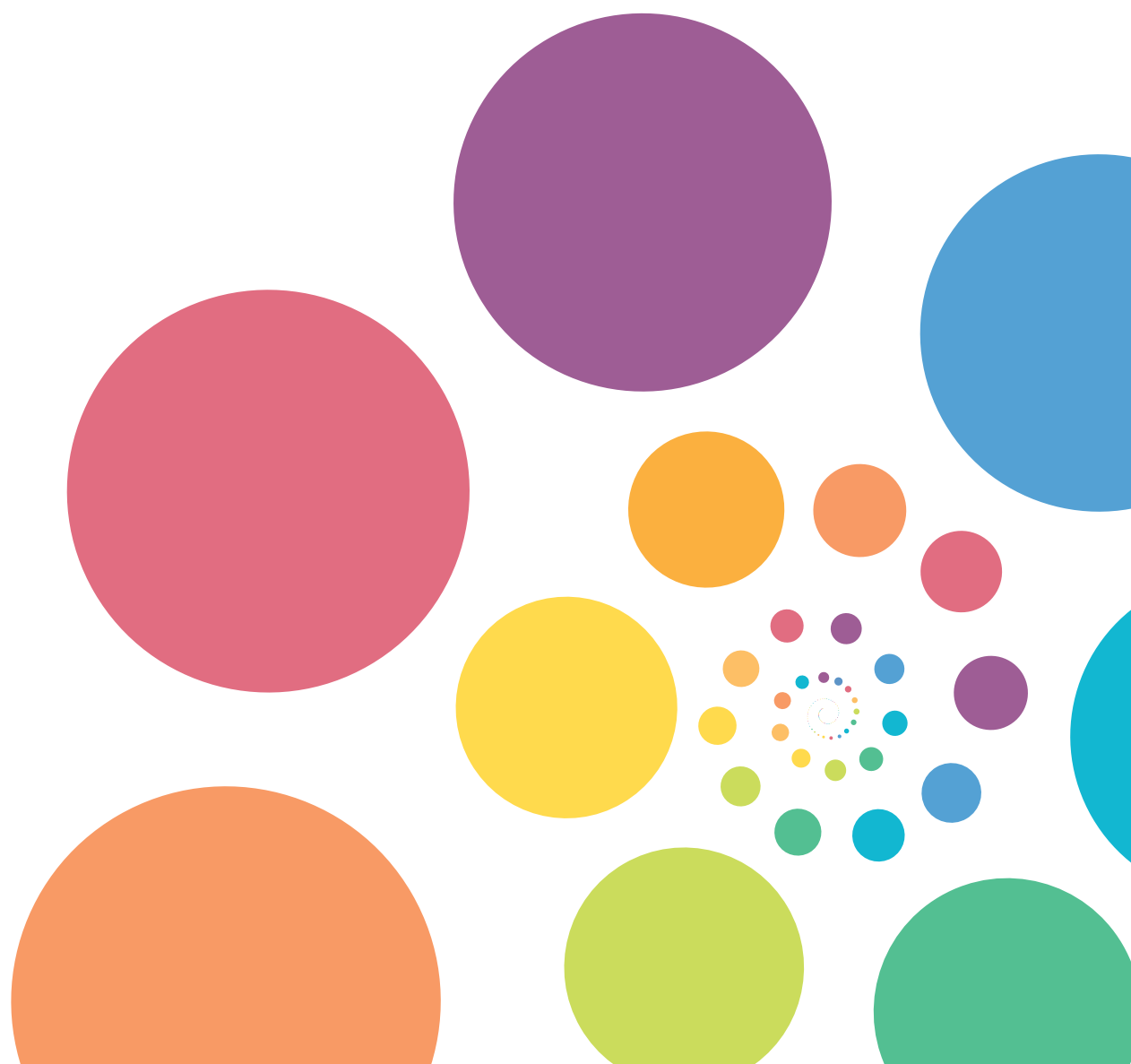




ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

for Teachers of Religious Education



PART A: AN APPROACH

This section of the guidance outlines an approach using ‘Eight Steps Up’ to describe progression and achievement for pupils aged 5–14.

Expectations in RE: How can we assess pupils' progress and achievement?

A contribution to good assessment practice in RE through eight steps

In RE, by the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the RE programme of study, as in all subjects of the curriculum. The expectation is that pupils' achievements will be weighed up by teachers using criteria arising from the programmes of study. This statement is included in the programmes of study for each subject of the English National Curriculum 2013.

All schools need to have a curriculum and assessment framework for all subjects that meets the set of core principles offered by the Department for Education (DfE). For RE assessment, like other subjects, you should use the outcomes for RE from your locally agreed syllabus, diocesan guidelines or academy agreement. Subject leaders for RE should plan careful and progressed ways of describing achievement and progress for all pupils. The pages that follow offer teachers one approach to describe achievement and progress; there are many others being worked on in schools across the country. This 'Eight Steps Up' approach to assessing RE may be an approach you wish to use or you may wish to apply some of its ideas and principles within an approach you are using in your school. This approach offers a way forward from the eight-level scales often used in recent years, using new structures but maintaining good continuity with past practice.

The core principles are set by the DfE. They are that assessment in RE should:

- set out clear learning steps so that pupils can reach or exceed the expected outcomes for each age group in RE
- enable teachers to measure whether pupils are on track to meet end-of-key-stage outcomes at key points, e.g. when reporting annually to parents on progress and achievement in RE, as the law requires
- enable teachers to pinpoint any aspects of the RE curriculum in which pupils are falling behind, and also to recognise exceptional performance
- support teachers' planning for progress in RE for all pupils
- enable the teacher to report regularly to parents and, where pupils move to other

schools, providing clear information about each pupil's strengths, weaknesses and progress towards the end-of-key-stage outcomes.

In the light of these DfE principles and in relation to RE, this approach to assessing RE offers answers to five key questions.

I What steps within an assessment framework enable pupils to reach or exceed the end-of-key-stage outcomes in the RE curriculum?

- In RE, at 7, 11 and 14, pupils should show that they know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the programme of study. Specific RE outcomes should guide teaching and learning.

The key concepts of RE: to be understood and applied

- Good RE programmes of study enable pupils to increase and deepen their knowledge and understanding of key concepts in RE. These concept clusters relate to the religions and worldviews studied. The key concepts that make up RE's field of enquiry can be described like this:
 - beliefs, teachings, sources of wisdom and authority
 - experiences and ways of living
 - ways of expressing meaning
 - questions of identity, diversity and belonging
 - questions of meaning, purpose and truth
 - questions of values and commitments.

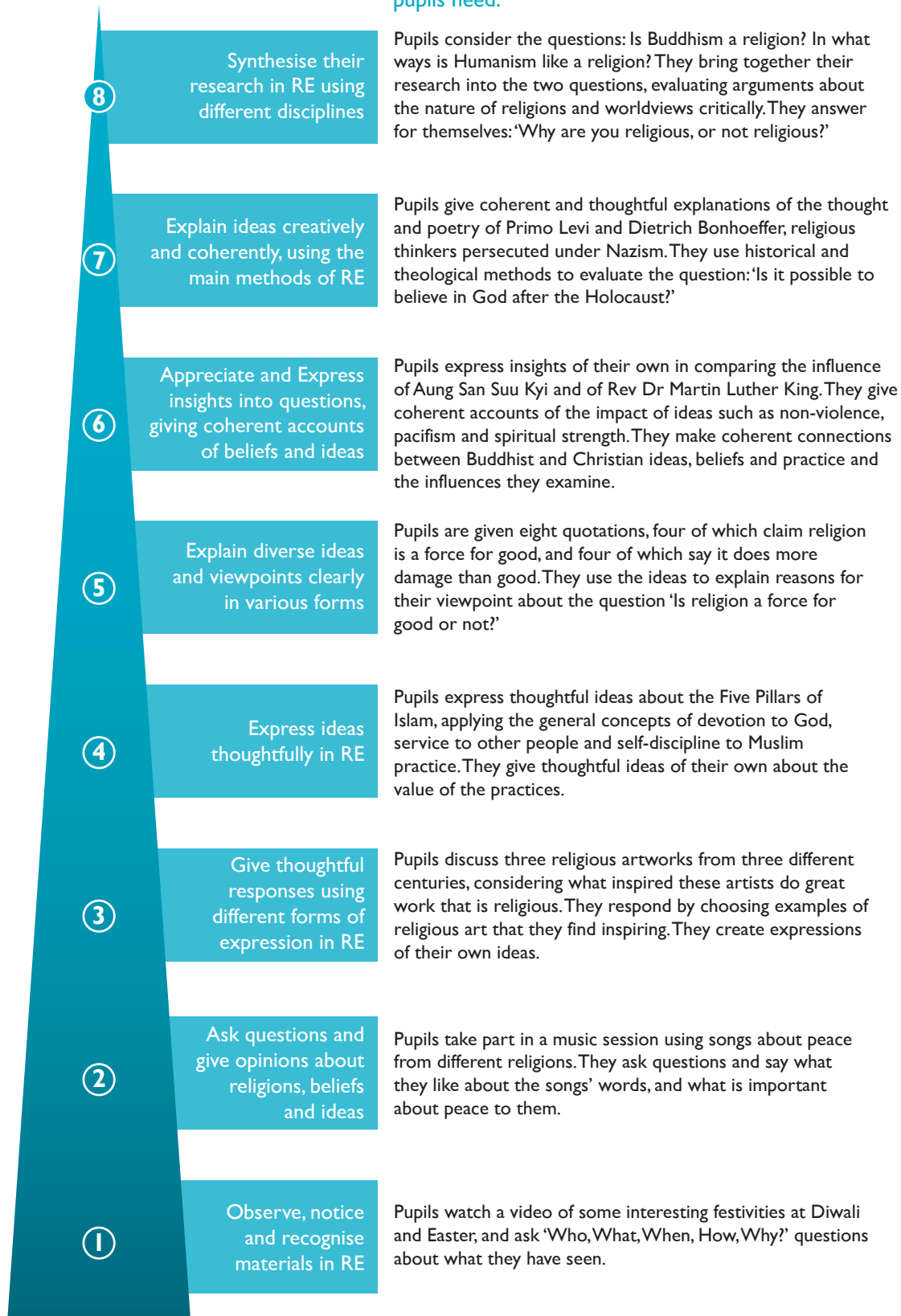
While this list of concepts bears a close relation to previous versions of RE curriculum guidance (e.g. the QCA *National Non-statutory RE Framework* of 2004), the concepts are listed here to provide a checklist of areas in which pupils will make progress towards outcomes in RE and to guide subject leaders in developing appropriate statements of attainment for different groups of pupils. They feature in many locally agreed syllabuses and

Eight Steps Up

Expressing and communicating ideas relating to religions and worldviews

Examples: Expressing and communicating

These examples of the communication and expression pupils learn in RE need to be read in the light of the RE requirements for each key stage. The examples are just one illustration of the planned progression that pupils need.



STEP 8

Analyse arguments, synthesise research, justify perspectives

I can analyse arguments cogently, justifying perspectives.

In good learning activities pupils could:

- analyse some ways in which Christians root their environmental action in scripture and ideas of God as creator and sustainer of life
- justify their own perspectives on British Muslim contributions to UK society in the light of the Qur'an's teaching on Shariah
- give an analytical account of why some people pray daily, and others never, in the light of experiences, evidence and arguments about both answered prayer and unanswered prayer
- analyse two opposing interpretations of the Bible's texts about gay and lesbian sexuality, accounting for the divergent views of the issue found among Quakers, Methodists and Catholics
- analyse the idea 'theodicy is impossible after Auschwitz'
- analyse the statement 'When God made Adam she was only practising'
- draw balanced conclusions about why six religions that all preach peace are involved in over 100 civil and international conflicts in the world today.

I can synthesise research using different disciplines in RE.

In good learning activities pupils could:

- account for the continuing popularity of Christmas in a secularising and pluralising United Kingdom, using sociological data and method (Sociology of Religion)
- use extensive core knowledge of ethical theory to explain three approaches to a question about sex ethics or the ethics of money (Ethics)
- use religious concepts from Sikhism to explain arguments for and against the reality of God, drawing balanced and well-substantiated conclusions
- draw balanced and informed conclusions to a debate about God and astrophysics: Was God real before the 'Big Bang'? (Science and Religion)

I can use varied disciplines of religious study to research ultimate questions.

In good learning activities pupils could:

- research ideas and values about using intoxicants, with reference to examples from Methodist Christianity and British Islam
- give well-informed and insightful explanations of why inter-religious understanding can make peacemaking between communities easier
- evaluate in detail the idea of a free-floating non-religious spirituality for young people in Britain today, in the light of the prevalent attitude that 'religion is irrelevant, but spirituality is vibrant'
- justify their own views about the spiritual dimension of life
- argue my own independent answer to the question 'Can you be committed to a spirituality without a tradition or a community?'
- conclude in a well-informed way how people in two religions might influence their ideas about responding to suffering and evil
- justify their own views of Christian and/or Muslim views about the priority of marriage over any other context for family life and sexual fulfilment.

Extensive examples of pupils' RE work, in standards files, marked with reference to the 2004-11 levels, are available at: www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/current-ongoing-projects



T: 0121 472 4242

F: 0121 472 7575

W: www.natre.org.uk

E: admin@natre.org.uk