



The Church of Scotland

Religious Observance Training Event

- 9.00 Coffee and registration
- 9.20 Welcome
- 9.30 The idea and purpose of Religious Observance in 21st Century Scotland
- 10.00 The opportunities Religious Observance brings in Curriculum for Excellence
- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 Facilitated workshop conversations on making RO work in your context
- 12.15 Plenary
- 12.30 close

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1. Curriculum for Excellence: Principles for Design

Challenge and enjoyment

Children should find their learning challenging, engaging and motivating. The curriculum should encourage high aspirations and ambitions for all. At all stages, learners of all aptitudes and abilities should experience an appropriate level of challenge, to enable each individual to achieve his or her potential. They should be active in their learning and have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their creativity. There should be support to enable children to sustain their effort.

Breadth

All children should have opportunities for a broad, suitably weighted range of experiences. The curriculum should be organised so that they will learn and develop through a variety of contexts within both the classroom and other aspects of school life.

Progression

Children and young people should experience continuous progression in their learning from 3 to 18 within a single curriculum framework. Each stage should build upon earlier knowledge and achievements. Children should be able to progress at a rate which meets their needs and aptitudes, and keep options open so that routes are not closed off too early.

Depth

There should be opportunities for children to develop their full capacity for different types of thinking and learning. As they progress, they should develop and apply increasing intellectual rigour, drawing different strands of learning together, and exploring and achieving more advanced levels of understanding.

Personalisation and choice

The curriculum should respond to individual needs and support particular aptitudes and talents. It should give each child increasing opportunities for exercising responsible personal choice as they move through their school career. Once they have achieved suitable levels of attainment across a wide range of areas of learning the choice should become as open as possible. There should be safeguards to ensure that choices are soundly based and lead to successful outcomes.

Coherence

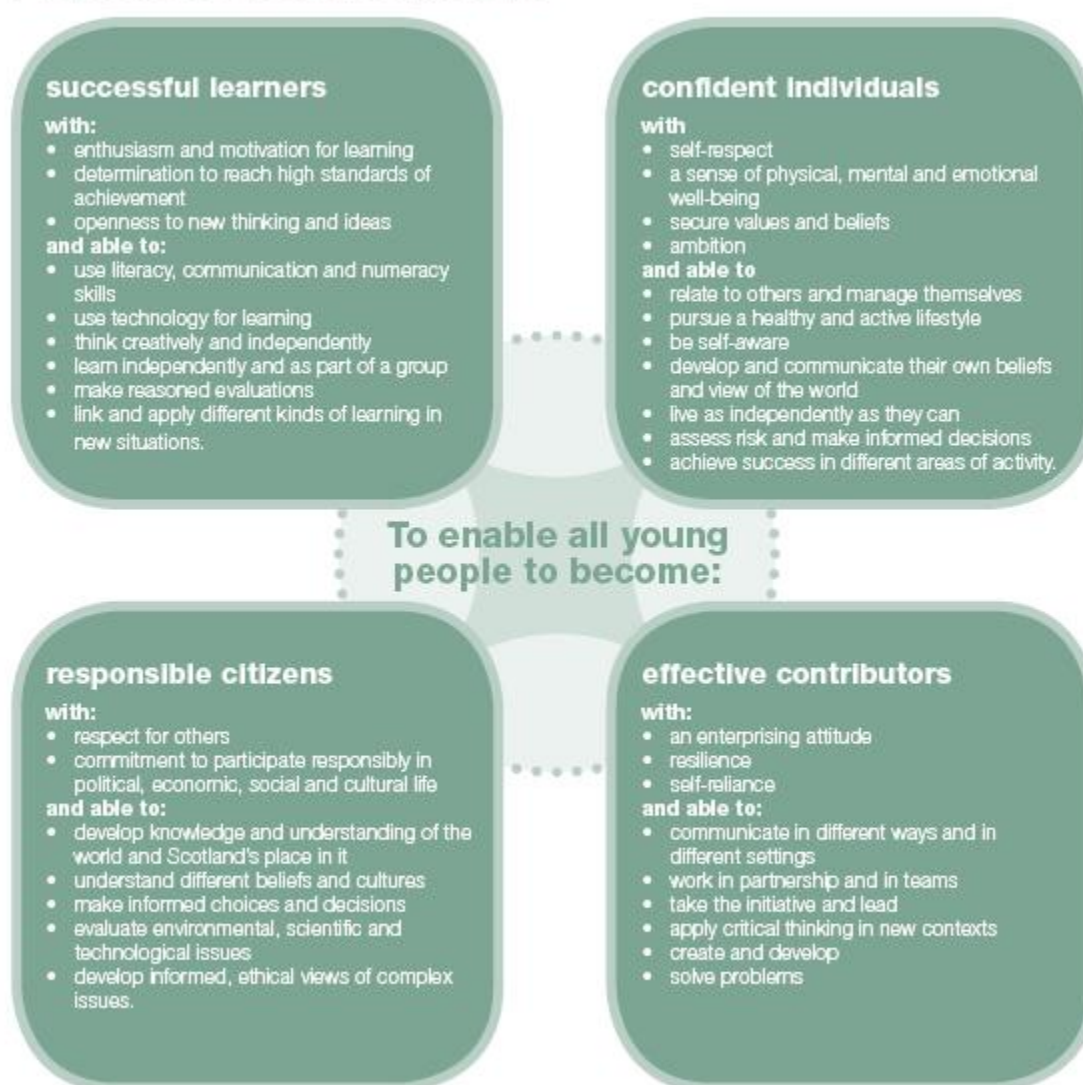
Taken as a whole, children's learning activities should combine to form a coherent experience. There should be clear links between the different aspects of children's learning, including opportunities for extended activities which draw different strands of learning together.

Relevance

Children should understand the purposes of their activities. They should see the value of what they are learning and its relevance to their lives, present and future.

Further detail can be found on pages 14 of [A Curriculum for Excellence, The Curriculum Review Group](#)

Purposes of the curriculum 3-18



Further detail can be found on pages 12-14 of [A Curriculum for Excellence, The Curriculum Review Group](#)

2. The meaning of spiritual development in a school context

The consultation process revealed the need to clarify the meaning of 'spiritual development' as used in the consultation paper. The consultation paper states that spiritual development *'includes being helped to recognise, reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the value and worth of each individual which comes from one's dignity as a person'*.

The idea of spiritual development led the group to look at the concept of spirituality. The concept of spirituality has its origin in religion and is still popularly identified as a religious concept used by members of religious traditions. Its use, however, is not limited to members of religious traditions. It is also used by much out with formal religion to describe key aspects of their experience. In fact, in spite of the move away from involvement with formal religion in Scottish society, there is evidence of a growing interest in the spiritual dimension.

Those who belong to a faith community believe that the human spirit is created by God and can only be fully developed through a relationship with God. Others believe that the human spirit can be understood and developed without any reference to a divinity. Most would agree that the spiritual dimension comes from what makes us human, it is a reflection of our deepest humanity. The spiritual dimension is seen and expressed in many ways such as:

Sensing mystery:	experiences of awe, wonder and mystery about the natural world, human achievement and for some a divinity
Sensing values:	attitudes and feelings about what is really important, what really matters
Sensing meaningfulness:	the ability to make connections or to see potential patterns in one's life which give it meaning
Sensing a changed quality in awareness:	the feeling of being 'at one' with nature, oneself and others
Sensing 'otherness':	the sentiment that humans are more than their physical elements
Sensing challenge:	being challenged and moved by experiences such as love, beauty, goodness, joy, compassion, injustice, evil, suffering, death.

Within the educational context, *Spiritual and Moral Development*, National Curriculum Council, Discussion Document, makes the following statement:

'The term "spiritual" applies to all pupils. The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs... The term needs to be seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition... it has to do with the unique search for human identity...'

In the setting of the school, whether this be a denominational school where the focus will be very much aimed at the fostering of religious life based on the belief of the divine origin of the human spirit, or a non-denominational school faced with a broader cross-section of religious and other viewpoints, the review group would maintain that religious observance can play an important role in the spiritual development of all within the school community.

An analysis of the policy statements of local authorities on religious observance reveals a set of concerns similar to those identified as belonging to the spiritual dimension suggesting that these are already at the heart of good practice in religious observance.



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Education Department
Qualifications, Assessment and Curriculum Division

Directors of Education

Gill Robinson
Room 2-A 75
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Telephone: 0131-244 0412
Fax: 0131-244 7001
Gill.robinson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

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Our ref:

25 February 2005

Circular 1/2005

PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

Dear Colleague

Introduction

1. This circular describes and explains the Scottish Executive's policy on the provision of religious observance in Scottish schools and sets out action for local authorities in planning the provision of religious observance. The Circular replaces the arrangements for religious observance set out in Circular 6/91 and applies to all primary and secondary schools, including special schools. The policy on religious education set out in Circular 6/91 remains in force meantime.
2. Scotland is a society with a longstanding Christian tradition. The most recent census showed that Christianity remains the main religious influence in Scotland. 67% of the Scottish population reported having a religion. 65% reported being members of the Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church or other Christian churches. However, Scotland has for many generations also had other faith and belief traditions, never more so than at present as Scotland increasingly becomes a place for many cultures and beliefs. This trend is set to continue as Scotland sets out to attract people from other communities as part of Scottish Executive policy. We can expect Scotland to become increasingly diverse in the range of faith and belief traditions represented. Religious observance needs to be developed in a way which reflects and understands this diversity. It should be sensitive to our traditions and origins and should seek to reflect these but it must equally be sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective.

3. The 2004 report of the Religious Observance Review Group made a number of recommendations about development of religious observance in schools (the full report is available at www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/rorg-00.asp). This circular responds to the recommendation that the Scottish Executive Education Department should review the circular on religious observance. In preparing this guidance, account has been taken of the current legislation as contained in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the special note contained in the HMIE report *Standards and Quality in Secondary Schools: Religious and Moral Education 1995-2000*.

Religious Education

4. Scottish Executive policy on religious education, as set out in Circular 6/91, is supported by the 5-14 National Guidelines on religious and moral education. The guidelines will be assessed against the principles and purposes of *A Curriculum for Excellence* during the second stage of the curriculum review. The importance of religious education for all school children will be emphasised in the review. When the review of the existing guidelines has been completed, we will update the religious education element of Circular 6/91 and the national guidelines.

Response to the Religious Observance Review Group Report

5. The recommendations of the Religious Observance Review Group outline sensitive and tactful solutions which will allow schools to provide religious observance which is an inclusive, valuable and meaningful experience for all. Scottish Ministers see religious observance as an important educational experience for children and young people at all stages of primary and secondary school. In accepting the Group's recommendations, Ministers believe that future actions can build on Scotland's strong Christian traditions without compromising them, and also promote the understanding and acceptance of other faiths and beliefs.

Definition of religious observance

6. Ministers accept the definition of and aims of religious observance proposed by the Religious Observance Review Group:
 - *community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community.*

Approach

7. Each individual within a school community should be enabled to develop as a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor. Religious observance should have an important part to play in this development. It should also provide opportunities for the school community to reflect on, and

develop, a deeper understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual and their contribution to the school and wider communities.

8. In recognition of Scotland's Christian heritage, schools are encouraged to use the rich resources of this tradition when planning religious observance. Many school communities contain pupils and staff from faiths other than Christianity or with no faith commitment. This should be taken fully into account in supporting spiritual development. It is of central importance that all pupils and staff can participate with integrity in forms of religious observance without compromise to their personal faith stances.
9. At present school assemblies are the most common vehicle for delivering religious observance. There should be a clear distinction between assemblies devised for the purpose of religious observance and assemblies for other purposes such as celebrating success. The precise form of religious observance will be determined by each school's policy within the local authority's framework, but these might include opportunities for class, year, stage or whole school observance as well as involvement by pupils and others, including school chaplains, in planning and presentation.
10. Materials and training events will be provided to support schools and authorities.

Frequency of religious observance

11. Religious observance needs to take place sufficiently frequently to have an impact on the spiritual development of the school community. It is, however, the quality of such occasions which is of greatest importance.
12. The Review Group acknowledged the need to balance the frequency which would make a positive impact on young people with the need to ensure that the experiences are valuable and inclusive. This will require careful planning by schools. The group concluded that every school should provide opportunities for religious observance at least six times in a school year, in addition to traditional celebrations central to the life of the school community, and preferably with greater frequency. We recognise that many primary schools value weekly religious observance as part of their regular assembly programme and will wish to continue with this. The school community should be involved in making decisions about frequency.

Parental Right to withdraw

13. There is a statutory provision for parents to withdraw children from participation in religious observance. This right should always be made known to parents and their wishes respected. Parents should be provided with sufficient information on which to base a decision.
14. Scottish Ministers consider that religious observance complements religious

education and is an important contribution to pupils' development. It should also have a role in promoting the ethos of a school by bringing pupils together and creating a sense of community. Schools are therefore encouraged to inform parents of this without applying pressure to change their minds.

15. Where a child is withdrawn from religious observance, schools should make suitable arrangements for the child to participate in a worthwhile alternative activity. In no circumstances should a child be disadvantaged as a result of withdrawing from religious observance.

Chaplains

16. Scottish Ministers value the important and varied contributions that chaplains and other faith group leaders make to the life of the school, for example in their involvement in religious observance, acts of worship, religious and moral education and a broader pastoral role. Headteachers are encouraged to engage in full discussion with chaplains in planning and implementation of religious observance. In supporting religious observance, chaplains' own religious stances should be respected and they should not be asked, or expected, to compromise their religious beliefs.

Worship in schools

17. The Religious Observance Review Group considered the relationship between organised acts of worship and religious observance. They concluded with the following statement:
Where the school, whether denominational or non-denominational, is continuous with a faith community, that community's faith in the "focus of worship", may be assumed and worship may be considered to be appropriate as part of the formal activity of the school. Where, as in most non-denominational schools, there is a diversity of beliefs and practices, the review group believes that the appropriate context for an organised act of worship is within the informal curriculum as part of the range of activities offered for example by religions, groups, chaplains and other religious leaders.
Ministers endorse this approach as complementary to schools' policy on religious observance and would ask schools to consider this statement when planning for religious observance.
18. Members of the school community, including pupils, parents and representatives of faith groups and communities, may wish to have opportunities for organised acts of worship within the informal curriculum of the school. Ministers would encourage headteachers to consider these requests positively and make suitable arrangements if appropriate personnel and accommodation can be provided.

Facilities

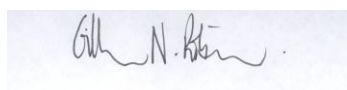
19. Consideration should be given to providing appropriate facilities in schools for acts of religious observance and worship. Locations need to be considered in the light of the size and diversity of participating groups. Locations for religious observance and worship should be considered in the planning and design of new and refurbished school buildings, to provide facilities which meet school and community needs.

Support

20. We recognise that schools will need support to enable them to action these revised arrangements. The Scottish Executive Education Department has therefore commissioned Learning and Teaching Scotland to develop, in collaboration with faith groups, the following support materials and resources for schools:
- guidance and exemplar materials to support schools in developing high quality activities for religious observance;
 - guidance and exemplar materials on the role of chaplaincy teams; and
 - self-evaluation tools for schools to assist them in evaluating the quality of religious observance provided for pupils.
- Training events will be organised by Learning and Teaching Scotland to provide support on the use of these materials.

Conclusion

21. Local authorities and schools are invited to:
- work with the school community to plan the content, frequency, and location of religious observance, in line with this Circular and the Review Group report;
 - review their policies on religious observance, and develop practice in line with this Circular and the Review Group report; and
 - introduce necessary changes into planning processes as soon as possible.
22. Please send a copy of this circular to the Headteacher of each school in your area.



DR GILL ROBINSON

Qualifications, Assessment and Curriculum Division

4. 2011 Letter

Learning Directorate
Curriculum Division

T: 0131-244 0081
E: laura.stewart@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Directors of Education
Headteachers of all schools

Our ref:
21 February 2011

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE – PROVISION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE IN SCHOOLS

Dear Colleague

Introduction

1. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 continues to impose a statutory duty on local authorities to provide religious observance in Scottish schools. This letter replaces guidance previously contained within Circular 1/2005 and reflects the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence across all of Scotland's schools.
2. This letter clarifies the current position regarding the provision of religious observance in Scottish schools and sets out action for local authorities in planning the provision of religious observance. The Circular has been updated to reflect the adoption of Curriculum for Excellence and applies to all primary and secondary schools, including special schools. It is intended to assist local authorities and schools in the delivery of religious observance and sets out the continuing statutory requirements regarding its provision.
3. The policy on religious and moral education in non-denominational schools and religious education in Roman Catholic schools is covered in a separate letter which will be issued in conjunction with this.

Background

4. Scotland is a society with a longstanding Christian tradition. However, Scotland has for many generations also been home to many who have other faith and belief traditions, never more so than at present. This trend is likely to continue as Scotland remains a country where people from other communities are welcomed and we can expect Scotland to become increasingly diverse in the range of faith and belief traditions represented. Religious observance needs to be developed in a way which reflects and understands this diversity. It should be sensitive to our traditions and

origins and should seek to reflect these but it must equally be sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective.

The Religious Observance Review Group Report (2004)

5. The recommendations of the Religious Observance Review Group outlined sensitive and tactful solutions which will allow schools to provide religious observance which is an inclusive, valuable and meaningful experience for all. Scottish Government Ministers consider religious observance to be an important educational experience for children and young people at all stages of primary and secondary school. In accepting the Group's recommendations, Ministers believe that learning and teaching can build on Scotland's strong Christian traditions without compromising them, while also promoting the understanding of, and respect for other faiths and beliefs.
6. However, Scottish Government Ministers also recognise that whilst the Education (Scotland) Act uses the term religious observance, and as a consequence both Scottish Government and its partners (LTS and HIMIE for example) use the same terminology, schools may feel a different name for the events that meet their religious observance requirements will be more appropriate to their context and culture. This is to be encouraged but needs careful thought and if possible some external reference point. For example, in a non-denominational school, the use of the title Time for Reflection might be appropriate because it is a clear description of the activity. This term is also used in other contexts, such as the Scottish Parliament.
7. Scottish Government Ministers also accept the definition and aims of religious observance proposed by the Review Group as being:
"community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school's community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community".

Approach

8. Religious observance has an important part to play in the development of the learner's four capacities: a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor. It should also provide opportunities for the school community to reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual and their contribution to the school and wider communities.
9. Scottish Government Ministers welcome the tradition that, in Roman Catholic denominational schools, Catholic Liturgy will largely shape the nature and frequency of religious observance activities in the classroom and in the wider school community. So, at times, children and young people will be invited to participate in, and sometimes to lead, prayer and reflection in classrooms and at assemblies. At other times, to honour particular occasions or feasts, chaplains will lead school communities in the celebration of Mass and other forms of liturgical celebration.

10. In recognition of Scotland's Christian heritage, non-denominational schools are also encouraged to draw upon the rich resources of this tradition when planning religious observance. However, many school communities contain pupils and staff from faiths other than Christianity or with no faith commitment, and this must be taken fully into account in supporting spiritual development. It is of central importance that all pupils and staff can participate with integrity in forms of religious observance without compromise to their personal faith.
11. At present in non-denominational schools, assemblies are the most common vehicle for delivering religious observance. There should be a clear distinction between assemblies devised for the purpose of religious observance and assemblies for other purposes such as celebrating success. The precise form of religious observance will be determined by each school's policy within the local authority's framework, but these might include opportunities for class, year, stage or whole school observance as well as involvement by pupils and others, including school chaplains and other faith leaders, in planning and presentation.

Frequency of Religious Observance

12. Religious observance needs to take place sufficiently frequently to have an impact on the spiritual development of the school community. It is, however, the quality of such occasions which is of greatest importance.
13. There is a need to balance the frequency which would make a positive impact on children and young people with the need to ensure that the experiences are valuable and inclusive. This will require careful planning by schools. Every school should provide opportunities for religious observance at least six times in a school year, in addition to traditional celebrations central to the life of the school community, and preferably with greater frequency. We recognise that many primary schools value weekly religious observance as part of their regular assembly programme and will wish to continue with this. The school community should be involved in making decisions about frequency.

Parental Right to Withdraw

14. There is a statutory provision for parents to withdraw children from participation in religious observance. This right should always be made known to parents and their wishes respected. Parents should be provided with sufficient information on which to base a decision.
15. Scottish Government Ministers consider that religious observance complements religious education and is an important contribution to pupils' development. It should also have a role in promoting the ethos of a school by bringing pupils together and creating a sense of community. Schools are therefore encouraged to inform parents of this without applying pressure to change their minds.

16. Where a child is withdrawn from religious observance, schools should make suitable arrangements for the child to participate in a worthwhile alternative activity. In no circumstances should a child be disadvantaged as a result of withdrawing from religious observance.
17. Where a parent chooses a denominational school for their child's education, they choose to opt in to the school's ethos and practice which is imbued with religious faith and religious observance. In denominational schools, it is therefore more difficult to extricate a pupil from all experiences which are influenced by the school's faith character.

Chaplains and Other Faith Group Leaders

18. Scottish Government Ministers value the important and varied contributions that chaplains and other faith group leaders make to the life of the school, for example in their involvement in religious observance, acts of worship, religious and moral education and a broader pastoral role. Headteachers are encouraged to engage in full discussion with chaplains and other faith group leaders in the planning and the implementation of religious observance. In supporting religious observance, their own religious beliefs should be respected and they should not be asked, or expected, to compromise them.

Religious Observance and Worship in schools

19. The Religious Observance Review Group considered the relationship between organised acts of worship and religious observance. They concluded with the following statement:
"Where the school community, whether denominational or non-denominational, is continuous with a faith community, that community's faith in the focus of worship, may be assumed and worship may be considered to be appropriate as part of the formal activity of the school. Where, as in most non-denominational schools, there is a diversity of beliefs and practices, the Review Group believes that the appropriate context for an organised act of worship is within the informal curriculum as part of the range of activities offered for example by religions, non-religious groups, chaplains and other faith leaders."
20. Ministers endorse this approach as complementary to schools' policy on religious observance and would ask schools to consider this statement when planning for religious observance.
21. Members of the school community, including pupils, parents and representatives of faith groups and communities, may wish to have opportunities for organised acts of worship within the informal curriculum of the school. Ministers would encourage headteachers to consider these requests positively and make suitable arrangements if appropriate support arrangements can be provided.

Facilities

22. Consideration should be given to providing appropriate facilities in schools for acts of religious observance and worship. Locations need to be considered in the light of the size and diversity of participating groups. Locations for religious observance and worship should be considered in the planning and design of new and refurbished school buildings, to provide facilities which meet school and community needs.

Support

23. Glasgow University, Scripture Union Scotland and the Church of Scotland have created a learning opportunity to assist school staff, chaplains and other faith group leaders in the delivery of religious observance.
www.gla.ac.uk/departments/religiouseducation
24. Learning and Teaching Scotland website offers guidance and exemplar materials to support schools in developing high quality activities for education about faith and belief, and for religious observance.
www.ltscotland.org.uk/religiousobservance
25. The Scottish Catholic Education Service offers guidance and exemplar materials to support denominational schools on aspects of religious observance and School Chaplaincy.
www.sces.uk.com

Conclusion

26. Local authorities and schools are invited to:
work with the school community to plan the content, frequency and location of religious observance, in line with this advice note and the Review Group report;
review their policies on religious observance, and develop practice in line with this advice note, the Review Group report and Curriculum for Excellence; and introduce necessary changes into planning processes as soon as possible.



Laura Stewart

5. Religious Observance: Frequently Asked Questions

Para References are to the Letter of Guidance issued 22nd Feb. 2011 by the Scottish Government and entitled “Curriculum for Excellence – Provision of Religious Observance in schools”

Do we have to call it Religious Observance?

Because this term exists in the Education (Scotland) Act it has been retained in official discussions. However, some schools and local authorities have used such terms as “Time for Reflection” (Para 6)

How long should an RO event be?

There is no set time. It depends on the school. Some may allow ten minutes, some twenty or fifty, or in some cases a whole day can be given over to an RO event. It is important that the purpose and the structure of the event are thought through. Each event should contain a stimulus, a guided reflection and a response. It is important also that meaningful RO events happen regularly within the rhythm of the school year.

Does it always have to a whole school event?

The Letter of Guidance, reaffirms the 2004 Review Group definition of RO as “*community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community*” (Para 7)

The answer to this question may then seem obvious. However, in some settings it could be similar to the Car Park in Glasgow which advertised “*Parking for 1000 cars, 250 at a time*”. In order to achieve the aims of the RO event or to fit in with the facilities available in the school, it may be better done in year groups, house groups, classes etc.

Equally, the stimulus and the guided reflection may be tackled in larger setting, but the response furthered in tutor groups or some smaller units.

How should RO events relate to assemblies?

Assemblies are often the vehicle for delivery of RO. Guidance advises a clear distinction between assemblies for RO and assemblies for other purposes (Para 8). Assemblies are not the only way of delivering RO and creative examples exist throughout the country of RO in non assembly forms.

Could it be an RO event without a faith element?

It depends on how we understand “faith”. RO events are not and must not be simply church services or evangelistic occasions replicated in a school setting. At the other end of the spectrum they are qualitatively different from school events which promote health or encourage values.

If by faith we mean those aspects of our being which are central, deep and personal to how we are and what we believe, what some might call spiritual, then RO should promote and give occasion for reflection on these aspects of our humanity.

The Guidance encourages use of Scotland’s rich Christian heritage when planning RO, but also requires sensitivity to those of other faiths and traditions, including non-faith

perspectives. (Paras 4 & 10). RO must allow all members of the school to participate with integrity (Para 10).

A tokenistic use of festivals of all faiths represented throughout the school should be avoided. The key question is – what is the spiritual reflection/ development we want to encourage/ facilitate and what are the best stimuli, guided reflection and response which make this possible?

What does Legislation allow us to do?

If we ask this question, we are starting at the wrong place. The question is: what will facilitate spiritual development?

What about going to Church buildings at Christmas and Easter?

This has been a contentious issue in some parts of Scotland. The impact of the building and the furniture should be considered. Will it prevent some from participating with integrity? Who will lead and what will that declare? Does the church building promote a better atmosphere of reflection than the “Street” area in the school?

Can we have worship in the school?

The Guidance affirms the opportunity for acts of worship within the informal curriculum.

Can I pray when leading an RO event?

If appropriate, yes. If you are from a faith community then participation with integrity should mean that you are free to say a prayer. However, it should be introduced as an option for others present, and other possibilities suggested for how others who do not share your faith stance may use the time.

Can I talk about what I believe?

If appropriate, yes. It must not be assumed that all present will share your beliefs or should share your beliefs. Respect must be given to those whose worldviews are different from yours.

What do we mean by integrity?

The Guidance clearly states the central importance of all members of the school community being able to “*participate with integrity ... without compromise to their personal faith*”. (para 10)

It means that in leading RO events, we are not expected to say or not say things that deny who we are. It also means we must extend the same expectation to others. This will require good communication, good preparation and the development of robust relationships within the school community.

Who decides?

Ultimately, RO is inspected in schools. But each school should create a group for monitoring and developing current practice of RO. This should include a wide representation of the school community and may be different from the group (e.g. chaplains) who might deliver RO.

6 RME and Religious Observance – a SJCRME position paper

This short paper is offered by the Scottish Joint Committee on Religious and Moral Education (SJCRME) to support schools in developing their understanding of the complementary roles of Religious Observance (RO) and Religious and Moral Education (RME) in the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) era. In particular this paper focuses on the 'personal search' approach which has emerged in non-denominational RME in Scotland as an approach which highlights the commonality of RME and RO since the LTS review of RO in 2005.

At the outset the SJCRME recognises that there are differences between the two educational experiences; RME is a curricular area and RO is a whole school activity. However, as defined by LTS (Building the Curriculum 3) the curriculum is "the totality of the experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education." Given that the 2005 Review of Religious Observance sanctions a non-confessional approach to RO, something that has been the approach of RME since the 1970's, the SJCRME feels therefore that this may be an appropriate time to highlight possible areas of commonality, where possible identifying effective practice which apply to both of these areas of school life.

The paper outlines how the SJCRME understands the different but complementary ways in which personal search should be experienced in RME and RO within the non-denominational sector. It is not definitive nor is it in anyway prescriptive or confessional. It is offered to help schools in creating a sense of the purpose of personal search in both RME and RO in contributing to what is a vital part of the educational experience.

RME and Personal Search;

Since the Millar Report (1972) RME in Scotland's non-denominational schools has focused on the desire to provide an opportunity for young people to develop their own views and analyses on religious, moral and philosophical positions. Various descriptions include the 'personal quest' (Millar Report 1972), 'personal search' (5-14 national guidelines 1992, CfE 2008) or quest for 'meaning, value and purpose' (SCCORE bulletin 2 1981), it has been a feature of Scottish non-denominational schools that pupils are encouraged to explore beliefs and issues through comparison and analogy with their own outlook, experiences and familial values. A related aim of this approach to RME is that pupils would thereby develop a sense of empathy, tolerance and understanding of the beliefs of others as attempts to similarly grapple with the existential, metaphysical and moral questions ubiquitous to the

human condition. Increasingly in Scottish secondary schools, the personal search approach is identified with a philosophical approach to RME .

The personal search approach can be placed within a broader movement within European RME as an attempt to firstly avoid an essentialist approach to RME which crudely and confusingly presents a range of religions and positions as monolithic and distant from experiential context. Secondly the personal search approach allows pupils the rational autonomy to develop their own position in relation to issues and questions vis-à-vis the response of a range of traditions and individuals. The personal search attempts to provide pupils with a means, through analogy and comparison, to relate to, and to an extent, enter, the world views of others with no confessional or worshipful commitment.

In 2001 Learning and Teaching Scotland published guidelines on the personal search approach. They identified the need for RME to adopt an exploratory, multi-tradition and Personal Search approach. They offer an account of the move away from confessional religious instruction in the 1960's towards this. Personal search then is a method through which pupils can discover and develop their own beliefs and values, involving pupils in coming to their own conclusions by developing skills in critical thinking and evaluation. A central aim to RME is to allow pupils to come to their own conclusions through a process of critical evaluation and personal discovery. This process has four stages, though the following order does not necessarily have to be followed:

- Preparing the way – in this stage the teacher provides the context, objectives and aims of the learning experience.
- Finding out – in this stage pupils learn about ideas (religious and non-religious), festivals, stories, or customs. This is “designed to enable pupils to go beyond just finding out what other people believe. It involves pupils first of all entering into the thoughts and feelings of believers by allowing the symbols, artefacts, festivals and stories of their religions to work on their imaginations”.
- Making connections – in this stage the pupils are invited to compare and contrast the content of the learning experience with their own experiences, beliefs and values. The intention is to develop empathy and understanding but also to facilitate the pupils own personal search for meaning.

- Thinking it over – in this stage pupils reflect on the learning experience and should be provided with the opportunity to offer their own conclusions about the material and the processes engaged with.

In current curricular guidance for RME (LTS 2008) though the personal search approach no longer has an explicit strand, it nevertheless is recognised as a permeating approach to effective RME, particularly within the Development of Beliefs and Values line of development. In the broader context of Curriculum for Excellence such an approach clearly echoes the stated aims of the curriculum to develop skills in critical thinking and discernment, and the related ability to cogently express ethical and articulate views of issues. The SCJRME would suggest that, while local choices about pedagogical emphasis are crucial, the common model of personal search in RME outlined above of exploration, exposure to and experience of other world views, followed by reflection and personal conclusions, form the basis of personal search in RME

Religious Observance and Personal Search

The idea of Personal Search in the context Religious Observance (RO) is both an individual and a communal activity. In other words, it is in the context of a communal experience that individual reflection takes place. Religious Observance is an opportunity for the individuals (staff, pupils and, where appropriate, parents) who make up a given school community to experience a common time of reflection, (community events as defined by the circular 1/2005), on what the core beliefs and values of that community mean to them as individuals and how they, as individuals, contribute to and are influenced and shaped by those beliefs and values.

To achieve communal experiences that facilitate a personal search, these events should involve a variety of stimuli that encourages the sensing of mystery, values, meaningfulness, deeper awareness, “otherness”, challenge. The methodology might include silence, stillness, art, music, drama, story telling, images, (moving and still), light and dark, and will draw on a wide range of communities of faith, philosophical thinking, cultural and common stories and other influences that have shaped that communities history and sense of place.

Given the range of issues raised by the term “Religious Observance”, it might be helpful to use another title for these events. Such a title could echo or be rooted in other similar activities elsewhere; for example, the title “Time for Reflection” is at least in part what is being created in RO events and is also used in the Scottish Parliament.

The community events should reflect the maturity and capacity of the young people involved. They should be planned to reflect the rhythm of the school year, the cultural year and the progression of the depth of the personal search of pupils involved.

The opportunity to engage in a personal search through RO is what some communities might call the inner journey. This is achieved by creating the opportunity, through deliberate but indefinable experiences, to develop the inner resilience that some faith communities call an “inner well of faith” and others from different starting points such as philosophers who might describe it as the search for contentment or meaning.

It is not simply a search for meaningfulness in the abstract or intellectually but a sense of meaning within an inner reality; how, for example, in the face of suffering we find the strength to cope and the resilience to find meaning in our own existence behind or even within the experience of suffering. It is the depth and quality of that inner reality that will eventually shape some of the most crucial decisions we make about our lives, decisions that are often made when we are under the greatest stress or with the least time to discern what the best choice is for us and for those around us.

The opportunity to engage in a personal search through RO is a way in which the meaning for each individual of the four capacities at the centre of Curriculum for Excellence can be explored. It also allows for collective reflection on the same subject. RO well delivered, especially where that delivery is led by or fed by pupil experience and understanding, can be a very effective way of articulating how those four capacities have been explored, understood and begun to be lived by pupils

The content and form of the common events can be shaped or informed by the experiences of those who live within the frame of a confessional life as well as those whose world view is experienced with no sense of confession, faith or divinity.

The opportunity to engage in a personal search through RO can be described as the exploration of the spiritual dimension of human self awareness, a sense of the other, of mystery, awe and wonder, of relationships with the self and with those around us, a capacity to be loved and to love others, a willingness to use how we feel about our life experiences as part of how we understand the meaningfulness of those experiences for ourselves and for any others involved.

The opportunity to engage in a personal search through RO will create a journey that will be shaped by daily experiences, family, faith and belief in their broadest sense, maturity and other stimuli external to the community events in schools. Those community events should, in part, be designed to help make sense of those other experiences.

The effectiveness of the opportunities to engage in a personal search through RO cannot be measured as much other school based learning can be. That should not preclude monitoring its efficacy through careful feedback obtained in supporting the inner journey of the individual participants. This can be done through, for example, journaling, small group reflections and questions, looking for indications in the quality and content of class work and participation in discussion and debate.

It is the view of the SJCRME that RO in can make a significant contribution to all contexts for learning. RO contributes:

- to the ethos and life of the school as a community by offering the opportunity for a corporate event which visibly and collectively provides a forum for the investigation, questioning and revisiting of values;
- to wider society as a means by which its various beliefs, values, traditions and institutions can be represented and investigated by pupils, thereby developing tolerance and understanding within the school community;
- to curriculum areas and subjects as means by which subject content can be linked to other areas of the curriculum, the wider community of the school and wider society;
- to the life of the individual, providing an opportunity for personal development, expression and achievement.

The SJCRME recognises that the personal search approach, which has developed within non-denominational RME, is a valuable pedagogical strategy in the achievement of these aims. The SJCRME also recognises that RO is often delivered by school management and non-RME staff and that many RME staff in secondary schools will be reluctant to contribute to RO events (perhaps as a result of fears that such a contribution could undermine the non-confessional approach to RME). However, hopefully this paper shows that this should no longer be a consideration and that RME has a lot to offer RO as it currently exists. Such a contribution may not be the direct involvement of RME specialists but could be through the development of RO materials and approaches that reflect approaches to beliefs and values (religious and non-religious) that have existed in RME for some time.

Possible Discussion Questions

1. In your school who plans and delivers RO events? To what extent are pupils involved?
2. Does your school have guidelines or a policy for RO events that outline recommended approaches and strategies? If so, does this policy echo the 'personal search' approach outlined in this paper?

3. What is the role (if any) of RME staff, approaches and content in the planning and delivery of RO events?
4. How representative of your school constituency are your RO events? How wide a range of outside speakers or organisations are represented?

Selected References

Jackson, R. (2004) *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality*, London and New York: Routledge Falmer.

Learning and Teaching Scotland (2001), *Effective Teaching of Religious Education: Personal Search*, Edinburgh: HMSO

Scottish Executive (2005a) *The Report of the Religious Observance Review Group*
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/05/19351/37052>

7 Religious Observance Template

Purpose

The purpose of the template here is to guide thinking and help prepare for RO events making sure that all important features outlined in the Religious Observance Review Group Report are in place.

Application

This template can be used in an RO event of any size, length, age group or location

Who Completes this?

The person or chaplaincy team in charge of the RO event should complete this consulting with the RO team in the school and if appropriate SMT.

Filling the Boxes in the Template

- ❖ **Rationale:** why this event is being done, how it is being shaped and how it fits in with the life of the school community

- ❖ **Title:** What it's going to be called

- ❖ **Stage:** which age group, year group or stage of pupils this is aimed at

- ❖ **Aim:** The broad aim of what is intended to be achieved through this event.

- ❖ **Objectives** This section is in two parts.

1]The first links the event with the sensings laid out as examples in the Review Group Report. (Sensing mystery; values; meaningfulness; a changed quality of awareness; otherness; and challenge - p13). It is these factors which differentiate an RO event from simply e.g. a PSD lesson or an administrative assembly in the life of the school. This list may not be exhaustive, but it does give an indication of some essential elements of the spiritual dimension of human life.

While it cannot be guaranteed that pupils and staff will experience a sense of mystery etc, events should be designed which allow for this to happen and to be nurtured.

This section allows staff to chart this objective over the course of a year and the breadth of a pupil's experience of school life

2]The second part lays out what a pupil or member of staff should be able to do at the end of the event, by e.g. stating new things learned, being able to analyse their own beliefs; or, identify challenges to respond to and how they will do it.

- ❖ **Link with ACfE.** This task enables us to locate the RO event within the broader educational programme of the school, either through the four capacities of a Curriculum for Excellence.
- ❖ **Is this part of a series?** It is helpful over the longer term to plan how this event will fit in with others, or how the themes may be developed or built on.
- ❖ **Introduction.** Deciding how the event will be introduced and who will do this are important in setting the tone for the whole event. Careful thought should be given to this as much as to any other section.
- ❖ **Stimulus/ Stimuli.** The stimulus/ stimuli which allow(s) for reflection and provoke(s) consideration of spiritual themes is/ are key to the event. The possible stimuli within our contemporary culture, religious traditions and current events are many and varied. The forms in which this can be presented allow for considerable variety. Care has to be taken to justify why a certain stimulus and means of delivery have been chosen.

Examples of stimuli could be e.g. a faith based story; a clip from a film or a TV programme; a drama; poetry or reading; a PowerPoint presentation, a charity speaker; a story from a member of the school or wider community; local cultural event a piece of contemporary music; or a national/ international event.

Key to this process is understanding how the stimulus supports the aim and objectives of the event and are linked in with the broader aspirations of RO.

- ❖ **Guided Reflection.** Having presented the stimulus/ stimuli a careful teasing out of the issues raised is required in order to allow those present to interpret and be fully involved in the event. Again, this is done with a view on the aim and objectives of the event.
- ❖ **Response & Possible Next Steps.** This can take many forms. It could be a challenge to go and further reflect on the issues raised. If the stimuli and reflection have been powerful, then this may be enough. If a challenge to do something arises out of the preceding sections then action may be appropriate. Prayer (used inclusively or allowing non-participation) may be the truly human action as a result of the issues considered.

This also allows the opportunity to link the RO event with the wider curriculum

- ❖ **Evaluation** (a) Linked with the objectives set out above. Obviously an exam is not an appropriate means of evaluating whether the objectives have been achieved, but a short discussion with selected pupils, or with the pupils on the Pupil Council may be.

Under the **Standards in Scotland's Schools. Act 2000**, 2.1. account must be taken of “so far as is reasonably practicable, to the views (if there is a wish to express them) of the child or young person in decisions that significantly affect that child or young person, taking account of the child or young person's age and maturity”

If a shared value of the school is “respect” then genuine consultation with pupils models this value.

- ❖ **Evaluation** (b) the team who ran the event should take time to consider the event, whether or not the objectives were achieved (and if not why not), and lay out next steps.
- ❖ **Evaluation** (c) evaluation of pupil participation and engagement with the event.
- ❖ **Running Order** allows everyone involved to know what comes next.

The Template Part 1 - structure

Rationale	This section should include a statement setting the scene. E.g. "within the school community/ local community/ pupil's lives/ pupils and staff experience.... This assembly intends to explore this theme and enable
Title	Title of Assembly or event
Stage	Age group or year group
Aim	Set out the aim of the event.
Objectives	1] At the end of this pupils will have experienced (list words from RORG report) mystery, values, meaningfulness, changed quality of awareness, otherness, challenge. 2] At the end of this pupils will be able to (use words such as describe, list, state, explain, evaluate, identify, select, analyse, evaluate,... not words such as understand, appreciate, be aware of...)
Link with 5-14 or ACfE	5-14. ACfE
Is this part of a series	State series or follow up
Introduction	
Stimulus/ stimuli	
Guided Reflection	
Response & Possible Next Steps	
Evaluation (a) (achieving the objectives)	How will we know the objectives have been achieved> e.g. Discussion with pupils
Evaluation (b) (of the team and event by the team)	Of the event will happen by post assembly chaplains meeting.
Evaluation (c) (evaluation of pupil engagement and participation)	

Rationale	
Title	
Aim	
Stage	
Objectives	
Link with ACfE	
Is this part of a series	
Introduction	
Stimulus/ stimuli	
Guided Reflection	
Response & possible Next Steps	

Evaluation a	
Evaluation b	
Evaluation c	

8 Sample Local Authority Policy



East Dunbartonshire Council

www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON: 10TH OCTOBER 2006
REPORT NO: CTY/164/06/JS BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (COMMUNITY)
CONTACT OFFICER: JOHN SIMMONS, HEAD OF EDUCATION
(TEL: 0141-578 8709)

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE IN EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE SCHOOLS

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of the report is to highlight to the Committee the document entitled "Guidance on the Implementation of Religious Observance in East Dunbartonshire Schools" and to seek approval for its issue to all educational establishments and services.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 Religious Observance is a statutory requirement for schools under The Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

2.2 The Education Service established a Religious Observance Working Group to produce a guidance document for schools on the implementation of Religious Observance.

2.3 The document (**Appendix 1**) details East Dunbartonshire Council's recommendations to schools regarding the implementation of both the findings of the national Religious Observance Review Group and of the Scottish Executive's Circular 1/2005.

2.4 It should be noted that these recommendations do not apply to Religious and Moral Education (RME). Circular 6/91 remains in force at present. A review of RME is being undertaken in the context of A Curriculum for Excellence.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

3.1 approve the guidance document for issue to all educational establishments and services in East Dunbartonshire; and

3.2 commend the members of the working group for their contributions.

JOHN SIMMONS

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 In February 2005, the Scottish Executive published Circular 1/2005 (**within Appendix 1**). This circular describes and explains the Scottish Executive's policy on the provision of religious observance in Scottish schools and sets out action for planning the provision of religious observance.

4.2 The Circular replaces the arrangements for religious observance set out in the previous Circular 6/91 and applies to all primary and secondary schools, including special schools/units.

5.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

5.1 The Education Service established a Religious Observance Working Group to produce guidance for schools on the implementation of Religious Observance in accordance with the Scottish Executive Circular 1/2005.

5.2 The guidance (**Appendix 1**) is provided with the intention of helping schools to ensure Religious Observance is relevant and appropriate to the pupil's experience.

5.3 In addition, it seeks to reflect the flavour of recent developments in Scottish education such as the Standards in Scotland Schools Act 2004, the National Priorities in Education and the more recent response by the Executive to the National Debate, A Curriculum for Excellence (2004). These all emphasised the nurturing and development of the whole person, one who can make a positive contribution to the society in which she or he lives.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 There are no implications for other departments.

Appendix 1
GUIDANCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE
IN EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE SCHOOLS

Contents Page

1. Background and introduction
2. The Aims and Definition of Religious Observance
3. Celebrating Shared Values in the School Community
4. Understanding Spiritual Development
5. Religious Observance and Organised Worship
6. Assemblies and Religious Observance
7. Frequency
8. Planning for Effective Religious Observance
9. Information for Parents/carers and the Right to Withdraw
10. Roles and Responsibilities
11. The Role of Chaplains
12. Procedures for Schools Regarding Visiting Faith Representatives or Speakers

Appendices

1. Circular 1/2005
2. Spiritual Development
3. 5-14 Religious Education – Roman Catholic Schools, section 7.
4. Helpful Resources

**Guidance on the Implementation of Religious Observance in East
Dunbartonshire Schools**

1. Background and Introduction

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 repeats the legislation of previous acts dating to 1872 when the social, cultural and educational contexts were very different to today. This act places a statutory requirement on education authorities to provide religious observance in Scottish Schools. In the HMIE report, Standards and Quality in Secondary Schools: Religious and Moral Education, 1995-2000, some concern was expressed about some aspects of Religious Observance, in particular its frequency. As a result, a review of arrangements regarding all aspects of religious observance was undertaken by the Religious Observance Review Group. This group consulted widely at national level and its final report was published in 2004.

Circular 1/2005 was published by the Scottish Executive in February 2005. This circular (Appendix 1) describes and explains the Scottish Executive's policy on the provision of

religious observance in Scottish schools and sets out action for planning the provision of religious observance. The Circular replaces the arrangements for religious observance set out in Circular 6/91 and applies to all primary and secondary schools, including special schools/units. Advice for schools is contained in both the revised circular and in the Report of the Religious Observance Review Group.

The policy on **religious education** set out in Circular 6/91 remains in force at present. Following from Educating for Excellence, The Executive's Response to the National Debate, [A Curriculum for Excellence](#) (2004) set out a unified set of purposes and principles for the whole curriculum in Scotland. One stated purpose of the programme is to ensure that pupils have opportunities to achieve in different ways, not only in academic terms, to ensure that children and young people acquire the full range of skills and abilities relevant to growing, living and working in the contemporary world.

These include the ability to understand different beliefs and cultures as well as to develop informed ethical views of complex issues. Religious observance can have a role to play here in contributing to the development of confident individuals with secure values and beliefs who have an understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual. That said, the overall purpose of religious observance is to contribute to the spiritual development of pupils in schools. The following guidance is provided with the intention of helping schools to ensure that Religious Observance is relevant and appropriate to the pupil's experience. In addition it seeks to reflect the flavour of recent major developments in Scottish education such as the Standards in Scotland Schools Act etc 2000, The National Priorities in Education and the more recent The Executive's Response to the National Debate, [A Curriculum for Excellence](#) (2004). These all emphasise the nurturing and development of the whole person, one who can make a positive contribution to the society in which she or he lives.

East Dunbartonshire Council endorses the findings and recommendations outlined in the report of the Religious Observance Review Group. The following guidance draws from its findings and applies to all primary, secondary and special schools/units. The unifying principles behind the different approaches to religious observance are set out in this paper.

2. The Aims and Definition of Religious Observance

The difficulties experienced in defining religious observance during the consultation conducted by the review group are listed in pages 15 to 17 of its report. The wider definition developed, and accepted by Scottish Ministers, is indicative of the inclusive nature of the experience for pupils and participating staff.

The **aims** of religious observance are defined as:

"to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community; to express and celebrate the shared values of the school community." (Circular 1/2005)

Scottish Ministers and the Religious Observance Review Group **define** the term for use in schools in Scotland as:

'community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community.' (Report of the Religious Observance Review Group)

Key issues which emerge from this definition and which are elaborated upon in the following sections are:

- celebrating shared values in the school community
- understanding spiritual development
- religious observance, assemblies and organised worship
- frequency
- planning for effective religious observance
- information for parents/carers and the right to withdraw
- the role and responsibilities
- the role of chaplains

3. Celebrating Shared Values in the School Community

Just as is seen in Scotland as a nation, many school communities are characterised by a diversity of beliefs and practices reflecting a range of religious and non-religious stances. Religious observance in schools needs to be delivered in such a way that it reflects this diversity and

- *“is sensitive to our traditions but is also sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective”*
- *“can build on Scotland’s strong Christian traditions without compromising them.”*

(Circular 1/2005)

One implication of the rich diversity of beliefs and traditions in Scotland is that forms of religious observance may differ from school to school. **Schools are therefore encouraged to make decisions based on local needs and circumstances.**

These decisions should follow a consultation with all interested parties on how religious observance can be implemented in an appropriate way. This can best be guaranteed by involving a range of people from the school and its local community in the preparation, planning and presentation of the assembly or other gathering. Pupils should have a key role in this process. Circular 1/2005 refers to the important principle that, in planning for religious observance, schools should ensure that pupils can participate in religious observance without compromising their personal faith stances.

Within the context of a school community, shared values give a sense of belonging and help to underpin all aspects of its life. Values are seen in their most common form at present in the statement of schools aims. They are also reflected in many school policies, for example, the policy on discipline or inclusion.

They can be seen in the way teachers approach the discussion of particular issues with children through circle time, for example, or in how pastoral care is delivered to those in need.

The process of understanding and developing the shared values of the school community should involve pupils, staff, parents, churches, other faith communities and the wider community in which the school is set. This could be done through discussion with pupil councils, the school board or through written forms of information gathering. Consultation on values could be undertaken, for example, when a school decides to review its aims. Participation in the process is an essential element in terms of ownership of the agreed values.

While many schools would identify and promote values such as those of honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and concern for others as common shared values in Scottish society, what is also true is that different communities hold values particular to their own traditions. In delivering religious observance it is important that:

- these values are acknowledged

- the right of people to hold them is respected
 - pupils are encouraged to consider these values and the life stances which they reflect.
- In denominational schools additional guidance may also be provided by The Church or other appropriate religious authorities.

Regular assemblies or other gatherings for religious observance provide opportunities for the school community to reflect on, and develop, a deeper understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual and the shared values of the school community.

4. Understanding Spiritual Development

The terms spiritual and spiritual development have been debated for centuries by theologians and philosophers. A useful definition of spiritual development in the school context is that spiritual development *'includes being helped to recognize, reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the value and worth of each individual which comes from one's dignity as a person (Report of the Religious Observance Review Group)*.

For many this may also involve the deepening of a personal relationship with God.

The definition above can be seen as offering a school the opportunity to encourage pupils to reflect further on the stimulus provided at a religious observance assembly. Such an assembly may have taken a values or thematic approach to an issue or topic which the pupil is to reflect upon.

The term "spiritual" can be seen as being applicable to all pupils; the potential for spiritual development open to every one and not confined to the development of religious beliefs. In spite of the apparent move away from involvement with formal religion in contemporary Scottish society, there is evidence of a growing interest in the spiritual dimension. Many people outwith formal religion would use the term spiritual to describe key aspects of their experience. Another useful definition from the National Curriculum Council is that spirituality: *'needs to be seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition... it has to do with the unique search for human identity...'*. (*Spiritual and Moral Development, National Curriculum Council*).

The spiritual dimension comes from what makes us human and this can be seen and expressed in many ways. There are many contexts that can be used to encourage pupils to consider matters from a spiritual perspective. Some of these are illustrated in *Making Sense of Spiritual Development published by The Stapleford Centre*.

With regard to religious observance, the Religious Observance Review Group identifies 'sensing' as a key experience for the spiritual development of pupils. Further information on aspects of sensing and on the characteristics of a spiritually developing person are contained in **Appendix 2**.

Effective religious observance has an important role to play in the spiritual development of all within the school community.

5. Religious Observance and Organised Worship

Circular 1/2005 clearly states that Scottish Ministers endorse the findings of the Religious Observance

Review Group on the relationship between organised acts of worship and religious observance: *"Where the school, whether denominational or non-denominational, is continuous with a faith community, that community's faith in the "focus of worship", may be assumed and worship may be considered to be appropriate as part of the formal activity of the school"*

(Circular 1/2005)

Denominational schools, although under the management of the education authority, include worship and other specific activities within assemblies for pupils, as is appropriate to their community of faith. Further elaboration on religious observance in Roman Catholic schools is contained within appendix 3.

Religious observance is not concerned in the main with organised worship in non-denominational schools.

Worship is a free response of an individual and community to what is considered worthy of worship. This response involves three elements:

- belief
- desire to worship
- the commitment to life stances related to the focus of worship.

An **organised act of worship** is based on the assumption that those present share these elements.

It is also important to note that while religious observance as now defined **does not** describe an act of organised worship, it **does not preclude** the possibility of worship as the free response of individuals to the stimulus offered (see also section 8).

The most appropriate context for an organised act of worship in a community where several different faiths are represented is within the informal curriculum as part of the range of activities offered for example by religious groups, chaplains and other religious leaders.

Many schools in East Dunbartonshire have made good arrangements with faith representatives who invite pupils to participate in organized worship or a range of other activities (see also sections 11 and 13).

6. Assemblies and Religious Observance

At present school assemblies are the most common vehicle for delivering Religious Observance. Both the Report of the Religious Observance Review Group and Circular 1/2005 stress that a **clear distinction** has to be drawn between assemblies devised for the delivery of religious observance and assemblies which support other purposes.

Communicating day to day administrative arrangements and information about extra-curricular activities at an assembly is important for the life and work of the school. However, this type of activity should be kept separate from **occasions that are specifically set aside for religious observance**.

Those organizing and leading religious observance must ensure that its overall integrity and purpose are kept distinctive and not compromised by the inclusion of routine administrative announcements. Schools also have flexibility to include other forms of grouping in their approach to religious observance.

This may include delivery to:

- a class group
- a year group
- a stage
- whole school
- a departmental group.

Given the different size of schools and range of pupil numbers at any stage in East Dunbartonshire, schools should choose the model which best suits their circumstances.

7. Frequency

The frequency of religious observance needs to be balanced with the impact it has on the spiritual development of the school community through providing a valuable and inclusive experience. To impact on spiritual development, religious observance needs to be a regular feature of the life of the school.

Equally, to impact on spiritual development, pupils will need to feel that religious observance is relevant to their lives.

Effective religious observance requires careful planning by schools, particularly in the early stages of moving towards any new arrangements. The school community should be involved in making decisions about frequency ensuring that the quality, rather than only the frequency, of the experience of religious observance is taken into consideration.

Every school should provide opportunities for Religious Observance **at least six times** in a school year **in addition** to traditional celebrations central to the life of the school community, and preferably with greater frequency.

A calendar for religious observance should be produced and shared with parents/carers and the school community. This may be a term plan or year plan. Traditional celebrations in some schools may already include more than those already offered at Christmas and Easter. Many primary schools value weekly religious observance as part of their regular assembly programme and may choose to continue with this practice.

While ensuring that religious observance is sufficiently frequent, the emphasis should be on the quality of the experience for pupils rather than quantity.

8. Planning for Effective Religious Observance

In order to ensure that the experience of Religious Observance is of a high quality, those planning and leading it should look to ensure that the following characteristics are evident.

Planning at Whole School Level

A team approach is recommended.

Planning at whole school level should be undertaken by all those who have responsibility for religious observance. This may include, for example, the Head Teacher, Chaplain(s), interested staff, a parent representative and/or a youth worker associated with a faith group. Pupil representation for some key tasks, such as consultation on a proposed programme of topics or assembly format, is also recommended.

In some schools planning may be undertaken by the Religious Observance team.

The planning group will have responsibility for contributing to the formulation of school policy, for the planning of events as well as the monitoring and review of these (see also section 10).

Leading

The Head Teacher, staff, chaplains, parents, pupils and visitors from the community or from organisations can all make effective contributions to religious observance. Sharing the leading brings many benefits such as offering a range of perspectives on a variety of issues for pupils to consider. Good planning and clear expectations are important to ensure that the experience appeals to pupils and engages their interest.

Please also refer to sections 10 and 11.

Location

A communal location within the school is the most suitable venue for religious observance.

All schools have areas such as assembly halls or gymnasias which have the potential for being appropriate locations for Religious Observance. It is important that every attempt is made to ensure that pupils can participate comfortably. Seating, ventilation, lighting and sound are important considerations in ensuring that pupils can give their full attention to what is being presented.

In addition, to take account of the fact that religious observance may at times be organised on a group basis, schools should also look to have a smaller area available. This space could also be made available

for organised acts of worship, for private reflection or prayer. The contemplation room within a new build school can offer an appropriate location for smaller groups.

Stimulus and Response

Religious observance should invite pupils through a shared, interesting and appealing stimulus to consider and reflect on a range of issues, values or themes that relate to their experience. As in good teaching, the stimulus for reflections should look to draw on:

- ▣ incidents which occur in the life of the school or in the local, national or international communities

- ▣ values which the school wishes the group to reflect upon considered from a spiritual perspective

- ▣ themes which are important to the life of the school or society in general - such as personal responsibility, responsibility to care for others, stewardship of natural resources – considered from a spiritual perspective

- ▣ the annual cycle of religious festivals.

The stimulus may be sourced from a range of written or media texts such as story, music, art, drama, film, television and/or the vibrant and rich resource of religious traditions.

The response to the stimulus can take a variety of forms one of which, for some members of the school community in non-denominational schools, may be worship or prayer. A period of time given for quiet reflection is one approach used in some non-denominational schools.

Appropriate atmosphere

For religious observance to be effective, creating an appropriate atmosphere where pupils feel relaxed and open to learn from what is being said and done is important. In order to achieve a mood of respectful attentiveness, leaders should consider the appropriate use of music, presentation media and lighting as well as procedures for entering and leaving the area.

Recent work on quiet assemblies in non-denominational schools and quiet time in denominational schools has proved very effective, particularly with primary school pupils (contact details are contained in Appendix 3.) Such techniques could be used in a variety of contexts. Silence can be powerful and offer a space for individual pupils to begin their responses to what has been shared.

9. Information for Parents/ Carers and the Right to Withdraw.

Parents and Carers

Under the terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, parents/carers have the right to ask for their child or children to be withdrawn from religious observance. A statement to this effect **must** appear in each school handbook. It is important that schools inform parents/carers of:

- the nature of religious observance in the school, in particular in moving to any new arrangements such as quiet assembly where this experience may be unfamiliar to the parents/carers
- the proposed term or year plan for religious observance
- the relationship and distinction between religious education and religious observance
- the contribution which shared religious observance can make to the ethos of the school and the sense of community within the school as a whole

In particular, parents/carers should be reassured that the form(s) of religious observance offered in school adopts an open and respectful approach and does not seek to compromise the beliefs of any pupils or their families. In the past schools have dealt with such requests with sensitivity and understanding and it is expected that this approach will continue.

Parents/carers should also be reassured that the focus of religious observance will be on the spiritual development of all pupils.

Parents/carers may also wish to be reassured that the religious observance offered by the school during an assembly will not take the form of multi-faith worship.

It is anticipated that the parent/carer will have shared the decision for withdrawal from Religious Observance with the child prior to any arrangements being made at school level.

Pupils

If a pupil is withdrawn from religious observance the school should make suitable arrangements for the pupil to participate in a worthwhile activity. No child should be disadvantaged as a result of being withdrawn from religious observance.

10. Roles and Responsibilities in Denominational and Non-denominational schools

When considering particular roles and responsibilities it is useful to reiterate the definition and aims of religious observance. The **definition** of religious observance as stated in Circular 1/2005 is:

“community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community and express and celebrate the shared values of the school community”.

The **aims** of religious observance are described as being

“to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school’s community; to express and celebrate the shared values of the school”

Within these contexts and in distinguishing between organised acts of worship, Religious and Moral Education and religious observance, the Review group stressed that the school community including both pupils and staff should be able to participate in forms of religious observance. In Circular 1/2005, Scottish Ministers acknowledged that the recommendations of the Religious Observance Review Group outlined sensitive and tactful solutions which will allow schools to provide religious observance which is an inclusive, valuable and meaningful experience for all. The following guidance has been drawn up to ensure that school staff and/or teams involved in the delivery of religious observance in schools have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are therefore equipped to engage with the delivery thereof.

Teachers

Teachers will have a responsibility for:

- participating in religious observance assemblies in line with Annex B of A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century.

- engaging, as appropriate, in evaluating the school's religious observance programme
- supporting, as appropriate, the celebration of success and good practice in this area.
- contributing towards good order and the wider needs of the school within the context of Religious observance
- promoting and safeguarding the health, welfare safety of pupils in this context.

School senior management

School senior management will have responsibility for:

- formulation of school policy on religious observance
- leading and facilitating the planning of religious observance assemblies and other opportunities for class, year, and stage as appropriate
- ensuring that the minimum number of opportunities for religious observance as indicated in circular1/2005 are met.
- ensuring that staff can participate in a religious observance assembly without compromise to their faith stance and that teachers are aware of the expectations related to their involvement in the programme
- responding to requests from faith groups to meet with pupils for organised acts of worship as part of the informal curriculum where appropriate personnel and accommodation can be provided
- ensuring that parents/carers receive appropriate information about activities held in the schools
- monitoring and evaluating the religious observance programme
- ensuring that health and safety considerations, in particular for pupils, are built into the school's approach for the delivery of religious observance
- ensuring that all chaplains are made aware of the local authority policy on child protection and the school's procedures relating to this.

Where the school has a **religious observance team**, the team will be responsible, as appropriate, for:

- working with the school chaplaincy team to plan opportunities for religious observance as defined by Circular 1/2005
- planning opportunities for religious observance as defined by Circular 1/2005 and in the Report of the Review Group on Religious Observance.
- contributing to the formulation of school policy
- engaging in evaluation of the school's religious observance programme
- helping schools to work with parents/carers as appropriate to the programme
- helping to plan, and taking part in, religious observance assemblies

The role of the education authority will include:

- monitoring the frequency of religious observance in line with Circular 1/2005 and in the context of annual or triennial review
- ensuring that Head Teachers are consulted about future developments relating to Religious Observance
- supporting schools in implementing new initiatives which impact upon religious observance as appropriate to the Improvement Objectives and/or Service Plan
- encouraging and supporting schools and clusters to share good practice in religious observance

11. The Role of Chaplains

The appointment of chaplains to Roman Catholic schools is made directly by the church authorities. In practice the parish priest is usually appointed to their local primary school. Where the primary area encompasses more than one parish it is customary for the priest from each parish to be involved with the local primary school.

Given the increasing pressure on local parish priests and ministers, schools may wish to consider a chaplaincy team or group approach. For example, in one East Dunbartonshire secondary members of the

Catholic ethos committee and teachers of Religious Education have volunteered to support the school chaplain in several areas such as pastoral care, in helping to prepare Mass and in helping with arrangements for acts of worship.

It is customary for non-denominational schools to have a designated chaplain, usually one of the local ministers. The chaplain traditionally has been involved in the planning and in conducting acts of worship as well as in carrying out pastoral duties with pupils and staff. While the definition of religious observance has widened it is important that chaplains should, if asked to participate in a religious observance assembly, be able to participate **without compromise to their personal faith stances.**

Chaplains and other faith group representatives or leaders offer important and varied contributions to the life of a school. A chaplain plays an important role in the life and work of the school both as a resource person and as someone who can offer pastoral and spiritual support to both pupils and staff. The decision to establish a chaplaincy team is clearly understandable given the variety of roles which could be undertaken. These diverse roles may include:

- Developing and delivering, in conjunction with the school, the Religious Observance calendar of events
- Providing pastoral care for staff and pupils, and where appropriate their families
- Supporting community events
- Having a key role during times of extreme difficulty
- Visiting classes at the invitation of teachers to complement the curriculum
- Offering services of worship or prayer gatherings to those who wish to attend outwith the Teaching day
- Contributing to extra-curricular clubs
- Leading or helping with pupil groups with a particular religious/moral/citizenship interest
- Participating in school trips.

The role of the chaplain may differ from school to school depending on the chaplain's particular talents, the needs identified by the school and the time available.

The role of the chaplain needs to be made clear and regularly reviewed in discussion with the Head Teacher. A full discussion should take place between Head Teacher and chaplain on how religious observance is to be planned and implemented in order to address the needs of the school community. This is especially important given the variety of demands made on those who are religious leaders in their communities.

The discussion should be based on the premise that the way in which religious observance is to be implemented is appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils.

Chaplains can only work in school at the invitation of the Head Teacher in the non-denominational sector and so it is important that expectations are clear and explicit for both parties. Proselytizing is not acceptable **within the context of whole school** religious observance in the non-denominational sector by chaplains or by teachers. Acknowledging a personal belief and sharing this is different in nature. Chaplains in non-denominational

schools, of course, perform a different role when leading groups in a worship activity for which pupils have volunteered.

Increasingly schools in the non-denominational sector may wish to have chaplaincy teams which include representatives from a range of traditions who cooperate with other members of staff and pupils in the planning, preparation and presentation of acts of religious observance. Non-denominational schools may wish to develop a chaplaincy team which is ecumenical or multi-faith in composition if this meets the needs of the school community. Each member of the chaplaincy team will be able to draw on the rich resources of their own religious tradition in this case. These resources can be used by the group responsible for religious observance as stimulus material relevant to the school community's experience and understanding. Some chaplains may also draw on material from other sources including stories from other religions.

Where chaplains are not comfortable with this, their stance should be respected and other members of the religious observance team would plan and implement the assembly or other activity when stimulus material from other traditions or faiths is being used.

It is again important to stress at this point that **this form of inclusive religious observance does not include multi-faith worship.**

Within the context of organised acts of worship within schools, the chaplain will be addressing members of their own faith communities. In this context a confessional approach is appropriate.

Procedure Manual Nos.1/04, 1/05 and 1/06 contain further information for schools.

It is hoped that LTS will issue national guidance on the roles of chaplains and chaplaincy teams in schools, as indicated in Circular 1/2005, in session 2006-07.

12. Procedures for Schools regarding Visiting Faith Representatives or Speakers

In planning for opportunities for religious observance, as in other aspects of education, Head Teachers will often find it valuable to invite another person or agency to visit the school, for example to participate in an assembly or to work with a group of children. The expertise which such individuals provide can prove invaluable in complementing and supplementing the work of the school. Individuals from faith and non-faith groups can contribute both additional knowledge and a breadth of experience, which might prove difficult for many schools to provide without extensive research. With careful planning their contribution can bring many benefits to the experience our pupils will have of religious observance, helping pupils to: "recognise, reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the value and worth of each individual which comes from one's dignity as a person and their contribution to the school and wider communities" (Circular 1/2005)

Visitors representing a range of responses to faith in action can impact on the spiritual development of the school community in helping to make the experience an openly inclusive one. In addition to providing a stimulus for religious observance assemblies, visiting individuals or agencies may also be able to contribute to staff development for those teachers who have a responsibility for the delivery of Religious and Moral Education programmes of study. On other occasions the visitor may provide an opportunity for worship to take place outwith the school day.

In order to maximise the effectiveness of contributions made in this way, the following procedures give advice and assistance on the criteria to be met in the choice and use of visiting individuals or agencies by schools. Designed to be followed by Head Teachers these procedures are not meant to be restrictive or to impede the flexibility of local decision-

making. They are designed rather to offer advice on preparation for visits, parental guidance and school security. It is also meant to be used in conjunction with the school/authority policies on Child Protection Procedures. .

Planning with Speakers or Visitors

1. Visitors should be viewed as a resource to enhance the planned religious observance programme.
2. Planning the programme should involve, **at different stages**, the Head Teacher, the school religious observance team, chaplaincy team and visiting speakers.
3. The programme should allow for all pupils, staff and speakers to be able to contribute without compromising their faith stance. The thematic approach outlined in the Report of the Religious Observance Review Group offers one way in which pupils can be engaged in a religious observance assembly in an inclusive way.

Planning with Speakers or Visitors (continued)

4. Speakers representing a religious standpoint should have credible standing with, be acceptable to and where possible be from recognised faith groups or organisations. It may be the case that a local church is represented by someone other than the chaplain, for example a youth outreach worker.
5. If an organisation is to be used to provide additional input, it is desirable that the organisation has links with statutory bodies. For example, a presentation from a major organisation such as the police or from a recognised charity may be useful in supplementing specific programmes on moral issues. This is especially so when the visitor is able to speak about or demonstrate how their own faith stance affects their working life or their response to particular issues. A school may choose to include a presentation from non-faith groups to provide additional input to the school community's planned programme for religious observance
6. A preliminary meeting should be held with the individual or agency and the Head Teacher or member of the senior management team to plan the type of delivery and content. This is to ensure that the input complements the religious observance policy of the school.
7. A designated area should be allocated to pupils who wish to worship or pray within the school building, for example during Ramadan or when celebrating Mass.

Expectations

1. It is essential that an acceptable level of professionalism will be maintained at all times by invited visitors. Criticism, implied or direct, of other faith groups should not be permitted at any point during a presentation whether the individual or agency believes it appropriate or not. Circular 1/2005 makes it clear that religious observance needs to be developed in a way which is sensitive to our Christian traditions but which "Must be equally sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective." The contribution of the individual or group should be based on the experience and expertise of the individual or group involved.
2. Individuals or agencies should not be permitted to sell publications to pupils. Any fee for the presentation should be agreed with the Head Teacher in advance.
3. Individuals or groups should be agreeable to vetting or checking (if appropriate) by the Head Teacher. In particular presenters new to the school or those wishing to address a small group must be subject to Disclosure Scotland procedures prior to working with pupils.

4. Those representatives of faith groups who wish to participate in worship with a group of pupils would be expected to bring all necessary materials as appropriate to the group who have agreed to attend.

Presentations

1. During the school day, at least one member of the teaching staff must be present throughout a small group presentation for a variety of reasons. In the case of larger meetings or assemblies, there must be sufficient staff in attendance to meet Health and Safety and also Child Protection requirements. A teacher presence is also desirable to help to contribute towards good order in creating the appropriate atmosphere for, say, a religious observance assembly or group worship.

2. The presentation should be appropriate to the ages and stages of pupils concerned. It would not be appropriate for the same presentation to be delivered regardless of age and stage, and, to primary and secondary pupils in the same way. The school should ensure that the presentation is pitched at the appropriate level as well as being interesting and stimulating for the pupils concerned.

3. Handouts or other materials to be used during presentations should be discussed with and/or submitted to the Head Teacher in advance of the presentation to ensure their suitability for use in the school. A sensible approach will be required, for example, with drama presentations for older pupils where difficult or sensitive issues are explored.

If any difficulties occur or doubts remain unresolved by these guidelines, the Head Teacher should consult with the Head of Education.

Appendix Spiritual Development

The Report of the Religious Observance Review Group identifies a number of key experiences that contribute to pupil's spiritual development. One of these is the capacity to sense. Sensing draws from experiences in which pupils explore their feelings and attitudes and build their awareness and insights.

Sensing includes:

Sensing mystery: experiences of awe, wonder and mystery about the natural world, human achievement and for some divinity

Sensing values: attitudes and feelings about what is really important, what really matters

Sensing meaningfulness: the ability to make connections or to see potential patterns in one's life which give it meaning

Sensing a changed quality in awareness: the feeling of being 'at one' with nature, oneself and others

Sensing 'otherness': the sentiment that humans are more than their physical elements

Sensing challenge: being challenged and moved by experiences such as love, beauty, goodness, joy, compassion, injustice, evil, suffering, death.

Sensing can often be a formative process where pupils think consider and reflect on significant matters in their lives and so become clearer about how their stance on these matters is developing. Sensing is an important but at times untidy experience for pupils in that it can provide challenge as much as reassurance, pose questions as much as offer answers.

Extract from The Religious Observance Review Group Report

The characteristics of a spiritually developing person are many and varied. On the next page is one way of trying to define what these characteristics might be.

The characteristics, applicable to pupils of all ages, are taken from '*Open Windows – Spiritual Development in the Primary School*' (ISBN 1-902234-29-4), edited by Alison Farnell (published 2002) and are reproduced with kind permission of the publishers, The Stapleford Centre, The Old Lace Mill, Frederick Road, Stapleford, Nottingham, NG9 8FN.

Characteristics of a spiritually developing person

Appendix 2 (cont)

Hopeful – a willingness to see opportunities rather than obstacles in life and to recognise new beginnings.

Joyful – a sense of deep wellbeing and ease. A positive response to life not to be confused with happiness.

Loving – an affectionate, respectful, caring attitude towards other people and the environment.

Peaceful – a willingness to act collaboratively and cooperatively and to choose actions which promote harmony but not lethargic or passive.

Questing – a sense of continuing pilgrimage, discovery and search for meaning.

Realistic – earthed in the realities of situations and able to make judgements with discernment. Aware of the 'dark' night of the soul'.

Receptive – open to and able to assimilate the experiences of life and not be unduly deflected by either success or failure.

Reconciling – an ability to integrate and hold together the many aspects of life in the creative tension.

Responsible – an awareness of responsibility for oneself and actions and for others.

Reverent - an attitude of awe and humility in the presence of great beauty, creativity or wonder.

Risk-taking – a willingness to take a ‘leap of faith’ to commit oneself to a cause or person without knowing the detailed outcome.

Thankful – a sense of gratitude for all that is given and for the gift of life itself

Trusting – a willingness to believe the best of situations and others.

Truthful – a commitment to truth and a willingness to be open to new ideas and perspectives.

Visionary – the ability to see beyond the obvious and immediate and beneath the surface values and to hold to a sense of purpose

Alert – a keen, shrewd and observant awareness of all that is happening around and within

Accepting – able to accept different attitudes and opinions with dignity, wisdom and humility. This does not however imply ‘laissez faire’ or evading responsibility to speak or act when necessary

Aware of mystery – willing to admit lack of full knowledge and possessing a wondering attitude towards the awesomeness of creation.

Challenging – a willingness to ‘grasp the nettle’ and to confront issues when necessary.

Creative – an ability to use one’s imagination and creativity in all aspects of life.

Compassionate – able to empathise with others and to be ‘alongside’ them.

Committed to struggle – the appreciation that concerted and energetic action is part of the spiritual life.

Courageous – the ability to meet disappointment, difficulties, pain and anxiety without being overwhelmed

Curious – an open hearted and questioning attitude to knowledge and understanding and a willingness to be surprised.

Energetic – motivated and with a sense of determination and purpose.

Focussed – an ability to be comfortable with both stillness and silence. Not distracted by the peripheral or ephemeral and able to maintain a sense of purpose.

Forgiving – an attitude which allows for mistakes, one’s own and other’s, and seeks a path of reconciliation, reparation and renewal.

Generous – a willingness to share and ability to both give and receive.

Gentle – an attitude which seeks the welfare of others and is non-manipulative whilst maintaining strength of purpose. It includes humility but does not imply weakness.

Holistic – an awareness of the interrelatedness of all life and a sense of the importance of balance.

Appendix 3 Religious Observance in Roman Catholic Schools

The Extract below is taken from Section 7 of the 5-14 guidelines for religious observance in Roman Catholic Schools. Additional advice is available from the relevant Church authorities.

Religious Observance

Religious Observance in a Catholic school is the experience of the worship of God. It enables the members of that faith community to grow in knowledge and love of God, to grow deeper in faith and to come closer together in their witness of faith.

Worship and Celebration

Aims:

- To acknowledge and worship God as individuals and as a community;
- To deepen relationships with God and with one another;
- To make Christ present in the life of the individual and the community through the celebration of the Eucharist and other Sacraments;
- To celebrate the great events of the Liturgical Year;
- To nurture faith through the experience of communal prayer and personal prayer;
- To foster the spiritual life of the school as a worshipping community of faith;
- To familiarise pupils with the language and symbolism of worship.

The Liturgy is the official worship of the Church, which makes the mystery of Christ present in the life of the individual and the community. It adds an experiential dimension to the faith which is presented and explored in the Religious Education programme in a Catholic school.

The chaplain has a vital role to play in the liturgical life of the school and can often support liturgical celebrations, either as participant or adviser.

Teachers and other adults in the wider community have also an important role to play by offering their own witness to faith as they join pupils in worship and celebration.

No matter what the religious background of their homes might be and whether or not they identify with parish worship, Catholic pupils have a right to experience the Catholic tradition of worship and celebration.

Appendix 4 Helpful Resources

The list below is by no means exhaustive but represents some of the sources for materials currently used by some schools. LTScotland intend to include additional materials and contact details on their web-site in session 2006-07.

1. www.sacredspace.ie

Source of reflections and prayers from a Catholic perspective but may also include extracts of reflections from other faiths.

2. SCIAF

Teacher resources, and citizenship links www.sciaf.org

3. Cafod

Ideas for themed assemblies www.cafod.org.uk

4. Quiet Assemblies

Site contains exemplar assemblies using this particular strategy. Also lists other contacts. www.churchofscotland.org.uk/boards/education/edgainintroduction.htm

5. Making sense of Spiritual Development (The Stapleford Centre, 2001)

A resource for use with teachers in helping to understand the nature of spiritual development.

6. Spiritual Development in the Primary school – Opening windows (The Stapleford Centre, 2002).

7. Fischy Music materials – uses medium of music to help children discover where the strength and resources lie to deal with the issues they face in their everyday lives. Uses implicitly Christian material to gently introduce topics such as self-esteem, relationships, personal values and God. www.fischy.com.

8. The Iona Community, 4th Floor, Savoy House, 140 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3DH

ioacomm@gla.iona.org.uk www.iona.org.uk

9. Scripture Union

Scripture Union have provided a resource for assemblies called "Message from Luke". Further information is available from the website. www.scriptureunion.org.uk

10. Traidcraft

'Resources for working with young people.' 12 exemplar assemblies which could be adapted to the needs of each school. www.traidcraft.co.uk

11. Oxfam (Global citizenship)

www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet

12. Amnesty International UK

Assembly pack available www.amnesty.org.uk

13. National Society and Culham Institute 2000-5 Collective worship resources for primary and secondary schools.

14. British Red Cross

Practical ideas www.redcross.org.uk

15. The Stapleford Centre

The address for the Stapleford Centre is www.e-stapleford.co.uk

16. Damaris

Damaris produce resources for assemblies on www.damaris.org

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9 Sample Primary School Religious Observance Event 1

Rationale	This RO assembly will be delivered to the whole school. The theme of Fairtrade has been chosen to coincide with Fairtrade Fortnight.
Title	Introducing Fairtrade – Chocolate Changes Lives
Aim	• To reflect upon justice and fairness and what part we can play. • To promote awareness of Fairtrade and to encourage reflection on the impact it can make on producers.
Stage	P1-P7
Objectives	1) At the end of this assembly the pupils will have experienced - Challenge - The experience of what it means to have values that shape their choices - Changed quality of awareness 2) At the end of the assembly the pupils will be able to express how their choices even over what chocolate bar to buy affects others and how they feel about that. 3) The children will be able to state what Fairtrade products are, what difference they make to the producers and why they should consider buying them.
Link with ACfE	Effective Contributors, Confident Individuals
Is this part of a series	No
Introduction	1) Short quiz identifying various symbols and signs ending with the Fairtrade Mark. (powerpoint) 2) Pictures and examples of different Fairtrade products. Person dressed as a banana – sad banana without the Fairtrade Mark. Happy banana with Fairtrade Mark.

Stimulus/ stimuli	Name as many different chocolate bars. Do they like to eat chocolate? How does eating chocolate make them feel? Distribute blocks of chocolate in proportion to amount received by the chocolate company, shop owner, taxman and farmer for a chocolate bar. Do again but in relation to a Fairtrade chocolate bar. Ask questions – Which one is fairer? How will the farmers feel? How do we feel when some injustice has been done to us? Are we required to be just and fair in our lives?
Guided Reflection	Stories of how Fairtrade has changed the lives of 2 different communities (powerpoint slides) Sit in silence after the stories for even a minute to think how they felt about the fact that their choices affect other people who have much less than them.
Response & Possible Next Steps	Discuss the benefits of Fairtrade. Why should we buy it? Read Micah 6:8 (on powerpoint slide) ‘And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy...’ Our challenge is to act justly and fairly – can we choose to buy Fairtrade goods and encourage others to do likewise?
Evaluation (a)	Discussion with Pupil Council – should we promote Fairtrade further in the school? How do we do that?
Evaluation (b)	Discussion with SMT about whether aims and objectives were met.
Evaluation (c)	

10. Sample Primary School Religios Observance Event 2

Rationale	This RO assembly will be delivered to the whole school. (Adapted from 'Identity: Am I Beautiful Enough' Reference: PAOLEW1273 from Assemblies online.com)
Title	Beauty Isn't Only Skin Deep
Aim	- To reflect upon what makes a person beautiful. - To look for inner beauty in themselves and others.
Stage	P1-P7
Objectives	1) At the end of this assembly the pupils will have experienced - Challenge - Changed quality of awareness 2) At the end of the assembly the pupils will be able to express the types of qualities that make a person beautiful on the inside. 3) At the end of the assembly the pupils will be able to reflect on how beautiful they are on the inside and how their actions display those qualities.
Link with ACfE	Confident Individuals
Is this part of a series	No
Introduction	3) Short quiz identifying various celebrities (powerpoint) and what links them (they all look beautiful) 4) Discussion about what makes a person beautiful

Stimulus/ stimuli	Show clip from 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid 2 – Roderick Rules' Ask questions – How did the boys find out about the girl in the clip? What did they base their observations on? Do you judge people on how they look? What if someone judged you on how you look rather than the kind of person you are?
Guided Reflection	Discussion: Can people tell what you are like through your actions or how you speak to people? What is more important – looks or character? If we judge someone by appearance only, we might miss the qualities that really count. The Bible gives some helpful advice about beauty – Read 1 Peter 3:3-4 (powerpoint slide) 'Don't depend on things like fancy hairdos or gold jewellery or fancy clothes to make you look beautiful. Be beautiful in your heart by being gentle and quiet. This kind of beauty will last, and God considers it very special.'
Response & Possible Next Steps	Listen to the song 'True Colours' by Cyndi Lauper. As song is playing think about how beautiful your heart is. How can you make your inner beauty shine through in your actions?
Evaluation (a)	Discussion with SMT about whether aims and objectives were met.
Evaluation (b)	
Evaluation (c)	

11. Example of Religious Observance Plan



PORTOBELLO HIGH SCHOOL PLANNED EVENTS

2012/2013

1. Holocaust Memorial Event – Inter-Faith approach – commemoration of the Holocaust, plus work on the annual theme – pupil led with support from nominated staff.
2. Celebration of light – significance of light in a range of religions – pupil led with support from the RME Department.
3. The Values of the Scottish Mace – Rev. Ewan Aitken – focus on Compassion / Wisdom/ Justice and Integrity.
4. Christmas Service – Observance rather than worship – Focus on Christian values / traditions looking at family, fun and faith. Further opportunity for worship through a voluntary Christian Service at Christmas – both led by the School Chaplain Peter Webster.
5. “Happiness – What do you need to have it all?” – led by the School Chaplain Peter Webster.
6. “The Concept of Giving” – pupil led – focus on the school’s charity work /on supporting others and on the theory that the giver is always better off as a result of the giving.

12. Bibliography

Religious Observance: An Indicative Bibliography

This bibliography is offers materials used and consulted by course participants to inform the writing of their essays and reading for the course. It is not exhaustive, nor is it expected that all items will be consulted. It offers guidance and suggestions for appropriate materials – academic and policy – for reflection on the design and practice of Religious Observance in Schools.

Materials are added to this on an on going based through the wiki bibliography in moodle. Please add your own suggestions for reading materials, in the appropriate alphabetic location, through the wiki-bibliography.

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