



Educate
Together

LEARN TOGETHER
ETHICAL
EDUCATION
CURRICULUM



Educate
Together

Learn Together

**Ethical Education Curriculum
2022**

An Ethical
Approach to the
Environment

Equality and
Justice

Values and Ethical
Perspectives

Belief Systems



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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Ethical Education in the Wider Context	2
Strands of the Learn Together Curriculum	3
Relationship to the Primary Curriculum Framework	3
Ethical Education at Second-Level	5
Aims of the Learn Together Curriculum	6
Stage 1: Junior and Senior Infants	9
Stage 2: 1st and 2nd Class	20
Stages 3 and 4: An Ethical Approach to the Environment	32
Stages 3 and 4: Equality and Justice	35
Stages 3 and 4: Values and Ethical Perspectives	37
Stages 3 and 4: Belief Systems	38
References	56



Introduction

Learn Together Ethical Education Curriculum

Ethical Education is defined as education that enlightens, challenges and broadens our perspective of the world. It encourages reflection and engagement with local and global issues and emphasises a shared responsibility for ensuring that equality and human rights are extended to all. Ethical Education invites pupils and teachers to engage with issues and problems facing society and aims to develop the skills of critical thinking, discussion and debate.

Educate Together's Charter affirms that children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds have a right to an education that respects their individual identity whilst exploring the different values and traditions of the world in which they live. The Learn Together curriculum enables teachers to enact this vision by providing a comprehensive roadmap for Ethical Education in equality-based primary schools.

Educate Together is working towards a future in which all people have access to an excellent education that is inclusive of all, irrespective of belief system, race, ethnicity, class, culture, gender, language, and ability.

charter

EDUCATE TOGETHER AFFIRMS THAT:

Equality-based schools have the right to be treated no differently than other schools within Irish educational system, in accordance with their needs and their identity.	Children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds have a right to an education that respects their individual identity whilst exploring the different values and traditions of the world in which they live.	Parents are entitled to participate actively in decisions that affect the education of their children. In particular, they have the right to decide what kind of school reflects their conscience and lawful preference.
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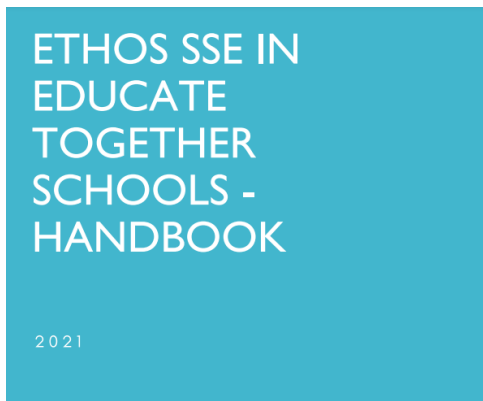
and COMMITS ITSELF TO:

1 Support the establishment of schools, which are:

Equality-based i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected.	Child-centred in their approach to education.	Democratically run with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers.
Co-educational and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities & opportunities.		

In areas where the demand for such a school exists,

2 Promote fuller awareness and recognition of the identity of the equality-based sector at all levels in Irish society and abroad.	3 Participate in appropriate structures and activities concerned with the future development of education in Ireland and abroad.
4 Promote a future where equality-based education will be as freely available to parents as any other educational option they may choose.	



Educate Together's [ethos standards](#) similarly emphasise the importance of Ethical Education, and include it as one of the six domains for evaluating systems, processes and practices as part of the school self-evaluation process. Read more about the standards and statements of effective practice [here](#).





Ethical Education in the Wider Context



Human Rights Framework

The Educate Together ethos and the Learn Together curriculum are underpinned by a human rights framework. According to Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011), this approach encompasses education:

- (a) About human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection.
- (b) Through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners.
- (c) For human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.


For this approach to work in practice, teachers and children need to engage with the skills to 'promote, defend and apply' human rights. Some examples of these skills include "conflict resolution, cooperation, empathy, critical reflection, activism, and the ability to analyse situations in moral terms" (Struthers, 2015, p. 60).

The children's lives and experiences should form part of informal and formal lessons and discussions about human rights. This approach affirms children's ethnic, cultural, racial, sexual, and linguistic identities, and empowers them as citizens both in the school and in larger society (Banks, 2010). Waldron et al. (2011) remind us that human rights education should be "integrated across the curriculum, informing all areas of school life and culture, including methodologies, classroom management, school governance and relations" (p. 16).

Sustainable Development Goals



The Learn Together Curriculum also works towards achieving Goal 4 'Quality Education' of the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]. The curriculum directly underpins teaching that will 'ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development'.

Where applicable, links to relevant Sustainable Development Goals have been outlined throughout the curriculum and are illustrated with the following symbol: 



Strands of the Learn Together Curriculum

The four Strands of the Learn Together curriculum are:



Spiral Approach

The curriculum is spiral in nature, with similar themes explored and developed from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. Planning by schools and teachers will help to ensure that pupils experience continuity and progression throughout the curriculum while undue repetition or significant gaps are avoided. A menu approach is also adopted from 3rd to 6th Class, enabling teachers to select content that aligns with their pupils' interests and school contexts. The Belief Systems strand utilises a conceptual enquiry approach to exploring beliefs, enabling child-led learning.

Relationship to the Primary Curriculum Framework

Patron's Programme

A patron's programme contributes to children's development and sense of identity and supports their connection to their community and wider society (NCCA, 2023). This is the Learn Together curriculum for Educate Together schools. The framework outlines the discrete teaching time allocated to such programmes:

- Stage 1: 1 hour and 40 minutes
- Stages 2 to 4: 2 hours

Changes in Terminology

To align with the terminology in the Framework and reflect the emphasis on students' experiences of learning, the following changes in terminology have been adopted in the Learn Together curriculum:





Structure

The structure of the Learn Together curriculum reflects developments in the ongoing consultation process for a new primary curriculum and as such is structured in the following manner:

- Junior and Senior Infants: Stage 1
- First and Second Class: Stage 2
- Third and Fourth Class: Stage 3
- Fifth and Sixth Class: Stage 4

The Primary Curriculum Framework promotes an integrated approach throughout the primary school system. In Stages 1 and 2, curricular areas are interrelated and overlap. The curriculum areas support an integrated approach to teaching and learning across a broad range of subjects. Learning in Stages 3 and 4 builds on this strong foundation while continuing to provide opportunities for integration across curricular areas.

Key Competencies

While the Learn Together curriculum promotes all key competencies of the Primary Curriculum Framework, it particularly supports the development of:

- Being an active citizen
- Being an active learner
- Being well
- Being a communicator and using language



Figure 1: Key Competencies of the Primary Curriculum Framework.

Time Allocation for Each Strand

In line with the proposed time allocation for patrons' curricula in the Primary Curriculum Framework, the following table is a rough guide of how much time should be spent on each theme or element:

Stage 1: Junior and Senior Infants	Stage 2: 1st and 2nd Class	Stage 3: 3rd Class	Stage 3: 4th Class	Stage 4: 5th Class	Stage 4: 6th Class
8 themes per year	8 themes per year	16 elements per year	17 elements per year	16 elements per year	17 elements per year
Approximately 18 days on each theme	Approximately 18 days on each theme	Approximately 9 days on each element.	Approximately 8 days on each element.	Approximately 9 days on each element.	Approximately 8 days on each element.



Ethical Education at Second-Level

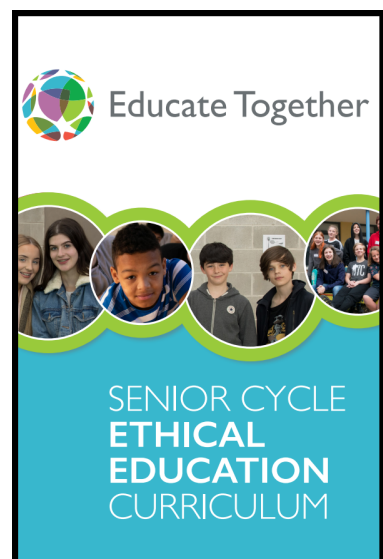
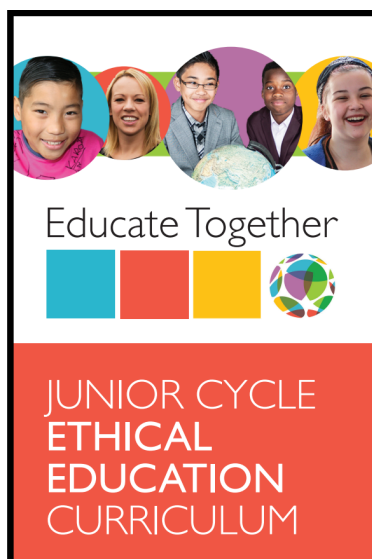
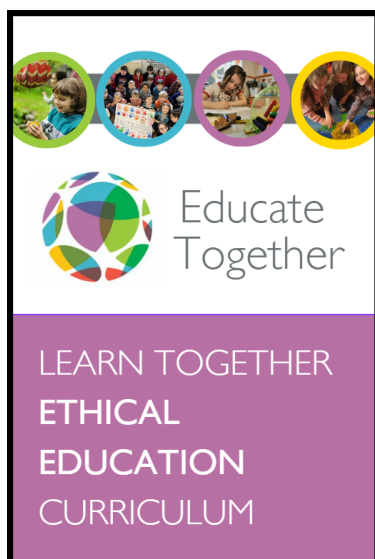
Educate Together schools provide Ethical Education from Junior Infants in Primary to Sixth Year in Second-Level schools. Many Sixth Class pupils will transition into an Educate Together second-level schools where they will have access to the Junior and Senior Cycle Ethical Education curricula.

Junior Cycle Ethical Education Curriculum Strands	Senior Cycle Ethical Education Curriculum Strands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Making Moral and Ethical Decisions • Beliefs and Worldviews • Different Teachings and Perspectives • Diversity in Ireland • Migration • Power and Participation • Gender Equality • Global Citizenship Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values, Assumptions and Action • Identity, Inclusion and Diversity • Pleasure, Purpose and the Meaning of Life • Power and Privilege • Justice

The content and learning outcomes of Stages 3 and 4 of the Learn Together curriculum develops knowledge, awareness and understanding of key issues that will be developed further at Junior Cycle.

Ethical Education from 4 - 18

2022 marked a significant milestone for the provision of Ethical Education in Ireland with the formal adoption of the Senior Cycle Ethical Education curriculum. Ethical Education is now taught from ages 4 - 18 in Educate Together schools.





Aims of the Learn Together Curriculum

The Learn Together curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- Become self-aware, reflective individuals with a secure sense of belonging and identity.
- Develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will facilitate them to live as ethical people who are empathetic, socially aware and committed to democratic principles and values, global citizenship, and equality.
- Develop and use critical thinking skills that will facilitate them to critique their world and empower them to give reasoned explanations for their opinions, decisions and actions.
- Recognise their role as active members of a democratic society with the potential to take action that will lead to positive change.
- Recognise the impact of the climate crisis and their role as active members of a democratic society with the potential to take action that will lead to positive change.
- Develop ethical principles in relation to human rights, equality and justice, and apply these principles to their daily lives.
- Become familiar with the tenets and beliefs of the major religions and rational understandings of the world.
- Relate this learning to their individual experience in the context of their local, national and global community.





Aims of an Ethical Approach to the Environment Strand

Pupils will be enabled to:

- Develop a knowledge, understanding and respect for the natural environment and an appreciation of its fragility and vulnerability.
- Explore the interdependence of life and the impact of over-consumption on the planet.
- Recognise the importance of active citizenship in attempting to redress the impact of human over-consumption on the environment.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the urgency needed to protect the environment for present and future life on the planet.



Aims of the Equality and Justice Strand

Pupils will be enabled to:

- Develop a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of issues relating to human rights, equality, culture, diversity, social justice and social inclusiveness.
- Develop a critical way of being, fostering questioning, analysis and open engagement with ethical and social justice issues.
- Feel empowered to become informed, ethical and active citizens.





Aims of the Values and Ethical Perspectives Strand



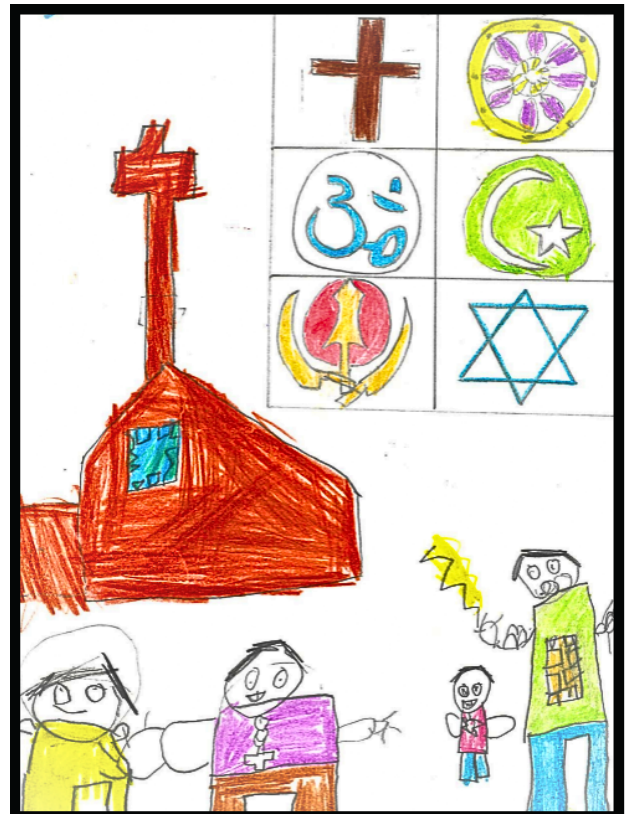
Pupils will be enabled to:

- Develop a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of right and wrong and a heightened awareness of social, ethical, and moral standards through reflection on life itself.
- Learn to explore their own identities and in doing so, strengthen and enhance their self-worth and self-esteem.
- Explore, understand and identify appropriate responses to the multitude and richness of human emotions.
- Identify values integral to personal development which can inform ethical decisions.
- Engage in philosophical discussion and enquiry.

Aims of the Belief Systems Strand

Pupils will be enabled to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the richness of belief systems and worldviews, both religious and secular, and relate these to the human experience and day-to-day life.
- Develop an understanding of the right to hold and practise a belief or worldview and to change that belief at any time.
- Develop their knowledge of conceptual understandings as they relate to religious and secular beliefs.
- Relate aspects of religious and secular beliefs to individual experience, leading to enhanced mutual understandings.
- Develop an understanding that beliefs and the practice of beliefs can vary from culture to culture and individual to individual.





Stage I

Junior and Senior Infants

In Stage I, Ethical Education is taught using a thematic approach, encompassing four strands.

The themes reflect all four strands and eight themes are taught per year. While it is up to each school's discretion to choose themes, please refer to the sample whole school plan in the Support Materials for an example of what this might look like in practice. It can be argued that all themes relate to all four strands. Some links between strands are highlighted in the table below.

Themes	An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Equality and Justice	Values and Ethical Perspectives	Belief Systems
We Are All Different			✓	
Family		✓	✓	
Values	✓	✓	✓	
Feelings			✓	
Philosophy for / with Children			✓	
Our Environment	✓			
Exploring the Natural World	✓		✓	
Introducing Democracy and Democratic Practices	✓	✓	✓	
Fairness	✓	✓	✓	
Food	✓		✓	
Making a Difference	✓	✓	✓	



Themes	An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Equality and Justice	Values and Ethical Perspectives	Belief Systems
We Can Make a Difference	✓	✓	✓	
Remembering				✓
Love				✓
Special Books				✓
Seasons				✓

Stage I: Learning Outcomes

We Are All Different
<p>The pupils will be enabled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify their own unique physical traits e.g. skin, eye or hair colour, height, etc.• Identify their own abilities and talents.• Articulate their character traits such as I am fun, I am kind, I am generous, sometimes I am sad and sometimes I make mistakes.• Demonstrate an understanding that individuals have many facets of identity and that these may change over time e.g. class member, daughter / son / child, friend, dancer, artist, athlete, GAA player, pet owner etc.• Demonstrate an understanding that everyone is different and that difference is a powerful and positive attribute.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Family

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Explore the concept of family and family stories through the affirmation of their own and other family structures including
 - families with foster children
 - blended families: families with children from previous relationships who now live together
 - families with female and male parents
 - families with a single parent
 - families with same-sex-parents
 - families headed by grandparent(s) or other relative(s)
 - families with adopted children
- Identify times when families come together to talk, eat, or exercise.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the diversity of family types within the class and school.
- Engage in discussion around the joy and wonder of new life e.g. siblings, animals, pets, plants.

Values

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of values such as respect, kindness, co-operation and responsibility.
- Discuss the meanings of these values.
- Identify these values in stories, songs, poems and scenarios.
- Identify specific examples of these values within the classroom and school setting.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Feelings

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of feelings such as sadness, happiness, anger, excitement and disappointment.
- Identify and recognise these feelings in stories and scenarios.
- Demonstrate an understanding that all feelings are a normal part of the human experience.
- Articulate how they might respond appropriately when feelings become overwhelming.
- Demonstrate an understanding that feelings are not permanent but transient.

Philosophy for / with Children

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify the benefits of reflection and wondering.
- Develop and apply critical thinking skills.
- Use and experience the language of dialogue e.g. agree / disagree, maybe / I wonder if?
- Give reasons for their opinions / perspectives.

Philosophy for / with Children has been included as a theme to ensure it is taught at least once per stage. However, it is recommended that Philosophy for / with Children is taught at every class level. Please consult the Support Materials for further guidance.

Our Environment

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Participate in nature walks to explore their school's immediate environment.
- Differentiate between natural and human-made materials.
- Engage in research and discussion around environmental issues in their locality such as plastic pollution or litter.
- Identify and communicate strategies to address the environmental issues in their locality such as eliminating single-use plastic in the classroom.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of composting and recycling.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Exploring the Natural World

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Carry out an exploration of the natural world around them by engaging in research about a bird / animal / plant / tree or another form of life in their environment.
- Participate in an environmental audit of their school or local area by going on an organised walk considering the sights and sounds experienced and the names of trees, plants and flowers etc.
- Articulate the importance of caring for nature and the positive benefits of interacting with the natural world such as excitement of seeing wildlife, walking through nature, listening to bird song, exploring rock pools etc.

Introducing Democracy and Democratic Practices

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Discuss the importance of voicing opinions and views.
- Role play the implications of one or two voices dominating the conversation.
- Articulate the difference between hearing and listening.
- Discuss the benefits of group members listening to one another.
- Experience talks, presentations, speeches from members / prospective members of the Student Council / Student Union / Student Dáil.
- Use and experience the language of dialogue e.g. I agree / I disagree, Why is this so / Maybe / I wonder if?
- Experience regular opportunities to engage in class votes.
- Demonstrate an understanding that it's possible to disagree with an opinion while still respecting the individual expressing that opinion.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Fairness

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Justify why something is 'fair' or 'unfair' in stories and scenarios.
- Engage in role play and other activities which explore the concepts of 'fair' and 'unfair'.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the nuances and grey areas that sometimes exist between what is 'fair' and 'unfair'.

Food

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of the benefits of sharing food while interacting with others.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of how the anticipation of a meal can enhance the overall experience.
- Discuss the benefits of eating slowly and mindfully for positive mental and physical health.
- Articulate why it is important not to waste food and how to minimise food waste.
- Investigate how different cultures and traditions have their own culinary styles and approaches to food e.g. use of spices, use of chopsticks etc.
- Explore how food can be used to mark special occasions including occasions associated with beliefs.



Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Making a Difference

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Recall the contribution an individual or group in the school community made in relation to a specific issue.
- Identify the circumstances which necessitated this contribution.
- Identify the practical benefits of this contribution.
- Engage in discussion with this individual or group about their motivations for instigating change and the process involved in bringing those changes about.

Examples of small, practical and visual initiatives could include:

- an addition to playground activities
- Student Council charitable fundraisers
- spring clean around the school
- planting flowers

We Can Make a Difference

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify an area of their classroom which could be improved in some way.
- Engage in discussion on how this area could be improved.
- Identify the desired outcome(s) of this intervention.
- Plan and engage in activities to undertake this intervention.
- Engage in subsequent discussion on the success of the intervention or if further action is needed.

Examples of small, practical and visual initiatives could include:

- changing layout of classroom library
- moving library
- changing formation of desks
- planting seeds to brighten up windowsill
- reorganising recycling bins

Stage I: Learning Outcomes

The following themes will adopt a conceptual enquiry approach focusing on one belief system: Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Atheism / Agnosticism / Humanism, Christianity, Islam or Judaism. There are eight themes that relate to Belief Systems from Junior Infants to Second Class. Each theme must be allocated to one of the seven belief systems and all seven must be taught from Junior Infants to Second Class.

There are five stages in the conceptual enquiry approach. Learning outcomes are presented under each stage. Please note that under the 'contextualise' stage of the conceptual enquiry approach, visits to places of worship, presentations from members of belief communities, exploration of celebrations etc. are encouraged.

Remembering

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept)

- Recall events, holidays or people that are significant to them.
- Identify what helps us to remember (mementos, photographs, books, etc.)

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours)

- Articulate why we like to remember and why it is important to remember.
- Acknowledge that we all don't remember in the same way (may not remember same event or may not remember same event in the same way).
- Acknowledge that memories may affect feelings (by invoking sadness / happiness) and actions (by revisiting places or talking about people / events).

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept)

- Articulate that memories may be triggered unexpectedly by a smell or taste.
- Articulate that sometimes we have no control over what we remember.
- Explain what it means to remember.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system)

- Identify connections that exist between memory and a religious artefact / symbol that represents a significant event (e.g. stories, parables, historical accounts).
- Explore the significance of a religious artefact / symbol for some members of the belief system.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept)

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the reasons some members of the belief system consider it important to remember significant stories / events.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on whether it is important or beneficial to remember events or people.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Love

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify when and how they feel loved.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify when and how they express love to others.
- Identify different types of love such as love for people, food, sport, pets or toys. (Note: some children may name love for god).
- Articulate the feelings and actions evoked by love from and for others.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Identify that some religious and secular celebrations and rites of passage are associated with love, such as the naming of a child or marriage.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify a celebration in one belief system which features expressions of love, such as Wesak (love for memory of Buddha when celebrating his birthday), Christmas (love of parents for child; love of God for world) or Diwali (love between Rama and Sita).
- Recall a story of celebration.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on why it is important for members of the belief system to acknowledge love in the chosen celebration.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion about whether celebrations or rites of passage would change if love was not a key feature.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Special Books

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify their favourite book(s) and books that have significant meaning for them.
- Articulate the reasons for this choice.
- Identify that books can be special to people for different reasons.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify circumstances and times when they like to look at / read a book by themselves and when they like to have a book read to them.
- Name feelings and actions that are brought about when they interact with special book.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Identify reasons that make some books special.
- Identify how the status of some books can be elevated to become special (e.g. signed by author, have a personal message, receive a religious blessing, decorated with a special cover).

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify a special book associated with one belief system.
- Recall why the book is special for many members of the belief system.
- Articulate whether there are special conditions associated with handling this book or keeping it safe.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance to belief community of reading texts either individually or within a community setting.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on whether it's important that special books are treated with respect.

Stage I: Learning Outcomes



Seasons

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept)

- Identify seasons and months of the year.
- Name their favourite season and give reasons for their answer.
- Name the month / season when significant (personal) events occur in their lives.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours)

- Identify special events and occasions during the year.
- Discuss how some celebrations are fixed and remain the same every year and others are not.
- Identify feelings and actions these events and occasions bring about.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept)

- Articulate the role seasons play in the year and calendar (marking the passing of time).

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system)

- Discover two historic markers of seasonal change (solstice and equinox) and identify when they take place during the year.
- Recall the identifying features of solstices and equinoxes.
- Explore how solstices and equinoxes are related to light and dark.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept)

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Identify examples of solstices and equinoxes.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of having 7 days in a week, 2 days in a weekend, 12 months in a year, summer holidays during July and August.



Stage 2

First and Second Class

In Stage 2, Ethical Education is taught using a thematic approach, encompassing four strands.

The themes reflect all four strands and eight themes are taught per year. While it is up to each school's discretion to choose themes, please refer to the sample whole school plan in the Support Materials for an example of what this might look like in practice. It can be argued that all themes relate to all four strands. Some links between strands are highlighted in the table below.

Themes	An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Equality and Justice	Values and Ethical Perspectives	Belief Systems
Our Educate Together School	✓	✓	✓	
We Are All Different		✓	✓	✓
Values	✓	✓	✓	✓
Feelings			✓	
Philosophy for / with Children			✓	
Our Environment	✓	✓		
Exploring the Natural World	✓		✓	
Human Rights	✓	✓	✓	
Communication and the Democratic Process	✓	✓	✓	
Food	✓		✓	✓
Making a Difference	✓	✓	✓	
We Can Make a Difference	✓	✓	✓	



Themes	An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Equality and Justice	Values and Ethical Perspectives	Belief Systems
Celebrating				✓
Special Clothes / Dress				✓
Growing and Changing				✓
Giving Things Up				✓

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes

Our Educate Together School

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history of their school and the origins of the Educate Together movement.
- Demonstrate a pride in belonging to their school community by researching school teams, school accomplishments and school contributions to the local community.
- Invite the Student Council / Student Union / Student Dáil or Green School Committee to present to the class.

We Are All Different

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify examples of difference within the class e.g. siblings / no siblings, pets / no pets etc.
- Identify examples of shared similarities within the class e.g. interests, number of siblings, etc.
- Explore why difference is a positive attribute.
- Demonstrate an understanding of equity i.e. everyone deserves to be given what they need to succeed which may vary due to individual circumstances.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Values

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify when and how values are expressed in the classroom and school such as empathy, peace and patience.
- Identify a selection of values in stories, scenarios and in their lived experiences.
- Engage in creative work around these values such as creative writing, music and visual arts.
- Contribute to the development of a classroom charter.

Feelings

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Name and describe feelings such as loneliness, enjoyment, jealousy, pride, frustration.
- Demonstrate an understanding that all feelings are a normal part of the human experience.
- Demonstrate an understanding that all feelings are transient e.g. as Gaeilge feelings are upon and not in us i.e. tá brón orm, tá áthas orm etc.
- Identify appropriate responses to these feelings.
- Engage in role play around these feelings.
- Engage in creative work around these feelings such as creative writing, music or visual arts.

Philosophy for / with Children

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify the benefits of reflection and wondering.
- Develop and apply critical thinking skills.
- Use and experience the language of dialogue e.g. agree / disagree, maybe / I wonder if ?
- Give reasons for their opinions / perspectives.

Philosophy for / with Children has been included as a theme to ensure it is taught at least once per stage. However, it is recommended that Philosophy for / with Children is taught at every class level.

Please consult the Support Materials for further guidance.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Our Environment

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Play an active role in maintaining a positive classroom environment by tidying up, picking up stray materials on the classroom floor, stacking chairs, wiping tables etc.
- Where possible, meet with the cleaning staff to
 - explore how they can contribute to a tidy classroom environment.
 - demonstrate respect for their work.
- Identify strategies to reduce single-use plastic in the classroom, school and home environments.
- Promote the importance of composting and recycling.
- Present on an environmental issue at a school assembly.
- Examine the environmental impacts of different modes of transportation such as walking, cycling, public transport, cars.
- Engage in active citizenship e.g. lobbying local businesses around plastic packaging, promoting 'walking buses' etc.

Exploring the Natural World

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Investigate the life cycle of an animal of their choice.
- Discuss and debate why it is that some animals resonate with us more than others and the implications for species considered 'cute' and 'not cute'.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how we should care for the natural world, such as planting flowers that attract pollinators and / or investigating the importance of native trees.
- Explore the concept of interdependence by examining food chains and / or eco-systems.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Human Rights

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Distinguish between needs and wants.
- Identify that we all have human rights related to everyday life such as the right to play, shelter, education, food, clothing and a safe home.
- Explore the importance of human rights and how they belong to everyone regardless of ethnic background, religious or secular belief, gender, sexual orientation, (dis) ability etc.
- Explore stories and scenarios that bring human rights to life.

Human rights are inalienable and exist independently of responsibilities. Rights should not be contingent on behaving in ways considered appropriate by authority figures. Please see the Support Materials for further guidance.

Communication and the Democratic Process

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Explore how respect can be demonstrated through words and gestures e.g. saying sorry and thank you, smiling, waving, moving aside where appropriate etc.
- Engage in role plays and written activities that involve respectful communication e.g. inviting someone to join a game, expressing gratitude etc.
- Identify and explore different forms of communication e.g. verbal, non-verbal, written, digital, through music, visual arts etc.
- Discuss the importance of voicing opinions and views respectfully.
- Use the language of dialogue e.g. I agree / disagree with ... because ...
- Experience regular opportunities to express opinions and preferences which are acted upon where appropriate.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of democratic bodies within the school e.g. the Student Council / Student Union / Student Dáil, Active Flag Committee, Creative Schools Committee, Green School Committee etc.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Food

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Articulate the importance of not wasting food.
- Investigate the nutritional benefits of processed versus unprocessed foods.
- Investigate examples of food packaging which contribute to plastic waste and explore solutions to such waste e.g. buying loose items where possible, use of tote bags etc.

The learning outcomes of the following two themes are also outlined for Stage 1. At Stage 2, it is recommended that efforts are made to learn about and engage in different initiatives.

Making a Difference

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Recall the contribution an individual or group in the school community made in relation to a specific issue.
- Identify the circumstances which necessitated this contribution.
- Identify the practical benefits of this contribution.
- Engage in discussion with this individual or group about their motivations for instigating change and the process involved in bringing those changes about.

Examples of small, practical and visual initiatives include:

- an addition to playground activities
- Student Council charitable fundraisers
- spring clean around the school
- planting flowers.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes

We Can Make a Difference

The pupils will be enabled to:

- Identify an area of their classroom which could be improved in some way.
- Engage in discussion on how this area could be improved.
- Identify the desired outcome(s) of this intervention.
- Plan and engage in activities to undertake this intervention.
- Engage in subsequent discussion on the success of the intervention or if further action is needed.

Examples include:

- changing layout of classroom library
- moving library
- changing formation of desks
- planting seeds to brighten up windowsill
- reorganising recycling bins.



Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



The following themes will adopt a conceptual enquiry approach focusing on one belief system: Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Atheism / Agnosticism / Humanism, Christianity, Islam or Judaism. There are eight themes that relate to Belief Systems from Junior Infants to Second Class. Each theme must be allocated to one of the seven belief systems and all seven must be taught from Junior Infants to Second Class.

There are five stages in the conceptual enquiry approach. Learning outcomes are presented under each stage. Please note that under the 'contextualise' stage of the conceptual enquiry approach, visits to places of worship, presentations from members of belief communities, exploration of celebrations etc. are encouraged.

Celebrating

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify celebrations that are meaningful to them such as birthdays, or family occasions.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify the reasons behind these celebrations and the feelings these celebrations may evoke such as happiness, joy, excitement, a sense of anticipation.
- Identify common elements of celebrations, such as food, music, games, special clothes.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Articulate reasons why celebrations are important and meaningful and why celebrating regularly or all the time would have its disadvantages.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify a celebration from one belief system and explore how it is celebrated.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of above celebration(s) to many members of the belief system

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the implications of not having or marking celebration(s).

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Special Clothes / Dress

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify items of clothing for different types of weather.
- Identify items of clothing for different occasions such as school, weekend, bed, beach, and sporting activities.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Discuss the reasons why we might change how we dress according to different occasions and circumstances.
- Articulate the feelings different types of clothing may evoke such as warmth, security or discomfort.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss how some types of clothes have changed over time and other clothes have not.
- Identify individuals in the community who wear a particular form of dress or uniform such as Gardaí, people at food counter, painters or some members of particular belief systems.
- Articulate that some items of clothing or ways of dressing can hold a particular meaning for people.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify individuals from one belief system who wear may wear particular form of dress – day to day and / or visiting a place of worship.
- Identify leaders in belief system who wear particular form of dress.
- Identify one common distinctive form of clothing in belief system e.g. head covering, robes, scarfs.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of wearing distinctive dress for members of the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the value of special clothing for individuals and groups.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Growing and Changing

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept)

- Identify how much they have grown since birth.
- Discuss how their likes / dislikes have changed over the years.
- discuss how their family circumstances have changed e.g. new sibling(s), new home, new pet.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours)

- Identify any changes that have occurred within the school community.
- Discuss how change can affect feelings e.g. excitement, insecurity, apprehension, anticipation, happiness.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept)

- Identify any changes within local community over the past number of years e.g. new supermarket, road etc.
- Discuss whether change is always positive.
- Discuss whether it's possible to prevent change and whether change is always commensurate with progress.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system)

- Identify any changes that occur within the practice of one belief system e.g. receiving communion, wearing a headscarf, fasting for Ramadan etc.
- Examine changes which have occurred within one belief system e.g., change of leader or place of worship.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept)

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Discuss the benefits of change for members of the belief system e.g. more responsibility.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the types of changes that occur as we grow and the importance of such changes for members of the belief system e.g. rites of passage.

Stage 2: Learning Outcomes



Giving Things Up

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept)

- Identify times when they had to give up something or go without something such as access to screens / tv / online games or not being able to play due to an injury.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours)

- Articulate how they felt and acted during this time e.g. impatient, occupied their time differently, anticipated the return of the item / event, appreciated it more upon its return.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept)

- Discuss the different reasons why people give things up.
- Articulate the meaning of giving things up.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system)

- Identify the concept of sacrifice or 'giving things up' in one belief system.
- Listen to and discuss stories and experiences of people who make sacrifices or give something up for religious reasons.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept)

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of giving things up for members of a belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on whether giving something up or going without something for a time makes us more appreciative of or grateful for it.



Stages 3 and 4

Third to Sixth Class

Ethical Education is taught by strand, with opportunities for linkage and integration into other curricular areas. Content is presented by element rather than class grouping to illustrate the spiral nature of the curriculum.






Strand	Element
An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Environmental Issues Interdependence of Life Examples of Environmental Initiatives Environmental Activism
Equality and Justice	Democratic Process Human Rights and Global Citizenship Equality Issues Examples of Equality-based Initiatives Equality-based Activism
Values and Ethical Perspectives	Ethical Issues and Dilemmas Values and Dialogue Communication Philosophy for / with Children
Belief Systems	3rd Class: Belonging, Symbolism, Pilgrimage 4th Class: Sacred, Ritual, Prophecy, Faith 5th Class: Trinity (Christianity), Torah (Judaism), Rationalism (Atheism, Agnosticism and Humanism) 6th Class: Nirvana (Buddhism), The Khalsa (Sikhism), Brahman (Hinduism), and Ummah (Islam)

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

An Ethical Approach to the Environment



The pupils will be enabled to:





















Element	3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class	6th Class
Environmental Issues	<p>Engage in research in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single-use plastics. • micro-plastics e.g. glitter. • introduced flora e.g. rhododendron and fauna e.g. mink. • a contemporary environmental issue. <p>Critically examine the impact of the above on life on land and / or sea.</p>	<p>Engage in research in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cutting down of hedgerows. • animal welfare impacted by mass production of food. • a contemporary environmental issue. <p>Critically examine the impact of the above on life on land and / or sea.</p>	<p>Engage in research in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extraction of palm oil. • sustainable transport options. • a contemporary environmental issue. <p>Critically examine the impact of the above on life on land and / or sea.</p>	<p>Engage in research in one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fast fashion. • food miles. • a contemporary environmental issue. <p>Critically examine the impact of the above on life on land and / or sea.</p>
	<p>SDGs:</p>     			

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

An Ethical Approach to the Environment



The pupils will be enabled to:


















Element	3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class	6th Class
Interdependence of life	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of how human consumption has impacted on oceans and ocean life e.g. plastic pollution.</p> <p>SDGs: </p>    	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of how human consumption has impacted on bogs and life in and on bogs.</p> <p>SDGs: </p>    	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of how human consumption has impacted on availability of water.</p> <p>SDGs: </p>    	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of how human consumption has impacted on biodiversity i.e. plants and animals.</p> <p>SDGs: </p>    
Examples of Environmental Initiatives	<p>Engage in research on the work and positive impact of a local environmental initiative e.g. community garden, Tidy Town or Cleaner Coast etc.</p>	<p>Engage in research on the work and positive impact of an environmental initiative in another area or county.</p>	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in environmental activism in Ireland, past or present.</p>	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in environmental activism in Ireland, past or present.</p>

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

An Ethical Approach to the Environment

When teaching the following elements, it should be acknowledged that failure to achieve all / any of the stated aims of a particular initiative is a natural component of activism. Change often comes slowly or not at all and success cannot always be objectively measured. There is an integrity to failure – trying to do something is better than doing nothing.

The pupils will be enabled to:





Element	3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class	6th Class
Environmental Activism	<p>Engage in environmental activism by addressing an issue researched in previous elements.</p> <p>Select one from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> oceans and ocean life. single-use plastic. micro-plastics e.g. glitter introduced flora e.g. rhododendron and fauna e.g. mink. a contemporary environmental issue. <p>SDGs: </p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>	<p>Engage in environmental activism by addressing an issue researched in previous elements.</p> <p>Select one from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bogs and life in and on bogs. cutting down of hedgerows. animal welfare impacted by mass production of food. a contemporary environmental issue. <p>SDGs: </p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>	<p>Engage in environmental activism by addressing an issue researched in previous elements.</p> <p>Select one from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability of water. extraction of palm oil sustainable transport options a contemporary environmental issue. <p>SDGs: </p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>	<p>Engage in environmental activism by addressing an issue researched in previous elements.</p> <p>Select one from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> biodiversity fast fashion food miles contemporary environmental issue. <p>SDGs: </p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

Equality and Justice



The pupils will be enabled to:











Element	3rd Class	4th Class	5th Class	6th Class
Democratic Process	Demonstrate an understanding of how the democratic process works within the school by exploring the structures of e.g. the Student Council, Green Flag Committee, Active Flag Committee etc.	Demonstrate an understanding of how the democratic process works locally with specific reference to the role of councillors and local TDs.	Demonstrate an understanding of how the democratic process works nationally, with specific reference to the process of Proportional Representation.	Demonstrate an understanding of how the democratic process works internationally, exploring the history and role of the EU and / or UN.
Human Rights and Global Citizenship	Select and research a number of rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Select and research a number of rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.	Explore what it means to be a global citizen with specific reference to the Sustainable Development Goals.	Explore what it means to be a global citizen with specific reference to the Sustainable Development Goals.
Equality Issues	Engage in research on the meaning of equality by examining the following issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • migration SDGs: 	Engage in research on the meaning of equality by examining the following issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (dis)ability SDGs: 	Engage in research on the meaning of equality by examining the following issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ + SDGs: 	Engage in research on the meaning of equality by examining the following issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • racism SDGs: 

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

Equality and Justice



The pupils will be enabled to:

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Examples of Equality-based Initiatives</p>	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in social justice activism in Ireland, past or present addressing one of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> religion or age <p>SDGs: </p> 	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in social justice activism in Ireland, past or present addressing one of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> family and / or marital status or poverty and homelessness <p>SDGs: </p>  	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in social justice activism in Ireland, past or present addressing the following issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> membership of the Traveller community / Roma communities <p>SDGs: </p> 	<p>Engage in research on the work of a prominent figure or group in social justice activism in Ireland, past or present addressing the following issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gender inequality <p>SDGs: </p>  
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Equality-based Activism</p>	<p>Identify an equality issue locally and engage in activism to address this issue e.g. through awareness raising, letters to local representatives etc.</p>	<p>Identify an equality issue locally and engage in activism to address this issue e.g. through awareness raising, letters to local representatives etc.</p>	<p>Identify an equality issue nationally and engage in activism to address this issue e.g. through awareness raising, letters to national representatives etc.</p>	<p>Identify an equality issue nationally and engage in activism to address this issue e.g. through awareness raising, letters to national representatives etc.</p>

Stages 3 and 4: Learning Outcomes

Values and Ethical Perspectives



The pupils will be enabled to:

Element	3rd and 4th Class	5th and 6th Class
Ethical Issues and Dilemmas	<p>Use critical thinking and reasoning to discuss ethical issues and dilemmas e.g. would you steal a loaf of bread if you were starving?</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding that shades of right and wrong exist.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding that individuals may change their opinion at any time.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding that an individual's personal background can impact how they address ethical issues and dilemmas.</p>	
Values and Dialogue	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of the role values play in our lives e.g. values of the month.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of dialogue and respectful disagreement.</p>	
Communication	<p>Demonstrate an understanding of various forms of communication e.g. verbal, non-verbal, written, digital, communication through the arts etc.</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of ethical behaviour when interacting with others in-person and online.</p>	<p>Implement critical-thinking and reasoning skills in media literacy.</p> <p>Investigate the importance of accessing reliable sources online and in hard copy format.</p>
Philosophy for / with Children	<p>Identify the benefits of reflection and wondering.</p> <p>Develop and apply critical thinking skills.</p> <p>Use and experience the language of dialogue e.g. agree / disagree, maybe / I wonder if?</p> <p>Give reasons for their opinions / perspectives.</p>	

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

3rd Class: Belief Systems



The following elements for Stage 3 will adopt a conceptual enquiry approach focusing on one belief system: Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Atheism / Agnosticism / Humanism, Christianity, Islam or Judaism.

There are five stages in the conceptual enquiry approach. Learning outcomes are presented under each stage. Please note that under the 'contextualise' stage of the conceptual enquiry approach, visits to places of worship, presentations from members of belief communities, exploration of celebrations etc. are encouraged.

Belonging

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify groups to which they belong such as family, class, school, sports club, after school club.
- Articulate how it might be possible to identify a group to which people may belong.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify the benefits of belonging to these clubs and groups and the feelings this sense of belonging may evoke, such as security, safety, acceptance, enjoyment or pride.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss whether it is possible to sometimes belong to a group.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify one belief system to which people belong.
- Identify the ways in which this belief system can nurture a sense of belonging (e.g., ritual and ceremony such as prayer, attendance at place of worship, rites of passage, pilgrimage, ablutions or fasting).

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on how belonging to the belief system affects the lives of the members of this belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a group and whether / why belonging to a particular group might not suit everyone.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

3rd Class: Belief Systems



Symbolism

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept)

- Identify symbols in their own lives and communities, such as the school logo as symbol of community or chicks as a symbol of Spring.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours)

- Identify a symbol that is important to them, such as a memento from a holiday or a book that they read with a family member.
- Articulate the feelings these symbols evoke, such as pride, fun, boredom, or wonder.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept)

- Identify the difference between symbol and sign (a symbol represents or stands for something, a sign informs about something).
- Discuss the meaning of symbols and why they are used.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system)

- Identify an artefact from one belief system which has a symbolic meaning. Examples include: Judaism - Star of David, Islam - star and the crescent moon, Sikhism - the Khanda, Buddhism - the Dharma wheel, Humanism- the Happy Human)
- Discuss the symbolism attributed to that artefact for the members of the belief system.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept)

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of the symbol within the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Explain how they would feel if the symbols that are significant in their own lives could no longer be used.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

3rd Class: Belief Systems



Pilgrimage

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify journeys which they have undertaken or undertake regularly.
- Identify the similarities and differences between these journeys, such as if they are long or short, daily or weekly, regular or irregular, functional or for pleasure.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify well-known walks locally or around Ireland and why they are used.
- Articulate the feelings journeys can evoke such as anticipation, excitement, boredom, exhaustion, hunger, stiffness, satisfaction.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Identify reasons why people embark on walks or long journeys.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify a pilgrimage associated with one belief system.
- Discuss and define the term 'pilgrimage'.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of this pilgrimage to members of the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on whether non-members of the belief system could also embark on this journey and derive meaning from it.
- Engage in debate and discussion on whether all journeys should be as short and direct as possible.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

4th Class: Belief Systems



Ritual

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify daily routines, such as getting up in the morning, going to bed at night, getting ready to play a match, or lunchtime at school.
- Identify everyday actions that are part of these routines, such as brushing teeth when going to bed.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings these routines evoke such as security, boredom, safety, reassurance
- Identify what all these routines have in common (they occur regularly).

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Articulate whether routines are useful or meaningful.
- Define the term 'ritual'.
- Identify and discuss the differences between the terms 'ritual' and 'routine'.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify a ritual practised in one belief system such as prayer, visiting place of worship, ablutions, or fasting.
- Explore how this ritual developed and reasons why it is practised in the belief system.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system).

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of rituals to some members of the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Identify some important rituals in their own lives that they would like to keep and some they would like to change.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

4th Class: Belief Systems



Sacred

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify items and places significant or sacred to them and articulate reasons for this significance.
- Identify items in the classroom, school and locality that are considered significant or sacred and articulate reasons for this significance.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings these items or locations evoke such as happiness or belonging.
- Identify appropriate behaviour while holding or touching someone's sacred item or while in someone's sacred space.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Articulate a definition of the term 'sacred'.
- Articulate the difference between something or somewhere being significant or sacred and something or somewhere being important.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify an artefact or a place in one belief system that is considered sacred.
- Articulate the reasons for this designation.
- Visit a place of worship (online or in person) and identify objects within also considered sacred.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the advantages and disadvantages (to belief system) of having and using items and places considered sacred.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of their personal significant items / locations and whether alternative objects or places could be used instead.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

4th Class: Belief Systems



Prophecy

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify times they made predictions about an event or a person (e.g., who would win a match, what teacher they would have next year, what lunch was in their lunchbox).
- Identify pundits from T.V. or social media who speculate on the results of matches or elections.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings associated with making predictions such as excitement, interest, anticipation, disappointment, or hope.
- Articulate whether predictions are useful or beneficial.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Articulate the role speculation or predictions play in society.
- Identify criteria for trusting those who publicly engage in speculation or punditry.
- Identify criteria for deciding if something is not speculative but based on reliable sources or evidence.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Define the terms 'prophet' and 'prophecy'.
- Identify prophet(s) associated with one belief system. Examples include Muhammad (Islam), Guru Nanak (Sikhism), and Moses (Christianity, Islam, Judaism).
- Identify prophecies associated with this prophet.
- Discuss why or how this individual(s) came to be seen as a prophet.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of prophets and prophecies to the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the differences between predictions and prophecies.

Stage 3: Learning Outcomes

4th Class: Belief Systems

The following element is specifically applicable to a religious belief.

Faith

The pupils will be enabled to:

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify people that they trust or have faith in.
- Discuss times that they trusted a member of their family or a friend.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings associated with trusting people e.g. safe, happy, nervous.

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss how they can demonstrate that they are trustworthy.
- Discuss the differences between trust and faith i.e. trust is within a relationship, faith has broader applications.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify examples of what faith looks like within the context of one belief system.
- Discuss ways in which members of a particular religion can demonstrate their faith.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of faith to members of the belief system.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the differences between faith and trust.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

5th Class: Belief Systems



Trinity: Christianity

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Explore examples of items that have distinct parts, such as an egg which has a yolk, an egg white and a shell, or a shamrock which is one plant with three parts.
- Discuss the different type of relationships they have e.g. sibling, cousin, friend.
- Discuss how one person could have three different types of relationships e.g. teacher, sister, daughter and still be the same person.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify the three parts or forms of The Trinity in Christianity.
- Engage in research in the role and significance of The Trinity in Christianity.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Engage in debate and discussion on the importance of The Trinity to Christians.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on benefits and challenges of believing in the Trinity for Christians.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify the places, items, or people they associate with the concept locally, nationally or internationally.
- Identify the places, items, or people they associate with the concept internationally

Examples include triangles, a triquetra, Trinity College Dublin, trinitarian stained glass windows.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings the concept of the Trinity may evoke for some Christians e.g. safe, confused, surprised, happy.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

5th Class: Belief Systems



Torah: Judaism

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss whether laws are necessary or important.
- Debate and discuss whether some rules can be broken, or whether it's possible to break a rule for a good reason.
- Debate and discuss whether something written on special paper or in a special format is more meaningful or effective than something written on ordinary paper or in digital format.
- Debate and discuss whether stories can impact on rules.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify the Torah e.g. using online videos, photos.
- Engage in research on its components and content.
- Articulate its significance and the significance of it being old, hand-written and untouchable by bare hands.
- Recall the reason why the content of the Torah is significant.
- Discuss the significance of stories and rules in a religious tradition.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Debate and discuss the importance of storing rules and stories about the Jewish faith in the same place.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Engage in debate and discussion on whether stories and rules are helpful in providing guidance for people.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify their favourite books and articulate their reasons for this choice.
- Identify books that are significant to them, such as photo albums, presents etc.
- Identify other books with sets of rules / guidelines, such as rule books for board games, or religious texts.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

5th Class: Belief Systems

Torah: Judaism

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Articulate the feelings favourite and significant books can evoke.
- Discuss whether others would have similar responses to their choice of favourite and significant books.
- Discuss the feelings a rule book or set of rules evokes i.e., security; comfort; annoyance.
- Discuss the impact laws have on society e.g., those passed by the Dáil and those enshrined in Bunreacht na hÉireann.



Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

5th Class: Belief Systems



Rationalism: Atheism, Agnosticism and Humanism

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Investigate examples of cave paintings from around the world.
- Articulate the reasons cave dwellers made these paintings e.g., they were trying to make sense of what they experienced around them, they were trying to capture or celebrate what they experienced around them.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Identify science as a means of interacting with the modern world.
- Discuss the humanist belief that empirical evidence can be trusted above speculation.
- Define atheism, agnosticism, and humanism.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system).

- Debate and discuss the importance of science for humanists, atheists and agnostics.

Without (from children's perspective).

- Debate and discuss the potential benefits and disadvantages of relying solely on empirical evidence.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify the ways in which they interact with the world around them (their senses).
- Discuss whether for them some senses are stronger than others.
- Discuss how using their senses can help inform decision-making.
- Reflect on factors that contribute to decision-making such as rational thought, reasoning skills and emotions.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify sights, sounds, smells, sensations of touch and tastes that they like and dislike and discuss why.
- Explore the difficulty of interacting with the world without the use of their senses.
- Discuss the effects of emotions on the decision-making process.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

6th Class: Belief Systems



Nirvana: Buddhism

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss the concept of internal struggle (a struggle within a person's mind over a problem or question).
- Discuss the feelings and emotions that result from an internal struggle, such as frustration, lack of understanding, disbelief, incredulity.
- Discuss strategies to overcome this struggle.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Recall the story of Siddhattha Gotama, who became the Buddha.
- Engage in research on his life and quest for Nirvana.
- Identify some of the questions the Buddha may have struggled with before reaching Nirvana.
- Discuss the meaning of Nirvana (learning the true nature of everything).

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Debate and discuss the challenges involved in reaching Nirvana.
- Debate and discuss the importance of striving to reach Nirvana for some Buddhists.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Debate and discuss whether it will ever be possible to live in a utopia.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify a time when they encountered an obstacle or challenge and discuss how they overcame it.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify the feelings they experienced when they encountered a challenge or obstacle.
- Explore how feelings can impact how people approach challenges or obstacles.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

6th Class: Belief Systems



The Khalsa (Sikhism)

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Discuss the reasons why people belonging to a group may like to adopt the same hairstyle or clothes or own and / or wear the same items.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Recall the meaning of the Khalsa in Sikhism.
- Engage in research on the significance and symbolism of the 5 Ks.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Recognise the importance of The Khalsa to some members of the Sikh community.
- Discuss the relevance of symbolism to the Sikh community and the importance of outwardly displaying an inner belief.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Debate and discuss the potential benefits and challenges for Sikh's to wear the 5 K's.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify items associated with the concept of Khalsa.
- Identify communities that they belong to, such as school, town, clubs, teams.
- Identify the communities they are part of and whether there are associated clothes, hairstyles or jewellery.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Discuss how being part of a community makes them feel, (pride, comfort, belonging).
- Discuss the reasons why not everyone will like the same hairstyle or clothes or wear the same clothes every day.
- Debate and discuss the messages we may send with our choice of clothes, hairstyle, or jewellery.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

6th Class: Belief Systems



Brahman (Hinduism)

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Define pulse and heart rate.
- Identify the link between pulse and breathing.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Engage in research on Brahman which is said to exist everywhere and in everyone.
- Engage in research on how Brahman can take many forms, the most important being Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Debate and discuss the importance of Brahman to some members of the Hindu faith.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Debate and discuss the role of a guiding leader on people's lives.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify the people [or god(s) / goddess(es)] in their lives that support(s) them and guide(s) their actions.
- Discuss how the people [or god(s) / goddess(es)] supported or guided them in times of need.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Identify how being guided or supported by others [or god(s) / goddess(es)] can impact our feelings and behaviour.

Stage 4: Learning Outcomes

6th Class: Belief Systems

Ummah (Islam)

As part of the conceptual enquiry approach, learning outcomes are presented under the stages involved. Please refer to the Support Materials for further information on the conceptual enquiry approach.

The pupils will be enabled to:

Enquire (children speculate and ask questions about concept).

- Define the concept of community.
- Explore different types of communities.
- Engage in research on the nature of Ummah.

Contextualise (children create connections between concept and belief system).

- Investigate the ways in which Ummah is present in Muslim life, such as the five pillars or distinctive clothing.

Reflect (children reflect on value and importance of concept).

Within (belief system / from viewpoint of member of belief system)

- Debate and discuss the importance of Ummah to some members of the Muslim faith.

Without (from children's perspective)

- Debate and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a community.

Communicate (children reflect on own experiences of concept).

- Identify the types of communities to which they belong, such as families, school, sporting club, religious tradition.
- Identify the items, places and people they associate with the concept of Ummah locally, nationally, or internationally, such as the hijab, the Clonskeagh Mosque or the Kaaba.

Apply (children reflect on how concept affects them and others – impact on feelings and behaviours).

- Discuss the rules of the communities they belong to and how this impacts their feelings, actions or behaviour.



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