

## Correspondence via email from Hindu Representative Abhijeet Kulkarni to clerk and professional RE adviser in advance of June ASC meeting

**My comments regarding the Teaching of Hinduism / Hindu People in the current syllabus** are as below

1. Hinduism needs to be taught **from an earlier stage**, including Early Learning Stage and KS1. Currently there seems to be no inclusion of Hinduism in Key Stage 1 and patchy inclusion thereafter.
2. If the current approach of 'Key Questions' to broaden pupils 'field of enquiry' regarding 'religion and world views', is to be continued, Hinduism aspects needs to be included in more of the relevant key questions.
3. **I would particularly like to request review and inclusive changes to Section B2 (Page 13)** of the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for 2019-2024. This is particularly in respect of the '**minimum requirements**' of which 'religious traditions are to be studied in depth', in each Key Stage of learning.
4. With regards to point 3 above, I note that apart from KS2 and Reception years, there appears to be **NO requirement to teach Hinduism**. This does **NOT** appear to be **equitable**, considering that Hinduism is one of the 3 major religions practiced locally, nationally and globally. Including Hinduism in each Key Stage, will help to make the Syllabus '**Broad and Balanced**'.

### What changes are being requested

1. **More balanced, broad and equitable inclusion** of the '**big six**' major religions, keeping a **balance between 'Abrahamic' and 'Dharmic'** religions, to enable ALL pupils to develop an inquisitive enquiry of Worldviews on religious and non-religious beliefs.
2. **Include Hinduism in All Key stages of learning, as a minimum requirement.** The breadth and depth of Hinduism taught could ofcourse be decided by individual schools and teachers, based on local factors. However it is essential that the basics of Hindu beliefs and traditions are taught from a very early stage, and continued throughout School years. *(The detrimental effects of a narrow and imbalanced worldview among pupils has recently come to light and has been widely reported, <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/publications/anti-hindu-hate-in-schools/>, following a report by the Henry Jackson Foundation, **copy of which I attach**)*
3. **West Yorkshire SACRE** have recently revised their RE syllabus, particularly aspects related to Hinduism. **I attach a copy** of the same with a request to include aspects of Hinduism taught in North Yorkshire, as deemed fit from an educational standpoint.

### How we can help

1. There are several Organisations, like the Hindu Education Board etc which can provide high quality teaching and learning resource material, with regards Hinduism in RE in Schools. I can liaise with the Hindu Education Board or any other Hinduism RE resource entity.
2. Specific help / resources for Teachers covering Hinduism as part of RE in Schools.
3. Liaise with RE Today or any other RE Syllabus writers/providers to provide any help or contributions with revision of syllabus where appropriate, concerning Hinduism.

I would be grateful if you could consider the above points with a view to provide a response, Local Schools. It will also help me to put forth my views at the upcoming Agreed Syllabus Conference in June 2023.

## Information to support the ASC in considering its response

The focus of the information provided is in response if option A of updating the current syllabus is chosen. If option B, C or D were chosen these requests would need to be considered when seeking information about syllabuses to review.

### 1. Request to change the syllabus to have equitable inclusion of the 'big six'

The ASC would need to take in to account current national curriculum advice from Ofsted and national developments in RE when considering this request.

#### Ofsted Research review

*High-quality RE prepares pupils to engage in a complex multi-religious and multi-secular world. To reach this goal, leaders and teachers might think about the overall conception of religion and non-religion that pupils build through the RE curriculum. To consider the overall concept of religion and non-religion that pupils build through the curriculum is perhaps more useful than thinking about the quantity and weighting of traditions to include.*

*However, much of the debate about RE content has not focused on the idea of cumulative sufficiency. Instead, the focus has been on the quantity and weighting of traditions to include in the RE curriculum. This focus might be due to the wording of the most recent legal prescription for RE,<sup>[footnote 52]</sup> which states that locally agreed syllabuses should:*

*reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.*

*Although this prescription is a starting point, it is not a full statement of the substantive knowledge that pupils should learn in high-quality RE. It only explicitly identifies substantive knowledge of Christianity. It alludes to but does not specify precisely what those other traditions are. There are different ways in which the content of high-quality RE might reflect this legislation.*

*Unfortunately, some leaders interpret the legislation in percentage terms, for example by devoting 51% of RE to the study of Christianity and 49% to 'other religions'. Commentators have noted for some time that this approach does not guarantee a quality RE curriculum.<sup>[footnote 53]</sup> In fact, it can generate problems. For example, it can unintentionally cause tensions by devoting more time to some religious or non-religious traditions. It can also prevent pupils from exploring the connections between traditions or even imply that there are no connections.<sup>[footnote 54]</sup>*

*Equally, simply covering a greater number of religious and non-religious traditions (as inclusive as that sounds) is no guarantee of a high-quality RE curriculum. This overloads the curriculum and might lead to superficial caricatures of religious and non-religious traditions.<sup>[footnote 55]</sup> Generally speaking, the issue of what might be enough content to constitute a high-quality RE curriculum has been given little consideration in the RE community.<sup>[footnote 56]</sup>*

#### Syllabus A

In syllabus A the table of range of religions and worldviews is the **minimum requirement**. Many schools may wish to go beyond the minimum.

Learning from four religions across a key stage is demanding: the syllabus does not recommend tackling six religions in a key stage. Depth is more important than overstretched breadth. Schools are encouraged to teach less but teach it better.

Key questions in this syllabus allow schools to draw in different traditions where they fit the theme and question, and where there are representatives of those traditions in the school and local community.

## 2. Request to include Hinduism in all Key stages

I have liaised with RE Today to explore enhancing representation within Syllabus A if this is the option the ASC adopts. A systematic study unit plan for Hinduism in KS1 can be provided in addition to the systematic study unit already present in KS2. It is also possible to add an additional unit in KS2. The costs of these unit plans are £750 per plan

In addition to this work with RE Today, there is scope for resource documents including subject knowledge and vocabulary documents to be written with support from SACRE members to enhance representation of all the religions and worldviews represented within the syllabus.

## The place of non-religious worldviews in the Syllabus

### 2021 Census Data

You can look at the detail of north Yorkshire data on the ONS website here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/identity/religion/religion-tb/no-religion?lad=E07000163> and I have provided a summary below

| Lower Tier Local Authorities | Religion (10 categories) | %      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| <b>Craven</b>                | No religion              | 38.50% |
|                              | Christian                | 53.80% |
|                              | Buddhist                 | 0.20%  |
|                              | Hindu                    | 0.20%  |
|                              | Jewish                   | 0.10%  |
|                              | Muslim                   | 1.10%  |
|                              | Sikh                     | 0.10%  |
|                              | Other religion           | 0.40%  |
|                              | Not answered             | 5.60%  |
| <b>Hambleton</b>             | No religion              | 34.10% |
|                              | Christian                | 59.40% |
|                              | Buddhist                 | 0.20%  |
|                              | Hindu                    | 0.10%  |
|                              | Jewish                   | 0.10%  |
|                              | Muslim                   | 0.30%  |

|                      |                |        |
|----------------------|----------------|--------|
|                      | Sikh           | 0%     |
|                      | Other religion | 0.40%  |
|                      | Not answered   | 5.50%  |
| <b>Harrogate</b>     | No religion    | 36.20% |
|                      | Christian      | 55.50% |
|                      | Buddhist       | 0.30%  |
|                      | Hindu          | 0.30%  |
|                      | Jewish         | 0.20%  |
|                      | Muslim         | 0.60%  |
|                      | Sikh           | 0.10%  |
|                      | Other religion | 0.40%  |
|                      | Not answered   | 6.30%  |
|                      |                |        |
| <b>Richmondshire</b> | No religion    | 35.80% |
|                      | Christian      | 55.70% |
|                      | Buddhist       | 1%     |
|                      | Hindu          | 1.50%  |
|                      | Jewish         | 0%     |
|                      | Muslim         | 0.20%  |
|                      | Sikh           | 0%     |
|                      | Other religion | 0.70%  |
|                      | Not answered   | 5%     |
| <b>Ryedale</b>       | No religion    | 34.20% |
|                      | Christian      | 58.70% |
|                      | Buddhist       | 0.20%  |
|                      | Hindu          | 0.10%  |
|                      | Jewish         | 0.10%  |
|                      | Muslim         | 0.30%  |
|                      | Sikh           | 0%     |
|                      | Other religion | 0.40%  |
|                      | Not answered   | 6%     |

|                    |                |        |
|--------------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>Scarborough</b> | No religion    | 39.40% |
|                    | Christian      | 52.80% |
|                    | Buddhist       | 0.30%  |
|                    | Hindu          | 0.10%  |
|                    | Jewish         | 0.10%  |
|                    | Muslim         | 0.70%  |
|                    | Sikh           | 0%     |
|                    | Other religion | 0.50%  |
|                    | Not answered   | 6.10%  |
| <b>Selby</b>       | No religion    | 38.80% |
|                    | Christian      | 54.70% |
|                    | Buddhist       | 0.20%  |
|                    | Hindu          | 0.10%  |
|                    | Jewish         | 0.10%  |
|                    | Muslim         | 0.20%  |
|                    | Sikh           | 0.10%  |
|                    | Other religion | 0.40%  |
|                    | Not answered   | 5.30%  |

## Enhancing non-religious worldviews in syllabus A

The updated syllabus includes the following text:

### Page 13 of the syllabus notes:

The agreed syllabus has a duty 'to take care that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in a pluralistic manner' and 'must accord equal respect to different religious convictions, and to non-religious belief'.<sup>8</sup> Note that the term 'religion' encompasses both religious and non-religious beliefs.<sup>9</sup>

### Page 14 of the syllabus states:

Non-religious worldviews. Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE in schools without a religious character should be inclusive of both religions and non-religious worldviews. Schools should ensure that the content and delivery of the RE curriculum are inclusive in this respect.

This syllabus requires that, in addition to the religions required for study at each key stage, nonreligious worldviews should also be explored in such a way as to ensure that pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different worldviews. This is enabled through the following key questions: L2.6, L2.9, U2.1, U2.5, U2.7, 3.1, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12

### Further enhancement

I have also liaised with RE Today to explore enhancing representation within Syllabus A if this is the option the ASC adopts. This can be provided through a KS1 and KS2 non-

religious worldview unit with examples from Humanism. This would be reflective of the new national resource written in partnership with Humanists UK and reflecting the national website developed by Humanists UK. The costs of these unit plans are £750 per plan

In addition to this work with RE Today, there is scope for resource documents including subject knowledge and vocabulary documents to be written with support from SACRE members to enhance representation of all the religions and worldviews represented within the syllabus. In the context of Humanism this should include the core knowledge document produced by Humanists UK.