

Promoting Key Skills

Work in Religious Education (RE) should also promote key skills, the prime purpose of which is to enhance the quality of learning in the subject.

Communication

In RE, children encounter a range of distinctive forms of written and spoken language, including sacred texts, stories, history, poetry, creeds, liturgy and worship. These are powerful uses of language, linked to fundamental human needs and aspirations.

RE has distinctive concepts and terminology, which stimulate children to use their language skills to reflect on their own experiences, and to help them understand and appreciate their cultural backgrounds.

In particular, children learn to talk and write with knowledge and understanding about religious and other beliefs and values; to discuss many of the fundamental questions of life; to construct reasoned arguments; to think reflectively and critically about spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues; and to present information and ideas about these issues in words and symbols. Moreover, RE emphasises that truly effective communication also includes an empathetic understanding of people and the issues that concern them

Information technology

RE provides opportunities for children to use and develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In particular, ICT can support the activities of finding information about beliefs, teachings and practices and their impact on individuals, communities and cultures. ICT can help children to communicate and exchange information and understanding with others and to investigate and record data. Many faith communities use ICT on a worldwide basis

Working with others

RE provides opportunities for children to work co-operatively, sharing ideas, discussing beliefs, values and practices and learning from each other

Improving own learning and performance

RE includes learning about taking responsibility for oneself and others. The beliefs and values studied are the foundation for personal integrity and choice. Such study is personally challenging and relevant to many aspects of learning and achievement throughout life, including future careers

Problem solving

RE deals with religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin individual problem solving and decision-making. Examples include the areas of sexual relationships, bringing up children, striving for ideas, and facing bereavement.

Developing Skills in R.E.

Progress in Religious Education is dependant upon the development and application of 'general educational skills', some of which are central to the subject and are reflected in the Programmes of Study and recommended approaches. Teachers should plan for the development of these skills as appropriate to each key stage.

Investigation: in RE this includes skills such as:

- asking relevant questions
- knowing how to use different types of sources for gathering information
- knowing what may constitute evidence for understanding religion(s)
- gathering information from religious sources

Interpretation: in RE this includes skills such as:

- the ability to draw meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism
- the ability to interpret religious language
- the ability to suggest meanings from religious texts

Reflection: in RE this includes skills such as:

- the ability to reflect on personal feelings, feelings of other people, relationships, experience, ultimate questions, beliefs and practices

Empathy: in RE this includes skills such as:

- the ability to consider thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs, needs desires, hopes, aspirations, motivation and values of other
- developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow
- the ability to see the world through the eyes of others and to see issues from their point of view

Evaluation: in RE this includes skills such as:

- the ability to debate issues of religious significance with reference to experience, evidence and argument
- weighting and respective aims of self interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience
- drawing conclusions which are balanced and informed by evidence, dialogue and experience

Analysis: in RE this includes skills such as:

- distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact
- distinguishing between the features of different religions
- the ability to ask 'religious' questions in a religious way
- recognising similarities and differences between religious lifestyles and their distinctiveness from secular lifestyles

Observing: in RE this includes

- the ability to give one's full attention
- using all the senses in order to appreciate the beauty, order, shape, pattern and mystery within religious practice, belief and experience

Responding (to): in RE this includes

- features of the natural world
- human experiences such as growth, loss, the complexity of relationships within the context of religious practice, belief and experience

Questioning: in RE this includes

- developing a sense of curiosity about religious beliefs and practices, human relationships and ultimate questions
- a willingness to ask questions
- asking relevant questions
- asking probing questions

Researching: in RE this includes

- learning where to go to find information about religion and religions
- knowing how to use different types of sources
- knowing what evidence is required

Promoting Other Aspects of the Curriculum

Use of Language Across the Curriculum

The General Teaching Requirements in 'Use of Language Across the Curriculum' can be found in the National Curriculum 2000 handbooks and reference should be made to these:- key stages 1&2 p38; key stages 3&4 p40.

The four areas of language are required be included in all subject teaching. There should be:

- general accuracy in the use of language – spoken and listened to, written and read. In RE this includes using and recognising religious words and spellings, eg. church, synagogue, temple, mosque, mandir
- use of subject specific concepts and specialist vocabulary. In RE this includes using religious terms and concepts correctly eg. worship, symbolism, sacred text
- use of patterns of language which express understanding in the subject. In RE this includes making connections within and between religions and their belief systems eg. sacred writings, teachings, personal attitudes/values, credal statements

Thinking Skills

RE is an academic subject, based on learning about and understanding Christianity and the other principal religions of Great Britain. The study of religion is a rigorous activity involving a variety of intellectual disciplines and skills. These include studying the sacred texts of the world; understanding the development, history and contemporary forms of believing; studying philosophy and ethics; and undertaking phenomenological, psychological and sociological studies in religion. Skills of research, selection, analysis, interpretation, reflection, empathy, evaluation, synthesis, application, expression and communication are promoted.

Financial capability

RE deals with the issues of the value and proper use of personal property, including money. These include means of acquisition, responsible use, taking care of others and giving to charity

Enterprise education

How and why human beings work for themselves and others is a fundamental question of beliefs and values, to which learning in RE makes a contribution in its study of religions and other belief systems

Creative thinking skills

The range of beliefs and values studied in RE covers questions of human nature and personality; personal fulfilment and vocation, sources of inspiration and discovery, and the connection between beliefs, values and the arts

Education for sustainable development

In RE children explore how human beings treat and care for each other and their environment and how they regard and use the world's resources. Attitudes to these issues vary and depend on peoples' understanding of their own and the world's significance. Such significance is reflected in the stories and beliefs, teachings and practice about the origin, value and meaning of life in the major world faiths that children study

Attitudes

In addition to what are termed 'general educational attitudes' there are some **attitudes** that are fundamental to Religious Education and absolutely necessary if students are to enter fully into the study of religion and learn from that experience. These include:

Self-understanding

- developing a mature sense of identity, self-worth and value
- developing the capacity to discern the personal relevance of religious questions
- developing self-confidence, allowing recognition that there are a variety of ways of expressing beliefs and ideas
- developing a set of personal values on which to base moral and ethical decisions

Enquiry

- curiosity and a desire to seek after truth
- developing personal interest in ultimate and metaphysical questions
- an ability to live with ambiguities and paradox
- the desire to search for the meaning of life
- being prepared to reconsider existing views
- being prepared to acknowledge bias and prejudice in oneself
- willingness to value insight and imagination as ways of perceiving reality
- perceiving a sense of mystery in the world

Commitment

- understanding the importance of commitment to a set of values by which to live one's life
- willingness to develop a positive approach to life
- the ability to learn, while living with certainty and uncertainty

Fairness

- listening to the views of other people without prejudging one's response
- careful consideration of other people's views
- willingness to consider evidence, experience and argument
- readiness to look beyond surface impressions
- an 'openness' which recognises that many issues concerned with beliefs and values are by nature controversial and ambiguous

Respect

- respecting those who have different beliefs and customs from oneself
- recognising the rights and freedom of other people to hold their own views
- avoidance of ridicule of other people or their beliefs and way of life
- discerning between what is worthy of respect and what is not
- a willingness to learn from the insights of other people
- appreciation that people's religious convictions are often deeply felt
- recognising the needs, feelings, concerns and desires of others

Promoting Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development through Religious Education

The National Curriculum sets out two aims for the school curriculum:

- Aim 1:** The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
- Aim 2:** The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

"These two aims reinforce each other. The personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and to achieve. Development in both areas is essential to raising standards of attainment for all pupils". (The National Curriculum Handbook 1999/2000)

Religious Education (RE), has a crucial role to play if the overall purposes of the school curriculum, as set out in National Curriculum documents, are to be fulfilled, particularly in areas of pupils' personal development. The whole curriculum will contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development but RE should take a leading role as it can offer a wide range of opportunities. RE is concerned with distinctive ways in which human beings express their understanding and interpret their experience of life, therefore it is uniquely placed to make a significant contribution to the personal development of pupils. It is virtually impossible to arrive at agreed definitions in these areas of personal development. However, it is possible to create working descriptions based on a common consensus about the key elements of each of them. This guidance sets out for each of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development a description from the Ofsted framework 'Inspecting Schools : a Sharper View' (Sept 2003) ; a working description to provide teachers with a practical and common understanding for use in schools; and the characteristics of each area with examples of how these might be approached in a school/classroom setting.

Spiritual Development

"Where schools foster successfully pupils' self awareness and understanding of the world around them and spiritual questions and issues, they will be developing a set of values, principles and beliefs which may or may not be religious, to inform their perspective on life and their behaviour. They will defend their beliefs, challenge unfairness and all that would constrain their personal growth, for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision and all forms of discrimination".

"Where the provision is effective, pupils develop an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. They will empathise with others, showing concern and compassion and have an understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely effect on others. They will have respect for others' needs and interests, as well as their own and a desire to explore their own and others' views."

(Handbook for inspecting schools - Ofsted 2003)

Working description:

Spiritual development concerns the growth and nurturing of the human spirit; an increasing awareness of an 'inner life' which includes emotion, intuition, creativity, imagination and curiosity as well as intellect. It enables us to look within ourselves and know who we are, evaluate our human relationships and our relationship to the wider world; to reflect upon life's fundamental questions and respond to these through formulating a perception of the 'divine' or 'Ultimate Reality'.

Characteristics of spiritual development include:

- reflection on a range of personal and human questions and experiences
- exploration of one's inner being and life, to develop a personal identity and insight into one's 'self' and essence
- exploration of life's fundamental, ultimate questions and a willingness to engage with these, to try to answer them and give life meaning and purpose
- exploration of meaning of the sacred; developing a sense of 'something other' and awareness of profound experiences which can be defining movements in life
- encounter with the responses of faith and believers to life's questions and mysteries and consideration of how these might inform or not one's own responses

Within the school and classrooms, particularly those of RE, spiritual development can be cultivated by providing opportunities for:

- reflection and quiet times, eg through learning from worship, prayer, meditation, celebrations, remembrance, repentance and forgiveness etc. Activities such as visits to places of worship, visitors from faith communities and experiential activities such as guided or imaginative work
- use of silence and listening to one's inner voice to creatively promote awareness of the sacred
- using imagination eg. through activities which encourage expression of inner thoughts, feelings and ideas, including art, poetry, drama, dance and music
- valuing the 'inner life' - recognition of one's personal capacity to have thoughts, emotions, hopes, fears, beliefs and of the hidden depths, secrets and mysteries which lie within us - eg. through studying stories from religious traditions of faith and action which would explore themes such as hope, courage, commitment, motivation, giving and love
- experiencing 'gobsmacking' moments of awe and developing sensitivity and awareness through drawing attention to the wonders around us eg in the natural world, through scientific study, in mathematics and in the power of music and poetry to move or inspire people

- developing a sense of self-worth and self-esteem through exploration of religious beliefs concerning the value of people and human life eg. in the Christian concept of salvation - an affirmation of the value of human beings to God
- exploring questions of meaning and purpose through consideration of ultimate questions such as Who am I? Why do we die? Why do things happen to me? Why is life unfair? Why is there evil and suffering in the world? Questions may well arise from pupils' own experiences of birth, growth, change, the beginning and breaking of relationships, loss and death

Moral Development

"Pupils who are morally aware have an ability to distinguish right from wrong, based on a knowledge of the moral codes of their own and other cultures. They are confident to act according to their own principles and have an ability to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions. Pupils should develop a willingness to express their views on ethical issues and personal values and make responsible and reasoned judgements on moral dilemmas".

(Handbook for inspecting schools - Ofsted 2003)

Working description:

Moral development concerns enabling pupils to develop an increasingly thoughtful and insightful view of what is right and wrong, including understanding of 'grey areas' and a deepening understanding of the principles underpinning society's judgements of what is right and wrong. It is concerned with enabling pupils to cope with moral conflict and dilemmas and to make decisions about moral issues based on principles, beliefs and values. Moral development encourages a concern for the needs, rights and interests of others and an understanding that personal actions have consequences, thus encouraging living in ways which respect the well being and rights of each person. Moral development is concerned to develop characteristics such as truthfulness, kindness, unselfishness and commitment to virtues such as honesty, integrity, justice, fairness and the moral will to do what is right.

Characteristics of moral development include:

- an ability to reflect on moral behaviour, the principles and rules which underpin it, the motivation behind it and consequences of it. In religious terms, for example, exploring the relationship between belief and lifestyle, faith and action
- the acquisition and development of personal attitudes and qualities which contribute to and foster human well being, such as unselfishness, kindness, acceptance, forgiveness, generosity and compassion
- an increasing ability to recognise and cope with moral conflict and dilemmas and to reason with insight, understanding and balance
- an awareness of their own moral choices and the values upon which these and judgements about the behaviour, decisions and experiences of others are based
- gradually developing a personal moral framework founded on a thought through and positive personal value system

Within the school and classrooms, particularly those of RE, moral development can be cultivated by providing opportunities for developing:

- personal values in relation to self and others eg. self-knowledge, self-control, taking responsibility for self and others
- awareness of feelings which motivate action eg. love, joy, compassion, gratitude, anger, frustration, hatred, greed and envy
- human qualities eg. love, sensitivity, concern, co-operation, respect for people and property
- understanding of commitment and responsibility
- understanding of human nature and experience eg. in the context of good v evil, pleasure and pain, suffering and well-being, hope and despair
- understanding of moral decision making and the rationale underpinning our judgements of what is right and wrong
- a sense of justice, fairness, moral 'rightness' and moral 'oughtness'
- an understanding of the situations of those less fortunate than themselves and a concern for equity and their well-being

Social Development

"Pupils who are socially aware adjust appropriately and sensitively to a range of social contexts. They relate well to others and work successfully as a member of a team. They support each other and help those experiencing difficulties. Pupils share their views and opinions, participate in decision-making and jointly take responsible action in the school community to solve problems. They show respect for people, living things, property and the environment".

(Handbook for inspecting schools - Ofsted 2003)

Working description

Social development concerns enabling pupils to relate to other people positively and successfully through a growing understanding of the roles, rights and responsibilities associated with being a member of family, local, national and global groups and communities. It enables pupils to develop social and cultural skills and personal qualities, attitudes and characteristics such as respectfulness, acceptance of diversity and a willingness to be involved and work with others for the common good. Good social development encourages pupils to play a full and fulfilling part in their community and society through meeting the demands of their roles as friends, family members, citizens, learners and workers successfully.

Characteristics of social development include:

- acquisitions and development of the skills, attitudes and values which enhance willingness to participate, work co-operatively and support and help other people as necessary
- learning about society, including family and social/cultural life, the local community, the world of work; the economic, legal, religious and political aspects of life and how one as an individual fits into these aspects of local and national life
- development of the ability to discuss, debate and think critically about society, for example, with reference to the school community, the local community, the media and

globally with reference to issues such as the environment, the distribution of wealth and conflict

- participation in voluntary, community, charitable or democratic activity

Within the school and classrooms, particularly those of RE, social development can be cultivated by providing opportunities for:

- developing understanding and practice of commitment, eg. through exploring the teaching of world faiths on concepts such as love, marriage, family, friendship and commitment to God and exploration of the motivation of those who are committed to a cause
- exploring celebration and thanksgiving eg. how celebration focuses the attention of groups on their shared values and life together, exemplified by eg religious festivals. Consideration of our national and social life through exploring what we as a nation celebrate eg. Remembrance, sporting and cultural achievement and services to communities and / or the nation
- exploring religious teachings on social issues and the values and attitudes which underpin these such as care and concern for those weaker and less fortunate - the vulnerable, the young, old, sick and poor
- understanding the relationship between religion and politics, Church and State eg. through exploration of situations where faith groups challenge or motivate political decision-making and change or where leaders seek political control over religion eg. through study of issues such as world poverty and debt and the global environment and of individuals such as Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King.

Cultural Development

"Pupils who are culturally aware recognise and understand their own culture and the influences that have shaped them. They appreciate cultural diversity and accord dignity to other people's values and beliefs. They challenge racism and value equality. They show openness to new ideas and a willingness to modify their beliefs in the light of what they have learned. Pupils are interested in participating in, and responding to, artistic and cultural experiences. They have a high regard for human achievements in all cultures and societies".

(Handbook for inspecting schools - Ofsted 2003)

Working Description

Cultural development concerns enabling pupils to develop their sense of place and identity in society and learn of the cultural traditions and heritage of that society. It cultivates awareness of the culture to which we belong and which has formed us and encourages creative participation in that culture, eg. through aesthetic appreciation of and involvement in the arts, music, sport, literature, architecture and travel for personal and communal enrichment. Good cultural development promotes appreciation of cultural diversity and the importance of valuing and regarding positively the richness and differences within and between cultures, which is vital for harmonious living in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith society. Cultural development supports pupils in developing understanding and the qualities, values and attitudes which lead to appreciation of and participation in local, regional, national, European and global cultures and dimensions.

Characteristics of cultural development include:

- a broadening and deepening awareness of various forms of cultural expression which explores beliefs, values, feelings, experiences, perspectives and visions
- reflection upon and valuing of a breadth and depth of cultural expression eg theatre, drama, film, literature, music, sculpture, dance and sport
- increasing awareness of and ability to identify accurately the links between culture and identity, beliefs and communities
- the ability to analyse, question and evaluate the variety of responses to culture, relating these to spiritual, moral and social perspectives and experiences

Within the school and classrooms, particularly those of RE, cultural development can be cultivated by providing opportunities for:

- exploring cultural responses to questions arising from human existence ie. questions of identity, origin, meaning, purpose, destiny, value and ethics
- understanding the cultural influences from dimensions such as the religious, social, aesthetic, ethnic and political which bear upon us
- expressing meaning through eg. use of arts, symbols, artefacts, community and leisure activities
- building a sense of community eg. friendship groups within the school and the wider community. This might be developed by studying the beliefs, values, attitudes and lifestyle associated with particular religious and cultural identities and choices
- developing respect for and appreciation of diversity eg. through developing sensitivity to and awareness of their own and others' feelings, history, forms of expression and symbols; the varied needs and interests of people, the importance of commitment to the common good and well being of all and a commitment to challenging and reducing prejudice, discrimination, intolerance and bigotry.

In addition to the clear and valid expectation laid upon RE in this matter, opportunities for the development and cultivation of pupils' spiritual and moral development should be evident across the whole curriculum. In each curriculum area, as well as the presence of implicit though identifiable opportunities, there should also from time to time be explicit, planned attempts to introduce and relate spiritual, moral and religious questions, concepts, ideas and understandings to appropriate subject issues. Such an approach demonstrates an awareness of the need for all to be responsible for and involved in the cultivation of these aspects of pupils' personal development and that the school is addressing this matter collectively and coherently.

Promoting Citizenship and Personal, Social, and Health Education through Religious Education

Religious Education (RE), Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship Education are all concerned with aspects of the education and development of the whole person and each has its own particular contribution to make. Through its distinctive subject matter, the RE curriculum will make a key contribution to pupils' personal development generally but also to schools' provision for PSHE and Citizenship, for example by providing opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

RE deals with, for example, the religious and moral beliefs and values that underpin personal choices and behaviour, eg. relationships; social policies and practices; crime and punishment; concepts and patterns of health, for example use of drugs. RE provides opportunities for the development of active citizenship and involvement in society eg. through looking at the voluntary and charitable activities that contribute to a healthy society.

Beliefs about the nature of humanity and the world influence how we organise ourselves and relate to others locally, nationally and globally. Issues in RE therefore contribute to social and political awareness, eg. rights and responsibilities. RE also contributes to pupils' understanding of Europe and the world. Religious and moral issues are worldwide and it is not possible to understand the nature and significance of European identity without studying religion.

RE promotes the values and attitudes needed for citizenship in a democratic society by helping pupils to understand and respect people of different beliefs, practices, races and cultures. Similarities and differences in commitment, self-understanding and the search for truth and meaning can be recognised, respected and valued for the common good.

Each school is responsible for developing curricular programmes for RE, PSHE and Citizenship but it is not appropriate for them to be taught together. Apart from fundamental educational and developmental reasons, such provision will not meet statutory curriculum requirements.

RE taught according to the Kent agreed syllabus will be able to make a contribution to Citizenship and PSHE. The requirements for learning about religions and learning from religion will guide planning and therefore contributions to pupils' personal and social development.

The four inter-related sections of PSHE and Citizenship at key stages 1&2 share some common elements with RE, including:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities
- preparing to play an active role as citizens
- developing a healthy, safer lifestyle
- developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

PSHE at Key Stages 3 & 4

The QCA PSHE document (2000) set out expectations for PSHE at key stages 3 and 4.

PSHE comprises all aspects of a school's planned provision to promote the personal and social development of pupils, including their health and well being. The knowledge, skills and understanding for PSHE are organised in three inter-related sections and RE plays a significant part in promoting these, for example:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities by **learning about what is fair and unfair, moral decision making, and being encouraged to share and justify their opinions**
- developing a healthy, safer lifestyle by **being taught about religious beliefs and teachings on drug use and misuse, food and drink, leisure, relationships and human sexuality, the purpose and value of religious beliefs and sensitivities in relation to sex education and enabling pupils to consider and express their own views**
- developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people by **being taught about the diversity of different ethnic and religious groups and the destructive power of prejudice, challenging racism, discrimination, offending behaviour and bullying, being able to talk about relationships and feelings, considering issues of marriage and family life and meeting and encountering people with beliefs, views and lifestyles that are different from their own**

RE and Citizenship at Key Stages 3 and 4

The QCA Citizenship (2000) document set out expectations of and initial guidance for schools re Citizenship at key stages 3 and 4.

Since September 2002, Citizenship Education has been a subject within the National Curriculum at key stages 3 and 4. Citizenship may be delivered as a discrete subject, taught through cross-curricular provision or using a combination of methods, including special events.

Citizenship Education will give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives, and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. This includes enabling pupils to tackle many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. Pupils learn to understand and respect our common humanity, diversity and differences.

The key areas of the Citizenship curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 are:

- knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens
- developing skills of enquiry and communication
- developing skills of participation and responsible action

RE plays a significant part in promoting Citizenship through, for example:

- developing pupils' knowledge and understanding regarding the diversity of national, regional religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
- enabling pupils to think about topical spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues including the importance of resolving conflict fairly
- exploring the nature of civic obligation and national loyalty and the bases for wider international obligations
- enabling pupils to justify and defend orally, and in writing, personal opinions about such issues, problems and events

RE contributes to pupils' PSHE and Citizenship development implicitly through both the content and activities of many of the units of study. Where RE contributes explicitly, cross-curricular references are highlighted in the programmes of study and individual units.

Using Information and Communication Technology in Religious Education

The government has acknowledged the significant contribution that ICT makes to pupils' learning. ICT is a key element of the National Secondary Strategy for School Improvement. The Secondary National Strategy document 'ICT across the curriculum' issued in September 2004 contains a booklet and CD ROM of guidance dedicated to developing the use of ICT in RE. Consulting this publication would be very helpful.

When ICT is used wisely, pupils' span and level of concentration, levels of effort and gains in skills, knowledge and understanding increase substantially. Therefore, this guidance is offered to support teachers in extending its use and role within the subject.

Use of ICT is most effective when:

- teachers are themselves trained, skilled and confident in their use of ICT
- teachers are enthusiastic about ICT and use it to improve and enhance their teaching eg through use of multimedia presentations to present graphic images to pupils which challenge them and demand a response
- it is an entitlement for all pupils and is used frequently as an integral part of the learning process
- there is a clear formulation of the principles of good practice in using ICT to raise standards of teaching and learning in subject documentation
- there is an effective management strategy in place to secure consistency and quality of practice across classes and teachers who teach RE
- teachers are aware of the National Curriculum ICT requirements for the age and ability of the pupils they are teaching
- there is a mechanism in place for identifying pupils' current level of ICT skill
- tasks are matched to pupils' learning capacities, are appropriately challenging and further their capacity to understand key concepts eg. through making connections between information gained and prior learning
- it is used for a range of purposes which offer new and interesting learning opportunities eg. guided internet research, surveys using spreadsheets, keeping diaries, establishing e-mail contacts with local faith communities, creating data-bases of useful resources and materials
- it is used to extend the range of information pupils have to draw on and helps them to enter imaginatively into the situations of others eg. through virtual tours or reading accounts of people's personal dilemmas
- it is used to broaden pupils' knowledge and deepen their understanding of religion
- it is used to encourage improvement in the presentation of work
- it is used to provide formative assessment opportunities and allows pupils to draft their work before completing it
- it is used to store evidence of pupils' achievement in electronic form
- pupils have regular access to a range of suitable and relevant hardware and software
- pupils are able to display their work on the school website

Use of ICT is least effective when:

- inappropriate teaching methods result in low level responses from pupils eg. cloze procedure exercises or tasks involving copying information from the screen to a handwritten sheet or answering closed, factual questions
- pupils copy out facts retrieved without any attempt to analyse or reflect on the information and relate it to prior learning
- pupils' time is wasted in irrelevant browsing because of insufficient guidance about references that will be really helpful
- pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to be selective in what they choose to print off which results in much irrelevant information being produced
- there is insufficient control over pupils' work, therefore pupils become distracted by irrelevant material or spend too much time on less demanding aspects of tasks such as formatting, arranging material on a page or considering the layout

Resources

- AS web pages
- Cluster web
- the National Strategy materials are available for download from:
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3/respub/ictac>
- the Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) has an ongoing project to develop the use of ICT in Religious Education with Becta. It is well worth visiting the Becta website for ideas:www.ictadvice.org.uk
- in Section 10 there are lists of RE specific websites and CD-ROMs/videos

General websites to explore:

- www.qca.org.uk/subjects and www.ncaction.org.uk/subjects/re - 2 QCA sites
- www.theresite.org.uk - the RE site - a gateway site - links to RE organisations, religious groups and sites - includes reviews of current ICT resources
- www.ngfl.gov.uk/resources/cits/re/ - the government's virtual RE teachers centre
- www.cant.ac.uk/re/net - the RE net - a gateway site
- www.re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk - the RE exchange - a gateway site - for teachers and pupils - latest news about RE and many links to RE related sites
- www.pcfre.org.uk - Professional Council for RE
- www.bbc.co.uk/education/lzone/progsschools.shtml - the BBC site
- www.4learning.co.uk/programs_search.cfm - the Channel 4 site

Teaching and learning websites:

- www.retoday.org.uk - RE Today
- www.refit.ucsm.ac.uk - Professional Council for RE's ICT and RE site
- www.curriculum.becta.org.uk/docserver.php?temid=362 - Becta site - ideas for teaching and learning at different key stages - also found on the RE link from the Virtual Teachers' Centre - vtc.ngfl.gov.uk/vtc/
- www.culham.ac.uk/ - Culham College site - very good links to RE curriculum materials