Religious Education
Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years
Archdiocese of Brisbane
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Foreword

The commencement of the Preparatory Year in Queensland schools has been an exciting development for us in 2007. Much work has gone into its preparation over many years.

Our Early Years Development Task Force coordinated preparation in our own community of Parish and Archdiocesan Catholic primary schools. Its members included principals, early years teachers and senior personnel from the Brisbane Catholic Education Centre. They monitored developments in our own Prep Trial and Phase-In schools, kept abreast of curriculum developments, examined how the building programs were progressing, reviewed budgetary considerations, made recommendations about professional learning for staff and linked with other dioceses.

Importantly, they made observations about the need for specific developments in Religious Education to support young learners and their teachers as learning in the early years commences and develops. In all of this, they built upon the fine work undertaken over many years by pre-school and early years teachers, school leaders and our own Religious Education Team.

The Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years and its supporting resources, are a result of many productive and collaborative partnerships. It forms part of the suite of source documents that together constitute the Religious Education Guidelines in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Our Archbishop, John Bathersby, wrote in the foreword of the Catholic Education Council’s Early Years Policy Statement (2001):

> The early years of schooling provide an important foundation for the future wellbeing of every child. The Church recognises the need to foster the spiritual development of each child through role models of loving parents, caregivers, teachers and pastors.

These Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years affirm such fostering partnerships. They offer to school communities an important way of connecting learning in Religious Education to the Queensland Studies Authority Early Years Curriculum Guidelines. Importantly, they build upon and enhance earlier Religious Education source documentation authorised by the Archbishop.

I wish to acknowledge especially the work of the Prep Trial and Phase-In schools, their principals and teachers and staff members in Religious Education and Curriculum Services in the development and refinement of these materials. I also thank all in schools, the Brisbane Catholic Education Centre and in other dioceses in Queensland, who have contributed to the trial and review of this important and foundational learning and teaching document.

I commend this document to your use.

David J Hutton
Executive Director of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Brisbane.
Religious Education in the Early Years
Religious Education in the Early Years

Status of the Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years

In 2007, the Queensland Government introduced the Preparatory Year in all schools in Queensland. Brisbane Catholic Education presents these Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years to support teaching and learning of religious education in the Preparatory Year and to locate it in the context of religious education in the early years of schooling.

The Religious Education Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Brisbane now consist of the following documents:

- A Statement on Religious Education for Catholic Schools (1997)
- A Syllabus for Religious Education for Catholic Schools (1997)
- Religious Education Years 1 to 10 Learning Outcomes (2003)

Purpose of Religious Education

All young Catholics, throughout their school years, are provided with opportunities for religious education suited to their age, background and the changing world in which they live.


For the Archdiocese of Brisbane, this policy on the religious education of school-aged Catholics establishes a clear rationale and consequences for religious education and religious educators. The policy statement is, in effect, a charter of young Catholics’ rights to be effectively supported in their faith growth through appropriate religious education.

It is imperative that all within the community of the Church proclaim the Gospel to the young in ways that they can understand, in ways that are relevant to their ecumenical and multi-faith world. (Pope John Paul II, Ecclesia in Oceania, 2001)

Religious Education in a Catholic school has its own specific purposes within a sound general education. In particular, it focuses attention on the religious and moral development of all students within the framework of the Catholic tradition. It is one means of empowering students in their quest for God.

Religious Education:

- heightens students’ awareness of the mystery that permeates all life
- helps students to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God
- helps students to develop their moral sensitivities and sense of responsibility
- helps students develop self worth
- helps students communicate about religious matters
- helps students understand the role religion plays in human affairs and achievements
- helps students understand and appreciate the Catholic religious heritage and the religious heritage of others
- provides students with opportunities to engage in practical projects designed to promote and support a just society.

(A Statement on Religious Education for Catholic Schools – Purposes, pp 9-11)
The Nature of Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane

The Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years align with the aim of Religious Education in the Archdiocese to:

develop students’ religious literacy in the light of the Catholic tradition, so that they may participate critically and effectively in the life of their faith communities and wider society.

(A Syllabus for Religious Education for Catholic Schools, 1997, p 18.)

Religious Education consists of two distinct but complementary dimensions, an educational dimension and a faith formation dimension. The educational dimension, teaching people religion, focuses on the classroom teaching and learning of religion. It is an intentional educational activity. It utilises a range of quality teaching and learning processes and resources to meet the diverse needs and capacities of learners. The faith formation dimension, teaching people to be religious in a particular way, focuses on the religious life and Catholic Christian ethos of the school community. It is an activity promoting formation and growth in faith. The educational dimension and the faith formation dimension are complementary and inextricably linked. This understanding of Religious Education is represented in and supported by the Religious Education Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

This document focuses on the educational dimension, teaching people religion. Other documentation from Brisbane Catholic Education supports the faith formation dimension, teaching people to be religious in a particular way.

A Model for Religious Education

Classroom Teaching of Religion
Religious Life of the School

The classroom teaching and learning of religion

Teaching people religion

Teaching people to be religious in a particular way

The Religious Life and Catholic Christian ethos of the school community

Model adapted from Gabriel Moran

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1 The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic school n.68
2 See the work of Gabriel Moran, 1991
The Classroom Teaching of Religion in the Early Years
The Classroom Teaching of Religion in the Early Years

The classroom teaching and learning of religion in the early years occurs within the context of general principles and priorities underlining the Catholic character of religious education in schools.

Principles

Religious Education in Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane:

- is an educational activity
- presents faithfully and with integrity, the richness of the Catholic tradition
- presents respectfully other Christian traditions
- acknowledges the diversity of religious beliefs and practices in Australia and the wider world
- recognises the rights of parents and promotes partnerships in learning.

(A Statement on Religious Education for Catholic Schools – Principles, p 12)

Priorities

Religious Education programs are designed to contribute to the religious, spiritual and moral development of all students in Catholic schools and to emphasise:

- God’s self-revelation in the people and events of history and in particular, in the life and person of Jesus Christ
- the Catholic tradition and its significance in nurturing personal and communal faith
- the Catholic tradition and its contribution to the development of culture
- other Christian traditions and other religions and their role in nurturing faith and in the development of culture
- the parish and its role in the faith life of Catholics
- the family as the first and continuing place where faith is nurtured.

(A Statement on Religious Education for Catholic Schools – Priorities, p 13)

An overarching priority for Catholics in the Archdiocese of Brisbane is Archbishop Bathersby’s vision for growth as a healthy, vibrant and evangelising Archdiocese. The three essential dimensions of this Archdiocesan Vision are **Jesus Communion Mission**. The Vision Statement for Catholic Education embraces **Jesus Communion Mission** and presents three key concepts:

**Teach** We promote faith in Jesus Christ, teaching and learning about Jesus, the gospel and the faith of the Catholic Christian community. Learning is lifelong, life-giving and engages the whole person.

**Challenge** Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we challenge those we educate to live in communion with God, others and the whole of creation in prayerful, sacramental, just, peaceful, inclusive and reconciling communities.

**Transform** We educate for a transformed world in communion by nurturing the gifts and potential of each person, enacting shared leadership, and exercising a preferential option for the poor and the marginalised.
Religious Education in the Early Years embraces this vision and the priority and importance of teaching students that God is Love. This belief is based on Scripture and is the focus of Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical Deus Caritas Est.

*God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.* (1 Jn 4:16)

### Educational Focus

It is widely accepted that the early years of learning are among the most significant periods of growth for students. Experiences during this time affect cognitive, physical, social and emotional development. They deeply influence students’ dispositions to learning and perception of themselves, particularly as learners. The early years classroom is a very significant place of learning. It is imperative that the approaches taken to all learning in the early years aligns with contemporary research, best pedagogy and practice.

Current research into early years learning identifies six factors associated with a young student’s preparedness for school and later success, namely:

- social and emotional competence with a focus on social learning and independence
- health and physical wellbeing, particularly in making healthy choices and gross-motor and fine-motor development
- language development and communication, focusing on oral language and early literacy
- early mathematical understandings with emphasis on early numeracy
- active learning processes with a focus on thinking, investigating, imagining and responding
- positive dispositions to learning.

In the Queensland Studies Authority *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* (EYCG), the six factors for success in learning named above have been used to organise the five Early Learning Areas. They provide a useful framework for curriculum continuity in the early phase of learning. The Early Learning Areas are:

- Social and Personal Learning
- Health and Physical Learning
- Language Learning and Communication
- Early Mathematical Understandings
- Active Learning Processes.

The *Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years* aligns with each of the five EYCG Early Learning Areas, to become Early Learning Areas: Religious Education. This is a useful framework for curriculum continuity and the development of religious literacy in the early phase of learning. The Early Learning Areas: Religious Education provide links with a student’s prior learning and with the curriculum framework in *Religious Education Years 1 to 10 Learning Outcomes*, Archdiocese of Brisbane, (2003).

The Early Learning Areas: Religious Education are:

- Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning
- Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning
- Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication
- Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings
- Religious Education and Active Learning Processes.
Classroom teaching and learning of religion in the early years:

- promotes integrated, learner-centred education
- develops religious literacy
- incorporates syllabus content from the four Strands of Scripture, Beliefs, Celebration and Prayer and Morality
- views Early Years learners as capable learners who bring diverse knowledge and experiences to their learning
- provides learning opportunities through all of the sensory pathways
- encourages active and play-based learning and provides problem-solving, decision making and strategic planning opportunities to enhance the cognitive development of early learners
- acknowledges the key role of teachers as supporters, facilitators and monitors of learning
- acknowledges the role of parents and other adults as supporters of learning.

The classroom teaching and learning of religion in the early years is also interrelated with the following:

- Learning Framework (Archdiocese of Brisbane 2002)
- Living Life to the Full Personal and Social Development Education Guidelines (Archdiocese of Brisbane 2005)
- Early Years Curriculum Guidelines (Queensland Studies Authority, 2006)

A Model for Developing Religious Literacy

Religion contributes to the fabric of Australian culture. Individual communities and the nation as a whole are more likely to build a tolerant society when their members are literate in their own religious traditions and have an understanding of the religious traditions of others. (A Syllabus for Religious Education for Catholic Schools, 1997, p 13.)

Religious Literacy can be defined as: the flexible and sustainable mastery of a repertoire of practices related to the discourse of religion, using spoken, written and multimedia texts of traditional and new communications technologies. (Adapted from Literate Futures: Report of Literacy Review of Queensland State Schools, p 9)

The repertoire of literate practices in the early years incorporates oral language, reading and viewing, and writing and shaping. Learners in the early years expand their spoken language through using, exploring and interacting with texts from the discourse of religion. They are becoming readers and viewers as they predict and make meaning of a variety of appropriate written, visual and multimodal religious and secular texts. They are also becoming writers and shapers as they experiment with their emerging understandings of written, visual and multimodal texts as they make meaning of religious and secular texts.

The Model for Developing Religious Literacy (Fig 7 over) has an educational focus, describing the core practices of people who are literate about religion. It applies research on literacy3 to the discourse of religion. This discourse is a set of ongoing activities and interactions among people in certain places and at certain times. It can consist of ways of talking, acting, participating, ritualising, theologising, worshipping, interacting, reading, interpreting, reflecting and writing with others in a variety of contexts. As such, it is a “material social practice with its associated people and things” (Gee, p 289). A discourse is also embedded in social institutions. Therefore, the discourse of religion incorporates particular language and a set of ongoing activities and interactions of a religious nature among people. As such, the discourse is entered, not only in the religion classroom, but within the whole Catholic school ethos and culture. Developing religious literacy through the use of transformative texts, e.g. scripture, prayer, ritual, inspirational writings, religious art and music, has the potential to transform and renew lives.

The below model demonstrates how competency in literacy practices in religious education is developed by readers, viewers, designers, listeners and speakers over time in an interactive and dynamic way. The elements within the model signify the “how” of literate practices.

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3 See the work of Luke and Freebody, 1997; New London Group, 1996; Gee, 1997; Anstey, 2002
Fig. 1 A Model for Developing Religious Literacy

The Religious Literacy model is interconnected and non-linear, in that each of the phases of a literate practice in religion, namely Purpose, Available Designs, Designing and Redesigning reflect and inform each other as they engage with the discourse of religion.

- **Purpose** is a clarifying phase during which teachers provide learners with clear purposes and contexts for learning.
- **Available Designs** is an explorative phase, when teachers find and learners use an appropriate repertoire of resources from the discourse of religion that enable learners to successfully achieve the purpose. Teachers prepare activities for the learners using the Four Resource Model and its four elements of Code Breaker, Meaning Maker, Text User and Text Analyst that align with the Purpose.
- **Designing** is a decision making and constructing phase when the early learners, with support, make decisions about what resources to use and how to use and design with them, to achieve the Purpose.
- **Redesigning** is a reflective and transformative phase. This phase involves redesigning drafts of designs to achieve a quality product. It is also the phase where transformative learning takes place when the learner is taken to a new place of knowing, when they have been changed in some way by the learning experience. The discourse of religion has a large repertoire of resources that facilitates, transformative learning.

An example of how to use the model for developing religious literacy in religious education in the early years is provided. (See Appendix 1)

The table over illustrates how the Available Designs component of the Model for Developing Religious Literacy might be applied to religious education in the early years, focusing on the Four Resource Model.

The set of questions and learning suggestions align with the four elements (Code Breaker; Meaning Maker; Text User; Text Analyst) and support the development of literate practices by early learners.
Applying the Four Resource Model to Learning in Religious Education

### CODE BREAKER

**How do I crack this code?**

- What words are hard for you to read? How did you work them out?
- What words are new for you?
- What words are about people/ places/ things?
- What words begin with the same letter/sound?
- How many syllables in this word?
- What words are repeated?
- What smaller word can you find in this word to help you work it out?
- Do the pictures help you read the words?
- What are the pictures about?
- Can you find the words: ‘is like’, or ‘same as’ in the text? What does this tell us? (i.e. similes and metaphors)

### MEANING MAKER/TEXT PARTICIPANT

**What does this text mean to you?**

- What does this text mean to you?
- Does the text remind you of something that has happened to you or to someone else you know?
- What does the title/cover tell us what the text might be about?
- What might happen next? Why?
- What are the characters thinking and feeling? How do you know?
- What does the text or part of the text mean? What do other people think it means?
- What message is the author trying to tell us?
- What is the text about? (main idea/s)
- What do the pictures (graphs, diagrams, tables, captions, illustrations) tell us?
- Do the pictures help us understand the text?
- What did you feel as you read this part?
- Describe or draw a picture of a character, event or scene from the text.

### Decoding and encoding the codes and symbols of written, spoken, visual, auditory and multi-modal text - for example:

- predicting parts of a story from a picture
- interpreting images in a religious story
- recognising significant words in a story e.g. Jesus
- listening to religious stories and messages
- taking digital photos of playground scenarios and describing the people, places and things.

### Comprehending and composing written, spoken, visual, auditory and multi-modal text - for example:

- illustrating meaning through pictures
- using oral language to explain parts of the religious text and predict what might happen next
- role playing characters, actions and feelings
- listening to other interpretations of religious text
- identifying, with support, messages in scripture stories from print and digital texts
- expressing feelings about a story or image
- viewing and discussing messages in religious films
- identifying new and unfamiliar words.
### Applying the Four Resource Model to Learning in Religious Education

#### TEXT USER

**What do I do with this text?**
- What sort of text is this? Is it a story? Is it about people, places or things? How do you know?
- What is the purpose of this text?
- How could you find information you need?
- How does this (name genre) start? How does this (name genre) finish? What happens in the middle?
- Who do you know would read a text like this?
- What words would you choose/use from this text? (i.e. particular purpose)
- What was interesting or new in the text that you would like to use?
- How is the language the same/ different from other similar texts you have read?
- Could the text help solve a real-life problem?
- If you were going to use words from this text in a different form (mode/medium – poster/PowerPoint) how would it be different?

#### TEXT ANALYST

**What does this text do to me?**
- Is the text fair?
- What would the text be like if the main characters were girls rather than boys and vice versa?
- What would the text be like if the main characters were from different cultures and places?
- How would the text be different if told by someone else?
- How would the text be different if told in another time or place? (e.g. a long time ago and today)
- Why do you think the author chose this title?
- Why do you think the author and illustrator chose particular words/ideas and pictures?
- What do you think the author/illustrator is like?
- Are the people in the text presented the way girls/boys/parents etc. are usually presented? (i.e. stereotyping)
- Which characters and ideas are strong in the text? Why? (i.e. underpinning ideology and beliefs)
- Who is allowed to speak?

#### Understanding the purposes of different written, spoken, visual, auditory and multi-modal text and using text in different ways for different purposes and contexts - for example:
- using words from a religious text and their own vocabulary to jointly construct a big book
- choosing appropriate words from a religious text for a class play
- using parts of a religious story to express meaning and understandings in diverse ways, e.g. building a model, picture, play dough, paintings, collage, role play, creating songs, rhymes and games
- identifying, with support, parts of a religious story that could be used to solve a classroom problem
- imagining new ways to express meanings and messages.

#### Understanding how texts differentially position readers, viewers and listeners – for example:
- comparing and contrasting different versions of the same scripture story
- exploring and identifying the truth within a story
- being exposed to diverse cultural and religious practices
- discussing the author’s and illustrator’s choices and intentions
- identifying the range of characters and their roles in the story
- exploring differences in texts related to time, people and place
- becoming aware, with support, of stereotyping within a religious story.
The Learning Framework

The Learning Framework (2002), identifies an Overarching Goal for Learning, Beliefs, Values and Roles for Lifelong Learning. This framework assists supportive learning communities to plan consistently, explicitly and creatively for every learner.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education aligns with the Learning Framework, particularly the Overarching Goal, Empowering learners of all ages to shape and enrich our changing world, by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Roles for Lifelong Learners for Religion in the Early Years

The classroom teaching of religion in the early years contributes to lifelong learning by facilitating the development of the following Roles for Lifelong Learners. The elaborations of each of the Roles for Lifelong Learners below are adapted to support the teaching and learning of religion in the early years.

Reflective, Self-Directed Learner, who:
- reflects upon personal and familiar problems and issues and engages in problem-solving, decision making and planning activities that depth their understanding of self and others
- affirms or rethinks, with support, ideas and values
- reflects on the significance of God and religious experience for self and others
- develops awareness of the spiritual nature of life

Community Contributor, who:
- relates to others in ways that promote peaceful and just relationships
- seeks to find appropriate ways to address and solve problems affecting their wellbeing, the wellbeing of others and the environment
- engages in simple practical projects to promote and support a just society
- explores and reflects upon moral choices made and their consequences
Quality Producer, who:

- produces objects and artefacts that express their understandings
- constructs and applies knowledge, concepts, theories and generalisations to make meaning and communicate religious ideas and concepts
- constructs and communicates religious meaning effectively for themselves and others
- begins to gather, select and use text, people and technologies for the development of a quality product in a fair and equitable manner, within an agreed time.

Leader and Collaborator, who:

- develops and incorporates collaborative and leadership skills to accomplish team goals
- develops and practises effective interpersonal skills in order to relate to others in peaceful, tolerant and non-discriminatory ways
- nourishes relationships with God, self, others and the environment with compassion, sensitivity and respect
- reflects upon choices and consequences, acknowledging roles and responsibilities in a range of learning contexts.

Designer & Creator, who:

- investigates, imagines and responds creatively to people, ideas, phenomena, environments and technologies
- plans tasks
- responds creatively to multiple experiences and ideas about the world from a religious perspective, through various modes and media
- uses innovative methods and technologies to solve problems, make decisions and envisage hopeful futures.

Effective Communicator, who:

- communicates confidently in a range of contexts and for many different audiences
- communicates about religious matters in a variety of settings
- listens actively to the intent and spirit of spoken language and responds appropriately verbally and non-verbally
- expands their oral language and early and religious literacy, using spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial and multi-modal text
- communicates religious ideas and points of view for a variety of purposes
- uses individual and group performances to explore and express ideas, thoughts, feelings and understandings.

Active Investigator, who:

- identifies questions and collects and investigates information to explore alternative meanings in religious and other texts
- generates and accesses information from a variety of sources
- investigates different ideas and perspectives
- explores the Catholic religious heritage and the religious heritage of other traditions.
The Curriculum Decision Making Model

The Curriculum Decision Making Model from the Queensland Studies Authority *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines (EYGC)* (2006, Pp 77-88), is another model that informs curriculum decisions in religious education in the early years. The four interactive processes of curriculum decision making are interconnected and non-linear. They support the designing of integrated, learner-centred curriculum for classroom teaching of religion in the early years. They include:

- Planning
- Interacting
- Monitoring and Assessing
- Reflecting

There are many different starting points for decision making. For example, many teachers, begin by reflecting on what they know about early learners and their local setting. These reflections inform their decisions about planning, interacting, monitoring and assessing. Decisions are interconnected and each decision leads to other decisions, questions and issues that shape ongoing actions and choices. The Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews for each Religious Education Early Learning Area incorporate the four interactive processes.

**Interactive Processes of Curriculum Decision Making**

**Planning** occurs across different timeframes including:

- planning as preparation (long and short term)
- on the spot (during the learning process)
Planning can be:
- post recorded and documented
- student-initiated, teacher-initiated or collaborative
- aligned with the Religious Education Learning Statements

Planning documents need to include:
- links to Religious Education Learning Statements
- opportunities to learn in a variety of contexts
- connections with the learning environment
- diverse and ongoing opportunities to monitor and assess.

Planning documentation continues to be developed throughout the learning process.

**Interacting** occurs when teachers continually engage with learners and other partners. These partners include: teachers, aides, Parish Priest, Principal, APREs and other administrative and support staff at the school, professionals who have supported students in previous learning/developmental or care programs, specialist personnel including medical, guidance or community liaison officers and other educators or professional associations in religious education and early childhood education. Interacting can be both planned and spontaneous, as teachers respond to teachable moments and emerging and changing situations.

**Monitoring and Assessing** is an ongoing process and part of everyday classroom practice. Monitoring students’ understanding is ongoing. It is an integral part of the learning process and is not a separate activity. It aligns with the Religious Education Learning Statements. The information gathered about students informs:
- future planning
- understanding of the students’ development
- conversations with parents and other adults.

**Reflecting** is an ongoing process. It can be formal or informal. It includes:
- professional reflection
- personal reflection
- reflection with students
- reflection with members of the school community.

### Key Components

The Queensland Studies Authority *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* (2006), nominates the five key components in the curriculum decision making model. These inform the processes of planning, interacting, monitoring, assessing and reflecting on religious education. The titles are slightly adapted to suit our understandings of young people as learners:

- *Understanding young students*
- *Partnerships*
- *Flexible learning environments*
- *Contexts for learning*
- *What young students learn.*

For detailed information on these key components refer to the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines* (2006, pp 18-58).
Key Organisers of the Religious Education Curriculum in the Early Years
Key Organisers of the Religious Education Curriculum in the Early Years

Key Organisers provide structure for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Religious Education Curriculum in the Early Years.

- Early Learning Areas: Religious Education
- Religious Education Learning Statements
- Religious Education Syllabus Content
- Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews and Connections to the Religious Education Syllabus Content: Planning Support Tables
- Student Responsive Curriculum
- Religious Education Programs for the Early Years
- Monitoring and Assessing and Reporting

Early Learning Areas: Religious Education

The Early Learning Areas: Religious Education are closely aligned with the Early Learning Areas in the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines. The Early Learning Areas in the EYCG are derived from research which demonstrates that a broad based, integrated, early years curriculum is most likely to provide a foundation for success in later learning. The Early Learning Areas incorporate the factors for success suggested by this research. Each Early Learning Area: Religious Education includes key elements of the Early Learning Areas EYCG and Religious Education. The Religious Education elements are drawn from religious texts, religious knowledge, Catholic Christian beliefs and religious practices.

Religious Education Learning Statements are described in terms of what students will know, do and experience. They are comprehensive statements that guide teachers towards integrated learning. Because of their comprehensive nature the Religious Education Learning Statements can be used in full, or in part when planning, teaching, learning, monitoring and assessing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Learning Areas - ELAS Queensland Studies Authority</th>
<th>Early Learning Areas: Religious Education</th>
<th>Religious Education Learning Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social and Personal Learning</td>
<td>Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning</td>
<td>Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Learning</td>
<td>Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning</td>
<td>Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts to build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Learning and Communication</td>
<td>Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication</td>
<td>Students explore, interpret and experiment with spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multi-modal religious texts* to expand their religious understanding, oral language and early literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Mathematical Understandings</td>
<td>Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings</td>
<td>Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Learning Processes</td>
<td>Religious Education and Active Learning Processes</td>
<td>Students imagine, investigate, and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology*, in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Religious texts include: Scripture and moral stories, simple prayers, gestures, celebrations and expressions of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, art and music.

* Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)
Religious Education Learning Statements

Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning (RE SPL)

Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.

This statement describes values and teachings in Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings that develop and inform:

- awareness and appreciation of being caring and contributing members of many social groups, including family, cultural and community
- an ability to show respect and dignity and to cooperate peacefully with others
- understandings, capabilities and dispositions related to social and cultural identities and relationships
- positive identity, self-esteem, resilience, personal organisation and independence.

Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning (RE HPL)

Students engage with messages within religious texts and reflect upon life experiences to build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing.

This statement describes messages within religious texts and life experiences that build a sense of physical and spiritual wellbeing and develop and inform:

- a capacity to make healthy choices that foster a sense of physical and spiritual wellbeing
- ways of being in daily experience that are life-giving.

Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication (RE LLC)

Students explore, interpret and experiment with spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multi-modal religious texts* to expand their religious understanding, oral language and early literacy.

* Religious texts include: Scripture and moral stories, simple prayers, gestures, celebrations and expressions of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, art and music.

This statement describes the ways in which students engage with a range of religious texts to expand their oral language and early literacy to develop and inform:

- religious understanding
- a capacity to construct, communicate and interpret meaning for a range of religious purposes and contexts
- a capacity to speak and listen, to read and view, to write and shape text including religious text
- use of language, its patterns and conventions in texts including religious texts
- concepts of print, phonemic awareness and alphabetical knowledge in texts, including religious texts.
Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings (RE EMU)

Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.

This statement describes their engagement with numerate practices that enhance the meaning of religious texts to develop and inform:

- an ability to explore patterns and repeated sequences in religious texts
- an ability to compare and contrast attributes and quantities in the background of religious texts
- an ability to explore mathematical language, positions, movements, directions and space in religious texts and ceremonies.

Religious Education and Active Learning Processes (RE ALP)

Students imagine, investigate and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology*, in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.

* Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

This statement describes their engagement with religious texts using processes of thinking, investigating, imagining and responding as they develop and inform:

- ideas about phenomena in the natural world
- understandings about sustainable environments and technology
- imaginative responses to religious texts
- a capacity to make decisions and plan in response to religious texts.

Thinking processes are embedded in all learning areas. Teachers consider explicitly the types of thinking to be included in particular learning experiences.

What Students Learn

For the teaching of religion in the early years, appropriate theological content has been selected from the document *A Syllabus for Religious Education for Catholic Schools* (1997) across the four strands of:

- Scripture
- Beliefs
- Celebration and Prayer
- Morality.

In the Syllabus, the content is arranged in Strands. When planning for Religious Education in the early years, teachers draw on syllabus content from across the Strands.

Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews and Connections to the Religious Education Syllabus Content: Planning Support Tables

The Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews assist teachers to design Religious Education programs for the early years. The Overviews include the Religious Education Learning Statements, together with Suggestions for Planning, Suggestions for Interacting, Suggestions for Monitoring and Assessing and Suggestions for Reflecting. The overviews assist planning, but are not intended for use as planning formats. Teachers select, modify, or create learning experiences, teaching interactions, assessment and reflection to develop learner-centred, integrated Religious Education programs. To support this process, teachers are provided with Religious Education

The planning support tables provide teachers with:

- Planning suggestions directly related and referenced to the Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews.
- Syllabus content from *A Syllabus for Religious Education for Catholic Schools* (1997). The Syllabus content statements are referenced to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and other Church documents. Syllabus content is organised by strand and number e.g. (S21) i.e. Scripture strand, reference number 21.
- Elaborations of RE Syllabus Content
- Contexts for Learning Suggestions.

**Student Responsive Curriculum**

In Religious Education, a student responsive curriculum is essential for effective early learning. There are five informers of a student responsive curriculum.

These are:

- Interests
- Capabilities
- Prior Knowledge
- Backgrounds
- Needs.

These informers of a student responsive curriculum demand a sound understanding of the student's interests, capabilities, prior knowledge and backgrounds. This understanding then informs teaching and learning opportunities that are made available to students. In Religious Education, the choice of content and learning context needs to be age-appropriate and relevant to early learners and their life experiences.

A student responsive curriculum also acknowledges the importance of using teachable moments as opportunities for significant learning. Teachable moments are opportunities for explicit learning and teaching that emerge spontaneously as students interact with people, objects and representations. These teachable moments involve teachers responding directly and purposefully to students’ ideas, questions and interests as they co-construct new learning.

**Religious Education Programs for the Early Years**

Religious Education programs include:

- reference to Religious Education Learning Statement Overviews with associated suggestions for planning, interacting, monitoring and assessing and reflecting
- student-initiated, teacher-initiated and collaboratively planned experiences
- flexible designs that include spontaneous learning situations
- connections to the Religious Education syllabus
- opportunities for the development of religious literacy
- learning opportunities that reflect the five contexts for learning, namely, play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and transitions and focused learning and teaching
- opportunities for monitoring and assessing students’ performance
- the use of phases of learning to describe students’ performance.
Overviews & Planning Support Tables
Religious Education Learning Statement Overview

Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning (RE SPL)
Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.

Suggestions for planning
With students, teachers plan for learning across the five contexts by constructing experiences relevant to local settings, or drawing on the following examples, in which students:

a) identify and express ideas and feelings about what it means to be a friend and sustain relationships, in relation to the values of love and compassion, in religious texts

b) explore and use social skills when interacting, collaborating and resolving conflict with others in relation to the value of forgiveness and reconciliation, as illustrated in religious texts

c) acknowledge and negotiate rights, roles and responsibilities that are collaborative, peaceful and inclusive reflections of the values in religious texts

d) investigate and communicate the social and cultural practices of people with respect and dignity

e) raise self awareness and enhance personal identity by caring for ourselves and others as a part of the goodness of God’s creation.

Suggestions for interacting
Teachers create interactions relevant to local settings or draw on the following examples:

a) engage students with religious texts and real-life situations that illustrate gospel values and Christian teachings about love, compassion, friendship and/or sustaining relationships

b) support students to link messages of forgiveness and reconciliation in stories with some collaborative and personal decisions

c) negotiate diverse roles and responsibilities that promote Gospel values of peace and inclusivity

d) model language that respects and celebrates the dignity of others from diverse social, cultural and religious groups

e) draw students’ attention to the unique gifts of self and others as part of the goodness of God’s creation.

Suggestions for monitoring and assessing
In relation to this learning statement, teachers may look for evidence that the student:

a) with some prompts, can express ideas, feelings and experiences of being a friend in light of familiar gospel stories

b) identifies some obvious links between messages of forgiveness and reconciliation in stories and in decision making contexts

c) negotiates peaceful and inclusive practices that consider others’ ideas, feelings and understandings

d) participates in discussion about unfair, stereotypical or biased ideas and practices in light of gospel messages

e) responds positively from their growing awareness of the gifts of self and others as part of the goodness of God’s creation.

Teachers monitor a student’s learning in relation to the Learning Statement as they:
• observe and analyse what the student is doing
• listen to and reflect on what the student says
• interact with the student
• record annotations
• communicate with partners including students, parents/carers and others.

Teachers gather evidence about a student’s learning through the five learning contexts: play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and transitions and focused learning and teaching.

Suggestions for reflecting
Adults and students might reflect on the following questions relevant to this learning statement:
• What new things have we learnt about getting along with others from the stories about Jesus?
• What things can we do and say to include others?
• What new things have I discovered about myself?

Teachers also reflect on their practice, in terms of decision making and the five key components, in order to continually improve both their judgements about students’ learning and their planning for future learning experiences.
### Connections to the Syllabus Content: Planning Support Table

**Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning (RE SPL)**

Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Suggestions</th>
<th>RE Syllabus Content</th>
<th>Elaborations of RE Syllabus Content</th>
<th>Students know with support:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>With students, teachers plan to:</strong></td>
<td>God is Love (B12)</td>
<td>• God is merciful. (M3)</td>
<td>• Jesus taught about love and compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) identify and express ideas and feelings about what it means to be a friend and sustain relationships in relation to the values of love and compassion in religious texts</td>
<td>Love of God and love of neighbour is the greatest commandment. (M21)</td>
<td>People apply scriptural teachings to their lives today. (S29)</td>
<td>the importance of sustaining friendships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jesus taught that people should treat each other the way they would want to be treated. This is called the Golden Rule. (M21)</td>
<td>Forgiveness involves reconciliation with God and others. It is our mission to forgive. (C6)</td>
<td>aspects of the reconciliation process e.g. admitting, saying sorry, being forgiven and accepting forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gospel stories are central for Christians. (S5)</td>
<td>Prayer uses word, song and bodily action. (C37)</td>
<td>what forgiveness and reconciliation look like at home and at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) explore and use social skills when interacting, collaborating and resolving conflict with others in relation to the value of forgiveness and reconciliation, as illustrated in religious texts</td>
<td>God’s plan is that people help each other to live safely and happily together. (M37)</td>
<td>God wants us to live safely and happily together</td>
<td>through exposure, some parts of the Lord’s Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect and dignity for human life always require people to pursue peace. (M37)</td>
<td>Peaceful relationships are important to foster. (M37)</td>
<td>Jesus promoted peaceful relationships and so do Christians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All religions can assist believers in understanding the mystery of God. (B20)</td>
<td></td>
<td>all people are equal and to be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• God is the creator and sustainer of the world. (B2)</td>
<td>• all people are equal and to be respected</td>
<td>religions are important to believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The Holy Spirit is active in the world leading people to God. (B13)</td>
<td>• all religions are important to believers</td>
<td>girls and boys are equal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Human beings are called to respect and be stewards of God’s creation. (B1)</td>
<td>• people’s beliefs are to be respected</td>
<td>people’s beliefs are to be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All creatures are interdependent and men and women are created for community and share God’s creation. (B3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>all of creation is good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Routines and Transitions:**

- Develop classroom routines that are fair and just e.g. Everybody gets a chance to be the leader.
- Routinely expose students to and experiment with saying parts of the Lord’s Prayer.
- Use reflections and class discussions on students’ experiences of the reconciliation process.
- Use charts and models that depict the body and show ways to care for it.
- Develop classroom routines that treat boys and girls equally.
- Discover the uniqueness of each member of the class and value and promote each student’s uniqueness in ways that are diverse.
- Use a Y Chart to investigate the messages in the story of the Good Samaritan. What is it to be a friend?
- Use meaning-making activities to develop understandings about God’s wish for people.
- Develop classroom routines that treat boys and girls equally in ways that are diverse.
- Use a song of forgiveness for moving early learners from one learning experience to another.
- Use reflections and class discussions on students’ experiences of the reconciliation process.
- Use charts and models that depict the body and show ways to care for it.
- Discover the uniqueness of each member of the class and value and promote each student’s uniqueness in ways that are diverse.
- Use a Y Chart to investigate the messages in the story of the Good Samaritan. What is it to be a friend?
- Use meaning-making activities to develop understandings about God’s wish for people.
**Connections to the Syllabus Content: Planning Support Table**

- **Identify and express ideas**: Teachers plan to:
  - With students, students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning (RE SPL) Religious Education Learning Statement.
- **Explore and use social texts**: Students are introduced to the text of the values in religious and inclusive reflections and reconciliation, as well as the importance of sustaining friendships.
- **Raise self awareness and responsibilities that are negotiated rights, roles and relationships**: It means to be a friend and feelings about what love and compassion in and sustain relationships.
- **Investigate and use social texts**: Students are introduced to the religious texts of the values in religious and inclusive reflections and reconciliation, as well as the importance of sustaining friendships.
- **Acknowledge and understand the mystery of God**: Students are introduced to the text of the values in religious and inclusive reflections and reconciliation, as well as the importance of sustaining friendships.
- **Social and Personal Learning (RE SPL)**: Students are introduced to the text of the values in religious and inclusive reflections and reconciliation, as well as the importance of sustaining friendships.

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**Contexts for Learning**

- **Investigation**: Use a Y Chart to investigate the messages in the story of the Good Samaritan. What is it to be a friend? What does compassion look like?
- **Focused Teaching and Learning**: Use code-breaking activities to introduce early learners to the Golden Rule, love and compassion.
- **Real Life**: Identify the attributes of family and community members who live a life of love and compassion.
- **Play**: Role play and set up a class hospital centre illustrating contemporary ways to show compassion.
- **Routines and Transitions**: Develop class prayers of petition seeking God’s help to be loving and compassionate.

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- **Focused Teaching and Learning**: Use meaning-making activities to develop understandings about forgiveness.
- **Play**: Use natural play to develop sustainable relationships.
- **Real Life**: Use reflections and class discussions on students’ experiences on the reconciliation process.
- **Investigation**: Create a retrieval chart that identifies forgiveness and reconciliation at home and in the school.
- **Routines and Transitions**: Use a song of forgiveness for moving early learners from one learning experience to another. Routinely expose students to and experiment with saying parts of the Lord’s prayer.

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- **Focused Teaching and Learning**: Use meaning-making activities to develop understandings about God’s wish for people to live safely and happily together.
- **Real Life**: Develop a class covenant that illustrates peaceful strategies for the classroom.
- **Investigation**: Discover the uniqueness of each member of the class and value and promote each student’s uniqueness in diverse ways.
- **Routines and Transitions**: Develop classroom routines that are fair and just e.g. Everybody gets a chance to be the Leader for a Day.
- **Play**: Encourage natural play practices that foster peaceful relationships.

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- **Focused Teaching and Learning**: Make full sized cut-outs of students and label physical/spiritual characteristics/gifts of girls and boys that make them special.
- **Real Life**: Invite a believer of a religion other than Christian to talk to the early learners.
- **Investigation**: Explore poster packs/visuals of people practising different religions.
- **Routines and Transitions**: Develop classroom routines that treat boys and girls equally.
- **Play**: Encourage natural play practices that foster tolerance of difference.
Religious Education Learning Statement Overview

Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning (RE HPL)

Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts to build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing.

Suggestions for planning
With students, teachers plan for learning across the five contexts by constructing experiences relevant to local settings, or drawing on the following examples, in which students:

a) explore the idea that God gives humans the freedom to choose and this freedom is to be used responsibly
b) explore and illustrate right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust choices from religious and other texts
c) reflect upon and learn from choices and their consequences, from life experiences and religious texts
d) rethink, with support, choices related to their own and others’ physical and spiritual wellbeing
e) identify and experience ways to nurture spiritual wellbeing.

Suggestions for monitoring and assessing
In relation to this learning statement, teachers may look for evidence that the student:

a) with occasional prompts, can identify occasions when people demonstrated freedom of choice and used it responsibly
b) can express ways characters in religious and other texts demonstrated right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust choices
c) expresses understandings in diverse ways about choices and consequences
d) identifies characters in religious or secular texts who changed their ways positively through the choices they made
e) identifies people in stories or real-life scenarios who incorporate life-giving ways of being into their lives.

Teachers monitor a student’s learning in relation to the Learning Statement as they:

• observe and analyse what the student is doing
• listen to and reflect on what the student says
• interact with the student
• record annotations
• communicate with partners including students, parents/carers and others.

Teachers gather evidence about a student’s learning through the five learning contexts: play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and transitions and focused learning and teaching.

Suggestions for interacting
Teachers create interactions relevant to local settings or draw on the following examples:

a) provide opportunities for students to reflect upon and use their God-given freedom of choice, responsibly
b) support students to identify right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust choices in religious and other texts
c) provide a variety of learning experiences where early learners are prompted to examine and discuss choices and consequences that are reflected in real-life experiences, religious and other texts
d) use teachable moments to provide feedback and to identify and consider alternative, life-giving choices made by early learners and others
e) make a class list of ways of doing and being that nurture the spirit.

Suggestions for reflecting
Adults and students might reflect on the following questions relevant to this learning statement:

• What things have we discovered about ourselves and the choices we make?
• What things have we discovered about the choices of others in stories and real-life?
• Who has helped us to learn new ways of making choices that keep us happy, safe and well?
• What new life-giving ways have we heard about and experienced?

Teachers also reflect on their practice, in terms of decision making and the five key components, in order to continually improve both their judgements about students’ learning and their planning for future learning experiences.
## Connections to the Syllabus Content: Planning Support Table

### Religious Education Learning Statement

**Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning (RE HPL)**

Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts to build upon their understandings of physical and spiritual wellbeing.

### Planning Suggestions | RE Syllabus Content | Elaborations of RE Syllabus Content
---|---|---
**With students, teachers plan to:**
a) **explore the idea that God gives humans the freedom to choose and this freedom is to be used responsibly**  
- God gives humans the freedom to choose. (M2)  
- God-given freedom is to be used responsibly. (M2)  
- Freedom to choose is influenced by many factors. (M2)  
- Moral choice involves the whole person. (M2)

**Students, with support, know:**
- about choice and our freedom to choose  
- about responsibility and ways to use freedom responsibly  
- that many people and things influence the choices we make  
- that people think and feel as they make choices

b) **explore and illustrate right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust choices from religious and other texts**  
- Morality is about good and bad, right and wrong. (M4)  
- Love of God and love of neighbour is the greatest commandment. (M21)  
- Jesus taught that people should treat each other the way they would want to be treated. This is called the Golden Rule. (M21)

**Students, with support, know:**
- some simple comparisons between good and bad, right and wrong, from their life experience  
- some ways to show love for God and others  
- the Golden Rule

c) **reflect upon and learn from choices and their consequences, from life experiences and religious texts**  
- Moral choice involves reflection, decision making and action. (M4)  
- Jesus taught in parables. (B38)  
- Stories and ideas in the Bible describe how people have reflected on God's presence in their lives. (S2)

**Students, with support, know:**
- about choices and the need to reflect before making decisions and acting  
- some of the parables that Jesus taught  
- some characters in Bible stories who have listened to God in their lives

d) **rethink, with support, choices related to their own and others’ physical and spiritual wellbeing**  
- Moral decisions should be made in light of the common good. (M4)  
- To receive God’s mercy, people must acknowledge their faults. (M3)  
- God gives humans the freedom to choose and this freedom is to be used responsibly. (M2)  
- Sacraments are sacred actions. Through ritual, prayer and symbol they communicate God's presence and action. (C1)  
- People can come to know a personal God. God's presence is revealed in all of creation. (B2)  
- Faith is a gift from God. It is personal and a free response. (B4, B5)

**Students, with support, know:**
- to think about others when making decisions  
- God forgives when we are truly sorry  
- to endeavour to choose responsibly  
- ritual and prayers support our physical and spiritual wellbeing  
- God is a friend  
- God is all around us  
- believers trust and have faith in God

e) **identify and experience ways to nurture spiritual wellbeing.**  
- Prayer is central to a personal and communal relationship with God. (C37)  
- God’s presence is revealed in all creation. (B2)  
- God is Love (B12)  
- The mystery of God is beyond language, concepts and stories. (B20)  
- The Holy Spirit is active in the world leading people to God. (B13)

**Students, with support, know:**
- to use words, songs and bodily action in prayer  
- icons and meditation are used to assist prayer  
- explore stillness, silence and simplicity  
- God’s Spirit breathes life into the world  
- God is everywhere  
- the Spirit of God is present everywhere  
- God’s love is everlasting.
### Contexts for Learning

- **Play:** Make up choosing games.
- **Focused Teaching and Learning:** Use a Y chart strategy to discuss people’s God-given freedom of choice.
- **Real Life:** Identify ways of using freedom responsibly.
- **Investigation:** Complete a list of the people who influence our choices.
- **Routines and Transitions:** Engage with classroom routines that allow freedom of choice.

### Planning Suggestions

- **Play:** Role play good and bad, right and wrong characters/scenarios in religious and other stories.
- **Investigation:** Record ways people show love for God and others.
- **Focused Teaching and Learning:** Use code-breaking and meaning-making activities to teach the Golden Rule.
- **Real Life:** List examples of outdoor play that illustrate the way students should treat each other.
- **Routines and Transitions:** Learn and sing a song about the Golden Rule for use each time students go outdoors.

### Focused Teaching and Learning

- **Focused Teaching and Learning:** Use *Thinking Bubbles*, or *Guess What’s in My Head* strategies with characters in moral stories.
- **Play:** Use puppets of biblical characters who love God/Jesus during imaginative play.
- **Investigation:** Search out words and pictures from Jesus’ parables and place them in a speech bubble.
- **Real Life:** Recall and discuss some choices made and their consequences.
- **Routines and Transitions:** Learn a short class saying that encourages thinking before acting e.g. Stop, Think, Act.

- **Focused Teaching and Learning:** Use meaning-making activities on forgiveness.
- **Play:** Use puppets of biblical characters that say sorry.
- **Investigation:** Search out and name, or draw healthy alternative choices that improve classroom and outdoor play situations.
- **Real Life:** Recall and discuss the happiness and wellbeing achieved by saying sorry and showing mercy.
- **Routines and Transitions:** Learn and use simple sorry prayers at frequent reflection times.

- **Focused Teaching and Learning:** Introduction to spirituality through simple prayer and meditation.
- **Play:** Foster a culture of spiritual wellbeing through creative play that allows for diverse forms of expression.
- **Investigation:** List ways to nurture spiritual wellbeing with God, self and others.
- **Real Life:** Share understandings of the ways families or others pray.
- **Routines and Transitions:** Learn a class prayer.
Suggestions for planning
With students, teachers plan for learning across the five contexts, by constructing experiences relevant to local settings, or drawing on the following examples, in which students:

a) explore, learn and use new religious vocabulary for a range of religious purposes in oral and early literacy modes e.g. to make meaning, to worship, to inspire, to thank and praise, to say sorry and reconcile, to celebrate, to help, to show compassion, to bring peace, to glorify God

b) explore simple patterns and conventions in religious stories, prayers and celebrations
c) interact, listen attentively and respond to others when engaging with religious texts
d) predict possible scenarios, endings or consequences of religious stories
e) investigate the text and explore its meaning by completing a simple analysis of a religious text e.g. use names, ideas and messages in scripture stories, in drawings, prayers and plays
f) exchange information and ideas by listening for, and using, explanations, descriptions and prior experiences to make meaning of religious texts
g) use religious texts for particular purposes
h) experiment through drawing, early reading, viewing, shaping and writing, their emerging understandings of religious texts.

Suggestions for interacting
Teachers create interactions relevant to local settings or draw on the following examples:

a) create word-rich environments for a range of religious purposes that assist early learners to make meaning of religious texts

b) make explicit some simple patterns and conventions, while engaging with religious stories, prayers and celebrations
c) provide opportunities for students to listen and respond in diverse ways to religious texts
d) respond to students’ personal experience and imagination to encourage predictions within and beyond religious texts
e) model ways of helping students extend their understanding of elements, characters and events in a religious story
f) provide environments that encourage and support students’ sharing of information and ideas emerging from religious texts
g) work along side students as they use religious texts for diverse purposes
h) involve students in producing multi-modal texts that demonstrate their emerging understandings of religious texts.

Suggestions for monitoring and assessing
In relation to this learning statement, teachers may look for evidence that the student:

a) can use spoken, signed or augmentative meaning obscure strategies for religious purposes
b) can identify some simple patterns and conventions in religious texts
c) responds in diverse ways to simple questions about oral religious texts
d) in collaboration, predicts scenarios, endings or consequences within and beyond religious texts
e) expresses in diverse ways, their emerging understanding of elements, characters and events in religious stories
f) is extending vocabulary and sentence structures to compare, classify, explain, describe, imagine and recount events, while making meaning of religious texts
g) with support, uses parts of a religious text for a particular purpose, uses parts of a religious text for a particular purpose
h) shows evidence of experimenting with letters, words, symbols and/or drawings in multi-modal form to express their emerging understandings of religious texts.

Teachers monitor a student’s learning in relation to the Learning Statement as they:

• observe and analyse what the student is doing
• listen to and reflect on what the student says
• interact with the student
• record annotations
• communicate with partners including students, parents/carers and others.

Teachers gather evidence about a student’s learning through the five learning contexts: play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and transitions and focused learning and teaching.

Suggestions for reflecting
Adults and students might reflect on the following questions relevant to this learning statement:

• What words could you use to pray?
• How did you share a Bible story with others?
• Are Bible stories like other stories?

Teachers also reflect on their practice, in terms of decision making and the five key components, in order to continually improve both their judgements about students’ learning and their planning for future learning experiences.
# Connections to the Syllabus Content

## Religious Education Learning Statement

**Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication (RE LLC)**

Students explore, interpret and experiment with spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multi-modal religious texts* to expand their religious understandings, oral language and early literacy.

* Religious texts include: Scripture and moral stories, simple prayers, gestures, celebrations and expressions of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, art and music.

## Planning Suggestions

*Because the planning suggestions for this RE Learning Statement are process-oriented, a general rather than specific approach is recommended.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Suggestions</th>
<th>RE Syllabus Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>With students, teachers plan to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Bible stories have symbolic meanings. The Bible has many images of God and Jesus. (S8)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) explore, learn and use new religious vocabulary for a range of religious purposes in oral and early literacy modes e.g. to make meaning, to worship, to inspire, to thank and praise, to say sorry and reconcile, to celebrate, to help, to show compassion, to bring peace and hope, to glorify God</td>
<td><strong>• Scripture needs to be understood in light of its social and historical contexts. (S14)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) explore simple patterns and conventions in religious stories, prayers and celebrations</td>
<td><strong>• Jesus lived a human life in a Jewish family. Mary was his mother. He lived a fully human life. (B32)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) interact, listen attentively and respond to others when engaging with religious texts.</td>
<td><strong>• Mary is the mother of Jesus and all Christians. (B53)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) predict possible scenarios, endings or consequences of religious stories</td>
<td><strong>• The Bible is used to tell key stories to introduce and develop students’ familiarity with Scripture. (S23)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) investigate the text and explore its meaning by completing a simple analysis of a religious text e.g. use names, ideas and messages in scripture stories in drawings, prayers and plays</td>
<td><strong>• Gospel stories are central for Christians. Jesus is the central person in the Bible for Christians. (S5)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) exchange information and ideas by listening for and using explanations, descriptions and prior experiences to make meaning of religious texts</td>
<td><strong>• Bible stories can be reflected upon and interpreted for students to gain an introductory understandings. (S42)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) use religious texts for particular purposes</td>
<td><strong>• God is active in the lives of people in the Bible and believers today. (S2)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) experiment through drawing, early reading, viewing, shaping and writing, students’ emerging understandings of religious texts.</td>
<td><strong>• The mystery of God is beyond language, concepts and stories. (B20)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Sacraments are sacred actions to communicate God’s presence. (C1)**
Students, with support, know:

- simple examples of new religious vocabulary
- some of the purposes of simple religious texts e.g. prayers, stories, rituals
- there are structures to prayers, rituals and religious stories
- ways to share understandings about the meaning of Bible stories
- some Bible stories and their meanings
- Bible stories can have symbolic meanings
- key characters and events in Bible stories
- Jesus is the central person in the Gospel
- some simple background knowledge of life and times in some Bible stories
- Jesus lived a human life in a Jewish family and Mary was his mother
- Mary is the mother of all Christians
- Bible stories can have symbolic meanings
- God is part of people’s lives
- God is mystery and that it is hard to explain God in language alone
- and use prior experiences to share ideas and understandings of Bible stories
- the Bible is to be used reverently
- that in Church celebrations, stories from the Bible are read and talked about to help believers understand God’s love
- believers gather to worship God in the local area and throughout the world.
- believers come to the local church every Sunday to celebrate Eucharist.
- there are special times in the Church year e.g. Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, Ordinary Time, Advent and Christmas
- that special times have special colours and stories about the life of Jesus.
- there are important days in the Church year e.g. feast days
- prayer is talking and listening to God
- believers pray using words, songs, actions and silence
- Jesus prayed regularly and taught people how to pray
- the Church has important celebrations and rituals that mark special times in the life of believers e.g. Baptism.

Elaborations of RE Syllabus Content

- Routines and Transitions: Role play appropriate behaviours and use new religious vocabulary in regular prayers and rituals.
- Focused Teaching and Learning: Use simple prayer and hymn structures e.g. Sign of the Cross, Amen.
- Investigate: Discover new ways to listen and learn from others to make meaning.
- Investigate: Share and gather new ideas to support predictions and symbolic meanings for Bible stories through What next? and What else? strategies.
- Play: Engage in imaginative play to encourage predicting and creative thought through What if? strategies with Bible and religious stories.
- Real Life: Name people and scenarios from life experiences that are similar to those in Bible stories.
- Investigate: Use simple retrieval charts to enhance students’ understandings of biblical texts and times, e.g. Then and Now, parts of 5 W’s +H, Before and After
- Investigate: Collect pictures of the life and times of Jesus and other Bible characters.
- Focused Teaching and Learning: Provide simple illustrations of the symbolic meaning of religious text.
- Real Life: Draw on real-life examples to explain the meaning of religious texts.
- Investigate: Use religious texts for a diverse range of purposes e.g. simple plays, collages, retell, reflection, prayer and celebrations.
- Focused Teaching and Learning: Make meaning of religious texts by drawing and experimenting with writing.
- Focused Teaching and Learning: Show students different ways to pray that are age-appropriate and meaningful.
- Play: After a special celebration, recreate the sacred space in the play corner and role play the actions of key role holders.
- Investigation: Visit the parish church to complete a Church Search that investigates religious art, artefacts, icons and symbols. Review this investigation through a learning object or digital photographs.
- Real Life: Attend and participate in celebrations of the Liturgical Years e.g. Holy Week, School Feast Days.
- Routines and Transitions: Change the liturgical colours in the classroom sacred space.
- Play: Create a touch table to stimulate thinking and play related to the celebration of a sacrament e.g. Baptism.

Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years
Religious Education Learning Statement Overview

Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings (RE EMU)

Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.

Suggestions for planning

With students, teachers plan for learning across the five contexts by constructing experiences relevant to local settings, or drawing on the following examples, in which students:

a) explore patterns and repeated sequences in religious stories, songs and movements to enhance their meaning
b) compare and contrast attributes and quantities in environments in biblical times to enhance meaning
c) explore mathematical language, positions, movements and directions related to religious stories, gestures, celebrations and prayers to enhance their meaning
d) use spatial understandings to design and/or participate in simple prayer and liturgical celebrations to enhance meaning.

Suggestions for interacting

Teachers create interactions relevant to local settings or draw on the following examples:

a) provide diverse opportunities for students to identify and experiment with patterns, sequences and attributes in religious stories, songs and movement
b) make explicit counting strategies used to count collections within Scripture stories and moral messages
c) model prayer gestures, movements and positions e.g. the Sign of the Cross and genuflecting
d) discuss the use of space in simple prayers and rituals.

Suggestions for monitoring and assessing

In relation to this learning statement, teachers may look for evidence that the student:

a) follows a simple pattern and sequence and identifies attributes in religious stories, songs and religious gestures
b) counts small collections in different arrangements and identifies how many in small collections within religious texts
c) uses appropriate movements and gestures for religious purposes
d) uses a sense of spatial understanding when designing or participating in simple prayers and rituals.

Teachers monitor a student’s learning in relation to the Learning Statement as they:

- observe and analyse what the student is doing
- listen to and reflect on what the student says
- interact with the student
- record annotation
- communicate with partners including students, parents/carers and others.

Teachers gather evidence about a student’s learning through the five learning contexts: play, real-life situations, investigations, routines and transitions and focused learning and teaching.

Suggestions for reflecting

Adults and students might reflect on the following questions relevant to this learning statement:

- What did you want to find out?
- How did you work out what came next?
- How did you know how to do it?
- What actions can you use when you pray?

Teachers also reflect on their practice, in terms of decision making and the five key components, in order to continually improve both their judgements about students’ learning and their planning for future learning experiences.
Religious Education Learning Statement

Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings (RE EMU)

Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.

### Planning Suggestions

**With students, teachers plan to:**

- **a)** explore patterns and repeated sequences in religious stories, songs and movements.

**b)** compare and contrast attributes and quantities in environments in biblical times.

- **c)** explore positions, movements and directions related to religious stories, gestures, celebrations and prayers.

- **d)** use spatial understandings to design and/or participate in simple prayer and liturgical celebrations to enhance meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Suggestions</th>
<th>RE Syllabus Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a) Explore patterns and repeated sequences in religious stories, songs and movements | - The Bible is used to tell key stories to introduce and develop students’ familiarity with Scripture. (S23)  
- Gospel stories are central for Christians. Jesus is the central person in the Bible for Christians. (S5)  
- The Bible is used as a source of prayer. (S22)  
- Jesus taught in parables (The rule of three). (B38)  
- There are miracle stories in the Bible. (There are patterns in miracle stories.) (B39) |
| b) Compare and contrast attributes and quantities in environments in biblical times | - Sacraments are sacred actions. (C1)  
- The Liturgical Year has seasons, symbols, conventions and patterns. (C7)  
- Prayer uses words, song and bodily action. (C37) |
| c) Explore positions, movements and directions related to religious stories, gestures, celebrations and prayers |
| d) Use spatial understandings to design and/or participate in simple prayer and liturgical celebrations to enhance meaning. |
**Elaborations of Syllabus Content**

Students, with support, know:
- there are patterns and repeated sequences in many Bible stories, prayers, songs and rituals e.g. parables, miracles stories, liturgical seasons
- the sequence of some Bible stories
- gestures that are appropriate for prayers, songs and religious rituals and their meanings e.g. kneeling, genuflecting, praying, Sign of the Cross
- quantities and attributes of people and things in Bible stories
- the comparison between quantities and attributes of people and things in Bible times and today
- mathematical language and actions that support their understandings of movements and directions in Bible stories, prayers and rituals
- how to follow and make meaning of directions and movements associated with prayers and celebrations.

**Contexts for learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Focused Teaching and Learning</th>
<th>Real Life</th>
<th>Routines and Transitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elaborations of Syllabus Content</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play: Perform an <em>Echo Mime</em> that repeats patterns and sequences in biblical and other religious stories, prayers and rituals.</td>
<td>• Investigation: Listen to and identify common patterns in stories, events and objects in Bible stories.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Imitate religious gestures common in prayers and liturgies.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Identify patterns from their life experience with those in bible stories e.g. pairs in Noah’s story</td>
<td>• Routines and Transitions: Learn and sing a song with repeated sequences and patterns at morning prayer, grace and thanks for the end for the day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Real Life: Compare and contrast attributes and quantities of things in biblical stories and real-life today.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Use a <em>Then and Now</em> strategy to compare people and things in biblical times and in the present.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Identify and record attributes and quantities in biblical stories.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Identify and record attributes and quantities in biblical stories.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Compare and contrast attributes and quantities of things in biblical stories and real-life today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Routines and Transitions: Say a verse that incorporates attributes and quantities in a Scripture story when moving from one place to another.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Use maps and drawings of places to move biblical characters from one place to another.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Use code-breaking to teach mathematical language in bible stories, prayers and celebrations.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Give directions to others to move and place props in a biblical story.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Learn and sing a song or use a rhyme about movements and directions in religious stories and prayers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play: Use mathematical language when playing with figurines from a Bible story e.g. <em>Zaccheus is up the tree.</em></td>
<td>• Investigation: Use maps and drawings of places to move biblical characters from one place to another.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Use code-breaking to teach mathematical language in bible stories, prayers and celebrations.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Give directions to others to move and place props in a biblical story.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Learn and sing a song or use a rhyme about movements and directions in religious stories and prayers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Investigation: Use a <em>Then and Now</em> strategy to compare people and things in biblical times and in the present.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Use maps and drawings of places to move biblical characters from one place to another.</td>
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<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Learn and sing a song or use a rhyme about movements and directions in religious stories and prayers.</td>
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<td>• Routines and Transitions: Learn and sing a song with repeated sequences and patterns at morning prayer, grace and thanks for the end for the day.</td>
<td>• Real Life: Real Life: Use maps and drawings of places to move biblical characters from one place to another.</td>
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<td>• Real Life: Give directions to others to move and place props in a biblical story.</td>
<td>• Focused Teaching and Learning: Learn and sing a song or use a rhyme about movements and directions in religious stories and prayers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Specific alignment of the Syllabus Content Elaborations and Contexts is provided in this Planning Support Table.*

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Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years
Religious Education Learning Statement Overview

Religious Education and Active Learning Processes (RE ALP)

Students imagine, investigate and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology* in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.

* Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

Suggestions for planning

With students, teachers plan for learning across the five contexts by constructing experiences relevant to local settings, or drawing on the following examples, in which students:

a) generate and discuss ideas and plans and solve problems, inspired by religious texts
b) explore, investigate and communicate their own understandings of the wonder and mystery of creation
c) explore and investigate sustainable futures and ways of being co-creators
d) design and create multi-modal expressions of the meaning of religious texts
e) discuss and respond to the features of their personal and others’ representations, experiences and artistic works, inspired by religious texts.

Suggestions for interacting

Teachers create interactions relevant to local settings or draw on the following examples:

a) model or teach alternative ways to generate ideas, plan and transfer ideas, processes and knowledge arising from religious texts
b) recognise and build upon student’s prior knowledge about natural phenomena and the wonder of creation
c) encourage students to think about how they can be co-creators of preferred, sustainable environments
d) challenge students to use different modes and designs to express the meaning of religious texts
e) discuss similarities and differences in people’s responses to artistic expressions of religious texts, including their own.

Suggestions for monitoring and assessing

In relation to this learning statement, teachers may look for evidence that the student:

a) makes simple plans to express ideas and uses known strategies to solve familiar problems that have been instigated by religious texts
b) in discussions, shares personal understandings, poses questions and wonders about creation
c) in group discussions, identifies ways to take care of God’s creation for future generations
d) experiments in different ways (including using ICLT) to imaginatively represent experiences, ideas and designs and meanings of religious texts
e) describes some features of interest in their own or others’ artworks and representations of religious imagination and meaning.

Teachers monitor a student’s learning in relation to the Learning Statement as they:

- observe and analyse what the student is doing
- listen to and reflect on what the student says
- interact with the student
- record annotations
- communicate with partners including students, parents/carers and others.

Suggestions for reflecting

Adults and students might reflect on the following questions relevant to this learning statement:

- How did we let others know about our ideas and plans?
- What did we learn from some religious stories?
- How did we learn about different parts of creation?
- How did we find out about being responsible for creation?
- What interesting ways did you use to show what you know?
- What ways did others use to share what they know?

Teachers also reflect on their practice, in terms of decision making and the five key components, in order to continually improve both their judgements about students’ learning and their planning for future learning experiences.
Connections to the Syllabus Content: Planning Support Table

### Religious Education Learning Statement

**Religious Education and Active Learning Processes (RE ALP)**

Students imagine, investigate and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology* in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.

* Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Suggestions</th>
<th>RE Syllabus Content</th>
<th>Elaborations of RE Syllabus Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With students, teachers plan to: a) generate and discuss ideas and plans and solve problems inspired by religious texts</td>
<td>• Bible stories can be reflected upon and interpreted for early learners to gain an introductory understandings. (S42) • Faith is a gift from God through which one trusts in God’s care. (B5) • Prayer brings us close to God. (C37) • God is love. (B12) • We can pray at any time. (C37) • Jesus prayed to God with great love and trust. (C38) • The Paschal Mystery – Jesus’ life, death and resurrection - are essential to the Church. The Church believes that God’s kingdom extends beyond this life. (B52)</td>
<td>Students, with support, know: • Scripture that explores and discusses plans and problems e.g. The Lost Coin (Lk 15:8-10), The Lost Sheep (Lk 15:1-7), The Lost Son (Lk 15:11-32) • Jesus prayed frequently especially when he faced problems and important decisions • believers trust and have faith in God • God always loves • everyone faces problems • people can help each other in hard times • we can thank God and celebrate happy times • Jesus is with us when we are afraid • Christians believe there is life after death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) explore, investigate and communicate their own understandings of the wonder and mystery of creation</td>
<td>• God is the creator and sustainer of the world. God created the world out of love and goodness. (B2) • God has a purpose in creating everything. (M1) • God’s presence is revealed in all creation. (B2) • The mystery of God is beyond language, concepts and stories. (B20) • The Holy Spirit is active in the world leading people to God. (B13) • The Bible has many images of God and Jesus e.g. creator &amp; teacher. (S8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) explore and investigate sustainable futures and ways of being co-creators</td>
<td>• Human beings are called to respect and be stewards of God’s creation. (B1) • All creatures are interdependent and men and women are created for community and share God’s creation. (B3) • Respect for all life is a teaching that is central to God’s moral law. (M22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) design and create multi-modal expressions of the meaning of religious texts</td>
<td>• God created men and women to live in community and to share in God’s creative work. (B3) • The mystery of God is beyond language, concepts and stories. (B20) • Sacred art reflects God’s goodness and truth. (C52) • Scientific and technological advances can benefit society. (M45)</td>
<td>• people must care for God’s creation • all living things need one another • God’s creation is shared with all living things • all life must be respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) discuss and respond to the features of their personal and others’ representations, experiences and artistic works, inspired by religious texts.</td>
<td>• People use their gifts and talents in the service of others. (M43)</td>
<td>• all people are part of God’s ongoing creation • there are many mysteries in life and people express this mystery in different ways • multimedia is used to reflect God’s goodness and truth • scientific and technological advances can benefit society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years*
## Contexts for Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Focused Learning</th>
<th>Real Life</th>
<th>Routines &amp; Transitions</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solve problems through playing out scenarios in biblical stories.</td>
<td>Identify problems and solutions in biblical stories.</td>
<td>Identify and discuss problems, plans and solutions in real-life stories.</td>
<td>Invite students to use <em>A problem a day</em> activities.</td>
<td>Draw plans to solve problems in biblical stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the wonders of creation through outdoor play.</td>
<td>Expand understandings of the wonder and awe of God's creation through photostories.</td>
<td>Discover and discuss mysteries and wonders in creation.</td>
<td>Play nature audios during transition times.</td>
<td>Explore the wonders of creation through the digital microscope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play ways to be carers of creation.</td>
<td>Explore and discuss new ways of being a co-creator.</td>
<td>Care for real animals and plants.</td>
<td>Explore and perform the daily routines of care for a class pet.</td>
<td>Discover new ways to be co-creators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk with others as they engage in self-directed, teacher supported play involving the use of a range of digital resources.</td>
<td>Use digital pictures to create mystery pictures.</td>
<td>Use the internet with teacher direction to explore diverse cultures and natural environments.</td>
<td>Create a photo story about the routines in their classrooms e.g. prayer time.</td>
<td>Create a page in PowerPoint or Word about people's co-creative work in God's creation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use and play with diverse art materials.</td>
<td>Use digital images for religious art.</td>
<td>Use the beauty of natural environments as the stimulus for religious art.</td>
<td>Learn ways to commend each others' artistic talents.</td>
<td>Discover artistic ways to express the wonders of creation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monitoring Assessing and Reporting

Monitoring and assessing and reporting are part of ongoing curriculum decision making. The approach to monitoring assessing performance and reporting in Religious Education in the early years has three components, namely:

- Religious Education Learning Statements which describe the focus of learning, interacting, monitoring and assessing and reflecting. Because of the comprehensive nature of the RE Learning Statements they can be used in full, or in part when monitoring, assessing and recording student’s learning.
- An Individual Folio which is a collection of data and evidence of what a student is learning.
- The Early Learning Record (ELR) which summarises the distance travelled in a student’s learning. The ELR can also provide a focus with parents and carers and form the basis for a written end of year report. The information in the ELR is also made available to the student’s next teacher.

Working in partnership enables teachers, parents and students to develop shared understandings about monitoring, assessing and reporting. Partnerships that effectively support monitoring, assessing and reporting require trusting relationships. Strategies teachers can use to build partnerships that support monitoring, assessing and reporting of learning include:

- providing feedback to students during the learning process
- reflecting and negotiating with students about their learning
- keeping parents informed about the student’s learning
- encouraging quality dialogue between parents, teachers and students
- sharing professional judgements about a student’s learning with parents and the student.

A culture of collaborative learning that supports quality monitoring, assessing and reporting among teachers is enhanced by:

- quality professional dialogue with colleagues
- sharing understandings of students’ performance
- sharing understandings of a student’s learning journey
- making professional judgements about a student’s learning journey using the Early Learning Record
- engaging in professional dialogue about teacher judgements of students’ performance at intra and inter-school settings, such as Brisbane Catholic Education’s Consistency of Teacher Judgement Processes.

Monitoring, assessing and reporting processes support teachers in making consistent judgements about students’ learning and development in relation to the Religious Education Learning Statements. Teachers make reliable and valid evidence-based judgements over time about the phases of learning in which the student is operating. This evidence is collected in an Individual Folio.
Phases of Learning

Four phases are used to describe a continuum of learning in relation to the Religious Education Learning Statements. These are:

- Becoming Aware
- Exploring
- Making Connections
- Applying.

The four phases are determined by:

- progress from personalised to shared understanding
- the level of support required to engage with the knowledge described in the Learning Statement
- the degree to which the student can use their knowledge, relating to the learning statement in different contexts.
The following table describes the four phases.

#### Becoming Aware

**Students:**
- rely on their own personal observations and habitual ways of doing things
- need explicit support to engage with the knowledge of the learning statement
- use their learning within a single familiar context.

At this phase students are becoming aware of new things in their lives. They watch and listen to an activity, and discuss new objects, representations, people and practices. They may randomly explore the attributes of new materials.

#### Exploring

**Students:**
- construct personal understanding
- need support to engage with the knowledge of the learning statement
- use their learning within familiar contexts.

At this phase, students explore new objects, representations and social practices for their own purposes.

#### Making Connections

**Students:**
- make connections between their personal understanding and commonly accepted understandings
- need some prompts to engage with and talk about the knowledge related to the learning statement
- are beginning to transfer their learning across familiar contexts.

At this phase students begin to represent their ideas and understandings.

#### Applying

**Students:**
- more readily recall and explain their conceptual understandings
- apply their knowledge, relating to the Learning Statement independently
- confidently transfer their learning across familiar contexts.

Students confidently plan, explain and reflect on their learning.

Typically, most students are operating in the Making Connections phase by the end of the Preparatory Year. This continuum of learning across four phases leads to Level One of the Religious Education Outcomes. These outcomes are described in the document *Religious Education Years 1 to 10 Learning Outcomes*, Brisbane Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane, 2003.

### Religious Education Learning Statement Rubrics

The monitoring and assessing process supports teachers in making consistent judgements about learning and development in relation to the Learning Statements. Teachers make reliable and valid evidence based judgements about the phases of learning in which the student is operating. When students are moving beyond the Applying Phase, the Religious Education Learning Statements Rubrics provide a link to the related Level 1 Religious Education Outcomes.

The following rubrics support teachers in making judgements about students’ learning and development in relation to the four phases of learning.
Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning Statement

Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming Aware</th>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Links Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With explicit support, the student identifies Scripture stories and Church teachings that inform their personal understandings of themselves and family members.</td>
<td>With support, the student explores Scripture stories and Church teachings and discusses how they contribute to their personal understandings of relationships.</td>
<td>With prompts, the student connects Scripture stories and Church teachings with their personal and shared understandings about individual and group diversity.</td>
<td>The student discusses Scripture stories and Church teachings and their application to understandings about self, relationships and diversity in real-life settings.</td>
<td>B1.1 Students illustrate personal understandings of Christian beliefs to express their ideas about God and life. B1.2 Students make connections between the teachings of Jesus and ways Christians live. B1.3 Students identify and describe characteristics of the Church community. S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in interpreting familiar scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning

Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts to build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming Aware</th>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Links Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With explicit support, the student uses religious contexts to participate in discussions about how the choices people make affect wellbeing.</td>
<td>With support, the student uses religious contexts to express emerging ideas about how the choices people make affect physical and spiritual wellbeing.</td>
<td>With prompts, the student uses religious contexts to represent ideas about their own and others understanding of how personal choices affect physical and spiritual wellbeing.</td>
<td>The student uses religious contexts to reflect upon, identify and express how their own, or community choices affect the physical and spiritual wellbeing of those involved.</td>
<td>M 1.1 Students examine actions described in religious and other texts to identify messages about morality. M1.2 Students create and reflect on scenarios to identify behaviours they or others regards as right or wrong. M1.3 Students illustrate just and peaceful relationships by reflecting on just and unjust ways of acting. S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in interpreting familiar scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication

Students explore, interpret and experiment with spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multi-modal religious texts* to expand their religious understanding, oral language and early literacy.

* Religious texts include: Scripture and moral stories, simple prayers, gestures, celebrations and expressions of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, art and music.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming Aware</th>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Links Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With explicit support, the student participates in early literate practices* involving religious texts. *Oral language, reading and viewing, writing and shaping.</td>
<td>With support, the student experiments with early literate practices to make meaning in religious texts.</td>
<td>With prompts, the student begins to use early literate practices to make meaning, represent and communicate about religious texts.</td>
<td>The student uses and applies for particular purposes, codes and conventions of early literacy, to interpret messages in religious texts.</td>
<td>S1.1 Students use textual features to explore information and ideas in familiar scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S1.2 Students gather and record information about people, places and things in scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in interpreting familiar scriptural texts.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C1.1 Students compare ideas and experiences of rituals, prayers, words and actions in the sacraments of the Church.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C1.2 Students express ideas and feelings about experiences of prayers and rituals.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1.1 Students examine actions described in religious and other texts to identify messages about morality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B1.1 Students illustrate personal understandings of Christian beliefs to express their ideas about God and life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings

Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming Aware</th>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Links Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With explicit support, the student uses</td>
<td>With support, the student participates in</td>
<td>With prompts, the student uses numerate practices</td>
<td>The student identifies, uses and communicates</td>
<td>S1.2 Students gather and record information about people, places and things in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerate practices to engage with</td>
<td>numerate practices to enhance their</td>
<td>to represent their own and others’ ideas and</td>
<td>numerate practices, to explain their own and</td>
<td>scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious contexts.</td>
<td>emerging personal understanding of</td>
<td>understandings of religious contexts.</td>
<td>others’ ideas and understandings of</td>
<td>S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>religious contexts.</td>
<td></td>
<td>religious contexts.</td>
<td>interpreting familiar scriptural texts.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>C1.1 Students compare ideas and experiences of rituals, prayers, words and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>actions in the sacraments of the Church.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religious Education and Active Learning Processes

Students imagine, investigate and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology*, in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.

*Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming Aware</th>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Making Connections</th>
<th>Applying</th>
<th>Links Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With explicit</td>
<td>With support, the student begins to</td>
<td>With prompts, the student investigates, imagines</td>
<td>The student begins to generate imaginative</td>
<td>C1.2 Students express ideas and feelings about experiences of prayers and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support, the</td>
<td>investigate, imagine and respond</td>
<td>and responds in collaborative ways, to care for</td>
<td>responses using materials to respond to</td>
<td>rituals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>to nature and familiar environments,</td>
<td>the environment using materials and stimulated</td>
<td>phenomena in the natural world and develop</td>
<td>C1.3 Students describe experiences of mystery and wonder to communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>randomly</td>
<td>experimenting with different materials to</td>
<td>by ideas in religious texts.</td>
<td>plans for sustainable environments, stimulated</td>
<td>understandings of spirituality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiments</td>
<td>share their emerging understandings of</td>
<td></td>
<td>by ideas in religious texts.</td>
<td>S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in</td>
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<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>religious texts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interpreting familiar scriptural texts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>responds</td>
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<td>B1.1 Students illustrate personal understandings of Christian beliefs to</td>
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<tr>
<td>ideas about</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>express their ideas about God and life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nature,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M1.2 Students create and reflect on scenarios to identify behaviours they or</td>
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<tr>
<td>familiar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>others regard as right or wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>and materials*</td>
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<td>as they</td>
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<td>engage</td>
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<tr>
<td>with religious</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>texts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Art and Craft</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>materials</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>material</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Props</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musical and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>audio equipment</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Costumes and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>dress-ups</td>
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<td>Puppets and</td>
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<tr>
<td>toys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Models</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| S1.3 Students share and compare their ideas, feelings and experiences in interpreting familiar scriptural texts. |
| C1.1 Students compare ideas and experiences of rituals, prayers, words and actions in the sacraments of the Church. |

| B1.1 Students illustrate personal understandings of Christian beliefs to express their ideas about God and life. |
| M1.2 Students create and reflect on scenarios to identify behaviours they or others regard as right or wrong. |
### Social and Personal Learning

**Social learning**

Early learners sustain relationships by:
- acknowledging and negotiating rights, roles and responsibilities in a range of contexts
- co-operating with others in social situations.

Early learners build early understandings about diversity by:
- investigating and communicating positively about the social and cultural practices of people in their community.

**Personal learning**

Early learners build a positive sense of self by:
- developing a sense of personal identity as a capable learner
- acting with increasing independence and responsibility towards learning and personal organisation.

### Religious Education and Social and Personal Learning

Students are introduced to Scripture and Catholic Christian teachings to further their understandings about relationships, diversity and self.

### Health and Physical Learning

**Making healthy choices**

Early learners build a sense of wellbeing by:
- making choices about their own and others’ health and safety with increasing independence.

**Gross-motor**

Early learners build a sense of wellbeing by:
- using and extending gross-motor skills when integrating movements and using equipment.

**Fine-motor**

Early learners build a sense of wellbeing by:
- using and extending fine-motor skills when integrating movements and manipulating equipment, tools and objects.

### Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning

Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts to build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing.
### Language Learning and Communication

**Oral language**
Early learners expand their oral language by:
- using spoken language (including home language, or signed or augmentative communication) for a range of purposes
- exploring the patterns and conventions of spoken, signed or augmentative language
- interacting with peers and familiar adults using, with support, the conventions associated with formal and informal group settings including attentive listening.

**Early literacy**
Early learners become readers and viewers by:
- using emerging understandings to predict and make meanings from a variety of written, visual and multi-modal texts.

Early learners become writers and shapers by:
- experimenting with emerging understandings of written, visual and multi-modal texts to communicate meanings.

### Religious Education and Language Learning and Communication

Students explore, interpret and experiment with spoken, written, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multi-modal religious texts* to expand their religious understanding, oral language and early literacy.

* Religious texts include: Scripture and moral stories, simple prayers, gestures, celebrations and expressions of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, art and music.

### Early Mathematical Understandings

**Early numeracy**
Early learners build early mathematical understandings about number, patterns & algebra, measurement, chance & data and space by:
- investigating and communicating about quantities and their representations and attributes of objects and collections
- investigating and communicating about position, movement and direction
- investigating and communicating about order, sequence and pattern.

### Religious Education and Early Mathematical Understandings

Students engage with early numerate practices to enhance their understandings of the meaning of Scripture stories, simple celebrations and prayers, moral messages and beliefs.
### Early Learning Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Statement</th>
<th>Phase of Learning</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Learning Processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early learners think and enquire by:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• generating and discussing ideas and plans and solving problems.</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investigating the natural world</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early learners think and enquire by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• investigating their ideas about phenomena in the natural world</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• developing shared understandings about these phenomena.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investigating technology</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early learners think and enquire by:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• investigating technology and considering how it affects everyday life.</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investigating environments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Early learners think and enquire by:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• investigating features of and ways to sustain, environments.</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imagining and responding</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early learners generate, represent and respond to ideas, experiences and possibilities by:</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• experimenting with materials and processes in a variety of creative, imaginative and innovative ways</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• discussing and responding to the qualities of their own and others’ representations, experiences and artistic works.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious Education and Active Learning Processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students imagine, investigate and respond to their own and others’ ideas about phenomena in the natural world, sustainable environments and technology*, in light of their emerging understandings of religious texts.</td>
<td><strong>BA EMCA1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Including Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendices 1

Using the Model for Developing Religious Literacy

In the early years, religious literacy is developed in age-appropriate ways. It is important to acknowledge that the Discourse of Religion (see A Model for Developing Religious Literacy P 15), may be a new experience for early learners. Generally, most early learners have limited:

- prior experience with religious texts
- knowledge about religious and secular texts
- religious cultural and social knowledge.

However, many have more sophisticated technological knowledge and experience than previous generations.

In the example provided below teachers, and students interact with the Discourse of Religion at every phase of the Model for Developing Religious Literacy.

This following example focuses on:

- the Learning Statement from the Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning Overview, namely:
  
  Students engage with and reflect upon life experiences and messages within religious texts and build upon their understanding of physical and spiritual wellbeing

- the b) Suggestion for planning, interacting and monitoring and assessing sections of the learning overview that engages students, in exploring and modelling right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust choices from religious and other texts

- the suggestions for reflecting in the learning overview.

The Model for Developing Religious Literacy is applied to the focus material above as follows.

Purpose:

Early learners, with support, design pictures and labels for a class wall chart that identifies just and unjust choices in real-life situations and in religious and other texts.

Available Designs:

**Repertoire of resources:** The teacher gathers and selects diverse age-appropriate texts that illustrate just and unjust choices and actions for the learners’ use. These texts could include: scripture and other moral stories, simple prayers of thanks and sorrow, gestures, celebrations, reconciliation rituals and actions, expressions or codes of belief, religious symbols, artefacts, artistic works and songs.

The Connections to the Syllabus Content: Planning Support Table for Religious Education Health and Physical Learning - RE HPL b) (see P 33), will provide teachers with religious content, teachings and stories to support learning.

In this phase, another repertoire of resources that teachers can draw upon is the students’ existing knowledge about just and unjust choices and actions.

**Four Resource Model:** The teacher develops learning opportunities using the repertoire of resources on just and unjust choices and actions. Some of the learning opportunities about just and unjust choices and actions are informed by questions and learning opportunities drawn from the Four Resource Model. (see PP 16-17)
Designing:

Students, with support, make decisions about which just and unjust choices and actions they are going to use for the wall chart from the resources provided about real-life, religious and other stories. They experiment using early literacy strategies, especially drawing, shaping and writing, to create their pictures and labels about just and unjust actions.

Redesigning

Drafts of drawings and labels are discussed and edited. The final drafts are redesigned before they are represented on the class chart. The teacher scribes emerging understandings about just and unjust choices and actions.

Monitoring students’ understanding is ongoing and part of everyday classroom practice. It is an integral part of the learning process and is not a separate activity. This phase of developing religious literacy provides the teacher with opportunities to interpret and make judgements about students’ learning in relation to the purpose. The Suggestions for Monitoring and Assessing b) (see P 33) may support the purpose of this particular learning opportunity.

The Suggestions for Reflecting (see P 33) can be used with adults and early learners to discover the learner’s new place of knowing about just and unjust choices and actions in relation to the Religious Education and Health and Physical Learning Statement.
References


Benedict XVI. (2006). “Encyclical letter Deus caritas est of the supreme pontiff Benedict XVI to the bishops, priests and deacons, men and women religious and all the lay faithful on Christian love”. Strafthfield, NSW, St Pauls.


*Brisbane*: State of Queensland, Department of Education.


The State of Queensland (Queensland Studies Authority) 2006. *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*. 
Religious Education

Curriculum Guidelines for the Early Years