



Nottingham Roman Catholic
Diocesan Education Service



Desert to
Garden

Branch 4

EYFS Teachers' Guide

Version 1: September 2026

This booklet is offered as a theological guide for teachers. Although the information provides some context for the whole branch, it will be most useful for teachers as they deliver the first few sessions and lessons within the branch.

Notes for teachers

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a specialism, needing careful planning and adaptations to ensure that every opportunity shared is a chance to learn and explore.
- The curriculum is holistic and teaching and learning weave into each area of learning.
- 'Religious Education, "in accordance with the rites, doctrines, discipline, general and particular norms of the Catholic Church", should be taught as a core subject, well-resourced and integrated clearly into other curriculum areas.'¹⁴⁰ 'The special character of the Catholic school, the underlying reason for it, the reason why Catholic parents should prefer it, is precisely the quality of the religious instruction integrated into the education of the pupils.'¹⁴¹
- The Religious Education Curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage aims to be at the heart of the curriculum and at the core of learning where appropriate. The curriculum will inform schemes of work and programmes of study to enable well-written, quality holistic planning and resources for early learning.
- The curriculum for the Early Years follows each branch as outlined in the Religious Education document and provides the adaptation of the statutory framework¹⁴² to suit Early Years planning, teaching, and learning. It provides Religious Education within the Early Years areas of learning as a bespoke foundation for secure grounding for Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- The Religious Education ways of knowing provide evidence of children's outcomes and development. At the end of the foundation stage, there are Religious Education Early Learning Goals.¹⁴³ Religious education may at times flow into areas of Mathematics, such as Creation, and Myself topics including counting birthdays.
- However, the links may be tenuous, and the distinctive religious education aim may be lost.
- The Religious Education Directory serves the Bishops of England and Wales, the Catholic Education Service, and diocese and Catholic schools in revealing the Good News and making the little stories of children meet the big stories told by the disciples. Wonder at God's gifts inevitably flows into reflection and enjoyment of the gifts, into prayers of praise and thanksgiving.
- Through the curriculum, children learn about the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus through sacred texts, parables, sensory experiences, and the symbols and gestures of the sacraments.
- The curriculum shares the importance of everyone's gift and talents in producing, writing, using, and learning. In responding to this encounter, children learn that dignity, loving friendships, responsibility, care for our world and its people, and peace are values they meet in Jesus, who calls everyone to live a life of love.
- All children can share the Gospel values and insights learned through Christian education.



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Hear	Lent is a time to care for others. Jesus died on a cross. It is a sad time. Jesus was given new life by God his Father. Jesus rose and everyone celebrates. Love God and love everyone (great commandment). A simplified version of key events of Holy Week especially Good Friday and Easter Sunday (to enable pupils to recognise key events). The great commandment (Lk 10:25-28).

Believe	Jesus was born for everyone. The Magi visited Jesus with gifts. Jesus is God's Son and came for everyone. Jesus' birth is celebrated at Christmas. Jesus came to show God's love and welcomes everyone. Jesus takes care of everyone.
Celebrate	The Glory Be is a special prayer. That the Church prays the 'Glory Be' as a response to the coming of Jesus.
Live	Show love to everyone like Jesus. We welcome and show love to everyone in our words and actions as Jesus does. We are called to help the poor and hungry. CST You need food, water, a house, your school, a good doctor, and a job for the grown-up who takes care of you. So does everybody else on the whole Earth. But many people do not have these things. Jesus wants us to take extra care of these people. An Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

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