# MENTOR DEVELOPMENT: Understanding the ITE Partnership Curriculum

## Religious Education

Subject rationale

The BUL primary religious ITE curriculum considers three distinct types of subject-specific knowledge that pupils learn in Religious Education (RE). Each of these is powerful and should not be confused with ‘mere facts’. Substantive knowledge is knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions. ‘Ways of knowing,’ identifies where pupils learn ‘how to know’ about religion and non-religion. ‘Personal knowledge,’ considers where pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about what they study. Assumptions and preconceived ideas about teaching RE are addressed; as well as any fears of anxiety linked to subject knowledge.

## **Sequencing the subject for each phase**

Phase 1: BSTs explore primary and early years RE, embracing the question of why we teach it in schools. Prejudgments and misconceptions are challenged by discussing the importance of a non-judgement culture, where everyone’s views and beliefs are considered. BSTs learn to recognise and self-evaluate not only their own preconceived ideas about RE but identify gaps in their subject knowledge and the impact this can have in the classroom through the lens of past experiences.

Phase 2: BSTs learn that rich substantive knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions is informed by lived religion as well as historical study of religious traditions. BSTs are taught to observe, and critically analyse creative pedagogical approaches to teaching RE and are introduced to the importance of disciplinary knowledge; for example, by understanding the value of embracing local places of worship, artefacts, images, and visitors into the classroom. Consideration is given to the locally agreed syllabus, and in particular to how RE can be sequenced over a series of lessons, introducing BSTs to exemplars for teaching excellent quality religious education. Guidance is provided on best practice beginning with EYFS and how this can be seen through the lens of understanding the world.

Phase 3: BSTs develop their understanding of the rationale of Ofsted’s concern about ‘rich knowledge’ in RE. A range of ‘ways of knowing’ (HMI research report into RE) used in good RE practice, and examples of good practice are introduced. BSTs appreciate the unique contributions RE can make in creativity, spiritual and moral development, exploring fundamental values and being ready for life in plural, diverse Britain where a safe culture of exploration of religion, worldviews, attitudes, and values are promoted.

### How mentors can support BSTs in school

* ​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​​Through discussing planning and observing expert colleagues teaching RE, discuss the importance of a safe learning environment where mutual respect and diversity of different beliefs are celebrated and where pupils are supported to consider their own beliefs, identify their own presuppositions and values about RE.
* ​​​​​​​Explain how your school's RE curriculum is planned and sequenced.
* ​​​​​​​Provide opportunities for your BST to observe the RE Coordinator teaching the subject.
* ​​​​​​​Support BSTs to know what is expected of pupils in the year group they are teaching, making use of the model of progression in RE, locally agreed syllabus, faith schools' expectations and EYFS expectations, as appropriate.
* ​​​​​​​Discuss the value of embracing local places of worship, artefacts, images, and visitors into the classroom.

### Indicative open access reading

1. Ofsted (2021) Research review series: Religious Education. Available at: [Research review series: religious education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-review-series-religious-education)
2. DFE (2019) Religious education in English schools: Non‑statutory guidance 2010. Available at: [DCSF-00114-2010.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7adb3ce5274a34770e7953/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf)
3. Religious Education Council of England & Wales (2018) CORE Commission on Religious Education. FINAL REPORT RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS: THE WAY FORWARD A national plan for RE. Available at: [Commission on Religious Education – Final Report 2018 – REC (religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk)](https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/commission-on-religious-education-final-report/)
4. Jackson, R and Everington, J (2017) ‘Teaching inclusive religious education impartially: an English perspective’, British Journal of Religious Education, 39(1) pp. 7-24. Available at: [Full article: Teaching inclusive religious education impartially: an English perspective (tandfonline.com)](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01416200.2016.1165184)