The Cayman Islands

National Curriculum
2008

Religious Education
Programme of study and attainment targets for
Key Stages 1, 2 and 3

Acknowledgements

The overview document sets out the guiding philosophy and principles of the new Cayman Islands curriculum. It guides all the subject documents and approaches to teaching and learning in the revised curriculum.

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Wil Pineau, CEO, Chamber of Commerce
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Aims

Religious education contributes to the achievement of the curriculum aims for all young people (the 'educated Caymanian') to become:

- Enthusiastic and motivated about learning and willing to continue to extend their knowledge and skills after leaving school
- Aware of global issues affecting the 21st century
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy, focused and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society

The aims of religious education are to help students:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions
- Recognise religion as an important expression of human experiences
- Investigate and understand the questions and answers that religions can offer about the nature and meaning of life
- Develop their own beliefs, attitudes, moral values and practices through a process of personal search, discovery and critical evaluation

Overview

Education is about the development of an individual. Similarly, religious education deals with the growth of individuals as it relates to their self-awareness and relationship with others in conjunction with their sphere of beliefs, values and practices. As such, it makes an important contribution to the personal, spiritual and social development of students.

The many different beliefs and attitudes found in today's pluralistic society of the Cayman Islands are mirrored in our schools. This area of the curriculum is exciting and very challenging. In meeting these challenges, schools will need to create an ethos in which differences are celebrated and welcomed.

Discussion of religious issues should be open. Students should be encouraged to express their own views and feelings and to listen with respect to the views and feelings of others, and be guided into making sound and rational choices aimed at contributing to a better community.

Religion is a significant area of human experience. This is true in history as well as in the contemporary world. As such, it should be studied by students so that they will have some understanding of one of the major motivating factors behind human behaviour, such as how they function in small groups and within communities.

Christianity has shaped the history and traditions of the Cayman Islands and its people and continues to exert a significant influence on present life. Other major religions, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, are represented in our islands to a lesser extent. It is important that while recognising the role of Christianity as the major religious tradition of this country, students should also be encouraged to develop understanding of and respect for people of other faiths and beliefs.

The importance of religious education is not only confined to appreciating the historical and social role of religion. It is also a personal dimension, linked to the individual's search for answers to questions about meaning, value and purpose in life. Such questions may be raised by younger children in response to experiences of awe, joy and sadness, and may be expressed in a more formal way by older students.

How teachers should use the programme of study and attainment targets

The programme of study identifies the experiences and opportunities that students must be given to enable them to achieve the knowledge, skills and understanding specified in the attainment targets.

The strands

The programme for religious education is presented in a single strand. Students need to be given the opportunity to study the strand within the contexts outlined at each key stage.

Progression in this subject requires students to develop, in parallel, their skills in investigating, exchanging information and evaluating with their knowledge and understanding. They should start with activities linked to themselves and their immediate environment and move on to less familiar situations and contexts. Progression is shown through the different expectations at each key stage. Progress in religious education is characterized by:

- Acquiring wider and more detailed knowledge of religious beliefs and practices
- Deepening understanding of the meaning of stories, symbols, events and practices
- More fluent and competent use of religious language and terminology
- Increased levels of response to questions of identity, meaning, purpose, values and commitment

The attainment targets specify the knowledge, understanding and skills that students should acquire through the key stage. More detail is given about how to interpret them in appendix 1.

During each key stage students should be offered opportunities that are integral to their learning and enhance their engagement with the concepts, processes and content of the subject.

Religious education programme of study for Key stage 1

Introduction

Throughout Key Stage 1, students should explore Christianity and at least one other principal religion. They learn different beliefs about God and the world around them. They encounter and respond to a range of stories, artefacts and other religious materials. They learn to recognize that beliefs are expressed in a variety of ways, and begin to use specialist vocabulary. They begin to understand the importance and value of religion and belief, for other children and their families.

Students ask relevant questions and develop a sense of wonder about the world. They speak about what is important to them and others, valuing themselves, reflecting on their own feelings and experiences, and developing a sense of belonging.

Students should be given opportunities to:

- Explore a range of religious and sacred writings and speak about their meaning
- Name and explore a range of celebrations, worship and rituals in religion, noting similarities where appropriate
- Identify the importance for some people, of belonging to a religion and recognize the difference this makes to their lives
- Explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts and communicate their responses
- Identify and suggest meanings for religious symbols and begin to use a range of religious words
- Reflect on and consider religious and spiritual feelings, experiences and concepts such as worship, wonder, praise, thanks, concern, joy and sadness
- Ask and respond imaginatively to puzzling questions, communicating their ideas
- Identify what matters to them and others, including those with religious commitments, and communicate their responses
- Reflect on how spiritual and moral values relate to their own behaviour
- Recognize that religious teachings and ideas make a difference to individuals, families and the local community

Contexts

Students should learn religious education in the following contexts:

- **Believing:** What people believe about God, humanity and the natural world
- **Story:** How and why some stories are sacred and important in religion
- **Celebrations:** How and why celebrations are important in religion
- **Symbols:** How and why symbols express religious meaning
- **Leaders and teachers:** Figures who have an influence on others locally, nationally and globally in religion
- **Belonging:** Where and how people belong and why belonging is important
- **Myself:** Who I am and my uniqueness as a person in a family and community

Suggested activities

- *Visiting places of worship and focusing on symbols and feelings*
- *Listening to and responding to visitors from local faith communities*
- *Having times of quiet reflection*
- *Using art and design, music, dance and drama to develop their creative talents and imagination*
- *Sharing their own beliefs, ideas and values and speaking about their feelings and experiences*
- *Beginning to use ICT to explore religions and beliefs as practised in the local and wider community*

Introduction

Throughout Key Stage 2, students should explore Christianity and at least two other principal religions, recognizing the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression.

They consider the beliefs, teachings, practices and ways of life central to religion. They learn about sacred texts and other sources and consider their meanings. They begin to recognize diversity in religion, learning about similarities and differences both within and between religions and beliefs, and the importance of dialogue between them. They extend the range and use of specialist vocabulary.

Students should be given opportunities to:

- Describe the key aspects of religions, especially the people, stories and traditions that influence the beliefs and values of others
- Describe the variety of practices and ways of life in religions and understand how these stem from, and are closely connected with, beliefs and teachings
- Identify and begin to describe the similarities and differences within and between religions
- Investigate the significance of religion in the local, national and global communities
- Consider the meaning of a range of forms of religious expression,

understanding why they are important in religion and noting links between them
- Describe and begin to understand religious and other responses to ultimate and ethical questions
- Use specialist vocabulary in communicating their knowledge and understanding
- Use and interpret information about religions from a range of sources

Contexts

Students should learn religious education in the following contexts:

- **Beliefs and questions**: How people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives
- **Teachings and authority**: What sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life
- **Worship, pilgrimage and sacred places**: Where, how and why people worship, including at particular sites
- **The journey of life and death**: Why some occasions are sacred to believers, and what people think about life after death
- **Symbols and religious expression**: How religious and spiritual ideas are expressed
- **Inspirational people**: Figures from whom believers find inspiration
- **Religion and the individual**: What is expected of a person in following a religion or belief

- **Religion, family and community**: How religious families and communities practise their faith, and the contributions this makes to local life
- **Beliefs in action in the world**: How religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment

Suggested activities

- *Visitors and visits to places of worship, and focusing on the impact and reality of religion on the local and global community*
- *Discussing religious and philosophical questions, giving reasons for their own beliefs and those of others*
- *Considering a range of human experiences and feelings*
- *Reflecting on their own and others' insights into life and its origin, purpose and meaning*
- *Expressing and communicating their own and others' insights through art and design, music, dance, drama and ICT*
- *Developing the use of ICT, particularly in enhancing students' awareness of religions and beliefs globally*

Introduction

Throughout Key Stage 3, students explore Christianity and at least three other principal religions, recognizing the impact of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. They make connections between differing aspects of religion and consider the different forms of religious expression.

Students should be given opportunities to:

- Investigate and explain the differing impacts of religious beliefs and teachings on individuals, communities and societies
- Analyse and explain how religious beliefs and ideas are transmitted by people, texts and traditions
- Investigate and explain why people belong to faith communities and explain the reasons for diversity in religion
- Analyse and compare the evidence and arguments used when considering issues of truth in religion and philosophy
- Discuss and evaluate how religious beliefs and teachings inform answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues
- Apply a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary consistently and accurately, recognising both the power and limitations of language in expressing religious ideas and beliefs

- Interpret and evaluate a range of sources, texts and authorities, from a variety of contexts
- Interpret a variety of forms of religious and spiritual expression

Contexts

Students should learn religious education in the following contexts:

- **Beliefs and concepts:** The key ideas and questions of meaning in religions and beliefs, including issues related to God, truth, the world, human life, and life after death
- **Authority:** Different sources of authority and how they inform believers' lives
- **Religion and science:** Issues of truth, explanation, meaning and purpose
- **Expressions of spirituality:** How and why human self-understanding and experiences are expressed in a variety of forms
- **Ethics and relationships:** Questions and influences that inform ethical and moral choices, including forgiveness and issues of good and evil
- **Rights and responsibilities:** What religions and beliefs say about human rights and responsibilities, social justice and citizenship
- **Global issues:** What religions and beliefs say about health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment
- **Interfaith dialogue:** A study of relationships, conflicts and collaboration within and between religions and beliefs

Suggested activities

- *Encountering people from different religious, cultural and philosophical groups, who can express a range of convictions on religious and ethical issues*
- *Visiting, where possible, places of major religious significance and using opportunities in ICT to enhance students' understanding of religion*
- *Discussing, questioning and evaluating important issues in religion and philosophy, including ultimate questions and ethical issues*
- *Reflecting on and carefully evaluating their own beliefs and values and those of others in response to their learning in religious education, using reasoned, balanced arguments*
- *Using a range of forms of expression (such as art and design, music, dance, drama, writing, ICT) to communicate their ideas and responses creatively and thoughtfully*
- *Exploring the connections between religious education and other subject areas such as the arts, humanities, literature, science*
- *Developing the use of ICT to enhance students' awareness of religions and beliefs around the world*

Appendix 1   Attainment targets

The learning outcomes or attainment targets are expressed at eight levels of increasing difficulty. These levels are the same for all key stages and are not age or year-group-dependent, which will make it easier to see how a student progresses as he/she moves up the year groups and from primary to secondary school.

Students learn at different rates and, therefore, individual students or groups of students of the same age could be working towards different levels within and across the key stage boundaries. By the end of a key stage, **most** students should be performing at the **'expected'** level, but some will be above this level and others will be below.

The range of levels covered by the key stage and the 'expected' levels for the end of each key stage are given in the table below:

Key Stage	Year Groups	Range of levels covered by the programme of study	Expected level at end of the Key Stage
1	1 - 3	1-3	2
2	4 - 6	2-5	4
3	7 - 9	3-7	5 or 6

Teachers will be expected to make judgements about the levels attained by each of their students, particularly at the end of a key stage. In deciding on a student's level of attainment, teachers should judge which description in the attainment targets best fits the student's performance. When doing so, each description should be considered alongside those for adjacent levels. It is not necessary for a student to have satisfied the entire range of a particular level to be awarded it.

It can be helpful to divide levels into three sub-levels to support tracking of progress and target setting.

For example:

- 3a – Represents a performance that demonstrates a good understanding of all the descriptors in level 3
- 3b – Represents understanding of the majority of level 3 descriptors
- 3c– Represents understanding at level 2a (ie the full understanding of the previous level) plus an understanding of some of the descriptors at level 3

Attainment targets for Key Stages 1-3 religious education

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
•Students recognise and name features of religious life and practice. •They can recall religious stories and recognise symbols and other verbal and visual forms of religious expression.	•Students describe why aspects of religion are important to some people and can talk about similarities in religions. •They retell religious stories and suggest meanings for religious actions and symbols. •They talk about how religion is expressed in different ways.	•Students describe some key features of religions, recognising similarities and differences. •They make links between beliefs and sources, including religious stories and sacred texts. •They describe some forms of religious expression.	•Students describe and show understanding of sources, practices, beliefs, ideas, feelings, experiences and make links between them. •They describe some similarities and differences both within and between religions. •They describe the impact of religion on people's lives. •They suggest meanings for a range of forms of religious expression.
Level 5	**Level 6**	**Level 7**	**Level 8**
•Students explain the impact of beliefs on individuals and communities. •They describe why people belong to religions. •They understand that similarities and differences illustrate distinctive beliefs within and between religions and suggest possible reasons for this. •They explain how religious sources are used to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues, recognising diversity in forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression, within and between religions.	•Students give informed accounts of religions and beliefs, explaining the reasons for diversity within and between them. •They explain why the impact of religions and beliefs on individuals, communities and societies vary. •They interpret sources and arguments, explaining the reasons that are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues. •They interpret the significance of different forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.	•Students discuss their understanding of a range of religions and beliefs. •They analyse issues, values and questions of meaning and truth. They account for the influence of history and culture on aspects of religious life and practice. •They explain why the consequences of belonging to a faith are not the same for all people within the same religion or tradition. •They use of a variety of sources, evidence and forms of expression to research religion, spirituality and ethics.	•Students analyse a range of religions and beliefs. •They put interpretations of religion into context, referring to historical, cultural, social and philosophical ideas. •They critically evaluate the impact of religions and beliefs on differing communities and societies. •They analyse differing interpretations of religious, spiritual and moral sources, using some of the principal methods by which religion, spirituality and ethics are studied. •They interpret and evaluate varied forms of religious, spiritual and moral expression.