

Coleshill C. E. Primary Religious Education Teaching

(Y1-Y6)

This is an overview of the religious education your child will receive in each year group.

In year groups 1-6, six different RE units are covered, one taught per half term. Every unit includes an aspect of Christianity and usually an aspect from another religion (Judaism, Islam, Sikhism or Buddhism).

Each theme and its content is based upon ideas from Warwickshire SACRE education resources: <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sacreresources>. At Coleshill Primary School we also like to use ideas and themes from the Solihull RE plans so that across the year your child we receive the teaching that we feel is most appropriate and engaging. Therefore, teaching may differ in some ways from what it set out below, as appropriate for each class.

Year 1:

Getting Ready For Prayer

This unit looks at the physical and mental preparations believers make for prayer. Pupils will begin from the idea of getting ready for a specific activity and the need to prepare. They may widen the range to include getting ready for prayer and should be helped to understand what prayer is, drawing on personal experience, books or video. The unit looks at how a Muslim would prepare for prayer (clothing, wudu, head-covering, removing shoes) and why, including intention (niyyah). The idea of the Call to Prayer telling Muslims to be ready is introduced. Christians' varied preparations should be considered. Pupils have an opportunity to think about what people talk to God about and meet some of the words they use. Finally they should think about what important things they need to talk about and to whom they talk.

Shining Lights

This unit is intended to link the festivals of Divali and Christmas by beginning to explore the symbolism of light as a sign of joy and a guide. Pupils will approach what light means to them through exploring experiences and feelings related to light and darkness, the uses to which light is put, the dangers of dark etc. They hear the story of Rama and Sita as an introduction to Divali. They take part in some aspects of the festival, especially the lighting of divas and draw out the significance. Christmas is approached through the Nativity story, putting the focus on Jesus as a very special baby, whose life was like a light. The unit then considers how a person can be like a light and how Christians use candles, including the Advent ring, to show they think Jesus is like a light. Finally, pupils explore ways in which they feel they can act like lights.

Belonging Together

This unit helps pupils to consider aspects of belonging to a group and the significance of a place that is special to that group, beginning from the shared experience of belonging to a class in school. They are introduced to the idea of religious groups who have symbols that show they belong to their own tradition, in particular the Christians with their cross and the 5 Ks worn by Sikhs. They explore some of the things religious groups do together in their shared places of worship, making a visit to such a place and recognising the co-operation involved. Finally, they are asked to think about the ways in which they show that they belong to each other and share in their class.

A Time to Feast

This unit focuses on the festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Easter, linking the elements of feasting and fasting. Pupils should begin by exploring experiences and events which affect the contents of the family shopping basket, such as visitors, sickness or special occasions. They might also consider economic effects or times when certain items are not purchased. The unit moves from this to looking at the Muslim practice of fasting during Ramadan and the Christian idea of giving things up for Lent. The pupils should be helped to understand the reasons for this (obedience in Islam, as a sign of repentance for Christians) and the focus of contemplation (the needs of others). Emphasis is put on the festivals of Eid and Easter at the end of the fasts and celebrated with joy. The unit considers the associated feelings and helps pupils explore what events might cause them to have similar feelings.

Senses in Worship

The purpose of this unit is to explore ideas about offering in worship. It involves concentration on the senses and how they are used by the pupils themselves and by believers in worship. The unit offers the opportunity for visits to a Hindu mandir and a Christian church where sensory stimulation to worship will be the focus. There is an opportunity to consider what God might be and why Christians and Hindus would want to offer gifts to God. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon what offerings they might make to someone special.

People in Stories

The focus of this unit is upon the founders of the Christian and Muslim traditions whom people know about mainly through the Bible and the Hadith and Sunnah stories of Muhammad's sayings and actions. Pupils have an opportunity to begin from their experience of people who are special to them, considering the reasons and the relationships. This could include members of their families or friends who may no longer be alive. Jesus and Muhammad are introduced through stories about them which indicate their characters, abilities and relationships with others. The unit then considers how Christians

remember Jesus now through prayer and trying to be like him. It looks at how Muslim practice is based on using Muhammad as an example of how to live. Pupils may reflect on the characteristics they admire and widen their range of special people.

Year 2:

Meeting People

This unit allows children to look at the work of religious leaders in order to explore the concept of interdependence. They should begin by thinking about who they rely upon, what support they receive and how they say thank you. This then leads into investigating the work of a Christian leader (vicar, minister, etc.), who does not only work on 'Sundays', but includes teaching, caring, weddings, funerals, giving advice, etc in the role. Pupils learn how ordinary Christians help. The unit then looks at a Buddhist monk and the work of teaching and advising and then how lay people say thank you in return. The unit ends with pupils reflecting on their own experience of co-operation.

Special Books

The unit is grounded in pupils' love of books and the sharing of them with a variety of people in a variety of situations. Pupils consider what makes books special, exploring variety of content and their relationship with the books, their authors and those who introduced the book to them. Pupils learn that Jews and Christians have books which are very special to them because they are gifts from God. They meet with examples of the content of Bible and Torah and see the respect with which they are treated. The Jewish festival of Simchat Torah is introduced, when the cycle of readings from the Torah ends and is recommenced. Finally, pupils reflect on whether they have a book which is more precious to them than any other, and why.

Living Well

The purpose of this unit is to examine the force or motivation behind people's actions. Beginning with the pupils' awareness of the need to make choices as a route to happiness they should reflect on whether they should consider only their own wishes or the needs of others. They should think about why they do the things they do, both good and bad. This leads to the introduction of the Buddha and his teaching, in particular metta (loving-kindness) which causes good actions, and the Christian understanding of love as a powerful force which Christians use in relations with other people. Rules shared by Christians and Buddhists should be explored for their motivation (e.g. honesty, kindness, avoiding fighting and harm etc).

Growing and Changing

Pupils are led through an exploration of life-cycles to consider the fact that death is also inevitable for humans. They have opportunity to reflect upon what happens when we die and how people remember those they have loved. They are introduced to Christian and Muslim beliefs and ideas about what happens after death without dwelling on practicalities of funerals. This leads into the Christian celebration of Good Friday and Easter exploring a solemn and joyful festival. Finally there is opportunity to respond with their own ideas about what happens after death.

Special Places

This unit focuses on the theme of Special Places. It starts with pupils' own experiences which may or may not be shared and then follows with Christian and Sikh places of worship with an emphasis on purpose and use. A number of visits should be made to contrasting churches and if possible a Gurdwara (or use posters, videos and virtual tours on the internet). On these visits draw out how these buildings are used. Pupils should be encouraged to discover how prayer and praise of God takes place, and how the use of music, rituals and prayer, etc. is used to do this. This unit ends with more reflection from the pupils on their own experience of feeling special, in a particular place or at a particular time.

Nobody's Fault

This unit centers on the problem of suffering and human responses to it. Pupils begin by exploring issues of accident and blame and the recognition that sometimes it is nobody's fault. This is enlarged to look at natural disaster and the attempts made to avert it and deal with the aftermath. They learn how Christians and Muslims make their contribution through prayer and charitable giving. Finally, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on the things in this world that they would wish to see changed.

Year 3:

Ways of Telling

This unit centers on the idea that people feel a commitment to communicate the ideas which are most important to them. Some of these ideas relate to relationships, the world in which we live, the past, the future or the supernatural. They may be handed on through symbol employing words or the arts e.g. conservation or peace movements use logos. Religious traditions use symbols to express meaning. Christians use the cross to speak of Jesus and the nature of God, expressing suffering, love, eternity, kinship. Hindu murtis use symbolic art in a similar way through images or pictures to speak of the deities and the values they represent. Pupils should begin to recognise that the wearing of symbols or their

possession is a sign of a relationship expressed by believers in worship. In designing symbols, pupils have opportunity to indicate matters which are the subject of personal belief or allegiance.

People Worth Celebrating

This unit looks at how people honour their heroes and heroines, beginning from the pupils' own perceptions of who is important to them and why. It explores the qualities which make people worthy of admiration and lead to the celebration of their lives. The content from the Christian tradition explored the way Jesus is recognised and honoured in the celebration of Christmas. His qualities are indicated in the names used for him. The Hindu element in the unit relates to the celebration at Divali of the persons Rama and Sita. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and respond to the idea of festival as a way of recognising value and other possible ways of doing this.

Living Like a Saint

This unit looks at the phenomenon of saintliness. It explores occasions when the pupils have found themselves disadvantaged by standing out from the crowd to support something they felt to be important. It goes on to look at historical examples of such determination and draws out the kinds of qualities which make someone 'a saint'. Christian saints and Sikh Gurus and their followers are considered as religious examples, drawing out the importance for them of belief in God, and their present day influence. Finally, pupils consider when in their lives they display saintly qualities and what might occasion such behaviour.

Working Together

This unit centers on the community aspect of special places, beginning with those places which are special to groups to which the pupils belong, such as home or school. It looks at responsibilities and expectations of people in those places. The unit goes on to look at roles and responsibilities in the church and gurdwara communities where the special place is considered in part to be sacred and members have a duty to care for it. It also looks at the handing on of belief and tradition in the nurture of the next generation. Finally pupils are encouraged to consider how they and adults rely on each other and what makes for a relationship which benefits communities to which they belong.

Making Choices

This unit is designed to help pupils explore and consider the day-to-day choices they make in life. It begins by looking at influences around them (role models) and their perceptions of why rules are used to guide people. The experience of members of the Jewish tradition is

considered through the examples of putting up Mezuzahs and keeping Kashrut (food laws), and also the less formal practice of stewardship in the Christian tradition. Both are related to belief in God and God's teachings as a guide for life choices. Finally, pupils consider what they could offer as an act of service and who or what is their own ultimate authority.

Caring for Others

This unit may be developed alongside a history unit on the Victorians. Pupils look at the historical social conditions which led to the foundation of the Salvation Army. They should consider the reasons which prompt people to help others and the responsibilities of individuals as members of society. Attention should be drawn to the motivation of Salvation Army members, then and now, of showing the love of God to those in need. This they do through service and prayer. They show their identification with Christ through their uniform. Pupils investigate the ways in which Christians serve others. In parallel, the belief of Sikhs in sewa (service) should be explored as a practical expression of worship of God expressed through charity, the langar, and honest dealings. They identify themselves by wearing the 5Ks. Pupils consider whether they owe a duty of service to anyone and how it might be carried out.

Year 4:

Giving Thanks

This unit is based on the concept that people give thanks not only for material gifts but also for nonmaterial gifts and events in their lives. It offers the opportunity for pupils to explore the things which make them thankful. The religion-based element relates to the American festival of Thanksgiving and the Jewish festival of Sukkot, both of which celebrate the protection of God on a significant journey and his provision for people's needs. This continues by looking at the ongoing expression of thanks in Jewish blessings and Christian prayer. Finally, pupils are asked to reflect on events in their lives of which they are thankful to reach the end and to 'count their blessings'.

Follow My Leader

This unit helps pupils to consider the qualities they admire in a leader whom they might be prepared to follow and the reasons for this. It goes on to look at Christian and Buddhist experience, finding out about the lives of Jesus and Gautama Buddha and exploring the influence which they have had on the present –day lives of followers. There is an opportunity to explore the ways in which Christians and Buddhists represent their leaders, showing their allegiance. Finally, pupils are asked to identify the characteristics of a leader they might be prepared to follow.

Sound of Silence

Pupils should begin from personal experience of times when they or others have found silence useful, thinking about why it was valuable. What kinds of experiences reduce them to silence? What feelings accompany the stillness and silence? These feelings may be triggered by the natural world or by things that happen: joyful, sad, mysterious or frightening. They should go on to consider why Christians might value silence for worship or for contemplation. Explore Quaker worship. What kinds of things might they want to think through in God's presence? (This might raise some of the ultimate questions of life/death, joy/suffering, origin etc). Pupils should be introduced to the Buddhist practice of meditation, giving them the opportunity to practise concentration. They should be shown how the Buddha used meditation to seek answers to the important questions of existence, with an introduction to the Four Noble Truths to show how Buddhists understand the world. Pupils have an opportunity to think about what they would value having space and time to puzzle through for themselves, sharing 'difficult questions'.

Remembering

This unit relates the concept of remembering, particularly those who are no longer alive on Earth, to the Christian festival of Easter, which marks the death and resurrection of Jesus. The unit includes the story of the first Easter with its message of life after death. It offers the opportunity to explore ways in which different denominations within the Christian tradition celebrate Easter and carry out a Communion service. It also explores the on-going sense Christians have of Jesus' presence when they celebrate Holy Communion. This unit is specific to Christianity.

A Fair World

This unit looks at the inequalities that are apparent in the world around us caused by phenomena such as climate, economic issues, war and disaster. It raises the question of whose responsibility it is to work for justice, looking at the work of governments, non-government organizations and international agencies as well as individuals. The religious content focuses on the work of Christian and Hindu charities and their supporters, and the motivation which comes from religious teaching. Finally, pupils are challenged to consider whether they too have a role in helping to create a fairer world.

Showing the Way

This unit on the role and nature of leadership in religious communities focuses on the leader as guide, interpreter and example. Beginning from pupils' own sources of advice in matters large and small they consider verbal and written advice and people as examples and how far it is to be accepted. Can they be their own guide by free choice? The role of Christian leaders is explored through chosen examples from among the denominations, recognising

variety from the embodiment of authority to the servant-leader. The work of the imam as spiritual leader of the Muslim community is explored. The similarities and differences in the role can be examined. The work of both is related back to God as their ultimate authority whose will they interpret to the lay people. Pupils have opportunity to think about their own ideas about the qualities and duties which might be expected of their own leaders or themselves as leaders.

Year 5:

Talking About God

This unit is designed to give pupils the opportunity to reflect upon the idea of God. It begins by considering the many kinds of relationships which exist between people, including the possibility of God. It goes on to consider the qualities which people find admirable and to relate these to names which may be given. There is an opportunity to research the symbolic names given to God by Christians and the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah, and what these might tell about God. Finally, pupils own views are sought and they have the opportunity to respond to the idea of God in words or through the arts.

Words of Wisdom

In this unit, pupils will consider the sources of guidance they use in their own lives and how they value these. They will investigate the importance of sacred text and its significance to believers. They will try to see why the Bible is special to Christians and the Qur'an to Muslims, by discovering the messages within the texts and the effect they have on people's lives. They will consider what effect the following of a sacred source of guidance might have on their own lives.

Freedom

The unit explores the major life-experience of suffering and remedies for it. Pupils look at the cause of unhappiness in their own lives, some the result of change, some inevitable. They consider others whose suffering may be more desperate and lead to more powerful remedies. This leads to study of the festival of Pesach when Jews celebrate achieving freedom from slavery in Egypt. Pupils also explore the Christian festival of Easter looking at the solemnity of Good Friday and the joy of Easter Day with their symbolism of victory over death and the freedom of new life. Pupils reflect on whether freedom is simply relief from something bad or an opportunity for the future.

Beginnings

Pupils research the origins of the groups to which they belong and try to discover the aims and purposes of those groups. They should consider why they joined and what responsibilities they have to the group. They should hear the story of the founding of the Christian Church at Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit symbolically in wind, fire and words. Emphasis will be put on the danger to the first Christian witnesses and their courage. The fish symbol is introduced, and pupils should learn about modern marking of the festival. Pupils learn about the founding of the Sikh Khalsa, considering the issue of courage in standing up for one's beliefs. They investigate how Baisakhi is now annually celebrated and discover the significance of the 5Ks. Pupils will consider how far they would go in support of their own beliefs and whether they want others to know what is important to them.

Keeping the Rules

Pupils begin by exploring whether or not there is a need for rules and in what circumstances, relating this to personal experience and to their knowledge of the world around them. They consider the sources of such rules and the authority behind them. The laws by which Christians try to live and the Buddhist precepts and paramitas are examined as a source of guidance for living. Pupils consider how these would affect the life choices of someone following these traditions. They look also at their understanding of the outcome of failure. Finally pupils are asked to reflect upon what rules they would consider to offer guidance which would be universally helpful.

Believing and Belonging

Pupils begin this unit from their own understanding of groups to which they belong, come chosen, such as youth groups, supporters groups, some through family affiliation or location, such as school, and some through birth, such as race. They should be shown that difference is valuable and seek reasons for this. The explicit material deals with two major branches of Christianity, Roman Catholic and Protestant, exploring external aspects of worship, authority and ceremony and seeing contrast which leads to division, yet recognising the beliefs, values and ideas which are shared worldwide. This leads to ways in which they work together in ecumenism. Pupils have opportunity to consider alternatives to prejudice, thinking of tolerance and mutual respect and giving reasons for such values.

Year 6:

Ways of Worship

This unit begins from the idea that some people, places or events make people feel awe, wonder or a sense of mystery. Pupils are given opportunity to consider personal experiences of this kind. The religious focus is on what Christians and Sikhs do in response to such feelings, which for them, comes from their sense of the presence of God, and their desire to be close to God. The unit explores the different ways in which worship is expressed – through hymns, music, prayers, words, private and communal rituals - such as Holy Communion and Karah Parshad and the feelings involved. Finally pupils are encouraged to employ the arts in response to their own feelings of awe, wonder or mystery.

Showing Belief

This unit begins by introducing the idea that commitment and approval can be expressed symbolically. Pupils are asked to consider why people need to celebrate and what kinds of things they celebrate. The unit moves on to explore the festivals of Navratri and Christmas. It looks particularly at the forms of artistic and symbolic expression which believers use to honour the persons at the centre of the festivals and to show their commitment to them. Pupils are asked to consider the focus of their own commitment and to design a creative, celebratory response to it.

Caring for the Earth

This unit on an environmental theme begins with exploration of accounts of the origin of the Earth, both scientific and mythical. The pupils should be taught that myths speak of the nature of the world we live in. Include the Judaeo-Christian version where the Earth is essentially good and the origin of evil is discussed, and the Hindu story of the churning of the ocean. Pupils should consider a perfect world and how greed and natural disaster damage it, whilst some people work to solve such problems. Christian teaching about the Earth as God's creation and people's duty to care for it are explored with reference to St. Francis and the 1986 Pilgrimage to Assisi. The Hindu concepts of respect for all life, non-violence and non-materialism, with the Earth as Divine Mother, are explored. This leads to consideration of charitable work. Pupils finally consider the effect of such ideas on their own world-view and sense of responsibility.

Speaking for Yourself

This unit centres on the idea of commitment. It begins with personal ideas of belonging to groups and the importance of making decisions when old enough to do so. It then moves on to religious ceremonies marking important stages of life and involving a tradition. The focus is on Confirmation from the Christian tradition and Bar/Bat Mitzvah from the Jewish tradition. It emphasises the public recognition of people joining a religious tradition and

taking on the associated responsibilities and commitments. Pupils are asked to consider where their own commitments lie and design a way of symbolically showing this.

Journeys

This unit is intended to explore the idea of having a spiritual experience by visiting places that have religious importance to Christians and Muslims. It also explores the idea of life as a journey. It starts by asking the children to think about their life so far, to plot the key events and to consider who has supported them. It then introduces the idea of Christian Pilgrimage and asks them to investigate where and when these happen. They are introduced to the Five Pillars of Islam and focus on the fifth pillar; Hajj. They reflect on how making these special journeys, brings people closer to God. The unit then asks children to consider their own future and the journey they will take in the future.

In the second half of summer term, year 6 prepare for the service in the Cathedral as part of their RE lessons.