write a magazine article for teenagers on dress in religious cultures.</li> <li>• Take on the role of a contemporary religious person and answer questions from group/class as that person.</li> <li>• Evaluate the work of another class member giving positive feedback for certain criteria e.g. use of language specific to the topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and construct a time line, story board in the life of a religious leader using mathematical tools.</li> <li>• Work through a mathematical problem on religious taxes in Islam; Judaism.</li> <li>• Present survey information using appropriate graphs/mathematical formats (%/ratio).</li> <li>• Understand why Muslims use Islamic patterns and how they are created using symmetry.</li> <li>• Create own symmetric patterns.</li> <li>• Interpret statistical/graphical information that reports findings on religious beliefs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research information about a moral issue e.g. substance abuse, alcohol misuse using electronic resources.</li> <li>• Consider how Religious Education websites are designed to be appealing to a teenage audience.</li> <li>• Contribute to a class bank of useful resources for a topic such as rites of passage that could be accessed by peers.</li> <li>• Plan, develop and present a multimedia presentation on a religious festival and various ways of celebrating it.</li> <li>• Set up a personal Religious Education file on school network and manage data within that file.</li> <li>• Develop the use of different applications through various tasks e.g. Excel spreadsheet for surveys on belief in God; Publishing for newspaper articles on the life of a significant religious figure.</li> </ul>

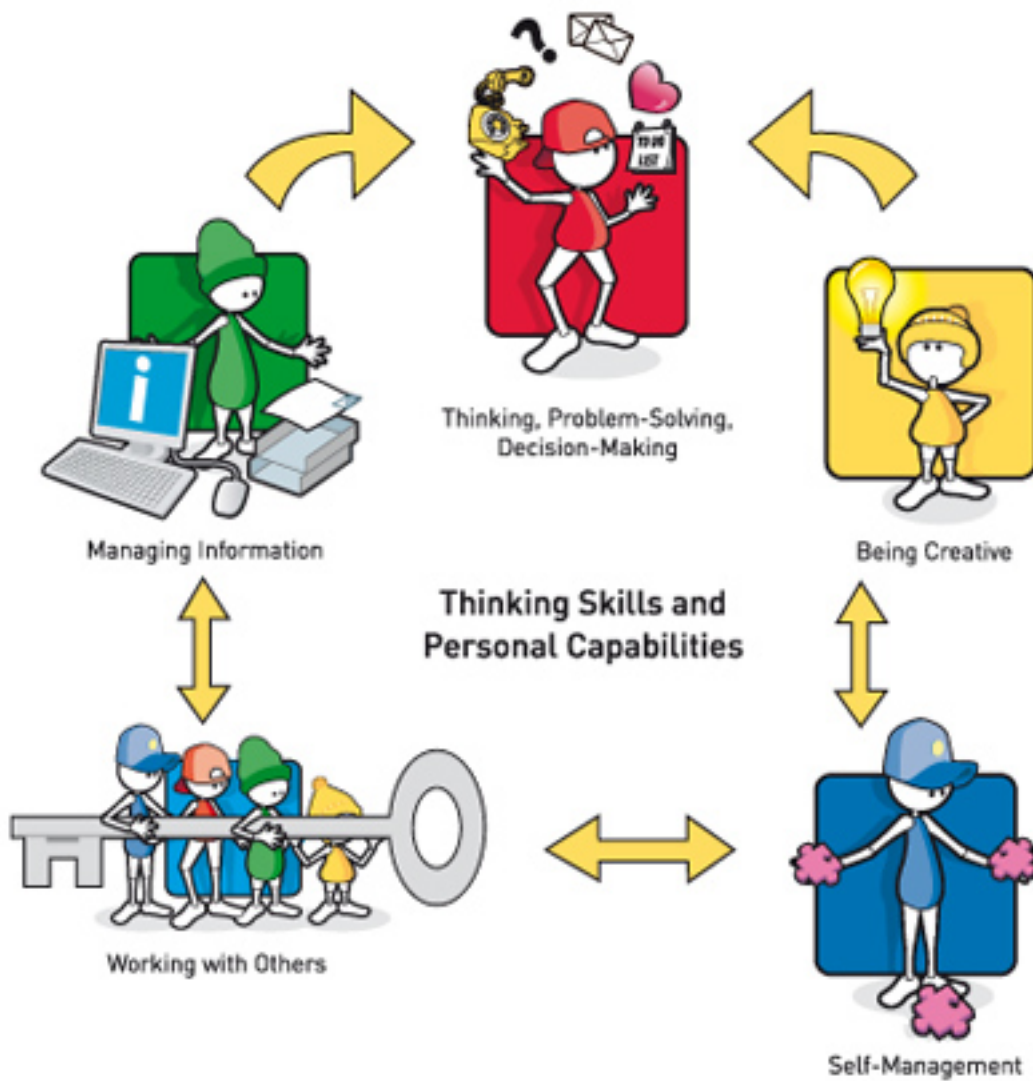
## Appendix 2

# Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Thinking skills are tools that help children to go beyond the acquisition of knowledge in order to search for meaning, apply ideas, analyse patterns and relationships, create and design something new and monitor and evaluate their progress.

Personal and interpersonal skills and capabilities underpin success in all aspects of life. It is important, therefore, that children's self-esteem and self-confidence are explicitly fostered along with the ability to understand and manage their own emotions and to interact effectively with others.

Teachers should help children to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities by focusing on the following areas.



### Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities in Religious Education

Thinking skills and Personal Capabilities strands	Managing Information	Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	Being Creative	Working with Others	Self-Management
<b>Purpose</b>	To develop learners' abilities in an information intensive environment	To engage pupils in active learning so that they can go beyond mere recall of factual information and the routine application of procedures	To encourage personal response of the learner by promoting dispositions for curiosity, exploration, experimentation and invention	To enable learners to engage in collaborative activities and to make the most of their learning when working with others	To help learners to become more self-directed so that they can manage their learning in new situations and in the longer term
<b>Examples of processes in which pupils are involved</b>	Asking, accessing, selecting, recording, integrating, communicating	Searching for meaning, deepening understanding, coping with challenges	Imagining, generating, inventing, taking risks for learning	Being collaborative, being sensitive to others' feelings, being fair and responsible	Evaluating strengths and weaknesses, setting goals and targets, managing and regulating self
<b>Examples of contexts in Religious Education</b>	Collate information from a variety of resources around an issue e.g. the role of equal rights for a minority group in society Compare and contrast information about the birth of Jesus from Matthew and Luke's Gospels Make a judgement about the reliability of sources of information for an issue/topic e.g. a web site, book or article on drug addiction Research a project on the life and influence of a religious individual e.g. St Patrick	Sequence events in the last week of Jesus' life Make comparisons between Hindu/Christian/Jewish wedding ceremonies Investigate links between the causes of sectarianism and its effect on communities Follow through logical arguments for a religious belief e.g. existence of God; purpose of life Justify your opinion on an issue in a short 1 minute slot e.g. use of leisure time	Use questions to solve problems e.g. being willing to ask difficult questions in relation to moral/religious issue to help develop opinion Make unconventional connections between ideas or information in previous work e.g. use a thinking grid to compare and contrast links with religious artefacts Be prepared to investigate differing viewpoints e.g. Hindu view of reincarnation	Work effectively in a group discussion e.g. sharing opinions and listening to others' views on the issue of giving to charity Share the work load and give feedback e.g. take on the role of secretary for a discussion about the importance of the Ten Commandments today Take responsibility for own work within the group and evaluate own contribution to group through self-assessment Develop role plays that highlight the influence peer's/parents/religious beliefs may have in a moral dilemma	Set targets and review them when necessary e.g. draft and write a report on a religious figure and his/her influence today Re-draft work taking into consideration self and peer evaluation e.g. discuss writing with pupils to ensure understanding of comments and possible negotiated success criteria Negotiate the success criteria on a newspaper report about Muhammad's early life, with pupils planning their work in detail to meet the success criteria

<p>Thinking skills and Personal Capabilities strands</p> <p><b>Examples of contexts in Religious Education</b></p>	<p>Justify decision regarding the choice of source material for a written report on places of pilgrimage</p> <p>Present the main events in the life of a well known religious figure in a visual format e.g. Mind map</p>	<p>Identify the possible outcomes of a situation where there is sectarian tension e.g. consider the options open to someone who is persecuted for their religious beliefs</p> <p>Develop connections between Religious Education and different subjects e.g. historical knowledge about the time of the reformation</p>	<p>Look at the same situation from different perspectives e.g. take on the role of Peter, Jesus, High Priest at the time of Jesus' arrest</p> <p>Use role plays to develop the ability to empathise e.g. various characters in the parable of the Prodigal Son; Prince Siddhartha (Buddha) seeing the four sites</p>	<p>Work in a pair/group to plan, write and produce a flyer about a religious festival</p> <p>Debate current issues in class e.g. human responsibility for the world; buying Fair Trade goods</p>	<p>Pupils use check list at stages during report writing task to break down work and ensure relevance</p> <p>Before or following an activity pupils encouraged to set own goals for improvement e.g. pupils to review report writing and set goals for the future</p>
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## Appendix 3

# Changes in the Core Syllabus for Religious Education (significant changes highlighted in **bold**)

It is no longer mandatory to teach the following in the context stated:	The following in <b>bold</b> have been introduced into core syllabus in the contexts stated:
<p><b>Learning Objective 1 - The Revelation of God</b> <i>God and the Bible</i> God's Covenant with his Chosen People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jacob (taken from the list);</b></li> <li>• <b>Last supper, Calvary, Resurrection (in the context of covenant).</b></li> </ul> <p>The life and ministry of Jesus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>recognise the main events of the life of Jesus as a connected story;</b></li> <li>• <b>become increasingly aware of the significance of the main events of the life of Jesus for people then and now.</b></li> </ul> <p>Jesus and his followers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>religious authorities.</b></li> </ul> <p>Teaching about the Kingdom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>investigate some of Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom;</b></li> <li>• <b>the Kingdom proclaimed;</b></li> <li>• <b>parables about the Kingdom;</b></li> <li>• <b>the fullness of the kingdom which Jesus will establish at his Second Coming;</b></li> <li>• <b>Jesus' teaching on the resurrection of the body/ judgement and eternal life.</b></li> </ul> <p>Pentecost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit;</b></li> <li>• <b>the Holy Spirit sent by the Father and the Son.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Objective 1 - The Revelation of God</b> <i>God and the Bible</i> God's Relationship with his Chosen People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ruth (included in list).</b></li> </ul> <p>The life of Jesus Jesus' miracles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>demons – for example legion.</b></li> </ul> <p>Jesus' Teachings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>forgiveness, eg. the unmerciful servant;</b></li> <li>• <b>judgement eg. the rich man and Lazarus;</b></li> <li>• <b>love, eg. the prodigal son</b></li> </ul> <p>Events leading to the death of Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Palm Sunday;</b></li> <li>• <b>The last supper.</b></li> </ul> <p>Resurrection and ascension of Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jesus appearing to the eleven;</b></li> <li>• <b>the ascension and <b>second coming of Christ.</b></b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning Objective 2 - The Christian Church</b> <i>The Church through the ages</i> study one key figure in the church life <b>from each</b> of the following periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the celtic church;</li> <li>• the reformation;</li> <li>• the church in modern times</li> </ul> <p><b>Worship, prayer and their effects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>consider how believers have been moved to worship God through an appreciation of creation and faith in his great saving acts;</b></li> <li>• <b>explore an instance of prayer/worship in the Old Testament and two instances of prayer/worship in the New Testament;</b></li> <li>• <b>consider types of prayer for both corporate and personal use;</b></li> <li>• <b>study ways in which worship/prayer has influenced an individual or a group.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Objective 2 - The Christian Church</b> <i>The Church through the ages</i> Pupils should engage in a study of at least one key figure from three of the following periods, considering how his/her faith has impacted on his/her life and the life of others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the celtic church;</li> <li>• the reformation;</li> <li>• <b>eighteenth/nineteenth Christian missionary outreach and social reformers;</b></li> <li>• <b>the church in the twentieth century;</b></li> <li>• the church today – a contemporary Christian.</li> </ul>

It is no longer mandatory to teach the following in the context stated:	The following in <b>bold</b> have been introduced into core syllabus in the contexts stated:
<p><b>Learning Objective 3 - Morality</b>  <i>Know and accepting myself</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>their own uniqueness.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Relationships</i>  <b>consider their roles in the community and their responsibilities towards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• family;</li> <li>• peers;</li> <li>• <b>teachers;</b></li> <li>• <b>opposite sex;</b></li> <li>• minority groups.</li> </ul> <p><i>Making decisions</i>  <b>Explore, discuss and reflect upon a variety of issues in relation to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distinguishing the difference between right and wrong;</li> <li>• <b>distinguishing between positive and negative peer group influence;</b></li> <li>• <b>making moral decisions and acting on them.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Objective 3 - Morality</b>  <i>Issues of personal identity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>self image;</b></li> <li>• <b>physical and emotional well being.</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Relationships and responsibilities</i>  consider how relationships, rights and responsibilities operate and pertain to <b>at least three of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• family;</li> <li>• peers;</li> <li>• <b>people with special needs;</b></li> <li>• <b>authority figures;</b></li> <li>• <b>gender equality issues;</b></li> <li>• <b>ethnic and religious groups;</b></li> <li>• minority groups.</li> </ul> <p><i>Choices</i>  Consider how choices are made and influence the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>career;</b></li> <li>• <b>work;</b></li> <li>• <b>unemployment;</b></li> <li>• <b>use of leisure time;</b></li> <li>• <b>money/Substance abuse;</b></li> <li>• <b>the environment;</b></li> <li>• <b>prejudice, sectarianism and reconciliation.</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Learning Objective 4 - World Religions (at least 2)</b>  This section is new.  It is seen as an introduction to two world religions other than Christianity in order to develop knowledge of and sensitivity towards the religious beliefs, practices and lifestyles of people from other religions in Northern Ireland.  For detail see Core Syllabus</p>

## Appendix 4

# Examples of Assessment for Learning Approaches in Religious Education

Task: Plan, research and take part in a formal debate on the importance of one of the Ten Commandments in today's society.

Key Action	Context
<b>Sharing learning intentions</b>	<p>Learning Intentions - should be made clear to the pupils. We are learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan a debate on the topic in groups;</li> <li>• understand different roles in a formal debate;</li> <li>• conduct research about the topic;</li> <li>• plan and structure arguments;</li> <li>• listen and respond to others points of view.</li> </ul>
<b>Sharing and negotiating success criteria</b>	<p>Decided with the pupils – how will we know we have achieved the learning intentions. Remember to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make a clear time plan for your research;</li> <li>• complete research about the topic;</li> <li>• draft and structure arguments and get feedback;</li> <li>• develop ideas within the debate;</li> <li>• become fully involved in the debate.</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during preparation of the debate in groups give constructive comments to encourage the pupils to think more broadly of the issue and to come up with further arguments for development;</li> <li>• be constructive with pupils about how well their arguments will stand up against counter-arguments;</li> <li>• during planning process of talk use comments for pupils to see areas of success and areas for improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Effective questioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during the preparation of activity plan questions and build in higher order questions e.g. What do you think about this commandment? Do you think it is important to follow this today? Why?</li> <li>• encourage pupils to question the commandment and its purpose for today;</li> <li>• pair and share – ask pupils to share their opinion on the commandment/s with their neighbour – bring it back to whole class/group discussion;</li> <li>• question commandments from different view points.</li> </ul>
<b>Self and peer assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during the group activity encourage pupils to share ideas and arguments with peers to get feedback. Give prompt questions to help pupils focus when they are reading. Encourage positive feedback;</li> <li>• during debate encourage pupils to ask questions and respond to the view of others;</li> <li>• review contributions to the group/individual performances and success of debate afterwards.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5

# Examples of Key Concepts in Learning for Life and Work with Relation to the Core Syllabus for Religious Education

Learning for Life and Work Strands and Key Concepts	Religious Education Core Syllabus
<p><b>Personal Development</b></p> <p><i>Self-awareness</i> Explore and express a sense of self.</p> <p><i>Personal Health</i> Investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.</p> <p><i>Relationships</i> Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenario.</p>	<p>Issues of Personal Identity. World Religions other than Christianity – Beliefs.</p> <p>Choices – substance abuse. A Contemporary Christian.</p> <p>Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities. Jesus and his relationship with people.</p>
<p><b>Home Economics</b></p> <p><i>Home and Family Life</i> Explore the roles and responsibilities of individuals within a variety of home and family structures.</p> <p><i>Independent Living</i> Investigate a range of factors that influence consumer choices and decisions.</p>	<p>Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities. World Religions other than Christianity - Family Life.</p> <p>Choices.</p>
<p><b>Local and Global Citizenship</b></p> <p><i>Diversity and Inclusion</i> Investigate factors including religious and political that influence individual and group identity.</p> <p><i>Human Rights and Social Responsibility</i> Investigate why different rights must be limited or balanced in our society.</p>	<p>Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities. Christian Church. World Religions other than Christianity.</p> <p>Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities.</p>
<p><b>Employability</b></p> <p><i>Career Management</i> Explore the changing concept of career. Use a range of ICT resources to investigate a variety of both familiar and unfamiliar jobs.</p>	<p>Choices. Career/work/unemployment.</p>

## Appendix 6

# Examples of Active Learning and Teaching Methods in Religious Education

Some examples of activities from the Active Learning and Teaching Methods at Key Stage 3 available at [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk).

- **CAF – consider all facts (page 9-10)**. From a chosen issue/scenario pupils use caf template to consider all the relevant factors when making a decision:  
Role of conscience – is it ever right to tell a lie?
- **Collage (page 14)**. Pupils work to represent their view in a visual and creative way:  
The concept of stewardship – looking after the world and humans within it.
- **Traffic Lights (page 72)**. Pupils use Red, Amber or Green cards to show their understanding of a topic/issue in the class:  
Concept of the Trinity in Christianity;  
The concept of dukkha (suffering) in Buddhism.
- **OPV – other people’s view (page 55)**. Encourages pupils to look at issues/topic from another person/opposing point of view:  
Pupils could look at the story of The Good Samaritan and see the different views of people in the story – why did they act the way they did? Who do they identify with?
- **Mind maps (page 48-49)**. Pupils use the mind map technique to clarify ideas and show how connections can be made in variety of issues:  
Mind-map highlighting similarities and differences of an important ceremony in 2 religions (birth/marriage).
- **Walking Debates (page 75)**. Can be used for pupils to think about a specific issue and to justify their opinions. They can change their positions at certain points during the debate:  
We should only buy goods that are guaranteed to be Fair Trade.

# Religious Education within the Northern Ireland Curriculum

The statutory requirements are set out in the Core Syllabus for Religious Education. These are outlined in **Bold** in the **Knowledge, Understanding and Skills** column. This diagram aligns aspects of the core syllabus with the statutory requirements of the curriculum. All four learning objectives of the Core Syllabus can relate to a number of **Key Elements**. The illustrations offered in the objective columns aim to relate this strand to Learning for Life and Work contexts. All examples are in italics.

<b>(Objective 1)</b> <b>Developing pupils as Individuals</b>	<b>(Objective 2)</b> <b>Developing pupils as Contributors to Society</b>	<b>(Objective 3)</b> <b>Developing pupils as Contributors to the Economy and the Environment</b>
<p><b>Developing pupils' Knowledge, Understanding and Skills</b></p> <p>Pupils should have opportunities, through the contexts opposite, to develop:</p> <p>an awareness, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the key Christian teachings about God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), about Jesus Christ, and about the Bible; develop an ability to interpret and relate the Bible to life;</p> <p>a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the growth of Christianity, of its worship, prayer and religious language; a growing awareness of the meaning of belonging to a Christian tradition, and sensitivity towards the beliefs of others;</p> <p>their ability to think and judge about morality, to relate Christian moral principles to personal and social life, and to identify values and attitudes that influence behaviour;</p> <p>a knowledge of two world religions other than Christianity and sensitivity towards the religious beliefs, practices and lifestyles of their followers in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>They should also have the opportunities to develop and practise the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>investigate, explain and evaluate the impact of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and society;</li> <li>analyse, interpret, evaluate and present information from a range of sources, texts and authorities;</li> <li>develop critical and creative thinking in their approach to solving problems and making decisions;</li> <li>be able to discuss, evaluate and empathise with how religious beliefs and teachings can inform answers to questions about the meaning and purpose of life as well as moral and ethical issues;</li> <li>reflect on and evaluate their own and others' thoughts, feelings, experiences and beliefs on religious, spiritual and moral issues, using reasoned and balanced arguments, and consider how these might be applied to their lifestyle.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pupils should have opportunities to:</b></p> <p>Explore issues of personal identity by fostering respect for self, for example, <i>development of positive self-image through the concept of creation in the image of God.</i> (Key Element: <b>Personal Understanding</b>)</p> <p>Investigate ways in which rights and responsibilities in relationships with other people apply to everyday life and how this is sometimes difficult to put into practice, for example, <i>conflicts with family or peers and how they can be resolved.</i></p> <p>Develop a range of skills to promote sensitivity and empathy when discussing religious and moral issues, for example, <i>discussing and questioning in a frank and open manner varying opinions on issues such as sectarianism, prejudice and/or racism; discussing the positive impact of inter religious dialogue.</i> (Key Element: <b>Mutual Understanding</b>)</p> <p>Explore the role of religion in regard to health issues, for example, <i>development of the concept of the body as a temple in relation to smoking, alcohol or substance abuse.</i> (Key Element: <b>Personal Health</b>)</p> <p>Examine how we make choices between right and wrong and the influences that shape our moral behaviour such as conscience, family, peers, school, religious background, media and society, for example, <i>investigation into the life of a well-known religious person who has taken a moral stance.</i> (Key Element: <b>Moral Character</b>)</p> <p>Explore and respond to the key questions that arise through discussions on the purpose of life and develop personal awareness in this area, for example, <i>the role of forgiveness, love and judgement in the teaching and life of Jesus; investigate the Eightfold Path in Buddhism or Five pillars of Islam.</i> (Key Element: <b>Spiritual Awareness</b>)</p>	<p><b>Pupils should have opportunities to:</b></p> <p>Consider the important role of skills, attitudes, dispositions and ethical values in the work place, for example, <i>working within religious and ethical guidelines in work.</i> (Key Element: <b>Employability</b>)</p> <p>Consider how their consumer choices have an effect on the economic stability of others, for example, <i>the development of fair trade consumer goods.</i> Explore the role of charities in modern society, for example, <i>how one charity contributes to the economic development of people locally or globally.</i> (Key Element: <b>Economic Awareness</b>)</p> <p>Explore why those with a religious faith believe they have responsibility, as stewards, to take care of the world and people within it.</p> <p>Explain how they might put these beliefs about stewardship into practice today, for example, <i>activities in which people participate that develop a responsible attitude towards the environment; religious response to human development issues; the creation of a fair and equitable world.</i> (Key Element: <b>Education for Sustainable Development</b>)</p>
<p><b>Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <p>The learning outcomes require the demonstration of skills and application of knowledge and understanding of Religious Education and its impact on life today.</p> <p>Pupils should be able to:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>research and manage information effectively to investigate religious, moral and ethical issues, including Using Mathematics and Using ICT where appropriate;</li> <li>show deeper understanding by thinking critically and flexibly, solving problems and making informed decisions, demonstrating Using Mathematics and Using ICT where appropriate;</li> <li>demonstrate creativity, and initiative when developing ideas and following them through;</li> <li>work effectively with others;</li> <li>demonstrate self-management by working systematically, persisting with tasks, evaluating and improving own performance;</li> <li>communicate effectively in oral, visual, written and ICT formats, showing clear awareness of audience and purpose.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <p>The learning outcomes require the demonstration of skills and application of knowledge and understanding of Religious Education and its impact on life today.</p> <p>Pupils should be able to:</p>

NB: Teachers may develop activities that combine many of the statutory requirements, provided that, across the key stage, all of the statutory aspects highlighted in **BOLD** (including each of the Key Elements) are met.

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