

## Assessing RE

**Assessment does not exist as a separate entity but is an integral part of the process of learning.**

### What is assessment?

Assessment, from the Latin *assidere*, 'to sit beside', is any formal or informal moment when we draw up alongside a student and assess their progress. How do we know they are making progress? We need to have clearly defined learning outcomes which themselves feed into our larger vision for why pupils are learning RE at all. Learning outcomes should test specific knowledge and skills related to the subject matter in hand, they should offer pupils the opportunity to interrogate the subject matter and conduct some analysis of their own.

A curriculum which systematically builds up understanding over time can be termed a **progression curriculum**. A progression curriculum is not only designed to develop and grow students' understanding, it also makes assessment straightforward. A progression curriculum provides a point to aim for, a goal. In order to check students' progress we need to know where they are heading. In a progression curriculum, small pieces of information deliberately feed into a larger whole, allowing students understanding to grow in sophistication and complexity.

Small learning outcomes might be built into a larger question, eg *Should non-Muslims be allowed on Hajj?* This requires some factual knowledge of Hajj, but draws on wider information and asks for students' analysis. Students could answer in different ways but they will all use the same information on Hajj to answer. They will be taking ownership of the information and rather than simply repeating disconnected facts. They will be weaving their own considerations through the information to form a larger whole.

A question such as this shows that assessment can both check on students' understanding and skills, as well as push them into more analytical modes of thinking.

Does this apply to younger children? While too much information can overburden younger children and cause confusion, they can offer something of their own thoughts as well as show their factual understanding in age-appropriate ways. For example:

- Talk about whether gifts of money are better than gifts of time or attention. This might crop up in a lesson on Precious Things.
- Discuss why religions build places of worship when they believe God is everywhere. This could be part of the discussion when learning about a place of worship.

Questions such as these require children to repeat and recall RE-specific information, while also offering some of their own ideas and thoughts. A group of 4 children might answer differently using the same information, showing you that they are thinking for themselves as well as taking on board the information.

For all ages, the idea of **progression** is important. Key ideas can be taught at an age-appropriate level, but coherent curriculum design means pupils will revisit them again and



with increasing sophistication. Progression shows us where pupils are, not just in relation to one lesson or unit of work, but to where they will be in future.

## Progression

Assessment should test pupils' progress along the road to this overall vision. **Progression** is a good way to think about planning to meet one clear and coherent purpose of learning. A progression curriculum deliberately builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time, so connections can be made and understanding can grow in richness and depth.

Information, taught at an age-appropriate level, will gradually build to allow a deeper, richer understanding to grow. For example, children in Year 1 might talk about Christians celebrating Jesus' at birth at Christmas. They might use words like 'special' or 'unique' to describe Jesus. They might make a 'present' card and draw a baby Jesus inside. This is not the language you would use at GCSE, but it is an early building block of information about Christian beliefs. By Year 3 or 4 our pupils will be learning words like 'Incarnation', breaking down the word to understand its meaning. By Year 4 or 5, our pupils will learn some of the historical context of Jesus' life; his cultural, religious and political influences. Understanding builds systematically and pupils are empowered to think at increasing levels of challenge and at greater depth.

## Why do we do it?

We need a goal in mind in order to assess progress. The new Ofsted framework in fact cements the connection between systematic curriculum design (intent) and how pupils are enabled to explore and master the curriculum (implementation). The outcome, their increased knowledge and skills, is the final part of this journey (impact), the outcome of effective planning, teaching and assessing. The following section offers more information on Ofsted and assessment.

## Assessment and the New Ofsted Framework

Inspections in the new framework will work to four deciding factors when coming to an overall judgment: (1) quality of education, (2) behaviour and attitudes, (3) personal development, (4) leadership and management

Assessment is part of the quality of education. This itself is envisioned in terms of intent, implementation and impact.

**Intent** teachers and subject leaders will need to state the purpose of learning in a subject, to explain why pupils are learning this subject. Inspectors will consider what knowledge and skills pupils gain through the curriculum and how the curriculum develops understanding that is increasingly rich and critical.

**Implementation** inspectors will consider how far planning, teaching and learning, including assessment, meets curriculum aims. Therefore assessment is an integral part of curriculum design, planning and teaching. It is the time taken to check pupils' progress in relation to a goal. Assessment tests curriculum design and measures pupils understanding. It is part of teaching, not separate.

**Impact** inspectors will consider the impact of the above measures through comparable national measures such as literacy and numeracy and *the progress pupils can be seen to make*. This will be seen in their work, in talking to pupils and in the classroom. Assessment is to check pupils' progress in relation to a learning goal, it should not overburden teachers or exist separately to curriculum design and implementation. A systematic,



coherent curriculum, that builds understanding and is implemented in an engaging manner, will have a positive impact on pupils' growing understanding.

**Assessment Questions**

Year Group and Term	Unit	Assessment Questions
EYFS Term 1	Special People	What makes people special?
EYFS Term 2	Learning from Bible stories	What can we learn from the stories of the Bible?
EYFS Term 3	Belonging	What does it mean to belong?
EYFS Term 4	Special Times (Easter)	What happens at Easter?
EYFS Term 5	Learning from stories from other traditions	What can we learn from stories from other traditions?
EYFS Term 6	Precious Things	Why are objects precious to people?
Year 1 Term 1	Caring for our World (Creation)	How do Christians believe the world was created?
Year 1 Term 2	Special Days	Which days are important to Christians and Jews?
Year 1 Term 3	Rules and Routines	Why is it important to have rules and routines in religions?
Year 1 Term 4	Palm Sunday	Why is Easter important to Christians?
Year 1 Term 5	Special Friends	Who were Jesus's special friends and why were they important?
Year 1 Term 6	Special Books	Why is the Bible important to Christians and Jews?
Year 2 Term 1	Special Food	Why is food important in Christian and Jewish festivals?
Year 2 Term 2	Festivals	What do you know about Christian and Jewish festivals and symbols?
Year 2 Term 3	Special Places	Why do religions build special places of worship?
Year 2 Term 4	Moses	What do you know about Moses?
Year 2 Term 5	Stories from the Bible	What do stories from the new and old testament teach Christians and Jews?
Year 2 Term 6	The Importance of Water	What role does 'water' play in religion and ritual?
Year 3 Term 1	Creation	What do religions teach about caring for our world?
Year 3 Term 2	How do Christians around the world celebrate Christmas?	Do all Christians celebrate Christmas the same throughout the world?
Year 3 Term 3	Belief and Practice of Christianity	What do you know about Christian belief and practice?
Year 3 Term 4	The Story of Easter	Why do Christians call the day Jesus died, Good Friday?
Year 3 Term 5	Special Leaders	Why was Jesus a special leader for Christians?
Year 3 Term 6	Judaism	What do you know about Judaism that is different to Christianity?



Year 4 Term 1	Islam	How does an Islamic person practise their faith? Is it similar or different to other faiths?
Year 4 Term 2	Light and Dark	What do Light and Dark symbols mean in religions?
Year 4 Term 3	Places of Worship	Why are places of worship significant to Jews, Muslims and Christians?
Year 4 Term 4	Holy Communion	How does Holy Communion build a Christian community?
Year 4 Term 5	Saints or Heroes?	What makes someone a hero or saint?
Year 4 Term 6	Prayer	Why do religious people pray?
Year 5 Term 1	Creation or Science	Creation v Science - conflicting or complementary?
Year 5 Term 2	The True Meaning of Christmas	What is the true meaning of Christmas?
Year 5 Term 3	Who was the Buddha?	Who was the Buddha and why is he important to Buddhists?
Year 5 Term 4	What happens in churches during Lent and Easter?	How does what happens in churches during Lent differ to what happens at Easter?
Year 5 Term 5	Tudor Religion	How did religion change in the Tudor period?
Year 5 Term 6	Muhammad	Who was Muhammad and why is he a role model for Muslims?
Year 6 Term 1	Buddhism	How is the Buddhist religion similar/different to other religions you have studied?
Year 6 Term 2	Jesus the Messiah	Was Jesus the Messiah?
Year 6 Term 3	Miracles of Jesus	What do the miracles of Jesus teach?
Year 6 Term 4	Easter	How does the Christian Festival of Easter, offer hope?
Year 6 Term 5	What happens when we die?	What happens when we die?
Year 6 Term 6	Pilgrimage	What is pilgrimage and why is one undertaken by people of different faiths?