

# National Content Standard for Religious Education in England

For too many years, the level and quality of provision for RE around England has been reported as inconsistent at best. This means 1000s of pupils in our schools are denied their entitlement, established in law, to high-quality religious education.

The NCS provides clarification about excellence of approach to RE and exemplifies how schools and academies can fulfil current legal and contractual requirements effectively.

## Why?

One major barrier to improving this situation is the lack of an agreement about what is meant by 'a high-quality religious education'. Unlike a subject included in the National Curriculum, RE has no national programme of study document to act as a benchmark.

The NCS aims to embed a common standard for RE in all types of state funded school in England to meet the REC's vision for all pupils in all schools to receive high quality provision for the subject..

## Aims?

The REC hopes that by establishing the NCS as a benchmark, the document will support a range of stakeholders in RE including:

- SACREs and Academy Trusts
- Initial Teacher Trainers and providers of CPD
- Those making judgements about what constitutes a high-quality curriculum for RE
- Resource providers including Oak National Academy and publishers

## Who?

The NCS was developed around extracts from a draft resource for syllabus writers. This resource has been the focus of extensive consultation and scrutiny for the last 12 months and is due to be published in its final form in Spring 2024 alongside three exemplar curriculums. It draws upon relevant publications including the Ofsted Research Review (2021).

## Origins?

[Read the NCS here](#)

[Read a blog about the NCS here](#)

## Frequently asked questions



Religious Education Council  
of England and Wales

## Indicative

The NCS uses the familiar style of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Unlike the National Curriculum Programmes of study however, it does not prescribe content but instead provides an exemplar for the sort of **breadth, depth and ambition** in a high-quality RE curriculum.

It does not recommend a particular approach to the subject.

## What RE is

The exemplar content should be read within the context of the legal framework including the primary legislation cited for different types of school, and case law which together set an expectation that pupils will develop **knowledge and understanding of the matters of central importance** for the religious and non-religious worldviews studied.

## ...What it is not

The standard **builds on the legal framework** in its assumption that the content of a curriculum in this subject will be **age appropriate** and **focus on religious and non-religious worldviews** rather than on content which is the focus of a **different curriculum subject**.

## Criteria for selecting content

- Legal Framework
- Intention
- Inclusive Principle
- Contextual Factors
- 'Collectively enough' principle
- Coherency

For all pupils to have equal access to high quality education in religion and worldviews, the subject **must be given adequate time and resources** commensurate with its place as a core component of the basic curriculum.