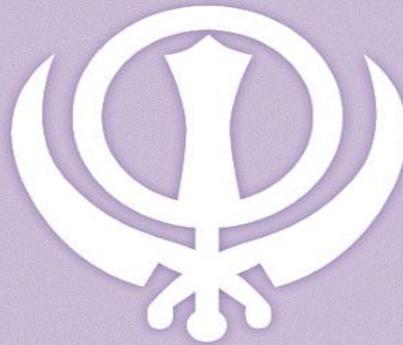
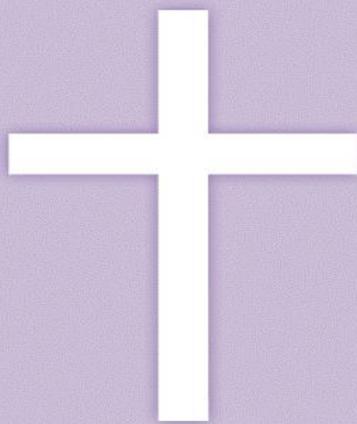
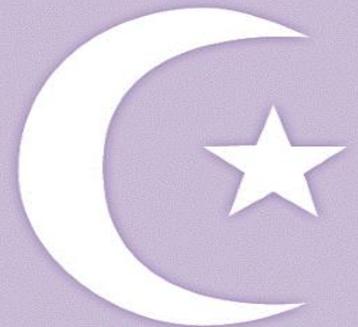
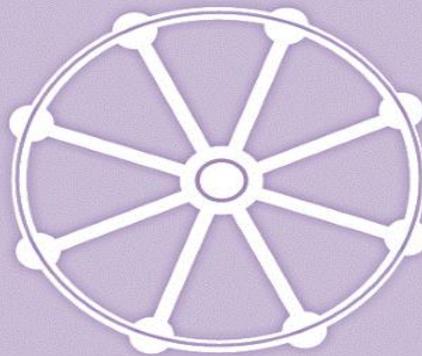
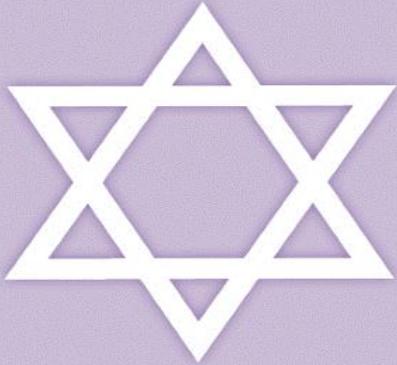


# Hillingdon Religious Education Agreed Syllabus

Hillingdon Standing Advisory Council  
on Religious Education  
April 2022



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

[www.hillingdon.gov.uk](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk)

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In the Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus, references are made to, and the spelling of religion-specific terms is consistent with, the nationally agreed spelling in the 'Religious Education: Glossary of Terms'.

# Introduction

This locally Agreed Syllabus has been put together by the London Borough of Hillingdon SACRE whose membership includes elected members, teachers and representatives of different faith groups and denominations. Hillingdon SACRE works hard to promote exemplary RE teaching in schools within the Local authority.

Whilst recognising the numerous and diverse beliefs that are representative of our Local Authority, including those who have no particular faith, the Agreed Syllabus promotes the importance of children showing respect and understanding of each other's views. It enables children to explore the relationship between culture and religion. Furthermore, it facilitates teachers in supporting children in their understanding of the significance that faith holds for many. The Agreed Syllabus acknowledges the teaching of the major religions and associated traditions whilst recognising that other beliefs such as Humanism also form part of the lives of others.

The Agreed Syllabus sets out the statutory requirements for the teaching of religious education and provides guidance to support learning. It is designed to promote a greater understanding of this important and valued area of the curriculum which in turn will promote greater achievement in this subject area. It is intended to be a starting point for schools to consider pupils' beliefs and thoughts, as well as providing a forum for promoting discussion through the use of stimulating questions and opportunities for reflection. The design of this syllabus will increase religious literacy and enable children to engage in the deeper questions in life.

Local Authorities are required to review their RE syllabus every five years and to recommend a full or partial review of the syllabus. Hillingdon SACRE has reviewed its syllabus and has been particularly proud of its funded Continuing Professional Development element which has seen Primary teachers guided through a programme of development supported by NATRE and RE Today. We are also very proud of the continued successes of the Interfaith Networks and the sharing of high-quality learning with the wider community. This Agreed Syllabus serves to further support community cohesion.

# Purpose and Entitlement to Religious Education

Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself. It develops an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society.

Religious Education is an important facet of education for Hillingdon's young people as it informs our students about how religious beliefs, embedded in a vast array of faiths, provide the underpinning for the ways people live their lives. It also contributes significantly to their decision making with regard to right and wrong action. Given this, the study of religion, both in terms of its content and its enactments, is crucial to the achievement of an educated person in Hillingdon today.

RE can thus make a fundamental contribution to community cohesion, citizenship, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Nevertheless, children and young people must also have an understanding of what it is to be someone of no religious faith. Furthermore, the fact that the locally agreed syllabus is produced with the involvement of all aspects of the local community and its schools, including those that are not tied to the locally agreed syllabus, helps to ensure that the syllabus supports community cohesion, including inter-faith working.

RE equips pupils with the skills to understand and explain the human values which are shared between religious and other worldviews. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully. To achieve this, RE must be taught in an objective and pluralistic manner, and not as indoctrination into a particular faith or belief.

Teaching RE should foster and develop key discernment skills including interpreting, understanding and evaluating texts, the knowledge in the selection of authoritative texts, and critical thinking skills. This will lead to a high level of religious literacy among our young people, giving them the skills to participate positively in our contemporary society.

Every pupil in a maintained school is entitled to Religious Education. The place of Religious Education (RE) in the curriculum of maintained schools in England has not changed since the 1944 Education Act. While it's compulsory for all maintained schools to provide RE, it's not part of the National Curriculum. Its content is determined by a locally agreed syllabus for maintained schools that do not have a particular faith character.

Religious Education remains a subject that has to be taken throughout the years of statutory education, and within schools up to the age of 19, unless parents withdraw their children from RE or the young people over 18 seek to do so themselves. The governments of the United Kingdom have continued to state that RE "is a very important subject in the school curriculum".

By not being included in the National Curriculum, the syllabus continues to be able to reflect the local demographic of faith communities.

A number of legislative changes within and beyond the world of education in both Britain and Europe have implications for RE. The Human Rights Act 1998, the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2006 all contribute to the 'bigger picture' within which RE is provided in schools and experienced by children and young people.

# The Aims of Religious Education in Hillingdon

The following aims will be delivered in all maintained schools and academies which adopt this syllabus.

This will enable children and young people, according to their ability and level of development, to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions, principally Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism as well as those with no faith allegiance, all of which are represented in Hillingdon.
- learn from different world religions and provide opportunities to explore and express their own responses and personal beliefs.
- understand the relationship between beliefs and practices.
- develop an understanding of the influence of faiths, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies, and cultures.
- develop personal learning and thinking skills pertinent to Religious Education, such as questioning, investigating, communicating, expressing, and evaluating, and to promote the ability to make reasoned, critical and informed moral judgements.
- combat prejudice.

**Further we expect Religious Education to:**

- encourage children and young people to respect and value the right of people to hold differing beliefs, including those with no faith, and to cultivate understanding and respect in a society with a diversity of faiths.

**And in line with Section 78(1) of the 2002 Education Act to:**

- contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils and of society, and help prepare children and young people for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

# Assessment in Religious Education

Religious education equips pupils with the skills to understand and explain the human values which are shared between religious and other worldviews and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus acknowledges that some aspects of RE are easier to assess than others. With this in mind, teachers are not expected to make judgements about pupil's moral development or spiritual insight. Nonetheless, as with other subjects, assessment can be used to help pupils to make progress in RE.

In Hillingdon we wish to empower our teachers to use their professional skills and judgement in the task of assessment for Religious Education.

Assessment is complex, and there is no one method or approach that can be applied to all contexts. This guidance brings together a range of current best practice to support schools in developing their assessment of RE. The Hillingdon Agreed Syllabus for RE is broadly in line with the national non- statutory framework provided by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (2013). (See Appendix 1)

Good assessment requires continual dialogue and revision. Schools are strongly advised to provide opportunities for all teachers of RE to collaborate, making use of exemplification materials and to moderate pupils' work.

## Assessment is divided into the following three categories.

**Aim A:** Know and Understand

**Aim B:** Express and Communicate

**Aim C:** Gain and deploy skills

**The key issues when assessing a piece of student's work are:**

1. Does the pupil directly address the question asked?
2. Does the pupil's work reflect the objective(s) being taught?
3. Does the pupil give good and sound detail and explanation?
4. Does the pupil show good use of relevant terminology and a comprehensive coverage of the material?

**Appendix 1** The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (2013) A Summary of the Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England.

# Reporting on Religious Education

Headteachers at maintained schools, including maintained special schools must prepare annual reports for every pupil's parents. The school must make arrangements for parents to discuss the report with their child's teacher, if the parents wish to do so.

Religious education is a statutory subject for all pupils registered at a maintained school, except for pupils:

- in nursery classes
- who have been withdrawn by their parents under section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

It is a general requirement that schools report pupils progress in religious education to parents. There is no required format for reports.

Therefore, schools will need to ensure that, as

a minimum, annual reports to parents, carers and guardians include a statement about the pupil's progress and achievement in Religious Education, and that a copy of the annual report is retained within the pupil's file.

Information based on such reports must be given to the Governing Body. Statutory requirements, laid down by the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual), relating to the transfer of information between schools must be met.

## **Academies**

Academies should fully comply with these assessment and reporting arrangements.

## **Governing Bodies**

Governing Bodies of maintained schools have a duty to ensure the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, including assessment and reporting arrangements.

# Curriculum Provision for Religious Education

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum which includes RE and the National Curriculum. This includes provision for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Hillingdon SACRE is available to support a school where a request to withdraw from RE has been made.

The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the LA concerned. Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decision in preparing their syllabuses. LA's must ensure that the agreed syllabus in their area is consistent with section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian

whilst taking into account the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Schools are not obliged to provide RE to pupils who are under compulsory school age (section 80(2)(a) of the Education Act 2002) although there are many instances nationwide of good practice where RE is taught to these pupils. Separate legislative provision on RE is made for maintained special schools which requires them to ensure that as far as practicable, a pupil receives RE.

By not including RE in the National Curriculum, the importance of it being able to reflect the local nature of faith and belief was recognised. The Hillingdon agreed conference wants the syllabus to helpfully reflect on the changing demographics of schools in Hillingdon and offers the inclusion of the Faith Strand as a useful way of reflecting on the diverse range of faith and beliefs in Hillingdon

# Curricular Requirements

The revised Agreed Syllabus continues to be based on the recommended minimum time allowance for the teaching of Religious Education in schools of 5%.

**In practice this generally works out to be:**

30-36 hours per year Key Stage 1

38-45 hours per year Key Stage 2

38-45 hours per year Key Stage 3

30-36 hours per year Key Stage 4

No specific proposal is made for Key Stage 5

In setting this syllabus, the Agreed Syllabus Conference recognised the pressure on schools in finding the time for all the requirements on the curriculum but would restate that the importance of RE and its specific opportunity to recognize and celebrate each person beliefs makes it difficult to see how this can be delivered other than as a separate and independent subject on the curriculum.

Where schools include RE within a cross-curriculum 'package', RE should be treated and staffed

accordingly, as an independent element with its specific aspects of learning about and learning from faith and beliefs.

Normally, Key Stage 3 covers years 7, 8 and 9 and Key Stage 4 covering years 10 and 11 although some schools have redefined this, starting Key Stage 4 in year 9.

Schools should use the above as a guide both across and within Key Stages.

Where Key Stages are redefined, the guidance should be taken across the years involved.

There is no requirement for the teaching of Religious Education in nursery classes, but it is statutory that children under five in reception classes are taught Religious Education.

Collective worship is not part of Religious Education though it may contribute to the delivery of the subject.

# Beliefs and Values Strand

The introduction of the renamed Beliefs and Values strand in the last review was welcomed by schools and has been revised in this latest revision. It contains material shared by everyone with a faith or faith background, but also by others who would perhaps claim not to have a faith. It is a compulsory strand at each Key Stage.

In addition to the religions below, other religions, philosophies and belief systems may be referred to within this strand. Schools should consider the needs of their communities in both extending their knowledge and understanding of the wide and divergent faiths throughout the known history of man as well as those beliefs and practices within our own culture.

# Faith Experience

Previous agreed syllabi have strongly recommended the benefit from visiting faith communities.

This continues to be the advice of this revision, specifically that all students should have opportunities to visit at least two places of worship at each of the Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Where this contributes to an understanding that the faith is a vibrant important part of the lives of the participants, the visit helps appreciate the importance of the building in the community. On a more pragmatic level, there are a limited number of non-Christian buildings within easy reach of most schools in the borough.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference continues to recommend another way of helping students appreciate that religion is an important part of people's lives; by inviting colleagues, parents, members of faith communities as well as faith leaders to come into school and be asked to talk about their personal faith journeys within lessons.

An additional route is for schools to consider holding their own Inter Faith Networking events. The termly inter faith events for schools continue to offer excellent opportunities for schools.

# Other Strands

The syllabus identifies six world religions and one non-faith as central to the study of Religious Education: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Humanism.

Faith and Values and Christianity must be taught at each key stage. Schools are free to determine which of the other strands, in addition to Christianity, they will teach at each key stage, subject to the following recommendations.

In order that pupils encounter a wide range of faith beliefs, at least one non-Abrahamic faith should be studied at Key Stage 1-2 and at least one in Key Stage 3.

Schools should not attempt to cover more than those recommended at each key stage.

## Key Stage 1

Faith and Values, Christianity and only one other, from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism or Humanism.

## Key Stage 2

Faith and Values, Christianity and at least two, but no more than three, other strands should be taught. Schools should monitor to ensure that at least one non-Abrahamic strand has been studied within Key Stages 1 and 2

## Key Stage 3

Faith and Values, Christianity and at least one, but no more than four, other strands should be taught.

## Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents, should pursue a course in Religious Education. Some schools have translated this in delivering the subject within a GCSE course in either year 10 or 11. This is acceptable as long as it meets the criteria required in covering the external examination syllabus within the time allowed.

## Key Stage 5

It is a requirement that all registered 16-19 year old pupils in maintained schools study Religious Education unless withdrawn by parents or by request from students themselves, if over 18 years of age.

Schools should ensure that all students have the opportunity to access Diploma courses which include Religious Education, A/S and A level courses in Religious Studies or similar.

At this stage, Religious Education offers students a great deal. Carefully planned and thoughtfully delivered it can allow students an opportunity to reflect on religious, philosophical, moral and ethical issues and relate these to the work they are doing within other areas of the curriculum.

Equally, they may be given the opportunity to develop their own beliefs and opinions and the ability to make sound and reasoned judgements in preparation for life beyond school. The aims of Religious Education remain the same as for pupils in other key stages, however as there is considerable diversity of needs, interests and attitudes among this age group there is no prescribed programme of study. Schools must determine the most appropriate courses for their pupils.

The subject provides a unique and valuable opportunity to allow students to participate in setting the topics to be covered, reflecting opportunities to explore their own beliefs as well as others.

There are examples of excellent practice through this opportunity.

The time allocation for Religious Education for pupils in years 12 and 13 should be flexible, but Religious Education must be delivered as part of a coherent and identifiable programme. Schools might consider offering various Religious Education topics as modules within a cycle of complementary studies units, as weekly sessions or as day conferences, but these need to be alongside or within a general programme of Religious Education.

Schools are free to use any of the material set out in earlier key stages or to devise a course based on the themes mentioned in the Post 16 section. Similar recommendations are that schools review the diplomas on offer.

# Key Stage 1

## Beliefs and Values Key Stage 1

### Key areas of understanding

- Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?
- The communities where I belong.
- Keeping a perspective on life.
- BIG questions – Widening your links with others.

### Key ideas

#### Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?

- Knowing that what I believe may be different to what others believe.
- What do I value - have I a choice and do I exercise it?
- Being happy and secure.

#### The communities where I belong

- Sharing.
- How do I know what you are thinking and what makes a community different?
- Awareness of the ways religious faiths and world views relate to the community and the wide range of activities and meetings.
- Rites of passage - the families I belong to.
- Keeping a perspective on life.
- An understanding that a belief can be a journey for people.

#### BIG questions – Looking outside yourself.

- What do we do to make others happy?
- Do animals have feelings like us.

# Christianity Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Christians believe in a God who is like a loving father/parent who created the world.
- Christians believe God's love is for everybody as shown through parables.
- Christians believe that Jesus (God's son) is God's gift to the world.

### Teachings

- Jesus is God's son, who lived on earth and showed the Father's love to all. What is known about his life reflects this love.
- Jesus was a healer and showed that people need to be free from pain and misery.
- The Bible is a very special book for Christians. It contains teachings about God and Jesus.

### Response from a believer

- Christians are followers of Jesus, knowing that following Jesus affects the way people live.
- Forgiveness is at the basis for Christian belief.
- Jesus taught that humans should care for each other and share their belongings.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Christmas and Easter are significant Christian festivals, in terms of God's gift to humankind and how it is celebrated.
- Understanding the themes and symbols associated with Christmas, such as birth, light, and journeys.
- Different ways in which Christian festivals are celebrated in various parts of the world.

### Place of worship

- Christians get support and encouragement through worshiping in communities (churches) where they are encouraged in their faith.

Christianity is a major world faith.

# Buddhism Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

Siddhartha Gautama – the Buddha's life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

### Teachings

Stories of the Buddha, a human prince who lived in northern India a long time ago, who gave up wealth and status to achieve understanding of human experience and enlightenment.

Introduction to the Tipitaka.

### Response from a believer

- Buddha – his values and teachings.
- Happiness comes through behaving in a particular way by:
  - kindness
  - generosity
  - truthfulness
  - patience
  - not harming any living thing.
- Features about Buddhist communities, supportive of each other, living out the teachings of Buddha.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Celebrations of life and knowledge.

### Place of worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

Buddhism is a major world faith.

# Hinduism Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Different ways in which Brahman is represented. Brahman as an impersonal supreme being. That there are not many Gods but many ways to think of the God as different personalities fulfilling different roles (Pluralism).

### Teachings

- The followers of Hinduism are known as Hindus.
- Stories associated with deities, including Rama, Sita and Ganesh, found in the Hindu scriptures.

### Response from a believer

- Devotion to God, respect for all things and all people.
- Love and family respect. Dharma – learning how to live with others, both in family and society.
- Vegetarianism. Not harming or hurting any living thing.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Various rites of passage – particularly including birth and marriage.
- Diwali and some details of how it is celebrated.

### Place of worship

- A shrine is a focus for daily worship.
- Know what might be found in a Hindu shrine and understand the purpose of each object.
- The idea of devotion to a particular deity.
- Dress codes (covering of heads and removal of shoes as marks of respect).

Hinduism is a major world faith.

# Humanism Strand Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Humanists don't believe there is a god.
- Some believe that we can never know whether there is a god, or not.

### Teachings

- Human beings are special. Some of the things that are special about humans we share with some other animals, but some things only humans have.
- Special attributes include our ability to question, our ability to reason, our empathy for other humans and animals, our ideas of right and wrong and our creativity.
- Human life is valuable and rewarding, as is love and support from others.

### Response from a believer

- Human beings should be good to each other, promote happiness and avoid doing harm. One way to be happy is to make others so.
- Humans can all find different ways to be happy.
- The happy human as a symbol is often used by humanist groups to represent the celebration of life and the importance of making ourselves and others happy.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Humanists do not have unique festivals, but often participate in special cultural occasions as a means to celebrate the importance of family, friendship, kindness and sharing.
- Humanists like to mark key moments in people's lives, such as births, weddings and death.
- Humanist naming ceremonies celebrate the arrival of a new baby, where family and friends make promises of love and support.

### Place of worship

- No particular places of worship, Humanists are happy to gather and celebrate anywhere.
- Humanists value the beauty of the natural world and appreciate feats of human achievement and creativity.

Humanist views are found in every culture and country in the world.

On [www.understandinghumanism.org.uk](http://www.understandinghumanism.org.uk) teachers can find a wide range of resources relevant to the above themes and discussions, including lesson plans, classroom activities, presentations, films, and humanist perspectives.

# Islam Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Allah, the one true God, the basis of the faith. Creator of all good things.

### Teachings

- The followers of Islam are known as Muslims.
- The Qur'an is the holy book and contains:
  - a) stories about prophets of Allah
  - b) guidance about how people should behave.
- Know some key facts about Muhammad and his life, the messenger of God, the most important prophet of Allah.

### Response from a believer

- Muslims are obliged to perform prayers, and this entails five daily prayers.
- The Qur'an is written in Arabic; the words are special, so the book is treated very carefully.
- The Qur'an is read and recited in Arabic.
- Muslims have choices in the ways they behave, efforts should be made to be in communication with Allah at all times.
- Respect for the Qur'an and of drawings and images.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The festivals of Eid – following Ramadan and Hajj.

### Place of worship

- The importance of the mosque as a centre of the community.
- Dress codes (removal of shoes) and codes of conduct (separate areas of worship for women and men).

Islam is a major world faith.

# Judaism Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- God forgives those who are sorry and expects his laws to be obeyed.
- Belief in one God who created the world and who provides for people.

### Teachings

- Followers of Judaism are known as Jews, whose early history is in the Torah.
- Stories in the Torah, including those of creation, Noah, Moses and Joseph.
- The story of Moses' birth and how he became a leader of his people.
- The Ten Commandments.
- Jews remind themselves to teach children and to pray by having mezuzot on their doorposts.

### Response from a believer

- Praying is having respect for knowing that they are in the presence of God.
- Children are taught to love God and their neighbour.
- The importance of the Sefer-Torah and the use of the Yad for showing respect. Other key leaders from the Torah, revealing how real people showed their love for God.
- Various symbols and processes are used to remind people of the need for prayer.
- Most men and women will cover their heads when praying.
- There are prayers when Jewish men may wear a kippah, tallit and tefillin.
- The importance of family life.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The celebration of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish new year).
- The festival of Shabbat, a fundamental part of family life, is celebrated both at home and in the synagogue.
- Festivals like Passover are important reminders of God's love for His people.

### Place of worship

- The synagogue, as well as the home, is the place of worship for Jewish people.
- The Rabbi, the spiritual leader and teacher of the congregation.

Judaism is a major world faith.

# Sikhism Key Stage 1

## Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one God.

### Teachings

- The ten teachers are called Gurus, Guru Nanak was the first.
- The story of Guru Nanak's call to be 'a minstrel of God'.
- Some of the key teachings of Guru Nanak through stories about his actions, e.g. Guru Nanak and the 20 Rupees, Guru Nanak and Bhai Lalo.
- The teachings written in a book called the Guru Granth Sahib, a holy scripture.
- The 5 Ks. Know that the 5 Ks are part of the Sikh rahit (code of conduct).

### Response from a believer

- Guru Nanak's hymns, teaching people about God and how to behave.
- The importance of the 5 Ks (origin, meaning and significance – they are referred to as symbols or articles of faith). Know that the Sikh turban is an essential part of Sikh dress.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The birthday of Guru Nanak.

### Place of worship

- Know that the Guru Granth Sahib is kept in the Gurdwara, a place of worship.
- On entering a Gurdwara, people cover their heads and take off their shoes as a sign of respect to the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The importance of community in Sikhi and the gurdwara as a centre for religious, cultural and social foci, for example, the classrooms, langar, charity and service in the wider community.

Sikhism is a major world faith.

# Key Stage 2

## Beliefs and Values Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?
- The communities where I belong
- BIG questions
- Continue to look outside of yourself
- Keeping a perspective on life

### Key ideas

#### Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?

- A consideration of what individuals believed when they were younger.
- Have individuals changed their beliefs? If so, what made them change their beliefs?

#### The communities where I belong

- How different religious faiths and worldviews have developed and changed within their timescales.
- Community Cohesion.

#### BIG questions

- What is 'truth'? Should we always accept what we are told?
- Can you 'prove' that what you believe is the case?
- What is meant by religious faith?
- What is meant by worldviews?
- Religious faiths and worldviews – are they a matter of choice?

#### Looking outside yourself

- Considering those with beliefs and views different from mine.

#### Keeping a perspective on life

- Investigation through discussions (from a wide range of age groups) to find out if experience of life makes you more certain of what you understand and believe?
- Some ideologies teach that governments should be run by faith leaders, others that there should be no connections.
- What would you do if state law conflicts with your religious beliefs or your worldviews?
- Should different faiths and worldviews be allowed to have their own laws

## Christianity Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Christians believe that there is one God, who is the creator of the world, like a father to human beings and a source of comfort and strength.
- Miracles that show Jesus' power over nature (for example, the calming of the storm).
- The events of Holy Week and of Jesus' resurrection appearances.
- The stories that suggest Jesus' divinity and which teach beliefs about him, including the Christian belief that Jesus is still present in the world.
- God in human lives – miracles. Ways in which God cares for human beings. God communicating with human beings.

### Teachings

- The creation stories from the Bible with particular reference to the relationship between God and mankind.
- Events from the life of Jesus:
  - the story of his nativity, his baptism and the events of his baptism, his temptations
  - his ministry as recorded in the Gospels.
  - the significance of his death.

### Response from a believer

- Christians believe themselves to be followers of Jesus and regard their duty to follow his teaching and ideals to the best of their ability. This is discipleship. The teachings of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament.
- The lives of some well-known Christians whose faith has shaped their lives, both national and international but also local people who may well be known to the community, including the young.
- Christians believe they are responsible stewards of the planet, including loving your neighbour.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The Eucharist, how and why it is celebrated in at least one denomination and understand its meaning.
- The significance of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and know the biblical events that they celebrate. Know that these festivals are celebrated differently around the world.

### Place of worship

- Church as a Christian place of worship and key elements of a church.
- Know and understand the major differences between the church buildings of at least two different Christian denominations.
- How Christians worship.

## Buddhism Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Places of Worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Siddhartha Gautama – the Buddha's life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

### Teachings

- The life story of Siddhartha Gautama who became the Buddha including his birth and upbringing, the four sights which led to his renunciation, his years in the forest, and his final enlightenment (Bodhi tree).
- The Buddha is represented in many different forms and that these reflect different aspects of his nature.

### Response from a believer

- The Buddha formulated a four-part understanding of the nature of life, which is known as the four noble truths.
- Buddhists promise not to harm living beings; take what is not given; misuse the senses; use wrong speech or take drugs or alcohol.
- Understand how Buddhist values permeate a Buddhist lifestyle.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate how the Buddhist community (Sangha) is made up. Know about the lifestyle of monks and nuns, and understand the symbols of the robes, shaven heads and alms bowls.
- Know how an alms bowl is used and understand its significance.

### Places of Worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

## Hinduism Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Brahman is one but can be worshipped in many different forms, as different deities.
- Some of the deities are male and others female. The different characteristics and family connections, including Shiva, Parvati and Ganesha. Pluralism in practice – plural ways to reach God.

### Teachings

- Ideas behind the cycle of life. The individual soul. Finding your inner self.
- The important stories of the deities, Rama and Sita (from the Ramayana).
- Family values and living with others.

### Response from a believer

- Respect for life in all its forms – nonviolence, the concept of ahimsa and its implications.
- Belief that respect for life, God, other people, all forms of life, and particularly the cow is important

### Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate that there are diverse communities each celebrating in diverse ways.
- Celebrations to include Divali, Havan and Navratiri.

### Place of worship

- The family shrine and puja in the mandir.
- Understand the role of murtis in worship, the importance of devotion to deities.

## Humanism Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Humanists don't believe in a god or gods because they find no supporting evidence.
- Humanists would either consider themselves atheists or agnostics.
- Humanism is more than just atheism/agnosticism - a humanist has many other positive beliefs about how best to live life.
- Humanists believe we can lead good and happy lives without divine support.

### Teachings

- Humanists base their beliefs about the world on scientific evidence; they believe science is the best method for understanding the world.
- The universe is billions of years old and began from a natural event.
- All life on Earth including human beings evolved from a common ancestor
- This is the one and only life we have, we should make the most of it - the time to be happy is now.
- Humanists have no sacred text or divine authority to guide them
- Rewards and punishments should not be our only motivation to do good.
- Empathy (the Golden Rule) and reason (considering the consequences and what might happen if everyone acted the same way) can help us decide how we should act.
- The importance of practical action – 'actions speak louder than words'

### Response from a believer

- It is important for individuals to ask critical questions, and to consider alternatives to widely held beliefs.
- Respect the differences in people's choices and ways of life.
- Be willing to change their beliefs when faced with new evidence.
- Celebrate humanity, companionship, curiosity and both intellectual and artistic creativity.
- Appreciation of the senses.
- Appreciating and taking pleasure in the way we experience the world around us, especially the people we meet and our environment.
- Working to create a better society and a better world.

### **Festivals and celebrations**

- Humanists value and celebrate human life, marking key moments such as births, weddings and death.
- Humanist weddings celebrate when two people, of any gender, agree to spend the rest of their lives together.
- Love and support need to come from other people in our lives.
- Humanists do not have unique festivals, but often participate in special cultural occasions to celebrate the importance of family, friendship, community and kindness.

### **Place of worship**

- No particular places of worship, Humanists are happy to gather and celebrate anywhere.
- Humanists show appreciation and spread awareness of aspects of the world they consider worthy, to ensure nothing is taken for granted.

On [www.understandinghumanism.org.uk](http://www.understandinghumanism.org.uk) teachers can find a wide range of resources relevant to the above themes and discussions, including lesson plans, classroom activities, presentations, films, and humanist perspectives.

## Islam Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Values and teaching
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Allah, the one incomparable, indivisible God.
- Some of the attributes/names of Allah, e.g. the Compassionate One, along with appreciation of the 99 names of God.
- That Allah is the Owner and Provider of all things.

### Teachings

- The purpose of creation is to serve Allah.
- The importance of the 5 pillars of faith.
- Muhammad, his life and calling to be a prophet, the first revelations of the Qur'an, the Hijrah, and the Hajj (return to Makkah).
- The Qur'an, the revealed word of Allah and therefore is very special. Know the different ways in which respect is accorded to it.

### Response from a believer

- Muslims pray five times a day (Salat), how Muslims prepare, by wudu and in their heart and prayer positions.
- Muslims seek to submit to the will of Allah in all things and by doing so achieve peace, and harmony with others and the environment.
- Muslims must share and be generous with their possessions.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Muslims are obliged to fast annually during the month of Ramadan. The purpose and benefits of fasting (sawm), both physical and spiritual. Know that the end of the fast is celebrated at Id ul Fitr.
- The rite of Hajj; understand the significance of Hajj and various rites within it.

### Place of worship

- The mosque is the place of worship and a community centre, the basic parts of a mosque and their uses.

## Judaism Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- God is the creator who reveals himself through his chosen people.

### Teachings

- The history of the people, as recorded in the Torah – the call of Abraham, the call of Moses, the plagues of Egypt and the exodus of the Israelites, and entry into the promised land.
- The Ten Commandments.
- Understanding the meaning of the covenant.

### Response from a believer

- Following the commandment, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'.
- Many Jews are members of orthodox congregations whilst there are other congregations with different interpretations and observances.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The Passover festival, Pesach and Seder.
- Love of God is celebrated through prayer, particularly on Shabbat.
- Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement and concept of forgiveness.
- Family life and its values, Shabbat and the Friday night meal.
- The work of the scribe, the reading of the weekly portion, the annual cycle of readings, the festivals associated with the Torah and the importance of regular Torah study.

### Place of worship

- The synagogue is the place of worship for Jewish people, its features, and the role of the rabbi.
- How the Torah is treated in the synagogue. The menorah and the Ark.

## Sikhism Key Stage 2

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one God (Ik Onkar) and that God is described as the Creator and Sustainer, the Universal Truth.

### Teachings

- Belief in life, birth and actions.
- Understand the meaning of the word Guru.
- Guru Nanak (1469-1539) founded Sikhism.
- The symbol of the Khanda. Know that the Nishan Sahib is the Sikh flag and has the symbol of the Khanda on it.

### Response from a believer

- The Guru Granth Sahib is the revelation of God's message and understand that Sikhs live in obedience to it at all times. Know how respect is accorded to it.
- Sikhs believe that everyone should work honestly to earn their living. The importance of service and honesty.
- The importance of equality (both by race and sex) in Sikhism and how this value is reflected in Sikh lives.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The significance of holy days, ceremonies, and stories. Birthdays of Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh and Vaisakhi.

### Place of worship

- The importance of the Gurdwara as the centre of the community, The langar and its example of charity to the wider community.

# Key Stage 3

## Beliefs and Values Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?
- The communities where I belong
- BIG questions
- Looking outside yourself
- Keeping a perspective on life

### Key ideas

#### Life stances - what makes me 'ME'?

- Life choices.
- When should I give priority to myself, my family duties, to my role as a citizen or to my religious or secular beliefs?

#### The communities where I belong

- The history of religion through investigations of different cultures.
- Citizenship and community cohesion.

#### BIG questions

- How different religious faiths and worldviews deal with the issue of death and the end?
- An investigation on what different faith stances teach about life after death.
- Are we really free?

#### Looking outside yourself

- Differences between religions and worldviews from the 'European' tradition versus those from other parts of the world.
- An adventure into alternative ideologies and systems other than those in the west, including the dependence on commerce and wealth as important life stances.
- Reflecting on the 'take' of post-modernism on religious faiths and worldviews, to consider that of 20th century history, philosophies and science has had on belief systems.

#### Keeping a perspective on life

- Culture and faith/worldviews.
- The place of religious faith and worldviews in a democracy.
- The place of religious faiths and worldviews in the natural world.



## Christianity Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Belief in a loving God who is understood as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God is both the creator and the 'sustainer' of all life.
- Christians believe that Jesus is both human and divine, that he reveals the will of God and is the saviour of humanity. That Jesus is a historical figure as shown in contemporary writings.
- Jesus as part of the Trinity, as shown through his baptism and transfiguration.
- The Holy Spirit its significance and application to life.
- Analysis of the biblical passages about the Holy Spirit.

### Teachings

- The creation stories of Genesis showing the relationship between God and mankind. Further investigations of the Old Testament exploring this relationship.
- The miracles of Jesus and their teaching significance.
- Selected passages about Jesus, including his birth, baptism, temptations, transfiguration, relationships with people, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension.
- Events from the life of Jesus are recorded by the Gospel writers. Know that different writers had different emphasis. Understand that these accounts are open to interpretation.
- The teachings of Jesus shown through parables, with particular reference to the Sermon on the Mount.
- The importance of the Bible and different ways in which it was both written and is now interpreted by different Christian denominations.

### Response from a believer

- Mankind is in need of God's loving forgiveness.
- Christians regard themselves as disciples of Jesus and understand some of the implications of discipleship.
- The implication of Christendom to the culture and of the significant differences for those churches outside of Christendom, reflecting on the tension between personal faith values and the surrounding culture.

**Festivals and celebrations**

- Rites of passage (confirmation, membership, and baptism as statements of parts of discipleship).
- Christians celebrate and commemorate important festivals in the Christian calendar including Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas and Pentecost.

**Place of worship**

- Christians worship in many ways both within the country and across the world showing a wide range of traditions.
- Christians express their understanding of God through a rich symbolic tradition with reference to a wide range of different ways of worship.

## Buddhism Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Siddhartha Gautama – the Buddha's life and that he was a wise person, not a god.

### Teachings

- Siddhartha Gautama was a human prince, learn the stories from his life including the four sights, his renunciation, his years in the forest and his final enlightenment, when he became Buddha.
- Siddhartha Gautama overcame suffering and achieved enlightenment.
- Out of compassion Siddhartha Gautama chose to teach others how they could overcome suffering.

### Response from a believer

- The Buddha realised that life is dukkha and understand what this means. Understand what Buddhists mean by the four noble truths.
- Buddhists try to become free from hatred, greed and ignorance.
- There are different Buddhist philosophies and approaches, each with its own character. Learn to begin to differentiate between them.
- Buddhists believe in kamma and understand that this means they believe that for every intentional thought, word and deed there is an effect.
- Know the five moral precepts and how Buddhists express these in their own lives.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Appreciate how the Buddhist community (Sangha) is made up. Know about the lifestyle of monks and nuns, and understand the symbols of the robes, shaven heads and alms bowls.
- Know how an alms bowl is used and understand its significance.

### Place of worship

- Buddhists give reverence to the Buddha with shrines at home and in temples.

## Hinduism Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

### Key ideas

#### Ideas of God

- Brahman is the ultimate impersonal, formless, and supreme being.
- Brahman is worshipped in many diverse forms, each reflecting a different aspect.
- Interpret symbols associated with a limited number of deities. e.g. Shiva Natarajah, Vishnu, and Brahman. The essential nature's 'spirit', rather than body and mind, respecting all as the *spark* of God.

#### Teachings

- The Hindu scriptures, making clear the distinction between myth and philosophy.
- The Hindu concept of time as an endless cycle of creation, preservation, and destruction.
- Idea of moksha and samsara (ie reincarnation).
- The characters and central stories of some of the following: Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva, Kali, Durga, Lakshmi, Ganesha, Rama, and Hanuman.

#### Response from a believer

- Dharma and karma. Seeing and serving God in man.
- Hindu society and the diversity. Seeing and serving God in man.
- The importance of vegetarianism, vows, yoga and fasting.
- Taking responsibility and accepting the consequences

#### Festivals and celebrations

- Family roles and customs.

#### Place of worship

- Worship in the home and in the mandir including Havan, Arti and Puja
- Pilgrimage in India.

## Humanism Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Humanism is a positive philosophy of life. It is more than just being an agnostic or an atheist.
- Humanists would disregard claims of revelations or miracles
- Humanists don't believe in the supernatural power of prayer but will reflect and contemplate on situations and use that to help guide their behaviour or motivate themselves

### Teachings

- Humanists base their beliefs about the world on scientific evidence; they believe science is the best method for understanding the world.
- The universe is billions of years old and began from a natural event.
- All life on Earth including human beings evolved from a common ancestor.
- Naturalism, rationalism, and scepticism are held as important ideas by Humanists
- Given the absence of any discernible purpose to the universe, humans have the right and responsibility to make their own lives meaningful
- Death is part of the natural cycle of life, we have one life and we should make the most of it.
- Something of us can survive our death (atoms, genes, ideas, memories, achievements, etc).
- Human morality is a natural capacity, which has evolved to help us live together in a society.
- All life has value and should be respected.
- We have the freedom to live how we wish as long as we try to avoid harm and avoid restricting others freedom to live as they wish.
- The Importance of human rights.
- Humans have individual freedom of thought, speech, and choice.
- We should live our lives with social and environmental responsibility.

**Response from a believer**

- Live useful and practical lives, being considerate of others' needs.
- Respect different people's choices and different ways of life.
- Charitable work: humanists can and do offer pastoral care in the community, e.g. in hospitals and prisons.
- Be willing to change one's belief when presented with the appropriate evidence.

**Festivals and celebrations**

- A Humanist Celebrant can be asked to conduct special occasions marking rites of passage.
- The end of human life and the memory and achievements of the deceased during their life are honoured at humanist funerals.

**Places of worship**

- No particular places of worship, Humanists are happy to gather and celebrate anywhere.

## Islam Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- There is one God, Supreme and Unique, and that the revelation given to the Prophet Muhammad is the final and complete revelation of Allah for all humans.
- Allah is both immanent and transcendent. Understand the meaning of the terms transcendent and immanent.

### Teachings

- Key events from the life of Muhammad.
- The importance of the Qur'an.

### Response from a believer

- Worship is obedience to God in all aspects of life.
- Muslims worship Allah by Taqwa: an awareness of God all day every day, and an effort to be in communication with Allah at all times.
- Dietary laws and rules of modesty and equality, including the Hijab.

### Festivals and celebrations

- The rite of Hajj – understand the significance of Hajj and various rites within it.
- The obligation to fast annually during the month of Ramadan.
- Understand the trials and benefits of this, both physical and spiritual.
- Know how the end of the fast is celebrated at Eid ul Fitr.
- The rites of birth, marriage and death are marked and celebrated in Islam and the key beliefs associated with each.

### Place of worship

- Know the purpose, parts of and basic architecture of mosques.
- The importance of the mosque, Muslim community, and the extended family.

## Judaism Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Creator God, as described in Psalms, Shema and other stories. The divine presence of God (Shekhina) and action in history.

### Teachings

- Creation stories as an example of God's relationship with creation.
- The Torah and Tenakh are of great importance to Jews.
- Understand how respect is shown to the Sefer Torah, in its use in worship and study, and in the manner in which it is treated in the synagogue and during the festivals of Shavuot and Simhat Torah.
- Actions of God in history have served to liberate and support the Jewish people in exchange for their allegiance, and also on occasion to punish them.
- Jews use the Shema to remind them of their faith through tefillin and the presence of mezuzot.
- Key symbols of Judaism: menorah, mezuzah, and Magen David.

### Response from a believer

- Jews seek to obey commandments set out in the Torah as a way of serving God and understand the nature and effect of these laws.
- The mizvot ensures that Jews are engaged in tzedaka (charity). Key values of tefillah, repentance and tzedaka.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Family life and its values, Shabbat and the Friday night meal. Symbols of Sabbath candles and loaves of bread (cholas).
- The major festivals including Succoth, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Shavuot.
- Understand what is remembered and celebrated during the Pesach festival.
- The place of family and tradition, the sense of identity. The rites of passage are celebrated in Judaism and understand the central issues surrounding each one, including Brit Milah, Bar/Bat Mizvah, Kiddushin (marriage), and death.

### Place of worship

- The synagogue is the Jewish place of worship and understand the role of the synagogue and the rabbi in the community. Understand the meaning of the ark and the temple in Jewish worship.

## Sikhism Key Stage 3

### Key areas of understanding

- Ideas of God
- Teachings
- Response from a believer
- Festivals and celebrations
- Place of worship

## Key ideas

### Ideas of God

- Sikhs believe in one universal God (Ik Onkar), who is self revealing, the enlightener or Guru, self-consistent, immanent, and the Creator.
- Description of God in the Mool Mantra.

### Teachings

- The importance of Guru Granth Sahib, the vak, the akhand path and its presence at important ceremonies.
- The teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib that are revered rather than the scripture itself.
- The outlines of the lives of Guru Nanak and some of the other ten Gurus and an understanding of their significance.

### Response from a believer

- That Sikhs seek freedom from self-centredness and aim towards God-centredness.
- The symbolism of the 5Ks as Sikh articles of faith.
- Issues of prohibitions (ritually slaughtered meat, narcotics...).
- Principles of living, honesty, sharing of time and talents.
- Key values of equality.
- Sewa is a key value for Sikhs and how it is manifested in Sikh lives.

### Festivals and celebrations

- Pattern and significance of naming, turban tying and other ceremonies.
- The significance of Vaisakhi as confirmation of the independent religion and nation by Guru Gobind Singh.
- Worship and ceremony; prayer, contemplation, importance of the hymns of Guru Granth Sahib.
- Rites of passage.

### Place of worship

- The parts of a gurdwara and understand the importance of the sangat, the langar, the nishan sahib, khanda.
- Understand the importance of the gurdwaras as a focus for life within the Khalsa and as the place that houses the Guru Granth Sahib.
- The langar is used and the various rationales behind it, e.g. sewa (selfless service with humility), equality, sharing with others, non-discrimination, community.

# Appendix 1 – A Curriculum Framework

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils should encounter religions and worldviews through special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting places of worship. They should listen to and talk about stories. Pupils can be introduced to subject specific words and use all their senses to explore beliefs, practices, and forms of expression. They ask questions and reflect on their own feelings and experiences. They use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation of and wonder at the world in which they live. Religious education is a legal requirement for all pupils on the school roll, including all those in the reception year.

In line with the DfE's EYFS Framework 2021 RE should, through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity, provide these opportunities for pupils.

### Communication and language:

- Children listen with enjoyment to stories, songs and poems from different sources and traditions and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.
- Answer 'who', 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences in response to stories, experiences, or events from different sources.
- Talk about how they and others show feelings.
- Develop their own narratives in relation to stories they hear from different traditions.

### Personal, social, and emotional development:

- Children understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect.
- Work as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly, understanding that groups of people, including adults and children, need agreed values and codes of behaviour to work together harmoniously.
- Talk about their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable.

- Think and talk about issues of right and wrong, and why these questions matter.
- A range of feelings when appropriate.
- Have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and are sensitive to those of others.
- Have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs, and those of other people.
- Show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings and form positive relationships.

### Understanding the world

- Children talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, among families, communities, and traditions.
- Begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.
- Explore, observe and find out about places and objects that matter in different cultures and beliefs.

### Expressive arts and design

- Children use their imagination in art, music, dance, imaginative play, and role-play and stories to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste.

### Literacy

- Children are given access to a wide range of books, poems, and other written materials to ignite their interest.

### Mathematics

- Children recognise, create, and describe some patterns, sorting and ordering objects simply.

These learning intentions for RE are developed from relevant areas of the DfE EYFS Framework 2021.

Non-statutory EYFS curriculum guidance that schools could also refer to are:

- Development Matters
- Birth to 5 Matters

## Requirements 'A' – Know about, and Understand

At the end of each Key Stage, pupils will be able to:

Action	Key Stage 1	Key stage 2	Key Stage 3
<b>A1.</b> Describe, explain and analyse beliefs, and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recall and name different beliefs and practices, including festivals, worship, rituals, and ways of life, in order to find out about the meanings behind them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe and make connections between different features of the religions and worldviews they study, discovering more about celebrations, worship, pilgrimages, and the rituals which mark important points in life, in order to reflect on their idea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain and interpret ways that the history and culture of religions and worldviews influence individuals and communities, including a wide range of beliefs and practices, in order to appraise reasons why some people support, and others question these influences</li> </ul>
<b>A2.</b> Identify, investigate, and respond to questions posed by, and responses offered by, some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retell and suggest meanings to some religious and moral stories, exploring and discussing sacred writings and sources of wisdom and recognising the communities from which they come</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe and understand links between stories and other aspects of the communities they are investigating, responding thoughtfully to a range of sources of wisdom and to beliefs and teachings that arise from them in different communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain and interpret a range of beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority, in order to understand religions and worldviews as coherent systems or ways of seeing the world</li> </ul>
<b>A3.</b> Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance, and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise some different symbols and actions which express a community's way of life, appreciating some similarities between communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and describe a range of beliefs, symbols, and actions so that they can understand different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how and why individuals and communities express the meanings of their beliefs and values in many different forms and ways of living, enquiring into the variety, differences and relationships that exist within and between them</li> </ul>

## Requirements 'B' – Express and Communicate

At the end of each Key Stage, pupils will be able to:

Action	Key Stage 1	Key stage 2	Key Stage 3
<b>B1.</b> Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask and respond to questions about what communities do, and why, so that they can identify what difference belonging to a community might make</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe and understand varied examples of religions and worldviews so that they can explain, with reasons, their meanings and significance to individuals and communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the religions and worldviews which they encounter clearly, reasonably, and coherently; evaluate them, drawing on a range of introductory level approaches recognised in the study of religion or theology</li> </ul>
<b>B2.</b> Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe and recount different ways of expressing identity and belonging, responding sensitively for themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the challenges of commitment to a community of faith or belief, suggesting why belonging to a community may be valuable, both in the diverse communities being studied and in their own lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe and interpret a wide range of ways in which commitment and identity are expressed. They develop insightful evaluation and analysis of controversies about commitment to religions and worldviews, accounting for the impact of diversity within and between communities</li> </ul>
<b>B3.</b> Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice and respond sensitively to some similarities between different religions and worldviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observe and consider different dimensions of religion, so that they can explore and show understanding of similarities and differences between different religions and worldviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider and evaluate the question: what is religion? Analyse the nature of religion using the main disciplines by which religion is studied</li> </ul>

## Requirements 'C' – Gain and deploy skills

At the end of each Key Stage, pupils will be able to:

Actions	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key stage 3
<p><b>C1.</b> Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore questions about belonging, meaning and truth so that they can express their own ideas and opinions in response using words, music, art, or poetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and present their own and others' views on challenging questions about belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, applying ideas of their own thoughts in different forms including (e.g.) reasoning, music, art, and poetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore some of the ultimate questions that are raised by human life in ways that are well-informed, and which invite reasoned personal responses, expressing insights that draw on a wide range of examples including the arts, media, and philosophy</li> </ul>
<p><b>C2.</b> Enquire into what enables different communities to live together respectfully for the well-being of all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out about and respond with ideas to examples of co-operation between people who are different</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all, responding thoughtfully to ideas about community, values, and respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine and evaluate issues about community cohesion and respect for all in the light of different perspectives from varied religions and worldviews</li> </ul>
<p><b>C3.</b> Articulate beliefs, values, and commitments clearly in order to explain reasons why they may be important in their own and other people's lives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out about questions of right and wrong and begin to express their ideas and opinions in response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss and apply their own and others' ideas about ethical questions, including ideas about what is right and wrong and what is just and fair, and express their own ideas clearly in response.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and express insights into significant moral and ethical questions posed by being human in ways that are well-informed, and which invite personal response, using reasoning which may draw on a range of examples from real life, fiction or other forms of media.</li> </ul>

The content in Aims A and B will be the vehicle through which the skills in Aim C will be developed.

# Appendix 2 – Statutory Obligations

## Section 69 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, Duty to secure due provision of Religious Education

- (1) Subject to section 71, in relation to any community, foundation or voluntary school:
  - (a) the local education authority and the Governing Body shall exercise their functions with a view to securing, and
  - (b) the head teacher shall secure, that Religious Education is given in accordance with the provision for such education included in the school's basic curriculum by virtue of section 352(1)(a) of the [1996 c. 56.] Education Act 1996.
- (2) Schedule 19 has effect for determining the provision for Religious Education which is required by section 352(1)(a) of that Act to be included in the basic curriculum of schools within each of the following categories, namely:
  - (a) community schools and foundation and voluntary schools which do not have a religious character,
  - (b) foundation and voluntary controlled schools which have a religious character, and
  - (c) voluntary aided schools which have a religious character.
- (3) For the purposes of this Part a foundation or voluntary school has a religious character if it is designated as a school having such a character by an order made by the Secretary of State.
- (4) An order under subsection (3) shall state, in relation to each school designated by the order, the religion or religious denomination in accordance with whose tenets Religious Education is, or may be, required to be provided at the school in accordance with Schedule 19 (or, as the case may be, each such religion or religious denomination).
- (5) The procedure to be followed in connection with:
  - (a) the designation of a school in an order under subsection (3), and
  - (b) the inclusion in such an order, in relation to a school, of the statement required by subsection (4),shall be specified in regulations

## Provision of Religious Education

Provisions concerning RE can be found in sections 69 and 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 19.

All maintained schools should provide Religious Education (RE) and collective worship for their pupils unless they have been withdrawn by their parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and sixth-form pupils are able to withdraw themselves. The right of withdrawal from RE and collective worship is set out in section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

RE in all community schools and all foundation and voluntary schools without a religious character must follow the agreed syllabus for the area. The agreed syllabus is drawn up by the LA, taking advice from local bodies. The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), a local body made up of representatives from faith groups, teachers and the LA advise on RE and collective worship issues, whereas the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), a subset of the SACRE, recommend new syllabuses.

The headteacher shares responsibility with the LA and the Governing Body for making sure that the RE requirements are met.

All locally agreed syllabuses must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are mainly Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

The precise nature of RE at a foundation or voluntary school will depend on the religious character of the school. Whether a foundation or voluntary school has a religious character and the particular religion or religious denomination concerned is set out in The Designation of Schools Having a Religious Character (England) Order 1999 (SI 1999 No. 2432), or, for schools approved to enter the maintained sector after 1 September 1999, the Order designating the school. There are no foundation special schools which have a religious character.

### **Voluntary-aided schools with a religious character**

RE in a voluntary-aided school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the schools trust deed or, where provision is not made by a trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the Order referred to above.

Where parents ask for RE to be provided for any pupils according to the locally agreed syllabus, and it is not convenient for them to attend a school at which the syllabus is in use, the Governing Body must make arrangements. This requirement is lifted if, because of any special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so.

### **Foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character**

RE in a foundation or voluntary-controlled school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for the area. However, where parents request it, provision may be made in accordance with the schools trust deed or, where provision is not made by trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the Order referred to above. This requirement is lifted if, because of any special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that such Religious Education is provided for not more than two periods in each week. The

headteacher shares responsibility with the LA and the Governing Body for making sure that the RE requirements are met.

### **Teachers**

Teachers cannot be required to teach RE except where the law provides otherwise. This would normally only apply in a maintained school with a religious designation.

Provisions concerning RE can be found in sections 69 and 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 19.

# Glossary

## Christianity

### Advent

Coming. The period beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas (40 days before Christmas in the Eastern orthodox tradition). A time of spiritual preparation for Christmas.

### Altar

Table used for Eucharist, Mass, Lord's Supper. Some denominations refer to it as Holy Table or Communion Table.

### Anglican

Churches in full communion with the See of Canterbury. Their origins and traditions are linked to the Church of England and are part of the Anglican Communion.

### Apostle

One who was sent out by Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel.

### Ascension

The event, 40 days after the Resurrection, when Jesus 'ascended into heaven' (see Luke 24 and Acts 1).

### Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent. In some Churches, penitents receive the sign of the cross in ashes on their foreheads.

### Atonement

Reconciliation between God and humanity; restoring a relationship broken by sin.

### Baptism

Rite of initiation involving immersion in, or sprinkling or pouring of water.

### Baptist

(i) A member of the Baptist Church, which grew out of the Anabaptist movement during the 16th century Reformation.

(ii) A Christian who practises Believer's Baptism.

### BCE

Before Christian Era.

### Bible

Christian holy book made up of both Old Testament and New Testament.

### CE

Christian Era. The Christian calendar dates from the estimated date of the birth of Jesus Christ.

### Christ

The anointed one. Messiah is used in the Jewish tradition to refer to the expected leader sent by God, who will bring salvation to God's people. Jesus' followers applied this title to him, and its Greek equivalent, Christ, is the source of the words Christian and Christianity.

### Christmas

Festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ (25 December, in most Churches).

### Church

The whole community of Christians.

(ii) The building in which Christians worship.

(iii) A particular denomination.

### Crucifixion

Roman method of executing criminals and traitors by fastening them to a cross until they died of asphyxiation; used in the case of Jesus Christ and many who opposed the Romans.

### Disciple

One of the biblical followers of Jesus Christ, one who follows Jesus today.

### Easter

Central Christian festival which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

### Epistle

From the Greek word for letter. Several such letters or epistles, from Christian leaders to Christian Churches or individuals, are included in the New Testament.

### Eucharist

Thanksgiving. A service celebrating the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, using elements of bread and wine (see Holy Communion).

### Evangelical

Group, or church, placing particular emphasis on the Gospel and the scriptures as the sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

### Evangelist

A writer of one of the four New Testament Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; a preacher of the Gospel.

### Father

Term used to describe God and his relationship with people.

### Font

Receptacle to hold water used in baptism.

### Forgiveness

Act of forgiving, pardoning.

### Good Friday

The Friday in Holy Week. Commemorates the day Jesus died on the cross.

### Gospel

Good news (of salvation in Jesus Christ).  
(ii) An account of Jesus' life and work.

### Holy Communion

Central liturgical service observed by most Churches (see Eucharist, Mass, Lord's Supper, Liturgy). Recalls the last meal of Jesus and celebrates his sacrificial and saving death.

## Holy Spirit

The third person of the Holy Trinity. Active as divine presence and power in the world and in-dwelling in believers to make them like Christ and empower them to do God's will.

## Holy Week

The week before Easter when Christians recall the last week of Jesus' life on Earth.

## Icon/Ikon

Painting or mosaic of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, a saint, or a Church feast. Used as an aid to devotion, usually in the Orthodox tradition.

## Incarnation

The doctrine that God took human form in Jesus Christ. It is also the belief that God in Christ is active in the Church and in the world.

## Jesus Christ

The central figure of Christian history and devotion. The second person of the Trinity.

## Lectern

Stand supporting the Bible, often in the shape of an eagle.

## Lent

Penitential season. The 40 days leading up to Easter.

## Lord

Title used for Jesus to express his divine lordship over people, time and space.

## Love

Doctrine of charity and care towards all.

## Mass

Term for the Eucharist used by the Roman Catholic and other Churches.

## Messiah

Redeemer. Jesus Christ

## Miracle

Supernatural act of power and often compassion.

## Nave

Main aisle of a church.

## New Testament

Collection of 27 books forming the second section of the Canon of Christian Scriptures.

## Old Testament

That part of the Canon of Christian Scriptures that the Church shares with Judaism, covering the Hebrew Canon, and in the case of certain denominations, some books of the Apocrypha.

## Orthodox

(i) The Eastern orthodox Church consisting of national Churches (mainly Greek or Slav), including the ancient Eastern Patriarchates. They hold the common Orthodox faith and are in communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

(ii) Conforming to the creeds sanctioned by the ecumenical councils, e.g. Nicaea, Chalcedon.

## Palm Sunday

The Sunday before Easter, commemorating the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem when he was acknowledged by crowds waving palm branches.

## Paschal Candle

Candle lit during Eastertide to recall the resurrected presence of Jesus.

## Parable

Narrative designed to elucidate meaning.

## Passion

The sufferings of Jesus Christ, especially in the time leading up to his crucifixion.

## Pentecost

The Greek name for the Jewish Festival of Weeks, or Shavuot, which comes seven weeks ('fifty days') after Passover. On the day of this feast, the followers of Jesus received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

## Pew

Bench in a church, sometimes enclosed.

## Protestant

That part of the Church which became distinct from the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches when their members professed (or 'protested' – hence Protestant) the centrality of the Bible and other beliefs. Members affirm that the Bible, under the guidance of the Holy

Spirit, is the ultimate authority for Christian teaching.

## **Pulpit**

An elevated platform from which sermons are preached.

## **Redemption**

Derived from the practice of paying the price of a slave's freedom; and so, the work of Jesus Christ in setting people free through his death.

## **Resurrection**

The rising from the dead of Jesus Christ on the third day after the crucifixion.

The rising from the dead of believers at the Last Day.

The new, or risen, life of Christians.

## **Rosary**

Beads used as an aid to meditation or prayer.

## **Sacrament**

An outward sign of an inward blessing, as in baptism or the Eucharist.

## **Lord's Supper**

Alternative term for Eucharist in some Churches (predominantly non-conformist).

## **Sanctuary**

The part of the church considered most holy and containing the high altar.

## **Sin**

Sin (original)

(i) Act of rebellion or disobedience against the known will of God.

(ii) An assessment of the human condition as disordered and in need of transformation.

## **Son**

Description of Jesus Christ as Son of God

## **Transfiguration**

Jesus Christ's change in form from earthly to heavenly.

## **Trinity**

Three persons in one God; doctrine of the three-fold nature of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

# Buddhism

## Anatta

No self; no soul. Insubstantiality; denial of a real or permanent self.

## Anicca

Impermanence; transience. Instability of all things, including the self.

## Atta

Self; soul.

## Bhikkhu

Fully ordained Buddhist monk.

## Bhikkhuni

Fully ordained Buddhist nun.

## Bodhi Tree

The tree (*ficus religiosa*) under which the Buddha realised Enlightenment. It is known as the Tree of Wisdom.

## Bodhisatta

A Wisdom Being. One intent on becoming, or destined to become, a Buddha. Gotama, before his Enlightenment as the historical Buddha.

## Buddha

Awakened or Enlightened One.

## Dalai Lama (Tibetan)

Great Ocean. Spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people.

## Dhamma

Universal law; ultimate truth. The teachings of the Buddha. A key Buddhist term.

## Dukkha

Suffering; ill; unsatisfactoriness; imperfection. The nature of existence according to the first Noble Truth.

## Dhammapada

Famous scripture of 423 verses.

## Enlightenment

As nibbana, a state of secure, perfect peace that follows complete freedom from greed, hatred and ignorance.

## Gautama

Family name of the Buddha

## Ihara

Dwelling place; monastery.

## Jataka

Birth story. Accounts of the previous lives of the Buddha.

## Kamma

Action. Intentional actions that affect one's circumstances in this and future lives. The Buddha's insistence that the effect depends on volition marks the Buddhist treatment of kamma as different from the Hindu understanding of karma.

## Khandas

Heap, Aggregate. The five khandas together make up the 'person' (form, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness).

## Nirodha

Cessation (of suffering). The third Noble Truth.

## Noble Truths

Four Noble Truths consist of the Buddha's understanding of the human condition: (i) what is wrong with life; (ii) why is it wrong; (iii) the good news that something can be done; (iv) what needs to be done.

## Magga

Path, leading to cessation of suffering. The fourth Noble Truth.

## Mahayana

Great Vehicle. One of the two main branches of the Buddhist tradition. The teachings that spread from India into Tibet, parts of Asia and the Far East.

## Mala

Also, Juzu (Japanese). String of 108 beads used in Buddhist practice (like a rosary).

## Metta

Loving-kindness. A pure love which is neither grasping nor possessive.

## Mudda

Ritual gesture, as illustrated by the hands of Buddha images.

## Nibbana

Blowing out of the fires of greed, hatred and ignorance, and the state of secure perfect peace that follows. A key Buddhist term.

## Panna

Wisdom. Understanding the trust nature of things.

## Sakyamuni

Sage of the Shakyas (the tribe of the Buddha). Title of the historical

Buddha.

### **Samadhi**

Meditative absorption. A state of deep meditation.

### **Samatha**

One of the two forms of meditation.

### **Samsara**

Everyday life. The continual round of birth, sickness, old age and death which can be transcended by following the Eightfold Path and Buddhist teaching.

### **Sanatha**

A state of concentrated calmness.

### **Sangha**

Community; assembly. Often used for the order of bhikkhus and bhikkunis in Theravadin countries. In the Mahayana countries. In the Mahayana countries, the Sangha includes lay devotees and priests, e.g. in Japan.

### **Sankhara**

Mental/karmic formation. The fourth of the five khandas.

### **Sanna**

Perception. Third of the five khandas.

### **Siddhattha**

Wish-fulfilled. The personal name of the historical Buddha.

### **Sutta**

Text. The word of the Buddha.

### **Tanha**

Third; craving; desire (rooted in ignorance). Desire as the cause of suffering. The second Noble Truth.

### **Theravada**

Way of the elders. A principal school of Buddhism established in Sri Lanka and South East Asia. Also found in the West.

### **Tipitaka**

Three baskets. A threefold collection of texts (Vinaya, Sutta, Abhidamma).

### **Vedana**

Feeling. The second of the five khandas.

### **Vinnana**

Consciousness. The fifth of the five khandas.

### **Vipassana**

Insight into the true nature of things; a particular form of meditation.

## Wesak or Vesak (Sinhalese)

Buddha Day. Name of a festival and a month. On the full moon of Wesak (in May or June), the birth, Enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha took place, although some schools celebrate only the birth at this time, e.g. Zen.

## Zen

Meditation. A school of Mahayana Buddhism that has developed in China and Japan.

# Hinduism

## Advaita

One who teaches by example. Usually refers to a prominent or exemplary spiritual teacher.

## Ahimsa

Non-dual. Refers to the impersonalistic philosophy that unqualifyingly equates God, the soul and matter.

## Arti

Welcoming ceremony in which auspicious articles such as incense and lamps are offered to the deity or to saintly people.

## Ashram

A place set up for spiritual development.

## Ashrama

A stage of life (of which there are four) adopted towards material considerations but ultimately as a means to spiritual realisations.

## Atman

Self. Can refer to body, mind or soul depending on context. Ultimately, it refers to the real self, the soul.

## Aum

The sacred symbol and sound representing the ultimate; the most sacred of Hindu words.

## Avatar

One who descends. Refers to the descent of a deity, most commonly Vishnu. Sometimes it is translated as incarnation which, although inaccurate, may be the best English word available.

## Bhagavad

Gita The Song of the Lord. Spoken by Krishna, this is the most important scripture for most Hindus. Tradition dates it back to 3,000 years BCE, though most scholars attribute it to the first millennium BCE. Considered an Upanishad.

## Bhajan

Devotional hymn or song.

## Bhakti

Devotion; love. Devotional form of Hinduism.

## Bhakti-yoga

The path of loving devotion, aimed at developing pure love of God.

## Brahma

A Hindu deity considered one of the Trimurti, and in charge of creative power; not to be confused with Brahman or Brahmin.

## Brahman

The ultimate reality, or the all-pervading reality; that from which everything emanates, in which it rests and into which it is ultimately dissolved.

## Brahmin

The first of the four varnas, the principal social groups from which priests are drawn. Some writers, rather confusingly, use the spelling 'brahman', and the meaning only becomes clear in the context of a few sentences (see also Brahman and Brahma).

## Dharma

Religion or religious duty is the usual translation into English, but literally it means the intrinsic quality of the self or that which sustains one's existence.

## Diva

Light, normally ghee lamp, lit as offering to a deity or deities.

## Diwali

Festival of lights at the end of one year and beginning of the new year, according to one Hindu calendar.

## Durga

Female Hindu deity, form of the goddess Parvati, wife of Shiva.

## **Ganesha**

A Hindu deity portrayed with an elephant's head – a sign of strength. The deity who removes obstacles.

## **Ganga**

The Ganges. Most famous of all sacred rivers of India.

## **Hanuman**

The monkey warrior who faithfully served Rama and Sita.

## **Havan**

Act of worship in which offerings of ghee and grains are made into a fire.

## **Holi**

The festival of colours, celebrated in spring.

## **Jati**

Caste is the usual translation, meaning occupational kinship group.

## **Jnana**

Knowledge.

## **Kali**

Name given for the power of God that delivers justice – often represented by the goddess Kali.

## **Karma**

Action. Use of work to refer to the law of cause and effect.

## **Krishna**

Usually considered an avatar of Vishnu. One of the most popular of all Hindu deities in contemporary Britain. His teachings are found in the Bhagavad Gita.

## **Lakshmi**

The goddess of fortune

## **Lotus**

Flower Symbol of spirituality

## **Madurai**

Place of pilgrimage in South India.

## **Mandala**

A circle, area or community/group, may be a complex design to aid meditation.

## **Mandir**

Temple.

## **Mantra**

That which delivers the mind.

Refers to a short sacred text or prayer, often recited repetitiously.

## **Moksha**

Ultimate liberation from the process of transmigration, the continuous cycle of birth and death.

## **Murti**

Form. The image or deity used as a focus of worship.

## **Navaratri**

The Nine Nights Festival preceding Dassehra, and held in honour of the goddess Durga.

## **Nirvana**

The cessation of material existence.

## **Parvati**

The consort of Shiva, also known by other names such as Durga, Devi, etc.

## **Prahlada**

Devotee of Vishnu, connected with the festival of Holi.

## **Prashad**

Sacred or sanctified food.

## **Puja**

Worship. General term referring to a variety of practices in the home or mandir.

## **Raja Yoga**

Path of self-control and meditation to realise God.

## **Rakhi**

A bracelet, usually made out of silk or cotton, tied to give protection and to strengthen the bond of mutual love.

## **Raksha Bandhan**

The birthday festival of Rama.

## **Rama**

The incarnation of the Lord, and hero of the Ramayana.

## **Ramayana**

The Hindu epic that relates the story of Rama and Sita, composed by the sage Valmiki thousands of years ago.

## **Rangoli Patterns**

Elaborate patterns made to celebrate Divali.

## **Rig Veda**

The first scripture of Hinduism, containing spiritual and scientific knowledge.

## **Samsara**

The world – the place where transmigration (the soul's passage through a series of lives in different species) occurs.

## **Samskar**

Sacraments designed to initiate a new stage of life.

## **Seva**

Service, either to the divine or to humanity.

## **Shiva**

A Hindu god. The name means kindly or auspicious.

## **Shiva Natarajah**

An image of Shiva involved in a cosmic dance of destruction.

## **Sita**

The divine consort of Rama.

## **Trimurti**

The three deities. Refers to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, who personify and control the three gunas. They represent and control the three functions of creation, preservation and destruction. 'Trinity' should be avoided.

## **Varanasi**

City on the river Ganges, sacred to Shiva. It is one of the holiest pilgrimage sites and also an ancient centre of learning.

## **Varnas**

The four main visions in Hindu Society.

## **Vishnu**

A Hindu God. With Brahma and Shiva forms the Trimurti.

## **Yoga**

Communion; union of the soul with the Supreme, or a process which promotes that relationship. The English word 'yoke' is derived from yoga.

gods do not exist.

# **Humanism**

## **Agnostic**

Someone who does not know, or believes that it is impossible to know, if a God or gods exist.

## **Atheist**

Someone who believes that a God or

## **Celebrant**

Someone who is involved with creating, writing, and conducting a ceremony.

## **Ethical decision**

A course of action stemming from a moral choice, that may have no clear right or wrong answer. It will try to take into account all the available evidence and considers all the foreseeable consequences, in order to do the least harm.

## **Empathy**

The ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.

## **Empirical**

Based on, concerned with or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory, or pure logic.

## **Evolution**

The process by which different kinds of living organism have developed from earlier forms over the history of the planet.

## **The Golden Rule**

The concept, often appearing throughout the history of ideas, that people should treat each other as they would like to be treated themselves, with the implication being that it is best to treat everyone with tolerance, consideration and compassion in order to have a better society overall. **Humanism**

An ethical worldview based on scientific understanding and human morality.

## **Humanist**

Someone who personally identifies with Humanism.

## **Ignostic**

Someone who believes that the question of the existence of a God or gods is meaningless because the term "god" has no unambiguous definition.

## **Judgement**

The formation of an opinion about some fact or idea after critical reflection, on the basis of reasoning and/or experience as appropriate.

## **Natural selection**

The process whereby organisms better adapted to their environment tend to

survive and produce more offspring. The theory of its action was first fully and popularly expounded by Charles Darwin and it is now regarded as the principle mechanism by which evolution occurs.

### **Naturalism**

The idea that everything arises from natural properties and causes and discounts all supernatural or spiritual explanations.

### **Pastoral care**

An ancient, universal model of emotional and spiritual support, performed by trained individuals supporting people in their pain, grief and anxiety or in their triumphs, joys and victories.

### **Rationalism**

The practice or principle of basing opinions and actions on reason and knowledge rather than on religious belief or emotional response.

### **Reason**

The power of the mind to think, understand and analyse given information and form judgements logically.

### **Relativism**

The idea that all points of view are subjective and there is no absolute truth.

### **Secularism**

A principle that proposes a strict separation between the state and religion and also that everyone, regardless of religious background, is equal before the law.

### **Scientific method**

A set of principles and procedures for the systematic pursuit of knowledge and discovery, based upon the recognition and formulation of a problem in a testable fashion, the collection of relevant empirical data, and the testing and re-evaluation of hypotheses based on the experimental data.

### **Scepticism**

The idea that not all ideas should be taken at face value, but instead should be subjected to logical and empirical challenges.

## **Islam**

### **Adhan**

Call to prayer. From the same root, Mu´addhin. (One who makes the call to prayer).

### **Allah**

The Islamic name for God in the Arabic language. Used in preference to the word God, this Arabic term is singular, has no plural, nor is it associated with masculine, feminine or neuter characteristics. (See Qur´an 2:255, 112:1-4) Pronounced Al-laah.

### **Allahu Akbar**

Allah is the greatest.

### **Arafat**

A plain, a few kilometres from Makkah, where pilgrims gather to worship pray and ask for forgiveness. This takes place on the ninth day of the Islamic month of Dhul-Hijjah, the day before Id-ul-Adha.

### **Bilal**

The first Mu´adhin of Islam (see Adhan), a companion of Prophet Muhammad, formerly an Abyssinian slave.

### **Bismillah**

In the name of Allah – phrase spoken prior to every action/deed.

### **Dawud**

David. A prophet of Allah to whom the Zabur (Book of Psalms) was given.

### **Din**

‘Life transaction’ or ‘religion’ of Allah – transaction between every being and Allah. Pronounced deen.

### **Du´a**

Varying forms of personal prayer and supplication.

### **Fard**

Obligatory duty according to divine law, e.g. offering Salah five times a day.

### **Ghusl**

Greater ablution. Formal washing of the whole body prior to worship (see wudu).

### **Hadith**

Saying; report; account. The sayings

of the Prophet Muhammad, as recounted by his household, progeny

and companions. These are a major source of Islamic law.

### **Hajj**

Annual pilgrimage to Makkah, which each Muslim must undertake at least once in a lifetime if he or she has the means. A Muslim male who has completed Hajj is called Hajji or Al-Hajj, and a female, Hajjah.

### **Halal**

Any action or thing which is permitted or lawful.

### **Haram**

Anything unlawful or forbidden.

### **Hijab**

Veil. Often used to describe the headscarf or modest dress worn by women, who are required to cover everything except face, hands and feet in the sight of anyone other than immediate family.

### **Hijrah**

Departure; flight; migration. The migration of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE. The Islamic calendar commences from this event.

### **Id**

Happy occasion shared by all the community.

### **Ihram**

The state or condition of strict discipline entered into to perform Hajj and Umrah. During this period, many normally permitted actions are placed out of bounds to pilgrims.

Also, the name of the two plain white unsewn cloths worn by male pilgrims to indicate the brotherhood, equality and purity of the pilgrim. For women, the dress of ihram consists of their normal modest clothing.

### **Ibrahim**

Abraham. A Prophet of Allah to whom the 'Scrolls' were given.

### **Id ul Adha**

Celebration of the sacrifice, commemorating the Prophet Ibrahim's obedience to Allah and his willingness to sacrifice his son Isma'il.

## **Id ul Fitr**

Celebration of the completion of the fast of Ramadan, which is also the first day of Shawal, the tenth Islamic month.

## **Imam**

Leader. A person who leads the communal prayer; a founder of an Islamic schools of jurisprudence. In Shi'ah Islam, Imam is also the title of Ali and his successors.

## **Isa**

Jesus. A Prophet of Allah, born of the virgin Mary.

## **Islam**

Peace attained through willing obedience to Allah's divine guidance. Pronounced Isslaam.

## **Jibril**

Gabriel. The archangel who delivered Allah's messages to His Prophets.

## **Jihad**

Personal individual struggle against evil in the way of Allah. It can also be collective defence of the Muslim community.

## **Jinn**

Being created by Allah from fire.

## **Ka'bah**

A cube-shaped structure in the centre of the grand mosque in Makkah. The first house built for the worship of the One True God.

## **Makkah (Mecca)**

City where the Prophet Muhammad pbuh was born, and where the Ka'bah is located.

## **Masjid**

Place of prostration. Mosque.

## **Mihrab**

Niche or alcove in a mosque wall, indicating the Qiblah – the direction of Makkah, towards which all Muslims face to perform salah. The Imam leads the salah from the mihrab.

## **Mina**

Place near Makkah, where pilgrims stay on the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul-Hijjah and perform some of the activities of the Hajj.

## **Minaret**

Tower or turret, connected to a

mosque from which the call to prayer is made.

## **Minbar**

Rostrum; platform; dais. The stand from which the Imam delivers the khutbah or speech in the mosque or praying ground. Mu'adhin Caller to prayer (see Adhan), also written as 'muezzin'.

## **Muhammad**

Praiseworthy. Name of the final Prophet.

## **Musa/Moses**

A Prophet of Allah to whom the Tawrah (Torah) was given.

## **Muslim**

One who accepts Islam by professing the Shahadah and wilfully commits/submits to the will of Allah. Pronounced mooslim.

## **Muzdalifah**

Place where pilgrims on Hajj stop for a time during the night of the day they spend at Arafat.

## **Niyah**

Intention. A legally required statement of intent, made prior to all acts of devotion such as Salah, Hajj, Sawm or ablutions.

## **Pbuh**

Peace be upon him, expression of respect made after mention of the Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets of Allah.

## **Qadar**

Allah's complete and final control over the fulfilment of events or destiny.

## **Qiblah**

Direction which Muslims face when performing Salah – towards the Ka'bah (see Mihrab).

## **Qur'an**

That which is read or recited. The Divine Book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Allah's final revelation to humankind. Pronounced Qur'aan.

## **Rak'ah**

A unit of Salah, made up of recitation, standing, bowing and two prostrations.

## **Ramadan**

The ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which fasting is required from just before dawn until sunset, as ordered by Allah.

## **Sadaqah**

Voluntary payment or good action for charitable purposes.

## **Salah**

Prescribed communication with, and worship of, Allah, performed under specific conditions, in the manner taught by the Prophet Muhammad and recited in the Arabic language.

The five daily times of Salah are fixed by Allah.

## **Sawm**

An act of worship: fasting from just before dawn until sunset. Abstinence is required from all food and drink (including water) as well as smoking and conjugal relations during the fasting hours in Ramadan.

## **Shahadah**

Declaration of faith, which consists of the statement, 'There is no god except Allah Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'.

## **Shari'ah**

Islamic law based upon the Qur'an and Sunnah.

## **Sunnah**

All the traditions and practices of Allah, observed and recorded by his companions and followers.

## **Surah**

Chapter of the Qur'an.

## **Taqwa**

An awareness of Allah that permeates every aspect of life. Piety.

## **Tawhid**

Belief in the Oneness of Allah – absolute monotheism as practised in Islam.

## **Wudu**

Ablution before salah, a ritual washing of hands, face and feet.

## **Zakah**

Purification of wealth by payment of annual welfare due. An obligatory act of worship.

## **Zakat**

Money given as Zakah.

## **Zakat-ul-Fitr**

Welfare payment during Ramadan.

# Judaism

## Agadah

Telling. Rabbinical teachings on moral values.

## Aron Hakodesh

Holy Ark. The focal point of the synagogue, containing Torah scrolls.

## Bar Mitzvah

Son of Commandment. A boy's coming of age at 13 years old, usually marked by a synagogue ceremony and family celebration.

## Bat Mitzvah

Daughter of Commandment. As above, but for girls from 12 years old. May be marked differently between communities.

## Bimah

Dais. Raised platform primarily for reading the Torah in the synagogue.

## Brit Milah

Circumcision.

## Challah

Enriched bread used particularly on Shabbat and during festivals.

## Circumcision

Religious rite of Brit Milah, performed by a qualified mohel on all Jewish boys, usually on the eighth day after birth.

## Covenant

Compact (between God and the Israelites).

## Gregger

Rattle sounded at the mention of Hannah's during Purim services.

## Hagadah

Telling. A book used at Seder.

## Halakhah

The Way. The code of conduct encompassing all aspects of Jewish life.

## Hanukah

Dedication. An eight day festival of lights to celebrate the re-dedication of the temple following the Maccabean victory over the Greeks.

## Hanukiah

Nine-branched Hanukkah lamp used at the festival of Hanukkah.

## Havdalah

Distinction. Ceremony marking the conclusion of Shabbat.

## Hebrew

Ancient Semitic language; language of the Tenakh (Hebrew Scriptures) and used by Jews for prayer and study. Also, everyday language in Israel.

## Huppah

Canopy used for a wedding ceremony, under which the bride and groom stand.

## Kashrut

Laws relating to keeping a kosher home and lifestyle.

## Ketubah

Document that defines rights and obligations within Jewish marriage.

## Ketuvim

Writings. Third section of the Tenakh.

## Kiddush

Holy. A prayer sanctifying Shabbat and festival days, usually recited over wine.

## Kippah

Skull cap.

## Kosher

Fit; proper. Foods permitted by Jewish dietary laws.

## Magen David

Shield of David, popularly called Star of David.

## Matzah

A flat cracker-like bread which has been baked before it rises; used at Pesach.

## Menorah

Seven-branched candelabrum that was lit daily in the Temple.

## Mezuzah

A scroll placed on door posts of Jewish homes containing a section from the Torah and often enclosed in a decorative case.

## Mezuzot

Plural of mezuzah.

## Mishnah

First writing down of the oral tradition. An authoritative document forming part of the Talmud, codified about 200 CE.

## Mitzvah

Commandment. The Torah contains 613 Mitzvot. Commonly used to describe good deeds.

## Mitzvot

Plural of Mitzvah.

## Noachide Laws

Seven laws given to Noah after the flood, which are incumbent on all humankind. These laws form the foundation for a just society.

## Pesach

Festival commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. One of the three biblical pilgrim festivals. Pesach is celebrated in the spring.

## Purim

Festival commemorating the rescue of Persian Jewry as told in the book of Esther.

## Rabbi

My teacher. An ordained Jewish teacher. Often the religious leader of a Jewish community.

## Rosh Hashanah

Head of the Year. Jewish New Year.

## Seder

Order. A home-based ceremonial meal during Pesach, at which the Exodus from Egypt is recounted using the Hagadah.

## Sefer Torah

Torah scroll. The five books of Moses hand written on parchment and rolled to form a scroll.

## Shabbat

Day of spiritual renewal and rest commencing at sunset on Friday, terminating at nightfall on Saturday.

## Shavuot

Weeks. One of three pilgrim festivals. Shavuot is celebrated in the summer, seven weeks after pesach.

## Shema

Major Jewish prayer affirming belief in one God. The Shema is found in the Torah.

## Shiva

Seven days of intense mourning following the burial of a close relation. During this period all ordinary work is

prohibited.

## Shofar

Ram's horn blown at the season of Rosh Hashanah.

## Siddur

Order. Daily prayer book.

## Simchat Torah

Rejoicing of the law. Festival celebrating the completion and recommencement of the cycle of the weekly Torah reading.

## Sukkah

Tabernacle; booth. A temporary dwelling used during Sukkot.

## Sukkot

One of three biblical pilgrim festivals, Sukkot is celebrated in the Autumn.

## Synagogue

Building for Jewish public prayer, study and assembly.

## Tallit

Prayer shawl. Four-cornered garment with fringes.

## Talmud

Mishnah and Gemara, collected together.

## Tefillah

Self-judgement. Jewish prayer and meditation.

## Tefillin

Small leather boxes containing passages from the Torah, strapped on the forehead and arm for morning prayers on weekdays.

## Tenakh

The collected 24 books of the Jewish Bible, comprising three sections: Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim (Te;Na;Kh).

## Teshuva

Repentance. Returning to God.

## Torah

Law; teaching. The Five Books of Moses.

## Tzedaka

Righteousness. An act of charity.

## Yom Kippur

Day of Atonement. Fast day occurring on the tenth day after Rosh Hashanah; a solemn day of Tefillah and Teshuva.

# Sikhism

One who lives by the Guru's teaching.

## Akhand Path

Continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib from beginning to end.

## Akal Purukh

Timeless being. A Sikh name for God.

## Amrit

Nectar. Sanctified liquid made of sugar and water, used in initiation.

## Amrit ceremony

The Sikh rite of initiation into the Khalsa.

## Anand karaj

Ceremony of bliss. Wedding ceremony.

## Ardas

Prayer. The formal prayer offered at most religious acts.

## Bandi Chhor Diwas

The Sikh festival which falls on the same day as the Hindu Divali.

## Bhai Lalo

A humble carpenter who opened his house to Guru Nanak. The Guru preferred Bhai Lalo's simple food to the offerings of a local rich merchant.

## Bhai Kanhaya (Ghanaya)

A Sikh commended by Guru Gobind Singh for serving water to the enemy wounded.

## Chanani

Canopy over the scriptures, used as a mark of respect.

## Chauri

Symbol of authority of the Guru Granth Sahib. Fan waved over scriptures, made of yak hairs.

## Darbar

Court. Place where the Guru Granth Sahib is kept and where people sit as the holy congregation (sangat).

## Gurbani

Divine word revealed by the Gurus. The Shabads contained in the Guru Granth Sahib.

## Gurdwara

Sikh place of worship. Literally the 'doorway to the Guru'.

## Gurmukh

## **Gurmukhi**

From the Guru's mouth. Name given to the script in which the scriptures and the Punjabi language are written.

## **Gurpurb**

A Guru's anniversary (birth or death). Also used for other anniversaries, e.g. of the installation of the Adi Granth, 1604 CE.

## **Guru**

The giver of light or teacher. In Sikhism, the title of Guru is reserved for the ten human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib. Ultimately through the Guru's word, the Guru or Enlightener is God.

## **Guru Arjan**

The fifth Guru who was the first Sikh martyr (1563-1606).

## **Guru Gobind Singh**

Tenth Sikh Guru. It is important to note that the title 'Guru' must be used with all the Gurus' names. Sikhs usually use further terms of respect,

e.g. Guru Gobind Singh Ji or Guru Nanak Dev Ji, or prefix the name with the title Sri. Guru Granth Sahib Primal collection of Sikh scriptures, compiled by Guru Arjan and given its final form by Guru Gobind Singh.

## **Guru Nanak**

The first Guru and the founder of the Sikh faith (1469-1539).

## **Haumai**

Egoism. The major spiritual defect.

## **Hukam**

God's will.

## **Ik Onkar**

There is only one Creator. The first phrase of the Mool Mantar. It is also used as a symbol to decorate Sikh objects.

## **Japji Sahib**

A Sikh name for God. A morning prayer, composed by Guru Nanak, which forms the first chapter of the Guru Granth Sahib.

## **Jivan Mukh**

Liberation from self-centeredness.

## **Kachera**

Traditional shorts. One of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

Self-orientated (as opposed to gurmukh).

## **Kakka**

A letter of the Punjabi alphabet. See panj kakke.

## **Kangha**

Wooden comb worn in the hair. One of the five K's (see panj kakke).

## **Kara**

Steel bangle worn on the right wrist. One of the five K's (see panj kakke).

## **Karah parshad**

Sanctified food distributed at Sikh ceremonies.

## **Kaur**

Princess. Name given to all Sikh females by Guru Gobind Singh (see Singh).

## **Kesh**

Uncut hair. One of the five K's (see Panj kakke).

## **Khalsa**

The pure. The Sikh community who have taken amrit. Also the Sikh community. or nylon. It should not be called a 'fly whisk'.

## **Khanda**

Double-edged sword used in the initiation ceremony. Also used as the emblem on the Sikh flag.

## **Kirat karna**

Earning one's livelihood by one's own efforts.

## **Kirpan**

Benevolent protector of honour. Sikh sword; one of the five Ks (see panj kakke).

## **Kirtan**

Devotional singing of the hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib.

## **Kurahit**

Breach of discipline. Examples are adultery, smoking and use of intoxicants etc.

## **Langar**

Guru's kitchen. The gurdwara dining hall where food is served without distinction. Symbolises human equality and sharing.

## **Manji Sahib**

Small wooden platform on which the Guru Granth Sahib is placed.

## **Manmukh**

## **Mela**

Fair. Used of Sikh cultural festivals that are not gurpurbs.

## **Mool Mantar**

Basic mystical formula. The basic precept or statement of belief at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib.

## **Nam simran**

Meditation of the divine Name (God Being) by repeating Sikh words for God "Waheguru" or "Satnaam".

## **Nishan Sahib**

Sikh flag flown at gurdwaras.

## **Panj kakke**

The five K's. The five articles of faith worn by Sikhs. "Symbols", although used sometimes, should be avoided.

## **Panj piare**

The five beloved ones. The first five Sikhs initiated into the Khalsa in 1699. Those who perform the Amrit ceremony today and lead Sikh religious processions (nagar kirtans), especially at major Gurpurbs.

## **Punjab**

Land of five rivers. Also spelt Panjab. The area of the Indian sub-continent now divided between India and Pakistan.

## **Panth**

Path. Panth or Khalsa Panth is the Sikh nation.

## **Ragi**

Sikh musician who sings compositions from the Guru Granth Sahib.

## **Rahit**

Sikh internal and external disciplines representing the Sikh way of life, e.g. keeping the five K's and reciting daily prayers.

## **Sangat**

Holy Congregation.

## **Sewa**

Service without expectation of reward directed at the sangat and gurdwara, but also humanity in general.

## **Shabad Word**

Hymn from the Guru Granth Sahib; the divine word.

## **Sikh**

Disciple, seeker after Truth. A person

who believes in the ten Gurus and the

Guru Granth Sahib, and who has no other religion. For the Sikhs the word also means seeker after the Truth.

### **Vak**

A random reading taken for guidance from the Guru Granth Sahib.

### **Vaisakhi**

A major Sikh festival celebrating the anniversary of the formal confirmation of Sikh Khalsa Panth as an independent religion and nationality in 1699 CE.

### **Waheguru**

Wonderful Lord. A Sikh name for God.

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