

## Appendix 2

# Some examples of 'Ultimate Questions'

The following offers some examples of the sort of questions that have been called ultimate or fundamental questions. It is important to realise that sometimes young children may be asking an ultimate question about for example the fact of pain or evil, if they ask a question like, 'Why are there stinging nettles?'

### 1 Authority

Who can I trust?  
Who should I listen to?  
Who should I obey?  
What can I believe?  
Who can I believe?  
Whose rules should I follow?  
Why shouldn't I steal?  
Where can I find the truth?  
Am I answerable to anyone?

### 2 Morality

How do I decide what is right?  
Where do my ideas about right and wrong come from?  
Where do our ideas about right and wrong come from?  
Why is honesty better than dishonesty?  
Why shouldn't I do bad things? E.g. Why shouldn't I steal? Why shouldn't I cheat? Why shouldn't I lie?

### 3 Values

What really matters to me?  
Do people matter more than things?  
Why is courage better than cowardice?  
Why is justice so important?  
Are people more important than animals?

### 4 Origins

How did the universe begin?  
How can something come from nothing?  
Why is there anything rather than nothing?  
Is there a Creator or is everything really just a cosmic accident?  
If there is a God, who made God?  
Are we alone in the universe?

### 5 Identity

Do I know the 'real' me?  
Do others see me the way I see myself?  
Do I see myself in the way that others see me?  
How can I get to know the real me?  
Am I being true to the real me / myself?  
What does it mean to be me?  
What does it mean to belong?  
What does it mean to be human?

### 6 Destiny

Where am I going?  
Can I determine my own future?  
Can I change?  
Can I 'buck the trend'?  
What can I hope for?  
Is death really the end?  
Why must we die?  
Is there life after death?  
Is there a heaven or hell?  
Is there an ultimate reward or punishment?



Will evil prevail?  
Is reincarnation true?  
What future is there for the human race?  
How will the world end?

**7 Meaning**

Why do we keep asking 'Why'?  
Does anything make sense?  
Is there a God?  
Why is life unfair?  
Why is there so much suffering?  
Why do we not stop the suffering?  
What brings lasting happiness?  
Is there a reason why things happen to us?  
Is there such a thing as an 'act of God'?

**8 Purpose**

What is it all for?  
Why go on?  
Why do some people appear to win and others appear to lose?  
Does life have any purpose?  
What does it mean to be successful?  
What should I aim for?  
Can I be different?

This list of questions has been slightly adapted from one produced as part of RE Today's Looking Inwards Looking Outwards project. We are grateful to RE Today for their permission to use the original list.

One of the 32 page booklets in the Engaging with Secondary RE series is entitled 'Spiritual RE' (Edited by Lat Blaylock, RE Today, ISBN 978-1-905893-10-2 - [www.retoday.org.uk](http://www.retoday.org.uk) ). It explores issues to do with spiritual development from an RE perspective.

