



# Diocese of Westminster

## EDUCATION SERVICE

Director of Education: JP Morrison MA (Hons) MBA (Ed) NPQH

### LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT 1. (iii) Learning About Religion

#### **Knowledge and understanding of social and moral practices and way of life.**

Pupils will learn about the ways behaviour is influenced by what people believe, whether that is in religious practice (e.g. actions) or their general way of life, for example the ways in which the Catholic Christian interacts with the world; they will learn about the ways in which religious belief shapes their lives and the way they see and interpret society and the world; they will learn to understand the religious and moral basis for certain belief systems.

Level	AT 1 (iii) social and moral practices and way of life	Our understanding	Issues	Prompt Questions to ascertain learning.
1	Recognise that people because of their religion act in a particular way	<p>Pupils will have some sense that when people believe, they try to behave in certain ways. The connection could be articulated by the teacher.</p> <p>The wording of the level does not presume pupils will either be able to describe what believers do or explain why</p>	<p>There are two issues:</p> <p>a. The overall focus of this strand is <i>behaviour and way of life</i>. We need to be careful to differentiate this strand from AT 1(ii) where the <i>rituals and celebrations</i> which mark religious practice are covered. Certainly rituals and celebrations are part of the way of life of a believer. However, this</p>	<p>Stating what Catholic Christians believe and then asking pupils to find what these believes 'makes us do' might be a first point of entry.</p> <p>Eg In our school we believe that God loves everyone in the whole world and so we try to love everyone too! Can you think of ways we take care of each other in</p>

		<p>they do them – just that they will recognise that people ‘do’ certain things because they believe.</p> <p>‘Believer’ in this level is presumed to be a Catholic.</p>	<p>strand is concerned with how believers act within society and the world more generally.</p> <p>b. Being kind to others, giving generously, being honest and trustworthy – in short treating others as you like to be treated – is not the sole prerogative of Catholic Christians. People who do not profess faith of any kind can be just as kind, compassionate and generous as those who do.</p> <p>What marks the way of life of Christians is <i>why</i> they behave in such a way: beliefs about humanity, the world and a relationship with God prompt certain behaviours.</p> <p>This connection, albeit very simple, is present from the first level.</p>	<p>our class? School?</p>
2	Describe some ways in which religion is lived out by believers	<p>Pupils will be able to describe some of the things that believers do in their everyday lives.</p> <p>The move from recognition (L1) to description (L2) implies a more comprehensive knowledge of behaviours. Rather than just being able to recognise some of the things that believers do, pupils will be able to offer a detailed</p>	<p>Description requires greater focus on specific behaviours.</p> <p>It may be easier to start with the more obvious behaviours of the Church (eg collecting for CAFOD; bringing foodstuff for Parishioners; raising money for the poor) as examples of what people who believe do. The rationale (<i>why</i> these things are done) could still be articulated by the teacher:</p>	<p>Catholic Christians believe that the resources of the world should be shared so that everyone has enough to eat. Can you tell me about some of the things we do in our school/class which helps to share what we have with other people who have less than us?</p> <p>Catholics believe that we are called to care for the earth. What could we do as a class to ensure</p>

		<p>description of their actions.</p> <p>The wording in this statement does not contain the linking aspect of the previous one: whereas level 1 asks that pupils recognise that people behave in certain ways <b>because they believe</b> level 2 simply asks that they can describe the behaviours. However, given the focus of the strand we should assume the belief/behaviour connection is present.</p> <p>'Believer' in this level is presumed to be a Catholic.</p>	'Catholic Christians do this because they believe.....'	<p>that things are not wasted?</p> <p>How does our school show its love of our 'neighbours'?</p>
3	Give reasons for certain actions by believers	<p>Pupils will be able to explain <i>why</i> believers engage in certain behaviours.</p> <p>Level 3 is like Level 2 in that it mentions <i>certain</i> actions of believers. Specific actions or behaviours will still be the focus of learning. However, in previous levels the connection between belief and action could have been made by the teacher. In Level 3 articulation of the relationship between belief and action is now expected of</p>	<p>Teacher knowledge! Why does the Church speak in favour of certain behaviours and against others?</p> <p>There is an obvious link between AT1 (i) Level 3, where beliefs and teachings of the Church are articulated, and this strand/level, where how people act as a result of their beliefs is studied. Eg. 'Catholics believe in/that..... People who accept this belief are likely to.....'</p>	<p>Catholics often (name an action)....Why?</p> <p>Why do you think a Catholic Christian would be reluctant to ....</p> <p>Are there things that a Catholic Christian would not do? Why not?</p> <p>How would someone who believed in God act in this situation?</p> <p>At our school we (collect food for the poor). Why do we feel it is important to do that?</p>

		<p>pupils: pupils will not only say what believers do, they will explain why they do them.</p> <p>'Believer' in this level is presumed to be a Catholic.</p>		Each year we.....Why?
4	Show understanding of how religious belief shapes life	<p>Pupils will be able to describe situations in which there is a clear link between what a person believes and the way they live.</p> <p>Level 4 pupils will have moved beyond the individual specific actions of believers to draw wider conclusions about how belief shapes all of life.</p> <p>This level requires a more comprehensive view: I believe and my beliefs impact on the way I chose to live.</p> <p>'Believer' in this level is presumed to be a Catholic.</p>	<p>Catholics believe that every person is called to live life to the full: whole and complete, conscious of their relationship with God and with humanity. This is their universal Vocation, given to them at their baptism.</p> <p>Although this Vocation to wholeness will be expressed differently: in single life; married life; in Religious life or in Ordained ministry, the choices Catholics make and the way they live their lives will be informed by this fundamental belief.</p>	<p>Can you see people in our community for whom belief – faith in God – helps them decide how to live?</p> <p>Catholic agencies exist because people believe that we should live a particular way. Can you think of an someone who works to 'bring to life' beliefs?</p> <p>Sometimes Catholic Christians talk about God walking with us. How might 'walking with God' help a person decide how to live or act?</p>
5	Identify similarities and differences between peoples' responses to social and moral issues because of their beliefs	<p>Pupils now apply their understanding of how faith impacts on action to consider how Catholics and other people of faith respond to social and moral issues.</p> <p>The verb <b>identify</b> asks for more 'shallow' knowledge than</p>	<p>This Level marks a move to consideration of people other than Catholics.</p> <p>The developmental capacities of pupils will determine the particular social and moral issues which it may be appropriate to study.</p>	<p>What would you expect from a person who holds to belief in God?</p> <p>If someone professed belief in the dignity of the person, where might we see that lived in their everyday life?</p>

		<p>asked for in Level 4 so extension is found in bringing <b>two</b> faith traditions together. In asking for identification only, an explanation of why these differences occur is not required although it may be very evident in discussion of the particular issue.</p> <p>A believer in this instance could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Catholic</li> <li>• A Christian of another denomination</li> <li>• A Jew or person of another religion</li> </ul> <p>These groups are the same as those taught in AT 1 (ii) Level 5</p>	<p>Clear planning and teaching of how people respond to different issues will be critical if this level is to be attained.</p>	<p>How might the life of a believer differ from someone who did not believe?</p> <p>Sometimes the outward actions of people who believe look a bit like those of someone who does not believe? Why might that be?</p> <p>Are there social issues on which everyone agrees?</p> <p>Does it matter if a person believes in God or not when it comes to being kind/thoughtful/generous?</p>
6	<p>Explain how religious belief and teaching influence moral values and behaviour.</p>	<p>The phrase ‘explain how’ continues to suggest understanding of difference and similarity rather than cause (explain why). Level 6 should ask for a more holistic understanding of moral behaviour on the basis of belief; a more generalised view of the life pattern of believers rather than their response to a particular situation or issue.</p>	<p>Increase in maturity may allow consideration of more complex issues. Focus is now on the formation of whole people; how belief influences values and behaviour generally.</p>	<p>Exemplar questions:</p> <p>How do religious beliefs help form a person in term of moral decision making?</p> <p>How do religious beliefs assist in the development of conscience?</p> <p>What conclusions could we draw about the way peoples values are informed by belief?</p>

		In keeping with AT 1 (i) Level 6 the believer is understood to mean Christian. This marks a move to a narrow focus, in terms of religion, than Level 5. Teachers should ensure the depth of knowledge expressed should be significant.		
7	Critically evaluate the ways of life of religious groups with reference to their history and culture and show a coherent understanding of differences.	<p>The introduction of evaluation at Level 7 brings it forward in this strand. Critically evaluate implies a level of analysis and critical thought.</p> <p>This level asks that pupils undertake their analysis with reference to the history and culture of the groups they are examining. The conclusions they draw in their evaluation should be coherent; that is, well argued and consistent with the findings of their study.</p> <p>In keeping with the expectation of AT 1 (i) Level 7 the study of more than one religion is expected.</p>	<p>Critical evaluation may be defined as the ability a pupil has to analyse and critically evaluate arguments and evidence. It may include the collection, analysis and interpretation of data and/or information and the drawing of conclusions about the relationships between the component parts. Critical evaluation is often about arguing a case, reinterpreting information and/or resolving problems.</p> <p>The benefit of hindsight can allow pupils to make more critical comments on the way issues were responded to or resolved in the past.</p>	<p>Exemplar questions:</p> <p>St Paul writes affirming the practice of slavery in the first century, a position upheld by the Church until its abolition in 1807. Critically evaluate the position of the Church with reference to the cultural beliefs of the time.</p> <p>Religious art expresses a religious communities view of itself. Critically evaluate this claim with reference to art works from different communities and eras.</p>

8	Show a coherent understanding of the impact of a belief system on the way of life of individuals, communities and societies.	To move to this level pupils are asked to include a 'coherent' comment on the impact of a belief system on the various groups within a religious community. Identification of the impact of a belief or set of beliefs had on a community is most likely to be included in any analysis of what happened and why, appropriate to Level 7. Level 8, therefore, needs to be read as a deliberate and serious understanding rather than a passing observation.	This level flows nicely from Level 7 in that it presumes a level of thinking and understanding of issues within their historical context.	<p>Exemplar questions:</p> <p>The phrase to have 'dominion over' was used by many Christian groups to justify practices which would now be called eco-vandalism. How has a reinterpretation of Genesis 1:1-2:4a lead to the development of a theology of stewardship? What impact has this had on the universal Church and individual members?</p> <p>Desire for a single monarch resulted, eventually, in the loss of the Promised land. How did the people of Israel respond to the loss of their promised land?</p>
EP	Provide a coherent, philosophical and evaluative account of the relationship between belief systems and ways of life.	This level implies an exploration of areas of the interconnectedness between theology, belief and philosophy in a manner which includes the analysis critical review of information so that significance and inter-relationships can be examined before being synthesised back into an	EP asks for a sophisticated level of thinking and reasoning, one which takes into consideration multiple disciplines of theology and philosophy as well as critical evaluation.	<p>Exemplar questions:</p> <p>A notion of free will informs a believer's understanding of themselves and the decisions they make. How does belief in free will express itself in the lives of believers?</p>

		evaluative conclusion.		
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