

Catholic Religious Education Curriculum Overview



'Lighting the Path' – EYFS, Year 1 & Year 2

The Six Branches of the RE Curriculum

The model curriculum has six annual themes (branches), each linked to a term. Pupils study the Bible and learn about the Catholic worldview lived out in the Church. They reflect on what this means for their lives. The branches follow the liturgical cycle, enabling links with wider aspects of Catholic life. Each year builds layers of knowledge through scripture, art, and music, ensuring progression and reflection.

Term 1 Branch 1: Creation and Covenant

- Explore Bible texts where God creates and calls people.
- Learn the Christian belief that everything comes from God.
- Study Genesis, Psalms, and covenants (promises) in the Old Testament.

Term 2 Branch 2: Prophecy and Promise

- Linked to Advent.
- Learn about the birth of Jesus, the Messiah promised by God.
- Understand how Old Testament prophecies point to Jesus.

Term 3 Branch 3: Galilee to Jerusalem

- Learn about Jesus' ministry and travels.
- Read Gospel writers, parables, and teachings.
- Connect teachings to Catholic beliefs today.

Term 4 Branch 4: Desert to Garden

- Linked to Lent and Holy Week.
- Learn about Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Understand its centrality to Christian life.

Term 5 Branch 5: To the Ends of the Earth

- Explore events after the Resurrection and Ascension.
- Learn about the apostles and the early Church.
- Make links between liturgy, sacraments, and Church structures today.

Term 6 Branch 6: Dialogue and Encounter

- Learn about Christianity as a global religion.
- Encounter different faiths and explore working together for the common good.

Additional Framework

Knowledge Lenses - Six lenses guide study:

- Catholicism: hear, believe, celebrate & live

- Other worldviews: dialogue and encounter

Ways of Knowing

Skills include understanding, discerning, responding, critical thinking and remembering.

Teaching Lighting the Path

Following the model curriculum, each half term of the school year teaches one branch. Each branch contains 12 lessons (10 for Reception), covering the mandatory content of the RED. The lessons are based on objectives drawn from the model curriculum but also have an assessment focus stating what pupils should be able to do by the end of the lesson. They aim to integrate knowledge lenses with the Ways of Knowing based on the hermeneutic cycle.

The lesson structure is consistent. They start with a 'tune in' activity to make links with previous learning or to help pupils make connections with the content of the lesson. This is followed by the main taught activity and then by an independent task which demonstrates pupils' learning. All lessons end with a 'wrap-up' session to recap learning.

Catholic Beliefs and Practices

Who is God?

- God is the source of all that is, all that has been and all that will be.
- God is infinite, that is, has no beginning and no end.
- God is love (John 4:8), and all that God does flows from that love.
- Christians sometimes call God 'Father'.

How do we know about God?

- Creation points to a Creator; Christians believe creation itself points to God.
- Christians believe there are other ways in which God is made known to humans. This is called revelation.
- Christians call the supreme form of God's revelation the Bible.

What does the Bible tell us about God?

- The Old Testament tells of God creating everything and how people turned away from God (fall).
- God continued to love humanity and made covenants to restore the relationship.
- The Old Testament includes teachings of prophets who announced the coming of a saviour or Messiah.
- Christians believe the Holy Spirit inspired the prophets and that Jesus is the promised Messiah.
- The New Testament includes stories of Jesus, acts of disciples, letters to early Christians, and a vision of a new heaven and earth.

What about the Holy Spirit?

- The Holy Spirit is God.
- God is a communion of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Holy Trinity).

- The Holy Spirit is described in powerful images (fire) and gentle ones (dove, stillness).
- Christians meet the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.

Who is Jesus Christ?

- God became man and was born to Mary in Bethlehem as Jesus.
- Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah who restores humanity's relationship with God.
- Jesus' teachings are recorded in the Gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.
- Jesus instituted the Eucharist meal before his crucifixion.
- Jesus died for humanity's sins and restored the relationship with God.

What is the Catholic Church?

- Built on the foundation of the apostles.
- The Pope is the leader and Peter's successor.
- The Church is a community sharing in God's love.
- Baptism is the first sacrament and entry into the Body of Christ.
- Sacraments are meeting points with God; there are seven sacraments.

What is the Bible?

- A collection of texts including stories, prayers, and letters.
- The Bible tells the story of God's relationship with humanity.
- Authors were inspired by God; it is the inspired word of God.
- Divided into Old and New Testaments.
- Old Testament: Hebrew scriptures and Jewish experiences of God's love.
- New Testament: Accounts of Jesus and letters to early Christians.

Who are the apostles?

- Twelve companions of Jesus.
- Received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- Peter is considered the first Pope.
- Acts of the Apostles tells of their work.
- Confirmation is a sign of Pentecost for announcing the good news.

What does the Catholic Church teach?

- Beliefs are summarised in the Creed, said at Mass each Sunday.
- Jesus rose on Sunday, influencing the Creed and prayers.
- Jesus is present in the Eucharist; Catholics join in communion as the Body of Christ.