

## Ofsted Research and analysis

### Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report

#### Source:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-religious-education/deep-and-meaningful-the-religious-education-subject-report>

**Date:** April 2024

#### Summary:

The report considers the evidence gathered through inspections and research visits. It is divided into findings in primary schools and those in secondary schools; it includes evidence from Reception Year to sixth form. It builds on the work of the 2021 [research review into RE](#). It considers:

- curriculum: the content that pupils learn in RE lessons
- pedagogy: how schools teach and implement the curriculum
- assessment: how teachers check the extent to which pupils have learned the curriculum
- how RE is organised in schools
- teacher education and professional development

#### Recommendations

Schools should:

- ensure that there is a distinct curriculum in place for teaching RE that is rigorous and challenging and builds on what pupils already know
- carefully select knowledge and important content and concepts. These should be clearly identified and sequenced. There should be a considered approach to ensure that the curriculum does not contain oversimplifications of traditions, including, where appropriate, non-religious traditions
- ensure that there is a balance in the breadth and depth of study of religious and non-religious traditions

- ensure that pupils have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge in RE over time
- ensure that disciplinary and personal knowledge should be evident through the chosen substantive content
- be ambitious for pupils to develop all aspects of knowledge: substantive, ways of knowing and personal knowledge. They should make sure that teachers have high expectations of what pupils will know and remember
- provide opportunities for pupils to review and build on important knowledge over time. They should make sure that pupils use the knowledge that they gained in previous years as the curriculum becomes increasingly more complex and demanding
- ensure that teaching specifically develops pupils' knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions
- develop manageable assessment methods that move beyond the simple recall of factual information. They should check that pupils recall and understand the intended curriculum over time and that the domain of their knowledge is expanding