



Levels of Attainment in Religious Education
in Catholic Schools and Colleges

Bishops' Conference Department for Catholic Education and Formation

Contents

| Page | |
|-------|--|
| 4 | Foreword |
| 5 | About this booklet |
| 6 | Structure |
| 7 | Using levels of attainment |
| 11 | Religious education through the early learning goals |
| 17 | How to use levels of attainment - a summary |
| 18-19 | Levels of attainment in religious education |
| 20 | Reflection and contemplation |
| 21-27 | Exemplification |
| 28-29 | Scaffold |
| 30 | P Scales |
| 38 | Level portraits |
| 41 | CD: Photocopiable Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'How to use' summaries• P Scale checklists• Exemplifications |
| 42 | Acknowledgments |

Foreword

I welcome the publication of the second edition of *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education* for use in Catholic schools and colleges. This book is published with the agreement of the Bishops' Conference Department for Catholic Education and Formation.

While this book does not allude to the content of Catholic religious education as outlined in the *Curriculum Directory*, 1996, it provides a tool through which pupils' understanding and progression may be measured, and the excellence referred to in our statement of 2000, achieved. In that statement, entitled *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, excellence in religious education was characterised by "a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and of key content, by appropriate methodologies, rigour, richness of resources, achievement of identified outcomes and accurate methods of assessment."

The attainment levels presented here will help teachers in their planning, allowing them to use commercial resources wisely and match those resources to the needs of pupils across the ability and age range. For the first time we have included information on the foundation stage and differentiated performance criteria (P Scales) for pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD).

The pilot undertaken during the writing of this second edition indicated that these levels helped teachers produce clearer outcomes for their work, giving pupils greater clarity in their tasks of 'learning about' and 'learning from' in religious education. Religious education, along with other subjects, also contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Progress in this realm is captured within the 'contemplation and reflection' strand of these levels of attainment.

I thank all who have worked so hard to produce these levels. I thank the pupils and teachers who have allowed us to use their work, and the diocesan religious education advisers who collated the materials. Where pupils work has been reproduced we have followed the convention of correcting the spelling, leaving the syntax intact.

I commend this book and CD to all who are committed to the academic and personal formation of religiously literate children and young people. Through your ministry they will grow in "knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically." Thank you.



+Vincent Nichols
Chairman: Bishops' Conference Department for
Catholic Education and Formation

About this booklet

This booklet is a revision of the *'Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools'* developed by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers.¹ It has been significantly revised and extended and is now issued by the Department for Catholic Education and Formation of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Several factors have prompted the revision. The most important of these has been the experience of teachers and advisers working with the levels of attainment in dioceses and schools across the country. The revision has benefited significantly from that experience. In addition the field of religious education continues to undergo change and development and this revision is in keeping with these developments. Furthermore the revision is an opportunity to present afresh a coherent understanding of the work of religious education in our Catholic schools and colleges. It is hoped and intended that this will benefit not just teachers and pupils² but also parents, governors, priests and bishops, and all who have reason to engage with Catholic education.

In this booklet those familiar with the earlier NBRIA publication will find new material. The two broad attainment targets, 'AT1 Learning about religion' and 'AT2 Learning from religion', remain with some modifications to the strands within them. The strand 'AT2 d: reflection and contemplation' in the NBRIA edition has been removed from the assessment strands in this revised edition in the light of discussions about its place within curriculum religious education and the serious practical difficulties involved in assessing it. It is now presented

as a discrete aspect to provide an indication of aspirations in this field.

New material on the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage and differentiated performance criteria ('P Scales') has been introduced. Some exemplification material is included but, critically, this is linked to the Catholic Education Service (CES) website which will provide further help and exemplification and be a continuing support for advisers and practitioners as they use the levels of attainment to contribute to improving pupils' performance in religious education.

By their nature the levels of attainment are independent of any commercially produced resource and try to provide a generic map through which progress in religious literacy may be assessed. The overall intention therefore remains: 'to support [pupils'] learning by offering an account of educational progression'.³ The attainment targets and levels give a framework which will enable teachers to identify 'clear outcomes and accurate methods of assessment', thus helping to assure the achievement of 'excellence in religious education'.⁴

A website is being established for the further development of examples of good practice in assessment in religious education based on the principles and practice outlined in this booklet.

¹National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, Rejoice Publications, 2000.

²Throughout this publication we have adopted the convention of calling children pupils rather than learners. This is in line with the Church's understanding that a human being can never be defined solely by an attribute.

³National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education*, Rejoice Publications, 2000, p.7.

⁴cf Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, 2000, n.7.

Structure

The booklet contains sections on Using levels of attainment; the four selected areas of learning from the early learning goals; the attainment targets and levels; and P Scales. There is also a presentation of the levels of attainment as 'portraits' of individual levels across the strands, in sequence, giving a more rounded picture of performance at any given level. The image of scaffolding, found on pages 28/29, suggests a way of seeing how all the work of early learning goals, P Scales and the levels of attainment are interlinked⁵. Finally there are 'How to use' summaries on an enclosed CD.

The section on 'Using levels of attainment' addresses the central intention and purposes along with the ways in which they are to be incorporated into the whole sequence of the planning, teaching and learning and the assessment of religious education.

Then we look at religious education in the Foundation Stage which is presented using both the language and structure of the early learning goals, published by the Department for Education and Skills.

The levels of attainment, in the familiar 'Learning about religion' (Knowledge and Understanding) and 'Learning from religion' (Reflection on meaning), are examined next.

As indicated above the strand 'reflection and contemplation' has been removed from the levels of attainment and is here presented as a discrete aspect; it will not be subject to assessment in the same way as the other strands in AT1 and AT2. It is more aspirational, presenting an indication of progression in the abilities of reflection and contemplation which can play such a significant part in the development of pupils in our schools. Finally we introduce P Scales.

Acknowledgments are included at the back of the booklet. You will also find a CD on page 41 which contains summaries of each of the three main sections: early learning goals, levels of attainment, and P Scales. This CD provides a guide to using levels in a simple, photocopiable form for practitioners.

⁵Assessment of attainment in religious education is more of a subtle art than an exact science and the image of the scaffold attempts to catch something of this. The scaffold is the chart of progression in skills that pupils can make working with the subject matter (the 'Church'). Some pupils will be working with early learning goals (primary colours) whilst others will be working with the levels of attainment or P Scales. Not all pupils will reach the same level; some pupils will attain the highest levels whilst others will progress more slowly and with much help and support. Some pupils will attain at the lowest levels but the attainment of all pupils is recognised in the scaffold image.

Using levels of attainment

Assessment

Assessment of pupils' work is a necessary part of the learning process. It involves the making of judgements about attainment, achievement and progress. It has several purposes including the affirmation of attainment and achievement, the necessary recording and reporting of pupil progress and, most importantly, helping the pupil to take the next step in learning. This **assessment for learning** (afl) is the prime purpose of all assessment⁶. However, the levels of attainment are also a measure, a benchmark, of attainment which will provide teachers and others with a measure of **assessment of learning** (aol). This is a more 'criterion-referenced' measure of progress.

The knowledge, understanding and skills to be developed and assessed are presented here in terms of early learning goals (Foundation Stage), the targets, strands and levels, and P Scales.

Through the early learning goals in the Foundation Stage pupils will begin the process of being introduced to religious language, stories, celebrations and practices in the Catholic Christian tradition as well as developing a range of generic skills. This work will be subject to on-going teacher assessment with reference to the early learning goals. We provide examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities, and examples of activities.

The levels of attainment themselves are presented in the familiar form of 'Learning about religion' (Knowledge and Understanding) and 'Learning from religion' (Reflection on meaning).

Finally we present P Scales for the assessment of religious education for pupils with a range of learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD)⁷, whether they are in special schools or in mainstream education. These P Scales provide a chart of progression in religious education for LDD pupils in the age range 3 – 16. They do not inevitably lead into either early learning goals or into level 1 of the levels of attainment, although there is clearly some overlap. Levels P1 - P3 show attainment in common or generic skills whilst levels P4 - P8 show religious education-related attainment.

A 'checklist' approach which can be used with P Scales has been developed to mark the very small incremental steps that often characterise learning at this level.

⁶Much, much more can be learned about assessment for learning from QCA's website www.qca.org.uk

⁷Within this publication, we have not followed the convention of referring to 'learners with learning disabilities and difficulties' but refer to pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties.

The levels of attainment

‘Learning about religion (AT1): this attainment target is about knowledge and understanding of (i) beliefs, teachings and sources; (ii) celebration and ritual; and (iii) social and moral practices and way of life. It includes the skills of enquiry, investigation, analysis, interpretation and evaluation of Catholic Christianity including how the Church relates to other Christian denominations, other religions and world views and to moral education, as well as the study of the philosophical nature and characteristics of religion. It demands an increasing ability to think rigorously and present coherent, informed and detailed arguments using specialist vocabulary.’

‘Learning from religion (AT2): this attainment target, called Reflection on Meaning, is concerned with developing [pupils’] reflection on and response to their own and others’ experiences in the light of their learning about religion. It contains two strands (i) engagement with own and others’ beliefs and values; and (ii) engagement with questions of meaning and purpose... ‘Learning from religion’ develops [pupils’] skills of application, interpretation, evaluation and expression of what they learn about religion. [Pupils] learn to develop and communicate their own ideas, values and attitudes, particularly in relation to questions of belief, meaning, purpose and truth, and commitments. They learn to relate their learning to the wider world.’⁸

Progression

Each strand of the attainment targets consists of eight level descriptors (1 - 8) plus a descriptor for exceptional performance (EP). Whilst both attainment targets, as well as the early learning goals and P Scales, involve the development of a range of skills the pre-eminent skill to be developed is to be able ‘to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and be aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life’⁹.

These targets and levels are designed ‘to support [pupils’] learning by offering an account of educational progression’¹⁰ giving substance to the desire for excellence in religious education which, the bishops have suggested, will be ‘characterised by a clarity of succinct religious learning objectives and ... accurate methods of assessment’¹¹.

The various levels will ‘help teachers to make accurate judgements on pupils’ achievement and attainment, to sum up what pupils have learnt so far and to identify how their pupils can [take] the next step in learning’¹². In doing this they will be using the levels of attainment to fulfil the prime purpose of assessment, i.e., assessment for learning. The levels of attainment cannot and must not be used to make judgements about character or faith; nor do they say all that we would want to say about a pupil.

⁸Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, Department for Catholic Education and Formation, *Religious Education in Catholic Schools & Colleges in England & Wales: 14-19*, 2006, p.13.

⁹Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, 1996, p.10.

¹⁰National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, Rejoice Publications, 2000, p.7.

¹¹Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, 2000, n.7.

¹²National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, *Levels of Attainment in Religious Education*, Rejoice Publications, 2000, p.7.

Incorporating Levels

Planning

To be of real use the levels of attainment, whether early learning goals, P Scales or attainment targets 1 and 2, must be integrated into the whole planning process, informing the teaching and learning mindset that prevails which in turn demands an appreciation of the intended outcomes of religious education. In expressing their learning objectives and outcomes teachers should be aware of the language of level descriptors and use this to inform the way intended outcomes are expressed. For example, in working with AT 1 iii) social and moral practices and way of life and targeting level 3 a teacher might express the intended outcome of the lesson / topic to be that 'pupils will be able to say:-

- why Catholics make the sign of the cross;
- bless themselves;
- genuflect;
- give money to CAFOD;
- tell the truth.

Similarly the focus and method of assessment should be clear from the outset. The critical question to address at the planning stage is 'what must I do, in this topic, to enable a pupil to achieve level x?' Thus assessment is not a trick and is not end-testing but is about providing the opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Gathering Evidence

When gathering evidence teachers will be able to draw on the full range of work produced by pupils. This does not mean that every piece of work has to be collected or assessed, nor that every single learning objective requires individual assessment tasks or activities, although they may at times be appropriate. Rather teachers should focus on the clarity of evidence collected and on making brief telling annotations in relation to significant attainments, incorporating into the evidence-base observations and materials collected as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Evidence which would be appropriate might include:

- staff records based on observations;
- witness statements from other people;
- pupils' written work;
- discussions, proposals and conclusions;
- comments or commentaries from pupils;
- artwork/artefacts created by pupils;
- evaluation of dance/drama/movement;
- photographs, video and audio tapes;
- assessment tasks or activities;
- detailed records of pupils' responses in class;
- more finely graded assessment materials;
- concept maps.

Best-fit

The Westhill project on 'Assessment, Recording and Reporting in RE' suggested that assessment was more of 'a subtle art, not an exact science'.¹³ In a similar way the levels are best-fit descriptions across a range of work that a pupil produces within a given period of time. When used in relation to single pieces of work, the most that can be said is that "given other work of a similar quality, this piece would contribute towards a level x"

Making Judgements

Teachers will be making professional judgements about pupils' performance almost continuously to ensure further learning (af). These judgements will lead to a cumulative judgement about attainment (ao). Working both singly and collaboratively teachers will decide whether a pupils' performance taken as a whole over a period of time has been more one level than another. This is an effective way of clarifying best-fit judgements made on the basis of the normal everyday teaching and learning process and the evidence gathered. Any, indeed all, work produced by the pupil can contribute to this final judgement.

It is worthy of note that achievement/attainment within any level may be described as 'hesitant', 'secure' or 'confident'. When this last stage has been accomplished the pupil is ready to be presented with work from the next higher level.

The process of making judgements about pupil attainment will also provide information for teachers about the quality of the teaching and learning experiences and opportunities they are providing. This in turn will inform decisions about future planning.

A chart of progression

The levels of attainment provide a chart of educational progression. However, progress through the levels of attainment will not be accomplished automatically. They cannot be used to predict how far or how fast individual pupils will progress. They are not tricks to catch out the pupil. They do not imply that we should be assessing everything.

Reinforce good religious education

Addressing the question 'what must I do to enable pupils to achieve a particular level, to demonstrate understanding?' will necessarily promote clearer thinking about the purposes of assessment and their contribution to good religious education. Using the levels of attainment well will help pupils to take the next step in learning. There will be real engagement between the pupil, the teacher and the authentic subject matter of religious education. All this will effectively contribute to achieving the intended outcome of religious education, i.e., 'religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills – appropriate to their age and capacity – to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and be aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life'¹⁴.

Website

A website is being established for the further development of examples of good practice in assessment in religious education based on the principles and practice outlined in this booklet. The website can be accessed at www.cesew.org.uk

¹³The Regional R.E. Centre (Midlands) – Westhill College, *Assessing, Recording and Reporting R.E.*, 1991, p.7.

¹⁴Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, 1996, p.10.

Religious education through the early learning goals

The Foundation Stage describes the phase of a child's education from the age of 3 to the end of reception at the age of 5, published by the Department for Education and Skills. Religious education is statutory for all pupils registered on the school roll. Whilst, therefore, religious education is not a legal requirement for much of the Foundation Stage it will form a valuable part of the educational experience of pupils throughout the key stage.

In Wales the Foundation Phase amalgamates the current early years for children from 3-5 years and Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum for children from 5-7 years, creating a new phase for all children between 3-7 years. The phase is being introduced over a period of time through a rolling programme of pilots and will become statutory for 3-5 in September 2008, 5-6 in 2009 and 6-7 in 2010. Guidance on the provision of religious education and the assessment continuum will be provided following an evaluation of the pilot.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage in England is described through the identification of **early learning goals**. These set out what most pupils should achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. The six areas of learning identified in these goals are:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development;
- creative development.

Religious education can make an active contribution to all these areas but has a particularly important contribution to make to:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- creative development.

During the Foundation Stage pupils may begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people, books, times, places and objects and by visiting the parish church. They will listen to and talk about religious stories. They will be introduced to religious words and use their senses in exploring beliefs, celebrations and practices. They may reflect on their own feelings and experiences, and use their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of God's world. In these ways they will develop their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief as well as accomplishing the early learning goals.

Religious education attainment and the early learning goals

For each of the four areas identified as being important opportunities for religious education we set out below the early learning goals for each area followed by examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities. These are closely related to the strands within the attainment targets.

In each case we provide a possible teaching and learning activity. These activities are indicative only and are included to exemplify particular ways in which religious education-related activities contribute to the early learning goals. Pupils' performance may be assessed and recorded in a variety of ways, e.g., drawing, group mind maps, role-play, dance, puppetry, discussion, and scribing of oral contributions.

The Areas of Learning

Personal, social and emotional development

Early learning goals

Self-confidence and self-esteem

- respond to significant experiences showing a range of feelings when appropriate;
- have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs, views and feelings of others;
- have a developing respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Making relationships

- work as part of a group or class, taking turns, sharing fairly, understanding that there needs to be agreed values and codes of behaviour for groups to work together harmoniously.

Behaviour and self-control

- understand what is right, what is wrong and why;
- consider the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others.

Sense of community

- understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect;
- understand that they can expect others to treat their needs, views, cultures and beliefs with respect.

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- pupils use some stories, including those from the Bible, as a stimulus to reflect on their own feelings and experiences and explore them in various ways;
- using a story as a stimulus, pupils reflect on the words and actions of characters and decide what they would have done in a similar situation;
- using role-play as a stimulus, pupils talk about some of the ways in which people show love and concern for others and why this is important;
- pupils think about issues of right and wrong and how humans help one another.

Example of an activity

In the context of learning about choices, pupils talk about the experience of making choices when they play games, in what they do, the way in which they do it, and the materials they use.

They encounter the story of Jesus telling his friends about choosing. In this story Jesus explains that loving one another brings happiness. They talk about and make pictures of what makes them happy and what makes others happy¹⁴.

Communication, language and literacy

Early learning goals

Language for communication

- listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems;
- extend their vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words.

Language for thinking

- use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences;
- use talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.

Reading

- retell narratives in the correct sequence drawing on language patterns in stories.

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- pupils have opportunities to respond creatively, imaginatively and meaningfully to memorable experiences;
- using a religious celebration as a stimulus, pupils talk about special events associated with the celebration;
- through artefacts, stories and music, pupils learn about important religious celebrations.

Example of an activity

In the context of learning about friends, pupils talk about their own friends; how they make friends and about the ways in which their friends help them through the year. They hear stories about how friends look after you and how friends share and make them feel safe. They role-play 'friends at home' and 'friends in school'. They talk about how they feel when they are with friends. They learn about a Baptism when friends gather to celebrate. They re-enact a Baptism and learn about the sign of the cross, water, the candle and the white garment. They will be able to talk about some of the things that happen at a Baptism and about becoming a friend of Jesus.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Early learning goals

Exploration and investigation

- investigate objects and materials by using all their senses as appropriate;
- find out about and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe.

Information and communication technology

- use information and communication technology to support their learning.

A sense of time

- find out about past and present events in their own lives, and in those of their families and other people they know.

A sense of place

- find out about their environment and talk about those features they like and dislike.

Cultures and beliefs

- begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- pupils ask and answer questions about religion as it occurs naturally within their everyday experience;
- pupils are able to identify a special place for prayer in the classroom;
- pupils visit the parish church;
- pupils handle religious artefacts with curiosity and respect;
- having visited a place for prayer or the parish church, pupils learn new words associated with the place, showing respect.

Example of an activity

In the context of learning about special places, pupils talk about their own special places; where they are; what they are like; what they do there and why they are special. They think about how they feel there. They learn about a place in the Nursery/Reception that is special for everyone for prayer. They think about what they do there and how they make it special. They think about the artefacts that are used to make this place special, for example the crucifix, candle and Bible. They may make a visit to the parish church. They would be encouraged to say what they or others liked about these places.

Creative development

Early learning goals

Imagination

- use their imagination in art and design, music, dance, imaginative play, role-play and stories;
- respond to experiences, and express and communicate ideas;
- respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel.

Examples of religious education-related experiences and opportunities

- using religious artefacts as a stimulus, pupils think about and express meanings associated with the artefact;
- pupils share their own experiences and feelings and those of others, and are supported in reflecting on them.

Example of an activity

In the context of a learning theme to do with Advent, pupils make a class Advent calendar. Each day a door or flap is opened to reveal an Advent or Christmas symbol, message or promise, helping the pupils to focus on Advent as a special season leading to the celebration of Christmas. The pupils reflect on the ways in which they get ready, for example going to bed, and make a display of this. In the home corner, they role-play getting ready to go shopping. The pupils use an Advent wreath as a focus for prayer each day. Each week an additional candle is lit helping them to think of Advent as a time of waiting and preparing. They talk about some of the symbolism of the wreath, for example, that the circle has no beginning and no end.

Exemplification of work in religious education using the early learning goals

Context

Pupils, through their work on Baptism, learn how friends gather to celebrate and they develop their communication, language and literacy skills. They re-enact a Baptism and learn about the sign of the cross, water, the candle and the white garment. They will be able to talk about some of the things that happen at a Baptism and about becoming a friend of Jesus.

Pupils' work

Baptism by Emilia, Maximilian, Conor, Isabella, Archie, Holly



Teacher's annotation

In this Foundation Stage role-play pupils demonstrate their knowledge by using actions, words and symbols. They experience what it means to be part of a community through celebration. In assessing what pupils know and understand, teachers look for the use of key words such as water, candle, white garment and the sentence 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. They observe pupils in their role-play and ask questions such as 'who would be there at a Baptism?' Pupils may be able to talk about friends gathering and the role of the priest. Pupils might also talk about how the baby is given a name and how the baby is welcomed.

Link to website

Further examples will be found on the aforementioned website www.cesew.org.uk as they become available.

How to use levels of attainment - a summary

Purposes

- assessment of pupils' work is a necessary part of the learning process;
- its purposes include the affirmation of attainment and achievement, the necessary recording and reporting of pupil progress, and helping the pupil to take the next step in learning;
- the levels of attainment provide a 'criterion-referenced' measure of attainment.

Planning

- teachers should use the language of the level descriptors to inform the way intended learning outcomes are expressed;
- teachers should clearly identify the focus and method of assessment from the outset;
- the critical question to address at the planning stage is 'what must I do, in this topic, to enable the pupil to consolidate working at their present level and create the opportunity to begin to work at the next level?'

Gathering evidence

- when gathering evidence teachers will be able to draw on the full range of work produced by pupils, in the normal everyday teaching and learning process;
- teachers should focus on the clarity of evidence collected and on making brief telling annotations in relation to significant attainments.

Best-fit

- more 'a subtle art than an exact science';
- made across a range of work over a period of time;
- in relation to single pieces of work they can be deemed to contribute to the best-fit judgement.

Making judgements

- teachers will be making professional judgements about pupils' performance almost continuously to ensure further learning;
- these judgements will lead to a cumulative judgement about attainment;
- teachers will need to decide whether a pupil's performance taken as a whole over a period of time has been more one level than another (best-fit judgement);
- the attainment within any level may be described as 'hesitant', 'secure' or 'confident';
- the process of making judgements about pupil attainment will inform decisions about future planning.

A chart of progression

- the levels of attainment provide a chart of educational progression;
- however, progress through the levels will not be accomplished automatically, appropriate challenge will have to be provided.

Reinforce good religious education

- addressing the question 'what must I do to enable pupils to achieve a particular level, to demonstrate understanding?' will necessarily promote clearer thinking about the purposes of assessment and their contribution to good religious education.

Levels of attainment in Religion

AT1: Learning about Religion:
Knowledge and Understanding of:

AT 2: Learning from Religion:
Reflection on Meaning

| Strand | i) beliefs, teachings and sources | ii) celebration and ritual | iii) social and moral practices and way of life | i) engagement with own and others' beliefs and values | ii) engagement with questions of meaning and purpose |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level | Pupils | Pupils | Pupils | Pupils | Pupils |
| 1 | Recognise some religious stories | Recognise some religious signs and symbols and use some religious words and phrases | Recognise that people because of their religion act in a particular way | Talk about their own experiences and feelings | Say what they wonder about |
| 2 | Retell some special stories about religious events and people | Use religious words and phrases to describe some religious actions and symbols | Describe some ways in which religion is lived out by believers | Ask and respond to questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings | Ask questions about what they and others wonder about and realise that some of these questions are difficult to answer |
| 3 | Make links between religious stories and beliefs | Use a developing religious vocabulary to give reasons for religious actions and symbols | Give reasons for certain actions by believers | Make links to show how feelings and beliefs affect their behaviour and that of others | Compare their own and other people's ideas about questions that are difficult to answer |
| 4 | Describe and show understanding of religious sources, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences; making links between them | Use religious terms to show an understanding of different liturgies | Show understanding of how religious belief shapes life | Show how own and others' decisions are informed by beliefs and values | Engage with and respond to questions of life in the light of religious teaching |
| 5 | Identify sources of religious belief and explain how distinctive religious beliefs arise | Describe and explain the meaning and purpose of a variety of forms of worship | Identify similarities and differences between peoples' responses to social and moral issues because of their beliefs | Explain what beliefs and values inspire and influence them and others | Demonstrate how religious beliefs and teaching give some explanation of the purpose and meaning of human life |
| 6 | Explain how sources and arguments are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to questions of religious belief, ultimate questions and ethical issues | Explain the significance for believers of different forms of religious and spiritual celebration | Explain how religious beliefs and teaching influence moral values and behaviour | Express insights into the reasons for their own and others' beliefs and values and the challenges of belonging to a religion | Explain with reference to religious beliefs their own and others' answers to questions of meaning |
| 7 | Show a coherent understanding of faith, religion and belief using a variety of sources and evidence | Use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of religious celebration | Critically evaluate the ways of life of religious groups with reference to their history and culture and show a coherent understanding of differences | Articulate their own critical response(s) to different religious beliefs and world views | Evaluate religious and non-religious views and beliefs on questions of meaning and purpose |
| 8 | Analyse a range of faiths, religions, beliefs and teachings, making reference to the texts used and how adherents interpret them | Use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse and interpret varied religious and spiritual expression | Show a coherent understanding of the impact of a belief system on the way of life of individuals, communities and societies | Critically analyse and justify own and others' religious beliefs and world views | Synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples to justify their own views and ideas on questions of meaning and purpose |
| EP | Provide a coherent and detailed analysis of faith, religion and belief | Evaluate in depth the nature of religious and spiritual expression in contemporary society | Provide a coherent, philosophical and evaluative account of the relationship between belief systems and ways of life | Provide independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' religious beliefs and world views. | Provide an independent, informed and well-argued account of their own and others' views on questions of meaning, purpose and fulfillment with reference to religious and moral traditions and standpoints |

ainment in Religious Education

What the strands are about

AT1 Learning about Religion:
Knowledge and Understanding of

i) beliefs, teachings and sources

Here pupils will be learning about what people believe, about the faith they hold and how that helps them to make sense of the world; they will learn about the teachings of different religious traditions and the answers those traditions give to questions of meaning and purpose; they also will learn about the sources that different traditions use to guide them in their understanding of faith, belief and practice; they will learn how to engage critically with such source material.

ii) celebration and ritual

In this strand pupils will be looking at the ways in which faith is celebrated; how that takes different forms in different times and for different traditions; they will be able to explore different liturgies (the public worship of the Church) and different rituals (such as the festivals of a different tradition) and the place of actions, words and symbols within them; they will learn about the significance of these celebrations for believers and see how the spiritual life can be analysed and expressed.

iii) social and moral practices and way of life

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

AT2 Learning from Religion:
Reflection on meaning

i) engagement with own and others' beliefs and values

Throughout this strand pupils will be reflecting on beliefs and values; by talking, exploring, discussing, thinking, responding and questioning, pupils will be increasingly able to structure and articulate their thoughts; they will be able to listen attentively to others and come to understand and empathise with others' views, beliefs and values; they will develop the ability to engage critically with their own and others' religious beliefs and world views.

ii) engagement with questions of meaning and purpose

In this strand pupils will be confronting the difficult questions which all people have to face; they will be thinking critically about their own questions of meaning and purpose and about the ways in which people of all faiths and none have struggled with similar questions; they will be exploring the evidence and arguments used by people of different faiths and other traditions to justify their position; they will be developing the ability to express their own point of view.

| Strand | Journeying in reflection and contemplation |
|--------|--|
| Level | Pupils |
| 1 | Reflect quietly |
| 2 | Participate in periods of reflection in response to a given stimulus |
| 3 | Show understanding of the importance of stillness and quiet during times of reflection and prayer |
| 4 | Demonstrate an appreciation of the elements needed for reflection and contemplation or prayer (places, times, foci, stimuli) |
| 5 | Explore how different situations are conducive to reflection and contemplation or prayer |
| 6 | Discern how different forms of reflection and contemplation or prayer can be important in people's lives |
| 7 | Express creatively, linguistically or through other media, how reflection and contemplation can give people insights into their own lives and their relationships with God |
| 8 | Reflect and analyse with others different views people hold on the worth of reflection and contemplation or prayer |
| EP | Reflect quietly |

Reflection and contemplation

This strand, formerly part d of AT2, is presented here as a quite discrete aspect. This is to emphasise the point that it will not be subject to assessment in the same way as the levels of attainment themselves. However, these levels may inform the provision of opportunities for growth in reflection and contemplation.

It also recognises the significant part that reflection and contemplation play in the spiritual development of pupils. In this way it contributes to the pupil's ability 'to think spiritually, ethically and theologically'¹⁶.

It is both improper and impossible to assess such spiritual development and so this strand simply marks out the steps that might be taken in terms of progression in reflection and contemplation. In this way it is more aspirational than evaluative and judgemental.

Nevertheless real steps may be marked out in ways similar to those used in the levels of attainment. However there is a circularity about this journey which is captured by Eliot's lines:

"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploration
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time."¹⁷

This thought from Eliot reminds us of the sense in which 'reflect quietly' (LI & EP) is both the starting point and the end point of the journey. Except of course that at EP the wanderer is more fully aware of the journey that has been made; of all the intervening steps which are now integrated into his/her reflection.

Above all it is a journey to be relished and delighted in.

¹⁶Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *Religious Education: Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools*, 1996, p10.
¹⁷T.S. Eliot: *Four Quartets*, Little Gidding V: l. 26-29.

Exemplification of work at level 3

Context

The piece of work was the pupil's evaluation of what they had learnt in the topic Signs and Symbols. The relate aspect of this topic focused on the signs and symbols used in Baptism and Confirmation and links between the two sacraments. Children are encouraged to use key vocabulary in their evaluation.

Pupil's work

Signs and symbols - what I know now by Louise

Babies are baptised so they can become a member of God's family. John the Baptist reminds me of baptism. John the Baptist baptised Jesus.

Candles are a sign that God is the light of the world and God is always with us. Holy water is poured on your head and it means you have no more sins in you. The oil of chrism is rubbed on you and it is a sign of strength. The shawl is wrapped around you and it is a sign of you are clean.

People are confirmed so they can pick a saint's name that would be part of their name. The people that are making confirmation chose to be a Christian. You have to make your own promise. Pentecost reminds me of Confirmation. Pentecost is when the wind and flame comes.

You get the oil of chrism on you. You get a candle. You have to pick a sponsor to help you if you are stuck.

You have a very important job you have to live like God did and like a Christian. It is important after Confirmation to really expect to live like God. The cross is important because God died on it.

Teacher's annotation

You learnt lots. Signs and symbols are important reminders of our beliefs and the lessons from the Bible. To improve: Put spellings in your word book to use in the future. The teacher had written the correct spellings of the following words in the margin: Shawl, purity, choices and Holy Spirit.

Evidence

The task had a primary focus on AT1 Strand ii, but the pupil is able to make the link between the story of the baptism of Jesus and infant baptism (AT1 Level 3 Strand i). In relation to Strand ii she has gone beyond description of religious actions and symbols so she achieves better than Level 2. She uses a developing religious vocabulary to explain the meaning of the actions and symbols of the ceremony of baptism (AT1 Level 3), but struggles to explain those of confirmation. There is a beginning of the use of religious terms to show an understanding of the different liturgies of baptism and confirmation, but it is insufficiently developed to indicate any competence at Level 4.

Link to website

Further examples will be found on the aforementioned website www.cesew.org.uk as they become available.

In this publication, wherever examples of pupils work are used, any spelling errors have been corrected but the syntax remains that of the pupil.

Exemplification of work at level 6/7

Context

The piece of work was produced by a pupil in Year 9 in a comprehensive school. The school serves a wide catchment area. There is a small but increasing number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds some in the early stages of English language acquisition. Pupils come from mixed social and economic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

Following on from work in Year 8 exploring the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and introduction to simple versions of the cosmological and teleological arguments, Year 9 pupils explored more complex arguments about God's existence or non-existence. As part of an extended independent study, including homework, they were to imagine a 'time café' where a variety of philosophers such as Aquinas, Paley, Epicurus, Nietzsche and Darwin meet and discuss the existence of God. In lessons pupils debated the strengths and weaknesses of those arguments and how they relate to their faith.

Learning Objectives

To learn about belief in God in the Catholic tradition

To develop and apply a wide range of religious and philosophical vocabulary and understanding of issues in the context of beliefs, teachings and sources as a key concept.

To express their own beliefs and views using a variety of creative forms of expression including reasoned philosophical expression, art, drama and prayer.

To explore the nature of meaning, purpose and truth as key concepts.

Pupil's work

The Time Café by Andrew

Characters: Isaac Newton
William Paley
Epicurus
Friedrich Nietzsche
Charles Darwin
Thomas Aquinas

Setting: William Paley's Café, on a Monday morning, in the middle of London. Isaac Newton and Epicurus are sitting at a table together drinking coffee and eating muffins.

Newton: How's work then Epicurus? Still paying the bills?

Epicurus: Ah, it's so-so, you know. Can't wait for my holidays, two weeks to go yet.

Newton: Going anywhere nice?

Epicurus: Just going to *Greece*, you know, the usual.

Newton: (licking his fingers) Aren't hands and fingers the most extraordinary little things?

Epicurus: What? (confused)

Newton: Well, take the thumb, for example. It's so unique. You know, nobody else in the whole world has a thumb like mine. Somebody must of designed it. There must be a *God*, a *God* that designed my thumb, my fingers and all the beautiful things in the world.

Epicurus: Hang on a minute, so you're saying that there must be a *God* because of all the beautiful, unique things in the world? What about the faults in the world, the evil? There mustn't be a *God*. If there is a *God* that cannot stop evil in the world, then he mustn't be all-powerful. *God* could stop evil if he wanted, but he chooses not to, so he mustn't be all-good. There is not a *God*.

Newton: Evil is man-made my dear friend. Us, we, me and you make evil.

Epicurus: There isn't a *God*! (angrily)

Paley, the owner of the café, walks past the two men.

Newton: Hello, William, how are you? Very nice coffee you have here.

Paley: Hi! Thank you, that's what my café gets recognised for. Have you tried the muffins as well?

Newton: Yes, I've just finished one. Oh, I'm so sorry, Paley, this is Epicurus. Epicurus, this is Paley.

Paley: (while shaking Epicurus's hand) Hello, how do you do? Enjoying my muffins as well, I see.

Epicurus: Yes, yes, they are very moreish! I've just noticed your watch there, it's magnificent.

Paley: Yes, it's very special. It was my father's. Watches are fantastic pieces of machinery, so intricate. One of the main reasons I believe in *God*. The world is like a machine, it must have a designer. The designer is most definitely *God*.

Newton: I agree with you totally, William. *God* is our designer.

In this publication, wherever examples of pupils work are used, any spelling errors have been corrected but the syntax remains that of the pupil.

Epicurus: We were just discussing this. What about the evil and hatred in the world? God must not be all-good or powerful, or he would stop it.

Epicurus: (looks around the café) Ah, Friedrich! He will tell you that God doesn't exist. He's got a head on his shoulders, unlike some!

Paley and Newton look at each other and raise their eyes

Epicurus: Friedrich, come over here a minute, I need your help on something.

Friedrich Nietzsche comes over to the three men and sits down beside Epicurus.

Epicurus: Friedrich, this is Newton, my friend, and this is Paley. He owns the café.

Nietzsche: (shaking Newton's and Paley's hands) Hello, you can call me Nietzsche. Everyone knows me by that name. So what did you want me for?

Epicurus: Well, we were having a discussion about the existence of God, and Newton and Paley were saying how all the beautiful things in the world must have a God. I obviously disagreed and I was explaining how I thought that there mustn't be a God because of all the evil in the world and that they shouldn't just look at the intricate things like Paley's watch and Newton's thumb. Don't you agree?

Nietzsche: Well, yes, I agree with you, Epicurus, but I don't agree with you at all, gentlemen, I'm sorry to say. The world is so imperfect. I don't think there is a God. I think that God is dead!

Paley and Newton look shocked

Nietzsche: There was no God, no natural laws and no order in the world and no ultimate purpose.

Epicurus looks very happy and has a smile on his face

Newton: God isn't dead! Who made us? How did we get here if there was no god?

As Newton is saying this, Charles Darwin comes out of the men's toilets and sits down next to Paley.

Darwin: Hello, gentlemen, how are you this fine morning?

Everyone: Hello, Darwin!

Newton: We are having a discussion about the existence of *God*.

Darwin: Ah! I heard a bit of it as I was queuing up for a coffee a minute ago. Sounds serious.

Newton: Well, it wasn't at first, but Epicurus is very determined and wants to prove me and Paley wrong. (looking at Paley).

Epicurus: Indeed I do!

Darwin: Why, what do you think, Newton?

Newton: Paley and me have agreed that because of all the beautiful things in the world, there must be a designer, *God*.

Paley nods his head

Nietzsche: You're wrong. You're not looking close enough and seeing the evil and bad things in the world. There cannot be a *God*.

Newton: What? How do we exist? How is the world the way it is?

Darwin: Epicurus and Nietzsche are right Newton. I believe that all life evolves by natural selection. The animals and plants that are suited to their life, survive. Those that are not, die out. I think human, animal and plant life have designed itself. There is no right or wrong, just the strong and the weak.

Paley looks confused and looks at Newton

Epicurus looks very happy now

Epicurus: I told you, but you didn't listen. More people probably don't believe in *God* than do. We've won the argument, Newton.

Newton: Not necessarily. There are plenty more people in the world and we don't know what they believe.

Thomas Aquinas comes through the door and sits down next to Newton.

Aquinas: How are you, Newton? Haven't seen you for a while.

Newton: Hi, I'm fine, you?

Aquinas: Ah, you know, so-so. Oh, I am sorry, I'm Thomas Aquinas, nice to meet you. (shaking each man's hand in turn)

Aquinas: So, what are you up to, just having a cup of coffee and a chat?

Newton: Well, not as such. We are discussing the existence of God. Me and Paley believe but Epicurus, Nietzsche and Darwin here don't. I must warn you, Epicurus is a very determined man and doesn't like to be proved wrong.

Epicurus still has a smile on his face

Aquinas: Oh, you've picked a very good topic of conversation. My favourite, as you know, Newton. (with a smile on his face)

Newton: Yes, I sure do.

Epicurus starts to look worried

Epicurus: Why, what do you feel about it? (very eager to know)

Newton and Paley have a smile on their faces and Paley nudges Newton

Aquinas: The First Cause.

Epicurus & Darwin: What?

Aquinas: Well, I believe in the First Cause. Everything in the universe has a cause. If you trace them back, there must have been a First Cause that triggered everything off. I believe that God is the First Cause.

Epicurus: What about the evil in the world?

Aquinas: Yes, there is evil but it doesn't mean that there can't be a God. We are the reasons for evil. God lets us get on with our lives. We live our own lives.

Epicurus: You're wrong! (angrily)

Nietzsche: Calm down, Epicurus, everyone is allowed their own opinion.

Newton: Don't let this ruin our friendship.

Epicurus: I know, but I still think you're wrong.

A young man comes over to the six men and sits down at the end of the table

Man: Hi, I'm Mr Motivator. I heard what you were discussing as I came in through the door. You've just got to ask yourself, who made the trees?

The man gets up and leaves the café. The six men look confused

Paley:

Oh, look at the time, I better get back to work.

Aquinas and Darwin leave the café. Nietzsche returns to his table and Newton and Epicurus order another coffee and sit back down.

Teacher's annotation

This unit enabled pupils to develop substantially in their learning about and learning from religion. Both engaged and disaffected pupils responded much more thoughtfully and creatively. Pupils responded enthusiastically and creatively to the introduction of the key concepts of beliefs, teachings and sources into the module 'Knowing God'. They were able to investigate unexamined assumptions about the existence of 'God', to apply essential, complex vocabulary from the arguments. They were stretched and stimulated by the key concepts of meaning, purpose and truth, and enabled to evaluate the arguments and to express their own point of view in the form of thoughtful playlets on the existence of God.

Matthew's 'Time Café' assignment clearly displayed a good use of specialist religious and philosophical vocabulary. He communicated these ideas in a lucid and creative manner. It was well argued and took into account conflicting religions and philosophical points of view. He didn't make a reasoned assessment of these views and I never really expected that at this stage.

Evidence

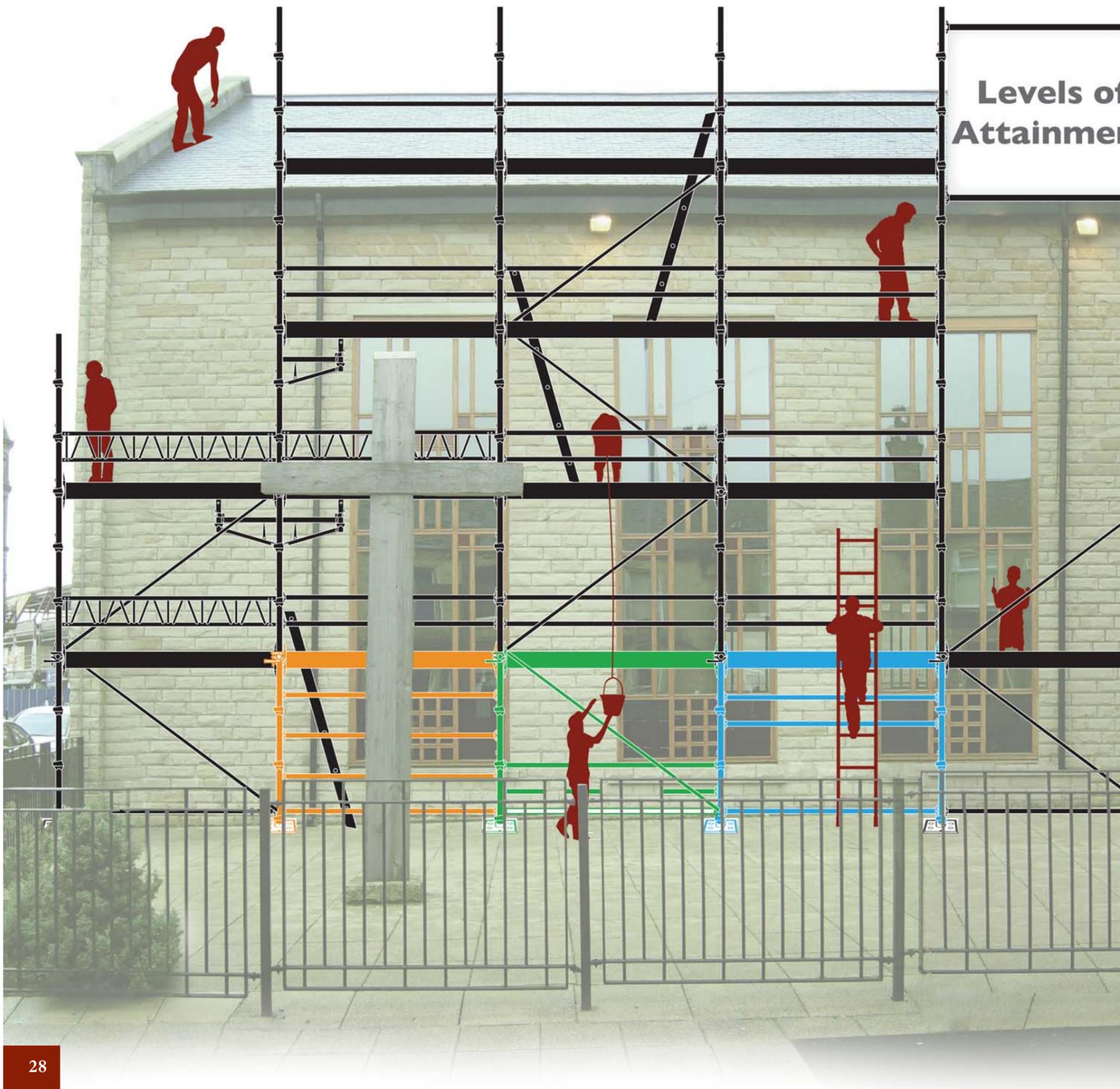
With its reference to a range of different belief positions, Matthew's playlet shows understanding of how sources and arguments are used in different ways to provide answers to questions of religious belief and ultimate questions (AT1 L6). He draws upon a variety of sources to demonstrate his understanding (AT1 L7) though the nature of the exercise as a discussion militates a little against his presenting a fully coherent understanding. There is some evidence of a response to Strand iii of Attainment Target 1 with the different perceptions of the source of evil (AT1 L5-6). In relation to AT2, Matthew explains clearly others' answers to questions of meaning (AT2 L6) and purpose and begins to evaluate them by contrasting those answers (AT2 L7). There are also some hints of L8 in the way that he synthesises a range of evidence and arguments on questions of meaning (AT2 L8).

Matthew, in commenting on what he had learned, showed that he could relate it to his own beliefs: "When I started the study I realized it was different from anything I had done in the past. Learning about how Nietzsche considered God to be dead was quite a shocking thought and it was the same with Epicurus' argument. However, I felt that although the arguments went against what I had been taught, it strengthened and gave some meaning to the faith I had received in the past. I really enjoyed bringing the arguments of Paley and Newton to clash with Nietzsche. I personally think that this topic strengthens and improves your faith in God by questioning if he is there, and not just accepting that He exists."

Link to website

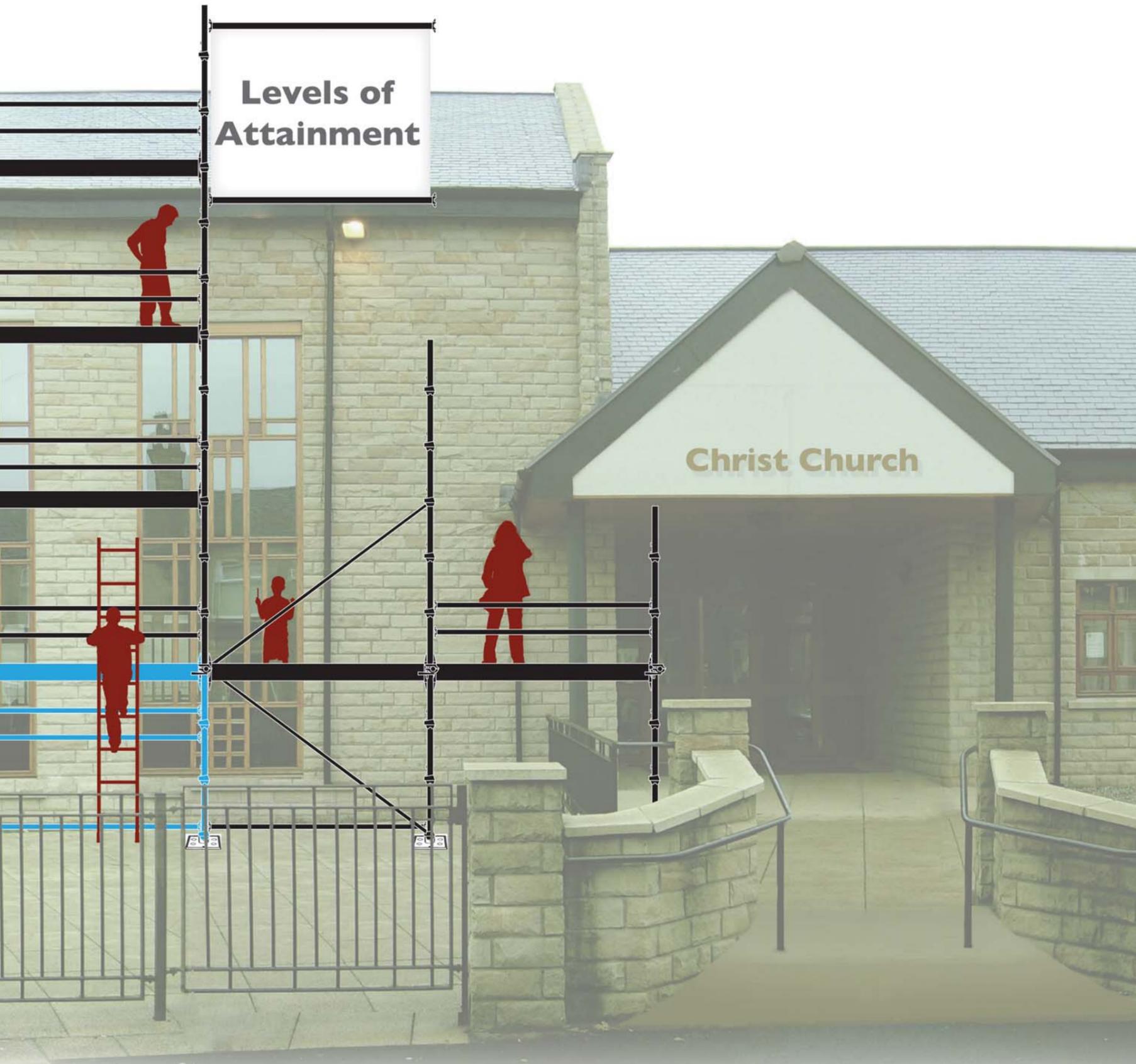
Further examples will be found on the aforementioned website www.cesew.org.uk as they become available.

In this publication, wherever examples of pupils work are used, any spelling errors have been corrected but the syntax remains that of the pupil.



Levels of Attainment

Levels of Attainment



P Scales

Using P Scales

What they are

Teachers will be aware that there are P Scales for each subject in the National Curriculum and for religious education. Here we present P Scales for religious education in Catholic schools and colleges. These differentiated performance criteria provide a chart of progression in religious education for pupils with special educational needs with a range of learning disabilities and difficulties (LDD) who are working below and perhaps towards Level 1 of Attainment Targets 1 and 2. They apply in both special and main stream schools wherever there are pupils with LDD.

How they work

The guidance given in Using levels of attainment above (page 7) about planning, setting realistic outcomes, employing appropriate teaching and learning strategies, gathering evidence and making judgements all apply equally here. In addition, across all the strands, the use of language by staff and pupils should be directly related to concrete experience. Questions, when they are used, should be simple and require a direct and straightforward response. Similarly, symbol and ritual play an important part in teaching and learning across all the strands and not just in AT1 (ii) Celebration and ritual. Symbols will be linked to actual experiences and ritual actions will provide a familiar 'marker' in the progress of a session, as well as providing boundaries and a sense of security. Widespread use of the senses is an important means of imparting and receiving information and of drawing out intuitive responses. If one of the senses is impaired

it is important to adapt teaching and learning accordingly with increased emphasis on the other sensory experiences. One must also bear in mind that silence has a powerful aura of its own and should be seen as a positive element, possibly assisting in enabling the pupil to make the leap from human experience to the mystery of God.

The levels

Levels P1-P3 show the earliest levels of attainment common across all subjects. They address basic, generic skills. We provide some religious education-focused examples. Levels P4-P8 show religious education-related attainment linked to the strands in the levels of attainment table (page 18).

The 'checklist'

These checklists, customised for use in Catholic schools and colleges¹⁸, break down the P Scale levels still further, identifying the very small incremental steps that LDD pupils make, often with prompts and support. The checklist enables the teacher to recognise and record these small attainments. The checklist proforma also allows the teacher to record the degree of assistance that the pupil had in achieving the level. They have been found by P Scale users to be a very useful, user-friendly and fine-tuned tool for assessment in religious education. We include here, by way of example, the checklist associated with level P6. Checklists for all the other P Scale levels can be found on the enclosed CD.

P Scales... TRREACLE... and the levels of attainment

TRREACLE

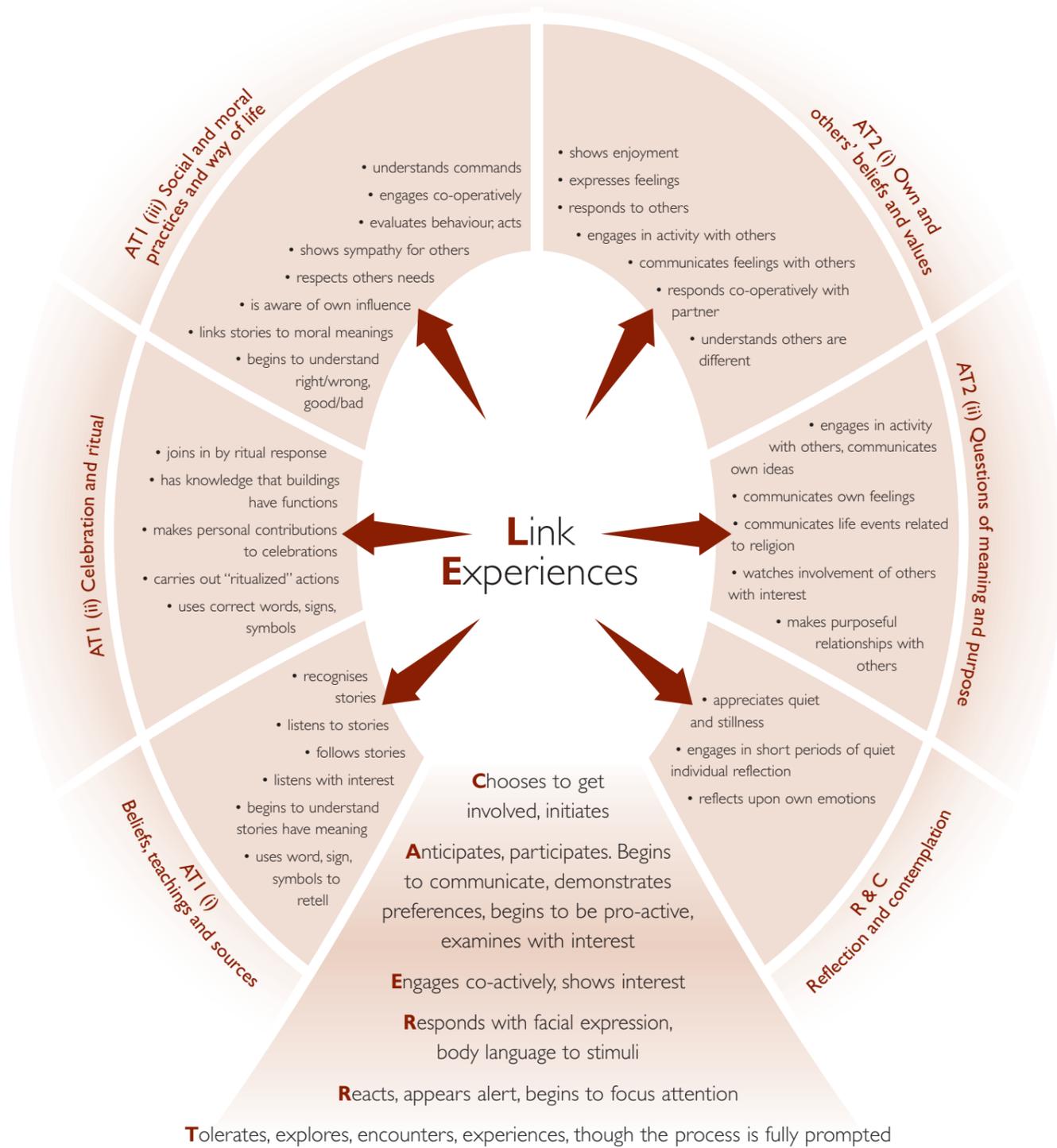
Trraeacle is an acronym which quickly identifies general descriptors for the incremental levels of progress within P Scales. It is used by some special needs teachers to give a quick handle on the level descriptors and to identify a pupil's level of performance.

- T**olerates, explores, encounters, experiences, though the process is fully prompted P1 (i)
- R**eacts, appears alert, begins to focus attention P1 (ii)
- R**esponds with facial expression, body language to stimuli P2(i)
- E**ngages co-actively, shows interest P2(ii)
- A**nticipates, participates. Begins to communicate, demonstrates preferences, begins to be pro-active, examines with interest P3(i)
- C**hooses to get involved, initiates P3(ii)
- L**ink **E**xperiences. P4-8

The exemplifications

The examples of activities and responses given are illustrative rather than prescriptive. Teachers can be confident that it is acceptable to look for alternative but equivalent learning. The key task in each category is to decide whether the contextual factors changed the nature (and perhaps the level) of the pupil's responses or merely enabled the pupil to participate in religious education in the Catholic school or college.

The website (www.cesew.org.uk) will have further examples in time.



Level P1(i)

Pupils encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, for example, startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted.

Level P1(ii)

Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, for example, becoming still in response to silence. They may give intermittent reactions, for example, vocalising occasionally during group celebrations and acts of worship.

Level P2(i)

Pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, for example, briefly looking around in unfamiliar natural and man-made environments. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, for example, leaning towards the source of light, sound or scent. They accept and engage in coactive exploration, for example, touching a range of religious artefacts and found objects in partnership with a member of staff.

Level P2(ii)

Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, for example, showing that they have enjoyed an experience or interaction. They recognise familiar people, events and objects, for example, becoming quiet and attentive during a certain piece of music. They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, for example, repeating a simple action with an artefact. They co-operate with shared exploration and supported participation, for example, performing gestures during ritual exchanges with another person performing gestures.

Level P3(i)

Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, for example, prompting a visitor to prolong an interaction. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, for example, stroking or shaking artefacts or found objects. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, for example, when vocalising in a quiet place. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, for example, following a familiar ritual and responding appropriately.

Level P3(ii)

Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, for example, prompting an adult to sing or play a favourite song. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, for example, celebrating the achievements of their peers in assembly. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, for example, choosing to participate in activities. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, for example, contemplating the flickering of a candle flame. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, passing an artefact to a peer in order to prompt participation in a group activity.

Level P4

Pupils use single elements of communication, for example, words, gestures, signs or symbols, to express their feelings. They show they understand 'yes' and 'no'. They begin to respond to the feelings of others, for example, matching their emotions and laughing when another pupil is laughing. They join in activities by initiating ritual actions or sounds. They may demonstrate an appreciation of stillness and quietness.

Level P5

Pupils respond appropriately to simple questions about familiar religious events or experiences and communicate simple meanings. They respond to a variety of new religious experiences, for example, involving music, drama, colour, lights, food or tactile objects. They take part in activities involving two or three other pupils. They may also engage in moments of individual reflection.

Level P6

Pupils express and communicate their feelings in different ways. They respond to others in group situations and co-operate when working in small groups. Pupils listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals. They carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances. They show concern and sympathy for others in distress, for example, through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort. They start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.

Level P7

Pupils listen to and follow religious stories. They communicate their ideas about religion, life events and experiences in simple phrases. They evaluate their own work and behaviour in simple ways, beginning to identify some actions as right or wrong on the basis of the consequences. They find out about aspects of religion through stories, music or drama, answer questions and communicate their responses. They may communicate their feelings about what is special to them, for example, using role-play. They begin to understand that other people have needs and to respect these. They make purposeful relationships with others in group activity.

Level P8

Pupils listen attentively to religious stories or to people talking about religion. They begin to understand that religious and other stories carry moral and religious meaning. They are increasingly able to communicate ideas, feelings or responses to experiences or to retell religious stories. They communicate simple facts about religion and important people in religions. They begin to realise the significance of religious artefacts, symbols and places. They reflect on what makes them happy, sad, excited or lonely. They demonstrate a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations. They are often sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others. They treat living things and their environment with care and concern.

Checklist¹⁹

P Scale Religious Education attainment

Pupil name: _____ Started: _____ Completed: _____

Level P6

Pupils express and communicate their feelings in different ways. They respond to others in group situations and co-operate when working in small groups. Pupils listen to, and begin to respond to, familiar religious stories, poems and music, and make their own contribution to celebrations and festivals. They carry out ritualised actions in familiar circumstances. They show concern and sympathy for others in distress, for example, through gestures, facial expressions or by offering comfort. They start to be aware of their own influence on events and other people.

| | E | PP | GP | VP | AI | M* |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Watches with interest the involvement of others within a religious activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Expresses own feelings by action/response within a religious activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Communicates own feelings by word, sign, symbol etc., within a religious activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Responds co-operatively with a partner in a religious activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Responds co-operatively to others when working in a small group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Listens to familiar religious stories/poems/songs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Begins to recognise/respond appropriately to familiar religious activities, e.g., stories/poems/songs/play | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Makes a personal contribution to a religious celebration/festival, e.g., has a role in a play | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 Carries out a ritualised action in familiar circumstances, e.g., lighting a candle/incense | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 Shows concern/sympathy for others who are in distress through word, sign, symbol or action, e.g., comforting a friend who is upset | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 Begins to have an awareness of the influence they can have on an event, e.g., being part of a group play | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 Begins to have an awareness of the influence they can have upon other people | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| # Key to colour coding of targets and strands | |
|---|--|
| AT1i | beliefs, teachings & sources |
| AT1ii | celebration & ritual |
| AT1iii | social & moral practices and way of life |
| AT2i | own & others' beliefs and values |
| AT2ii | questions of meaning and purpose |
| R&C | progression in reflection & contemplation |
| Generic | pre-requisite and on-going skill for all strands |

| * Key to level of assistance | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| E | Experienced |
| PP | Physical prompt |
| GP | Gestural prompt |
| VP | Verbal prompt |
| AI | Achieved independently |
| M | Mastered |

¹⁹Checklists for all the other P Scale levels can be found on the accompanying CD and the aforementioned website: www.cesew.org.uk

Exemplification of work with LDD pupils using P Scales

Water rite

Context

Illustration and example of activities: a 'water rite' linked to the themes of welcoming, acceptance, belonging, being initiated into the faith community, Baptism, which targets AT 1(ii) celebration and ritual and AT 2 (i) engagement with own beliefs and values

Pupil's work



Evidence of progression

Range of pupil responses – progression based on the 'water-rite'

| | |
|----|---|
| P1 | Pupil shows a reflex response after being greeted with a bowl of water |
| P2 | Pupil shows awareness of the bowl of water offered, responds with a smile and focus |
| P3 | Pupil shows greater awareness and involvement and after an invitation dips fingers or splashes- shows a degree of enjoyment |
| P4 | Pupil co-operates with group activity by passing the bowl to neighbour with a prompt |
| P5 | Pupil passes the bowl after a copied silent moment |
| P6 | Pupil passes the bowl after own unprompted action with water (blessing, touching, sprinkling) following the familiar routines |
| P7 | Pupil goes (unaided), after a request, around the group in turn, offering the bowl of water carefully, silently, to each person |
| P8 | Pupil goes unaided and voluntarily around the group offering the bowl of water and naming each person. Afterwards s/he says how much she enjoyed the experience |

Teacher's annotation

At Level P 6, a pupil spontaneously washes his face with water from the bowl, before passing it under guidance, to the next pupil according to the established procedure. The pupils are participating in a 'water rite' experiencing different effects of touching water as they explore symbols associated with initiation into the faith community.

Link to website

Further examples will be found on the aforementioned website www.cesew.org.uk as they become available.

Level portraits

The level descriptors for Attainment Target 1: Learning about religion refer to how pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding with reference to:

- beliefs, teachings and sources;
- celebration and ritual;
- social and moral practices and way of life.

The level descriptors for Attainment Target 2: Learning from religion refer to how pupils, in the light of their learning about religion, reflect on and respond to:

- their own and others' beliefs and values;
- engagement with questions of meaning and purpose.

The level descriptors for Reflection and contemplation refer to how pupils may develop qualities which will contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Portraits

Level 1

Attainment Target 1

Pupils recognise some religious stories. They recognise some religious signs and symbols and use some religious words and phrases. They recognise that people because of their religion act in a particular way.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils talk about their own experiences and feelings. They say what they wonder about.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils reflect quietly.

Level 2

Attainment Target 1

Pupils retell some special stories about religious events and people. They use religious words and phrases to describe some religious actions and symbols. They describe some ways in which religion is lived out by believers.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils ask and respond to questions about their own and others' experiences and feelings. They ask questions about what they and others wonder about and realise that some of these questions are difficult to answer.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils participate in periods of reflection in response to a given stimulus.

Level 3

Attainment Target 1

Pupils make links between religious stories and beliefs. They use a developing religious vocabulary to give reasons for religious actions and symbols. They give reasons for certain actions by believers.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils make links to show how feelings and beliefs affect their behaviour and that of others. They compare their own and other people's ideas about questions that are difficult to answer.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils show understanding of the importance of stillness and quiet during times of reflection and prayer.

Level 4

Attainment Target 1

Pupils describe and show understanding of religious sources, beliefs, ideas, feelings and experiences; making links between them. They use religious terms to show an understanding of different liturgies. They show understanding of how religious belief shapes life.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils show how own and others' decisions are informed by beliefs and values. They engage with and respond to questions of life in the light of religious teaching.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils demonstrate an appreciation of the elements needed for reflection and contemplation or prayer (places, times, foci, stimuli).

Level 5

Attainment Target 1

Pupils identify sources of religious belief and explain how distinctive religious beliefs arise. They describe and explain the meaning and purpose of a variety of forms of worship. They identify similarities and differences between peoples' responses to social and moral issues because of their beliefs.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils explain what beliefs and values inspire and influence them and others. They demonstrate how religious beliefs and teaching give some explanation of the purpose and meaning of human life.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils explore how different situations are conducive to reflection and contemplation or prayer.

Level 6

Attainment Target 1

Pupils explain how sources and arguments are used in different ways by different traditions to provide answers to questions of religious belief, ultimate questions and ethical issues. They explain the significance for believers of different forms of religious and spiritual celebration. They explain how religious beliefs and teaching influence moral values and behaviour.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils express insights into the reasons for their own and others' beliefs and values and the challenges of belonging to a religion. They explain with reference to religious beliefs their own and others' answers to questions of meaning.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils discern how different forms of reflection and contemplation or prayer can be important in people's lives.

Level 7

Attainment Target 1

Pupils show a coherent understanding of faith, religion and belief using a variety of sources and evidence. They use a wide religious and philosophical vocabulary to show a coherent understanding of religious celebration. They critically evaluate the ways of life of religious groups with reference to their history and culture and show a coherent understanding of differences.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils articulate their own critical response(s) to different religious beliefs and world views. They evaluate religious and non-religious views and beliefs on questions of meaning and purpose.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils express creatively, linguistically or through other media, how reflection and contemplation can give people insights into their own lives and their relationships with God.

Level 8

Attainment Target 1

Pupils analyse a range of faiths, religions, beliefs and teachings, making reference to the texts used and how adherents interpret them. They use a comprehensive religious and philosophical vocabulary to analyse and interpret varied religious and spiritual expression. They show a coherent understanding of the impact of a belief system on the way of life of individuals, communities and societies.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils critically analyse and justify own and others' religious beliefs and world views. They synthesise a range of evidence, arguments, reflections and examples to justify their own views and ideas on questions of meaning and purpose.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils reflect and analyse with others different views people hold on the worth of reflection and contemplation or prayer.

Level EP

Attainment Target 1

Pupils provide a coherent and detailed analysis of faith, religion and belief. They evaluate in depth the nature of religious and spiritual expression in contemporary society. They provide a coherent, philosophical and evaluative account of the relationship between belief systems and ways of life.

Attainment Target 2

Pupils provide independent, well-informed and highly reasoned insights into their own and others' religious beliefs and world views. They provide an independent, informed and well-argued account of their own and others' views on questions of meaning, purpose and fulfilment with reference to religious and moral traditions and standpoints.

Reflection and contemplation

Pupils reflect quietly.

Summary versions of 'how to use' levels of attainment

On the enclosed CD you will find summary versions for each area:

Early learning goals

Levels of attainment

P Scales

Each contains, in a photocopiable format:

- a summary explanation of how to use the levels;
- the appropriate levels and an exemplification with the link to the website.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all, the religious education advisers, pupils and teachers who have given freely of their time and creativity in helping to revise these levels. Below is a list of advisers who helped steer this revision and the schools who have allowed us to use their work:

Advisers

Mgr George Stokes (Chair)
Adrian Dempsey (Principal Writer)
Angela O'Hara (Arundel and Brighton)
Anne Darby (Salford)
Bernard Stuart (Salford)
Frances Honis (Southwark)
Jane Cook (Middlesbrough)
John Lally (Birmingham)
Jenny Pate (Hexham and Newcastle)
Kath Stead (Middlesbrough)
Kathleen Gilbert (Westminster)
Kathryn Ranson (Wrexham)
Liz O'Brien (Birmingham)
Margaret Doyle (Salford)
Margaret Horan (Nottingham)
Paul Mannings (Liverpool)
Peter Ward (Westminster)
Rita Price (Wrexham)
Sheila McNamara (Hexham and Newcastle)

Schools

St. John Fisher Catholic High School
Newcastle under Lyme
St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School
Dagenham
St. Cuthbert Mayne
Cranleigh

Finally, thank you to Therese Gordon for help and administration throughout the project, and to Andy Mathias for his design and translating our ideas on to paper.

Fr. Joseph Quigley, National Religious Education Adviser for England and Wales and Chair of NBRIA

© Bishops' Conference Department for Catholic Education and Formation
National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers

Price: £8.00

ISBN: 1-903533-17-1