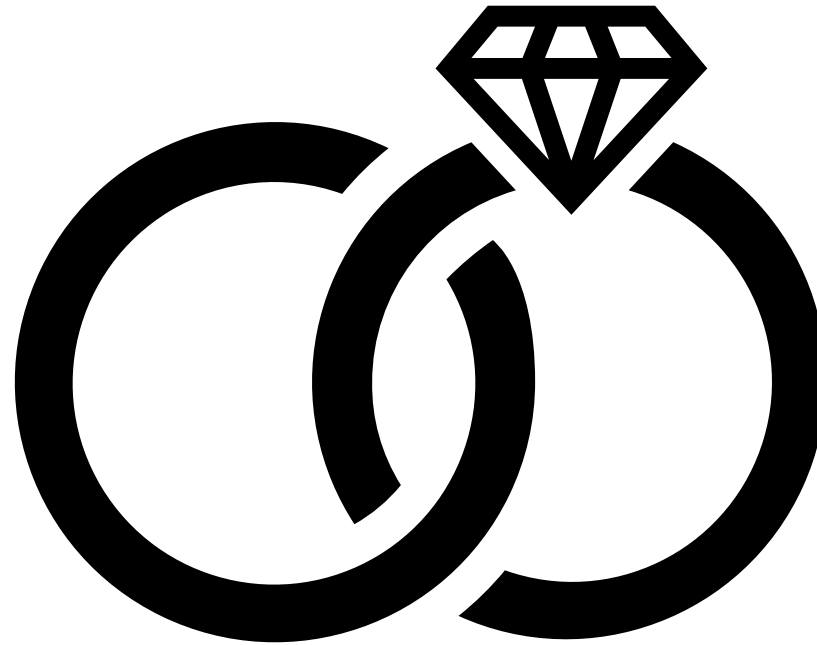


THEMATIC: Why do people make promises?



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<p>What's the purpose of this unit? It is the intention of this unit to build on prior learning through exploring and comparing how different religious and non- religious communities demonstrate commitment through making promises e.g. in marriage, at birth, rites of passage etc. and should ideally build pupils' abilities to make comparisons across and within regions and beliefs. It's really important to explore this question sensitively, as there will be children in your class who come from many different home backgrounds.</p>	
<p>Links across learning – <i>From your long term plan, which units will you be drawing on? Add detail linking to material that you know pupils have explored during the year. There may be other links from previous years' teaching that are relevant too.</i></p>	<p>'Sticky knowledge' By the end of this unit, pupils should know:</p>
<p>Because of the nature of this key question, we are expecting that schools are likely to choose it for the end of Y4 when pupils will have studied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y4 CHRISTIANITY: What did God promise to his people? • LKS2 JUDAISM: What are important times for Jewish people? • LKS2 HUMANISM: How do non-religious people celebrate new life? • LKS2 SIKHI: What do Sikhs value? • Y4 CHRISTIANITY: For Christians, is communion a celebration or act of remembrance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that for most religious people, many promises are made 'before God' and demonstrate their commitment to God and to others • that non-religious people make promises to help build strong relationships and to demonstrate commitment to each other • that promises may be hard to keep and take place throughout life by religious and non-religious people, such as promising to look after a new baby, joining a faith community or promises to look after each other in marriage • that many Sikhs and Christians make promises to show their love for God and for others, and in the actions they take as a result
<p>Key questions to shape the learning:</p>	<p>Expected outcomes for this phase: <i>i.e. what will pupils do to show this knowledge?</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a promise? Who makes the promise? Who is the promise to? What might happen if promises are broken? Is it easy to make and keep a promise? 2. How can a promise be a sign of commitment for us? (Brownies, class contract, new dog etc)- How can a promise be a sign of commitment for a religious person? 3. What types of promises are made at different stages of life and why? 4. How do promises made by individuals help build a community? (Ummah/ Humanists/ Jewish) 5. Do promises help people feel closer to God? 6. What difference do promises make to me? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① suggest reasons why people might make promises to mark stages of life ① suggest how promises religious people make might help them to feel closer to God ② make links between different rites of passage & the beliefs of people making the promises, and talk about the reasons for some similarities and /or differences ② talk about what types of promises are made in e.g. baptism, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Jewish weddings (Ketubahs), Humanist baby naming ceremonies and weddings. ② explain what difference promises might make to a community ② respond sensitively to the views of others ② describe some of the challenges of making and keeping promises ② give reasons for some of the views they have, relating to where their ideas come from

Background knowledge specific to this thematic unit

In this unit, it is important to draw together ideas from across children’s learning, based on units & religions you’ve taught. The questions posed and activities suggested in each session are often deliberately generic to allow you to do this. You may need to tweak the questions to include specific vocabulary.

- Pupils’ family lives & personal circumstances will naturally influence their experience of promises being made and/or broken, so this may need some sensitive handling within the context of this unit. This is part of pupils’ personal knowledge and one way in which learning in RE can support pupils’ SMSC development & contribute to PSHE.
- Pupils will draw their learning from a range of religious and non- religious worldviews. From Christianity, pupils will recap learning about the covenants made by God to Noah, Moses and Jesus.
- From Sikhi, pupils will draw on their learning about the Sikhi concept of ‘Pray, Work, Give’ as way of being closer to God.
- From the Judaism units, pupils will have learnt that Bar and Bat Mitzvahs (son or daughter of the commandment) are rites of passage for young Jewish people, marking the movement from childhood towards adulthood. Young people are considered responsible for their own decisions and actions and old enough to follow the commandments (mitzvot) for themselves. A tallit shawl is often given to boys at their bar mitzvah, which is then worn at synagogue for the rest of their lives. In non-Orthodox synagogues, girls sometimes also receive a tallit shawl. Find out more about the symbolism of the tallit here:
- **Ketubahs** are marriage contracts between Jewish couples. These show vows where the couple promise to look after each other & is written in Aramaic text. This is one of the oldest and most essential parts of the Jewish wedding. The Ketubah sets forth responsibilities that both partners accept. It promises something unwritten...a covenant between two people who promise to be partners in life and care for one another. In marriage, the groom accepts certain responsibilities which are detailed in the Ketubah. His principal obligations are to provide food, shelter and clothing for his wife, and to be attentive to her emotional needs. The protection of the rights of a Jewish wife is so important that the marriage may not be solemnized until the contract has been completed. The bride and groom sign the Ketubah before the wedding during a private ceremony with the Rabbi and two witnesses. It is a legally binding agreement. The Ketubah is the property of the bride and she must have access to it throughout their marriage. It is often written amidst beautiful artwork, to be framed and displayed in the home.
- There is also opportunity to include the promises that different communities make when a baby is born: in Islam it’s expected that the baby’s father whispers the Shahadah into a new born baby’s ears wh that there will be an event called aqiqah which is a bit like a baby shower. Teacher info here: [Aqiqah: the Islamic Baby-Welcoming Celebration \(learnreligions.com\)](https://www.learnreligions.com/aqiqah-the-islamic-baby-welcoming-celebration). Link also to the Y4 Humanism unit about welcoming new life. Baptism & christening will be included in an UKS2 unit ‘Y5: How did the Church begin and where is it now?’, but you may wish to introduce them as part of this unit, as they may be part of pupils’ lived experiences in their family.
- From the Humanism unit, pupils will have learnt that connections with others are nurtured and through helping others to be happy helps the person helping, to be happy to. Relatives or friends may be asked to become ‘guide parents’ ‘supporting adults’ ,‘mentors’ or ‘special friends’ who may promise to to support the child to be free to find their own path in life and happiness as long as their choices don’t harm others. <https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/One-life-overview-5.pdf>

Golden thread	Further questions to support learning	Vocabulary / glossary for this unit: <i>Pupils will also be drawing on vocabulary from across other units, so refer to prior learning for vocabulary that they should already be familiar with</i>
 God	<p>Why do some people make promises? What or who do people make promises to? Who makes the promise? Do promises help people feel closer to God? How can a promise be a sign of commitment for a religious person? Which things do children think are the same across religions? Which are different? Does a promise to serve others help people to feel closer to God? What do some religious people think about God’s promises? How might these beliefs help them to make their own promises? Is God a part of the promises that religious people make? Do you think Sikhs’ & Christians’ promises to serve others helps them to feel closer to God? How?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious people – people who believe in God or gods • Non-religious people – people who don’t believe that there is a god • Humanist – a non-religious person who believes that human happiness and well-being are the most important things in life • Ummah – Muslim community • Adhan – Muslim call to prayer, which contains the Shahadah • Shahadah – the Muslim statement of belief, that Allah is One and Muhammad is his Messenger; it’s expected that the baby’s father whispers the Shahadah into a new born baby’s ears • Aqiqah – Muslim baby-welcoming, like a baby shower, but after the birth • Seva / sewa - Sikh selfless service
 Community	<p>What types of promises are made at different stages of life and why? How do promises made as individuals help to build a community? How do the promises we make affect other people? What connections are there between how Christians and Sikhs serve others?</p>	



Identity

What is a promise? What type of promises do we make? **Why are promises made?**

What might happen if promises are broken? How does it make us feel when someone breaks a promise to us or when we break a promise? Is it easy to make and keep a promise?

How can a promise be a sign of commitment for us? (Brownies, class contract, new dog etc)

Does it make a difference to make a promise 'before / in front of' God or other people?

What difference do promises make to me?

Have I changed my thinking about anything as I've explored ideas in this unit?

- **Vand Chako** – the Sikh duty to **Give**
- **Langar** – the Sikh community kitchen where meals are prepared and served
- **Vow**- a promise to do something- e.g. vows exchanged in a Christian wedding.
- **Rite of passage** – a special time to mark a stage in life e.g. birth or marriage
- **Bar Mitzvah/ Bat Mitzvah** – a rite of passage marking commitment to the Jewish (synagogue) community
- **Ketubah** – a Jewish marriage contract, containing promises made by the couple to each other
- **Covenant** – an agreement between two 'parties', indicating a relationship between them e.g. God and his people, a married couple

Visual map, showing linked content from concept maps.




Christians make promises to 'love God' and 'love others', following the example of Jesus when they make a public declaration of faith e.g. at **confirmation** or **believers' baptism**. Promises are also a part of life ceremonies such as **infant baptism / dedication** or **weddings**. It's important to Christians that promises are made 'before God'.



Humanists also make promises as part of life ceremonies e.g. baby naming & marriage. These are non-religious ceremonies as Humanists believe there is no god, and that people should **celebrate and make the most of the one life that they have**.



Chessed: 
Loving kindness

In **Judaism**, two people getting married make promises as part of their wedding contract, the **ketubah**. They are often very beautiful and displayed on the wall in the couple's home. It's important that these promises are made as part of the Jewish community.



Gemilut Chasadim:
doing good deeds



Why do people make promises?

What promises have you made and what do they show about what's important to you?



Hindu (Sanatana) Dharma

*In **Hindu (Sanatana) Dharma**, weddings are an important way of setting up a new family unit and celebrating the joining of two people as part of **Vivah Sanska (the wedding sacrament)**. It involves making promises about the responsibilities and duties of marriage for the bride and groom.*




In Islam, the **Ummah** express commitment to each other through meeting for **salah** (prayers) on Fridays. The **adhan** (call to prayer) is a reminder of the commitment they have made. Worship (**ibadah**) as a community helps Muslims to feel closer to **Allah**.


Muslims also welcome new babies to the world by whispering the **Shahadah** into the baby's ear. This is often followed by a baby welcoming event called **aqiqah**.





For **Sikhs**, **seva (selfless service)** expresses a commitment to share with others: **Giving (Vand Chako)** is one of their key duties. Giving to others helps Sikhs to feel closer to God. The **langar (community kitchen)** is a key place to see this in action.






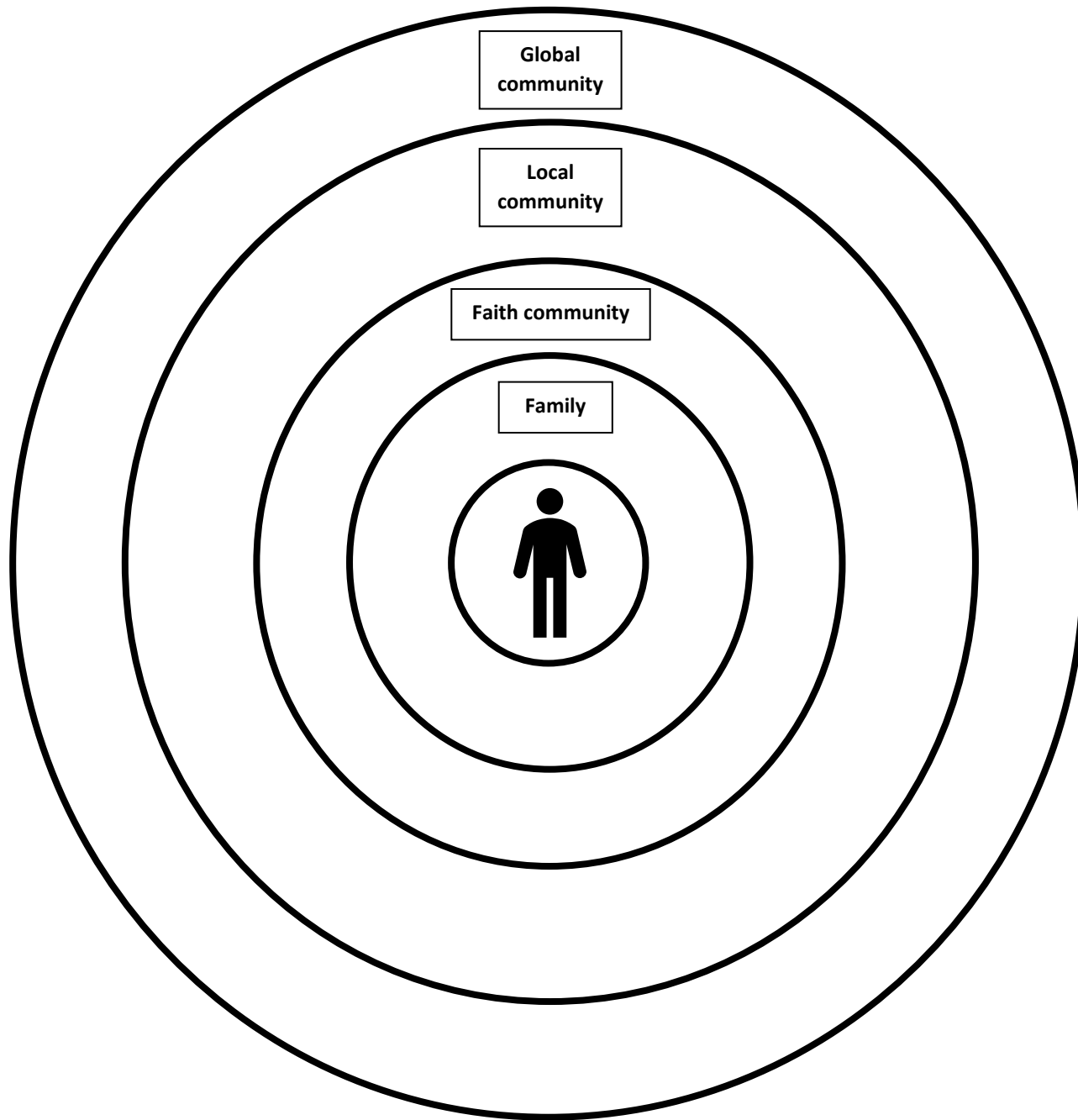
What might this look like in the classroom? This sequence of activities should help you plan pupils' learning....	Links to specific prior learning	
<p>Engage (10%)</p>  <p><i>There are lots of questions in this first session: pick and choose which can be explored quickly by your children, and which you might need to focus for longer on. Do try to use all the questions. You could split into groups if it helps.</i></p> <p>Session 1: What is a promise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore pupils' answers to the question 'What is a promise?' (e.g. A promise is when someone says that they will do (or not do) something and then try to make sure that they do it.) What kind of promises have children made? e.g., class charter, Brownies, Cubs. Watch a short video of the picture book 'The Promise' – how does this help us to understand the concept of a promise? <p>Why are promises made? Who makes the promise? Who is the promise to?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making and keeping promises is one way to communicate with others and show them that they can trust you. e.g, ask a child to fall backwards and tell them that you promise to catch them. Consider a range of people who might make promises through their line of work e.g. a firefighter, a policeman, a teacher, a cub scout, a couple getting married, a doctor- and match each up to the promise that each one has made. What sorts of promises do friends make to each other? How does it help if promises are made to one another? <p>Is it easy to make and keep a promise?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people may make promises which can be easy to say but much harder to actually keep. Make a human bar chart to help pupils think about different kinds of promises. Have pieces of paper on the wall in the classroom with the following statements written on each one: Easy, Quite Hard, Very Hard, Impossible. Read out a variety of promises (such as I promise to eat a packet of crisps, I promise to be the tallest person in the class, I promise to eat vegetables every day for a whole month, I promise to brush my teeth every day, I promise to share my toys...) and ask pupils to stand next to the piece of paper that reflects their thinking about this promise. Talk about children's choices for each statement. Why do they think they are easy or difficult? What are the criteria that might make them impossible to keep or very easy to keep? (Any promise that suggests the ultimate- all, always, never again- all likely to be impossible to keep) <p>What might happen if promises are broken?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What would happen in the example above if you broke your promise about catching the child falling backwards? (Please don't!!) How would they feel? Read the Parable of the Two Sons. Pupils can act out the story and the characters can be freeze framed. Interview each of the characters about their actions. How did the father feel about being let down by his son who promised to work in the vineyard but didn't? How did he feel about his older son who said that he 	<p>Links to parables- The Two Lost Sons, the story of the Lost Sheep,</p>	<p>The Promise by Nicola Davies, video The Promise - Full Film - YouTube</p> <p>Your school context will be where many pupils may think about promises that they make when writing a class behaviour charter, especially at the beginning of the school year.</p> <p>NB You may need to talk sensitively about promises that it is OK to break e.g. safeguarding issues</p> <p>The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-31a)</p>

	<p>wouldn't work in the vineyard but then did? The father figure can be compared to God asking humans to follow his commands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we learn about promises from Jesus' parable? 		
<p>Enquire & Explore (65%)</p> 	<p>Session 2: How can a promise be a sign of commitment for us? (Brownies, class contract, new dog, infant baptism / baby naming etc)-</p> <p>Reminding pupils of the types of promises discussed from session 1, talk about the commitment involved when making a promise. e.g. what commitment is involved when getting a new pet? Is it always easy to have this commitment? e.g. when you want to play with your friends but you have to stay in and clean out the cat litter.</p> <p>How can a promise be a sign of commitment for a religious person?</p> <p><i>This session will help to model what you will want pupils to investigate more independently in sessions 3&4.</i></p> <p>Gather ideas from across your learning this year, revisiting content and correcting any misconceptions. You might choose to do this by looking at photographs you've used in previous units showing Christian / Jewish / Sikh people making promises (carrying out acts of seva, getting married etc.), or by inviting familiar people to talk to children about their experience of making promises within their community, or by using videos.</p> <p>OR: Look at photos of people from different faith communities, where promises are being made and talk about what's happening. What actions are the same / different? Annotate photocopies of the pictures with your observations – and keep these to look back on at the end of the unit. Use different resources to help children to find out answers e.g. books, video clips, words, visitors to talk to children about what promises mean for them etc. Encourage children to observe similarities and differences.</p> <p>Which things do children think are the same across religions? Which are different?</p> <p>Plenary to prepare for next session: Can we match the pictures to an imaginary life timeline? Which life stages do they represent?</p>	<p>Units to link back to:</p> <p>Sikhi unit 'What do Sikh people value?' Selfless service- seva.</p> <p>'What are special times for Jews?' Jewish promises made in a Ketubah- a marriage contract where the groom promises to look after his partner; Bar/Bat Mitzvah (Son or Daughter of the Commandments) – for Jewish young people becoming a part of the synagogue community</p> <p>'Y4: What did God promise to his people' & 'Y4: For Christians, is communion a celebration or an act of remembrance?'</p>	<p>Photos to show where promises are being made, from prior learning. There are a few examples in a PPT: you can find the PowerPoint in the 'RE Downloads' area https://gdbe-elevate.org/help#re</p>
	<p>Session 3: What types of promises are made at different stages of life and why?</p> <p><i>This is likely to be linking new knowledge to prior learning. You should compare one rite of passage across different religions/beliefs and could give different groups in your class a different focus.... e.g.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby naming in Humanism, linking with new learning e.g. infant baptism / dedication, whispering the shahadah in a new-born baby's ear in Islam & holding a baby-welcome (aqiqah) • Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Judaism, linking with new learning e.g. believer's baptism, joining the Sikhi Khalsa (amrit ceremony) • Ketubah (marriage contract) in Judaism, linking with: marriage for Christian & non-religious people e.g. you could compare the vows made in a Christian wedding with the Jewish ketubah or promises written by non-religious people 	<p>'Y4: How do non-religious people welcome new life?'</p>	<p>You will need to provide books, videos or photos for groups to investigate</p> <p>Infant Baptism: BBC Two - Pathways of Belief</p> <p>Islam: Whispering adhan, select excerpt from: Muslim Birth Ceremonies - YouTube; or Adhan for baby Sabriana Yacoob - YouTube</p> <p>Christian marriage: Watch clip.</p>

	<p>Make a set of cards to show what you have found out – you may need more than one answer. Make (maybe in pairs) a set of cards to show what you have found out about a religious rite of passage and another set about a non-religious rite of passage</p> <p><i>Some suggestions to prompt your investigations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is making the promise? • What are they promising? • Why are they making a promise? • Who are they making the promise to / in front of? • Are there any symbols involved in the promise-making? <p>Evaluation: Does it make a difference to make a promise ‘before / in front of’ God or other people?</p>		<p>Humanists UK has information about Humanist views on non-religious naming ceremonies, including some short films.</p> <p>Ketubah: look for links in the LKS2 Judaism unit</p> <p>Hindu (Sanatani) wedding video here: BBC Two - My Life, My Religion, Hinduism, Marriage</p>
<p>Enquire & Explore (65%)</p> 	<p>Session 4: How do promises made by individuals help build a community? (Ummah- the Muslim community)</p> <p>Revisit the findings from session 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which life stages involve making promises as part of a <u>community</u>? • Why do you think this is? • How do promises benefit a wider community? • Are some promises more important than others? <p>Pupils write a rapid response Post-It© note response to the questions (i.e. make it quick!)</p> <p>Pupils conduct a survey to find out in school (or to ask a range of religious people e.g. your local church community) to find out which promises individuals in that community have made. Agree on some simple questions to ask so that children will be able to conduct the research themselves.</p> <p>You could then use your findings to model the Promise Circle.</p> <p>Promise Circle: How do the promises we make affect other people?</p> <p>Model this with your class with a set of concentric circles (Promise Circle, see resource p.), where the centre is the person who is making the promise. Who comes in the next circle e.g. their family? Or the next... e.g. their community of faith.... their local community... The global community of faith... etc.</p> <p>How wide can we go? Can we map how each ‘circle’ benefits from the promise that someone has made?</p> <p>What promises do Muslims make as part of the Ummah?</p> <p>Look at the Promises PPT exploring this question: how do the promises that individual Muslims make to follow Allah & the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) impact on the life of the wider Muslim community?</p>		<p>Be careful of your timings for this session so that you can focus on the impact that promises have on a community</p> <p>This would need careful planning ahead of the lesson so that teachers are aware that this will be happening, and so it doesn’t take the whole lesson!</p> <p>There is an example of the Promise Circle on p.11</p> <p>PowerPoint can be accessed from here: https://gdbe-elevate.org/help#re</p>

<p>Enquire & Explore (65%)</p> 	<p>(the Ummah) Part of a Muslim’s duties is to travel to Makkah once in their lifetime if they can, and be part of the Ummah, circling the Kaaba, in unity together. Everyone wears the same white clothes.</p> <p>OR: Create another Promise Circle as a group for a specifically faith / belief context and think about what this might look like for a member of that community.</p> <p>Evaluation: teacher creates some dilemmas relating to promises e.g. “You are a Jewish boy who has just undertaken his Bar Mitzvah. You are also a member of your school football team. Your team have been asked to play next Saturday (Shabbat) but that would mean you couldn’t go to synagogue with your family. What do you do? Who could you go to for advice to help you to make your decision?”</p> <p>Talk about who is impacted by the decision you might make. Might this be different for different people or different promises? Does this show difference in what people believe?</p> <p>Children reflect on the impact of those dilemmas on keeping or breaking a promise. Some might even be able to write their own dilemma cards to try out on others.</p>		<p>This evaluation activity could be used to stretch more able pupils</p>
	<p>Session 5: Does a promise to serve others help people to feel closer to God? (Sikhi & Christians)</p> <p>Recap from previous learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do some religious people think about God’s promises?</i> • <i>How might these beliefs help them to make their own promises?</i> • <i>Is God a part of the promises that religious people make?</i> <p>Sikhs believe that God exists within everyone, so any kind acts/ acts of service/ promises are seen as acts of service to God.</p> <p>Look at the Sikh concept of seva as an act of selfless service where ‘Pray, Work, Give’ are the main concepts of faith and are seen as being a way of getting closer to God. Watch ‘Types of Seva at the Gurdwara’ Images of seva at the Gurdwara Pupils can carry out a silent debate on what sorts of promises are being shown in each picture. Why are these promises made? How might serving others through sewa bring them closer to God?</p> <p>Look at the art of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet – remember the events of Maundy Thursday</p> <p>Consider what you’ve found out about how the Christian community tries to live out the values of God’s Kingdom, promising to follow the example that Jesus set. Jesus asked his followers to ‘serve’ others as they had seen him do. He also said, ‘Whenever you do these things, it’s as if you are doing them to me.’</p> <p>What connections are there between how Christians and Sikhs serve others?</p> <p>Do you think their promise to serve others helps them to feel closer to God? How?</p>		<p>https://www.natre.org.uk/resource/s/termly-mailing/inspiring-re/sikhs/What-is-sewa-Going-beyond-the-langar/</p> <p>Local links to the Sikhi community: Home - gurdwaraforsurrey.org.uk</p> <p>Jesus washes the disciples’ feet: The washing of the feet - Ghislaine Howard (methodist.org.uk) Jesus’ words in Matthew 25:37-40</p>

	 <p>Draw around your hands and then draw/label or write your conclusions to these questions on the hands.</p>		
 <p>Evaluate (5%)</p>	<p>Session 6: Answering our big question, ‘Why do people make promises?’</p> <p>Hexagons assessment activity [see right] Talk together about your work across this unit. Think back to the different things you’ve learned about different people making promises: what more could you add to the photos now? As a class consider what you’ve learned about WHY the people make promises and what difference these promises make.</p> <p>What difference do promises make to me? Have I changed my thinking about anything as I’ve explored ideas in this unit?</p>		<p>Hexagons assessment/linking activity on p.12</p> <p>Where children see links, they join the hexagons by a side (1 link) or corner (2 links) Annotate them to show why you’ve linked them</p>
<p>Express (20%)</p>  <p><i>(Could be more if you are cross-curricular)</i></p>	<p>Session 6: Why do people make promises? What new ideas might we use to help our school community to make promises?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a card that will help a bride and groom remember one of the promises that they have made e.g. to love each other; comfort each other; stay together etc. • Make a set of cards for e.g. parents of a new baby, someone who’s just been baptised / had Bar/Bat Mitzvah or just got married etc. that can be sorted into ‘actions that will help them to keep their promise’ and ‘actions that will not’. Share your cards with someone else and see if they can sort them. • Write appropriate words or choose Bible verses to use that reflect what Christians believe about love, promises and forgiveness to use in a marriage service. • Make a Ketubah-style contract, promising to uphold your school’s values, or look after a friend or pet etc. • Create art that shows your understanding of the importance of promises for religious or non-religious people • Find out about – and take action to support – your local food bank. What difference might this make to your local community? 		<p>Find a foodbank: Find a Food Bank - The Trussell Trust</p>



Promise Circle example:

Hexagons Task: (print as many as you need)

