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Curriculum Rationale

Year	Term	Rationale	Prior Knowledge/ Connections
Early Years	**N/A**		
Year 1	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Christianity** **What can we learn about Christianity?** Rationale: Children will begin their learning about Christianity from first hand experiences. Children will learn the basics of the Christian religion and they will be able to learn from visiting a local church. Children will be introduced to special times in the church through the festival of Harvest which will give children a real life insight into the Christian religion, as well as being a part of our school Harvest Festival. Children will begin to look what Christian's believe about God, they will listen to and reflect on the story of Creation to see what Christian's believe and why. All children will have the opportunity to reflect on their learning of Christianity and share their own experiences of beliefs. Children will then use their knowledge to compare and contrast Christianity with a different religion so that children have an insight into other worldviews.	In Reception children will have explored different religious festivals and celebrations and will have a brief understanding of religion and Christianity from seeing the Nativity story, Easter, Harvest Festival in the role play areas of their classroom and from joining in with whole school assemblies and celebrations.
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why are gifts given at Christmas?** Rationale: Children will have prior knowledge of Christianity from their Autumn 1 unit; this will build on what Christians believe about God and why Christians may visit a church at Christmas time. Children will learn that Christians believe Jesus was God's gift to the world; this will support their learning in Year 2 when they learn why Jesus is seen as light of the world. Children will have the opportunity to reflect and think about why they like to give and receive gifts and how this links to the story of the Nativity. Children will compare and contrast the Christian holiday to another religious holiday to gain an insight into other worldviews.	In EYFS children learnt the Christmas story. They will have taken part in a Nativity and be aware that the kings visited Jesus with gifts. They will know how churches prepare for special occasions from the Autumn 1 unit.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Christianity** **Why is Jesus special to Christians?** Rationale: From their learning in the Autumn term, children will know the Nativity story about Jesus and will have visited a church further their learning of Christianity. Children will now move on to learn about some of the events in the life of Jesus, they will think about what these tell Christians today about Jesus, how Jesus is special and how Christians act and think by following Jesus' example. Children will reflect on some of their own beliefs and values raised by their learning.	Children will be able to recall the Christmas story and know that this is when Jesus was born. They will have an understanding of Christian charity at Christmas from taking part in Harvest Festival celebrations and from their Autumn units.
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **What is the Easter Story?**	Children know about Jesus's birth and some of the events in his adult life from previous Year 1 units.

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		Rationale: The aim of this unit is to introduce the children to the Easter story and link it to the previous unit about Jesus' life and what the events of Easter Sunday mean. Children will learn what happened on these days and why they are sad and happy days for Christians. They will focus on Christian belief in Jesus as special because he came back to life.	In EYFS they will have learnt about the ways Easter is celebrated. They will have studied the season of Spring and compared changes from Winter.
	Summer 1	**Topic: Buddhism** **What can we find out about Buddha?** Rationale: This unit introduces children to some of the basic beliefs and teachings in Buddhism through exploring events in the life of Buddha and some of his teachings. Children will be able to explore questions they have around the religion and also reflect on their own experiences. Children will have a basic knowledge of Christianity and will be able to compare and contrast the two religions simply.	Children will know about the religion of Christianity and be able to make simple links between what religion means and make simple comparisons.
	Summer 2	**Topic: How do people show care?** **Rationale:** This unit introduces children to the humanist belief through exploring how people who are non-religious show care. Children will draw on and reflect on their own life experiences and how they show care. Children will have learnt about Christianity and Buddhism, therefore can compare and contrast how different religions/beliefs show care.	Children will build on the humanist belief in Year 4.
Year 2	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Christianity** **What can we learn from the story of St Cuthbert?** Rationale: This unit introduces children to the story of St Cuthbert, Durham Cathedral and Lindisfarne. The children will look at how Durham Cathedral and Lindisfarne are seen as special places for Christians and visitors. The children will have the experience of visiting Durham Cathedral, which they can link to their visit to the local church in Year 1.	These units build on what pupils have learnt about the Bible from visiting a church and stories from the Bible in EYFS and Year 1.
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Christians** **Why is the Bible special to Christians?** Rationale: Children will build on their knowledge of Christianity from Year 1 and expand on what they learnt from their visit to their local church. Children will learn about why the Bible is special through looking at stories from the Bible and seeing how it is treated. Children will explore different versions of the Christian Bible first hand in the classroom. The children will have opportunity to reflect on this, thinking about their own special	

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		items and how they keep them safe and protected. The children will deepen their knowledge of this topic in Year 4 through the unit 'What do we already know about the Bible and why is it important to Christians?'.	
		Topic: Christianity **How and why is light important at Christmas?** Rationale: Children will revisit the Christmas story and concentrate on the symbolism and importance of light in it as both accounts of the birth have light as a key theme. Children should be able to draw upon previous knowledge from Reception and Year 1.	Children will have learnt about the nativity in both Reception and Year 1 and should be able to recall key events. Children learnt the meaning of giving gifts at Christmas in Year 1 and looked at why Jesus is special.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Christianity** **What does it mean to belong in Christianity?** Rationale: Children will be introduced to the Christian ceremony of infant baptism and will explore the special words, actions and objects used. Children may have a brief understanding from personal experiences and from visiting churches in Year 1, they will expand on what they know already and will learn that Christians baptise their babies to show commitment to God and belonging to the Baptist church. Children will reflect on who they belong to and how they show this.	This unit builds on previous work about Christianity where pupils have been introduced to; the church as a place of worship, Jesus as teacher and the Bible as special because of what it teaches.
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **How do Christians celebrate Easter?** Rationale: This unit is about Christian practice; the children will learn how Christians remember and symbolise the Easter story. The children will know the Easter story from Year 1, they will expand on this by being introduced to some of the events of Holy Week. Children will explore Jesus entering Jerusalem and The Last Supper in detail in Key Stage Two.	This unit builds on the work children did around the Easter story in Y1. They should be able to recall key events and remember that the story tells the end of Jesus' life on Earth.
	Summer 1 **Summer 2**	**Topic: Buddhism** **How do Buddhists show their beliefs?** Rationale: The purpose of this unit is to deepen the children's understanding of another core religion and be able to start to compare in detail the beliefs and practices of Buddhists to Christians.	The children should be able to recall who Buddha was from their Y1 Unit and will have an understanding about the ways Christians show their beliefs in church, at home and during special times of year.
Year 3	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Hinduism** **How do Hindus worship?** Rationale: This unit has been planned into the Autumn term so that the children can learn about Diwali as the festival takes place around November. Pupils will be introduced to this core religion, they will learn about worship at home and in the mandir.	In KS1 children have learnt about the ways and where Christians and Buddhists worship and should be able to draw comparisons to Christian festivals and Diwali.

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		They also will learn about how and why Hindus celebrate a religious festival as a community. Children will have learnt about two other core religions (Christianity and Buddhism) which means they can draw upon what they know to make comparisons.	
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why is Advent important to Christians?** Rationale: This unit allows for continuity and progression in the teaching of Christmas, as children focus on the Christian celebration of Advent. They revisit the story focusing now on the weeks leading up to the birth of Jesus. This unit will build on their understanding of 'rituals' in religion and prepare them to delve deeper into their understanding of light at Christmas in Year 4.	In KS1 children have been taught the nativity and explored the theme of light. They will have learnt about the Christingle and the charity that takes place building up to Christmas. They will also be aware of the ways Christians celebrate in church and how candles are used in Baptism ceremonies.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Christianity** **What can we learn about Christian worship and beliefs by visiting churches?** Rationale: building on from the Year 1 unit 'What can we learn about Christianity from visiting churches?', in this unit children should be visiting more churches to be introduced to diversity of worship and church buildings. This unit explores worship in church buildings by focusing on the objects that are found in churches. Pupils will build up a picture of the importance of Christian worship and its diversity within different Christian traditions/denominations.	This unit builds on the knowledge learnt in Y1 about churches and the key features inside a church. They will also be aware of ceremonies that take place in church and how churches are used for worship.
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **What do Christians remember on Palm Sunday?** Rationale: In this unit children will hear the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and will consider the symbolism and significance of this event. They will put the story in the context of Holy Week and what happened next to Jesus.	Pupils will have been introduced at Key Stage 1 to the key events of the Easter story: Good Friday, Easter Day. They will have been introduced to some of the ways that Christians celebrate Easter today.
	Summer 1 **Summer 2**	**Topic: Hinduism** **What do Hindus believe?** Rationale: This unit focuses on some Hindu beliefs and their and their impact on individuals and communities; beliefs about God, life about death and importance of actions and consequences. Pupils will have the opportunity to develop Critical Thinking through discussing questions raised by the religious material.	In the Autumn term pupils explored the unit 'How do Hindus worship?' focussing on the Mandir and how Hindus worship both there and at home.
Year 4	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Christianity** **What do we know about the Bible and why is it important to Christians?**	This unit builds on the KS1 Year 2 Unit "Why is the Bible special to Christians?" The Bible will have been referred to in other units about Jesus, the Church, Christmas and Easter.

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		Rationale: Children will have a basic understanding of the importance of the Bible after the unit in Year 2. This is built on in depth, children will learn about the importance of the Bible as the source of authority to Christians. They will learn how the Bible tells the Big Story (beliefs) of Christianity: Creation/Incarnation/Salvation. They will learn about the differing types of writing in the Bible and the fact it is a collection of books written over a long period of time. They will consider the differing ways the Bible is used and the ways it can influence how a Christian feels, thinks and acts.	
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why do Christians call Jesus the light of the world?** Rationale: Children will use what they have learnt about the Christmas story so far to describe Christian belief in Jesus as light, Son of God and saviour. They will have chance to reflect on their own experiences linked to their learning and they will consider whether the Christmas story has real meaning to people today.	This unit builds on the understanding of the period of Advent taught in Y3. They will be able to connect Jesus' birth to the Easter story and how he was received by Christians on Palm Sunday.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Christianity** **What do Christians believe about Jesus?** Rationale: Children will learn about some of the events in the life and ministry of Jesus, including some of his teachings. They will be able to now make links to units of work previously taught on the birth and death of Jesus including Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus. They will learn what Christians believe about these events and the impact of this for Christians today. This unit gives opportunity for children to personally reflect on their own ideas, values, experiences and feelings in relation to their learning. As such, it makes a contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (this is not assessable). This unit provides an opportunity for a creative piece of work (designing and drawing a stained glass window or panel) which will show Christian beliefs about Jesus as – teacher, miracle worker, life-changer or Son of God.	The unit has been planned to build on previous Key Stage 1 work about Jesus.
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why is Lent such an important period for Christians?** Rationale: Children will already have learnt about the main events of the Easter story (death and resurrection of Jesus, Jesus entering Jerusalem). This unit focuses on the period leading up to Good Friday and Easter Day and looks at how Christians keep Lent and what they are remembering about the life of Jesus at this time. Children will be given the opportunity to think about the temptations Jesus faced in the desert and reflect on ways in which people react and respond to temptations today.	Reference should be made to previous units (Year 1, Year 2, Year 3) and some recap of Easter story, this should be brief so that pupils build on previous learning but do not repeat it.

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	Summer 1	**Topic: Thematic Unit/Islam** **How and why do people show care for others?** Rationale: The purpose of this unit is for the children to contrast differing religious and non-religious views on the subject of caring for others. Children consider what Christians and Muslims say about caring for others and compare them with each other and against a non-religious worldview – Humanism. Pupils will learn how these beliefs have an impact on how people think, behave and act towards others. Children will learn how some people and communities help others, making links to religious teachings about care for others.	Children will have knowledge about Christian beliefs and that caring for others and charity is important especially at special times of year like Harvest Festival and Christmas (Y1)
	Summer 2	**Topic: Sikhism** **How does Guru Nanak inspire Sikhs today?** Rationale: In 3 pupils began to learn about Hindu worldviews. Now they are introduced to another dharmic worldview: Sikh. This worldview has a long and deep relationship with the UK and so is essential knowledge. They will see how Guru Nanak arose within the context of India at the time and how his message challenged the society around him. This will prepare them for units looking at how the Prophet Muhammad and Jesus challenged their societies.	Pupils have been exposed to Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism throughout years 1-3. Children will be able to use what they know about religion and worship to build on a new worldview.
Year 5	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Judaism** **Why do Jewish people go to the synagogue?** Rationale: In this unit the children start to explore Judaism and what it means to be Jewish. They will explore the Ten commandments. Children will be able to explore the commandments and consider whether having a set of rules to live by is important. They will be able to compare these rules to the ones they follow at school and think about what it means to be Jewish and to follow these.	Children will have a good knowledge of Jesus as a prophet from previous studies of Christianity. They will have experience of what it means to belong to a faith community and having a set of rules to abide (Y4). They will also have experience of other places of worship.
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Judaism** **Why is Moses important to the Jewish people?** They learn about the prophet Moses and how he saved the Jewish people from persecution in Egypt when he led them to safety across the Red Sea. They should be able to draw comparisons between Jesus and Moses from previous lines of enquiry.	From the first unit in Year 5 'why do Jewish people go to the synagogue' children will have an understanding of the Jewish religion.

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		Topic: Christianity **What are the themes of Christmas?** Rationale: Children will draw on their prior knowledge and will then be introduced to differences between celebrations and understanding of Christmas from secular and religious viewpoints. They will learn about some of the themes of Christmas which are common to both secular and religious understanding e.g. love, peace, light over darkness, goodwill, joy, giving. They will explore their own feelings and understanding about the themes of Christmas. They will consider whether Christmas could be celebrated by all regardless of faith.	Children have an understanding of the themes of gifts and light from previous units studied n Y1 and Y4.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Christianity** **What do Christians believe about God?** Rationale: Throughout this unit, pupils will be encouraged to ask puzzling/interesting questions and suggest reasons. These can be used for final unit discussion and display. Pupils will learn about some key Christian beliefs about God expressed through metaphor, myth and symbol and begin to consider what impact these beliefs will have on the lives of Christians: Knowledge and Understanding of Christianity. They will have the opportunity to ask and respond to questions which are raised through learning about Christian beliefs about God. They will express their views on some of these questions, supporting them with plausible reasons: Critical Thinking. They will have the opportunity to reflect on some beliefs, feelings and ideas in relation to their learning about God: Personal Reflection.	This unit will build on work from KS1 work in relation to Christian Harvest and belief in God as creator.
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why is the Last Supper so important to Christians?** Rationale: In this unit children deepen their understanding of the events of Holy week by putting these events in the context of Holy Week and will consider the importance of	This unit builds on the Year 3/4 units where pupils have learnt about Palm Sunday and Lent in some detail. . Y5 wil have an understanding of Judaism from their Autumn unit and will be able to

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		these events for Christians today. In particular, the unit focuses on The Last Supper and how this has affected what Christians believe about Jesus and what some Christians do to show these beliefs. Children will have the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences as well as raise questions and give views. Children will visit Holy Trinity church where they will be able to make links and connections to what they have learnt about the Easter story throughout school.	spot connections between the two religions.
	Summer 1	**Topic: Thematic Unit** **Why do people use rituals today?** Rationale: This unit enables pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about the similarities and differences in religions by looking at a feature of religion (ritual) in 2/3 religions. The religions chosen are Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the reason for this is the children by now should have an understanding of what it means to be Jewish and Christian and will be learning more about being a Muslim in Y6. Links could also be made to ritual and ceremonies in non-religious worldviews eg Humanism.	The children already have an understanding of how Christianity and Judaism through previous studies. They know what a ritual is and why they are important.
	Summer 2	**Topic: Judaism** **How are Jewish beliefs expressed in the home?** Rationale: This unit enables children to develop knowledge and understanding of Jewish beliefs and customs at home. It builds on their learning during the Autumn term where they were introduced to Moses, the synagogue and Jewish community. Children learn that though the importance of synagogues and other Jewish institutions cannot be minimized, the home remains the place where most people first encounter Jewish ritual, and where much of Jewish life takes place.	Children have knowledge of Jewish beliefs about the ten commandments and the importance of the synagogue from Autumn 1 and 2. They have an understanding about how Christians, Buddhists and Hindus express their beliefs and should be able to draw on comparisons.
Year 6	**Autumn 1**	**Topic: Diversity** **What can we learn about religious diversity in our area?** Rationale: The purpose of this unit is for the children to consider and apply ideas about ways in which diverse communities can live together for the well-being of all. Teaching and learning will centre on the theme of respect for the ways religions are both similar and different. By exploring the concepts of commitment, respect and tolerance and examples of co-operation between faiths the unit aims to make a contribution to religious understanding in Durham. There are opportunities for children to explore their own identities, as well as the identity of others. This unit pulls together previous units on	Through years 1-5 children will have had the chance in class to compare and contrast different religions, as well as having had the chance to visit local churches and places of worship. Children will have drawn comparisons between local and national geography and have some understanding of why large cities are more diverse than small villages.

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		Christianity and other core religions as children consider what diversity is like in the local community and modern day Britain as a whole.	
	Autumn 2	**Topic: Islam** **What can we learn about a local Muslim community?** Rationale: The purpose of this unit is for children to explore another core religion. Children now will have multiple other beliefs and religions to use as comparison and can use their Autumn 1 learning about diversity to explore what it is like in a Muslim community. Children will visit a mosque to gain a deeper understanding of what it is like to be Muslim.	Children will be able to compare and contrast the Muslim community to the other religions they have explored from years 1-5.
		Topic: Christianity **What do the gospels tell us about the birth of Jesus?** Rationale: In this unit pupils will learn about the two versions of the birth story and compare similarities and differences. They will learn what the gospel writers (Matthew and Luke) were showing about Jesus through their version of the birth story. Pupils will consider some of the ideas that have grown up around the nativity story, but are not part of the gospel stories. They will explore what some people mean by the words 'true' and 'truth' in the context of the birth stories.	Children now have a deep understanding of the Christmas story and its significance to Christians. In History they will have learnt about the ways to interpret information form sources and draw comparisons from them.
	Spring 1	**Topic: Thematic Unit** **How and why do people care about the environment?** Rationale: By Year 5/6 pupils have increased their knowledge and developed their understanding of the beliefs and features of Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism as discrete religions. This unit further develops skills of investigation and enquiry by comparing 3 religious traditions in one area of study: *The Environment*. Through this study pupils will increase general awareness of the global world in which they live and	Children have an understanding of Christian and Buddhist beliefs and have explored Islam in previous studies comparing religions. They will have an understanding of the natural environment through studies in Geography.

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		learn about the impact of religion on individuals and communities, both locally, nationally and internationally. This unit could form part of a cross-curricular topic on environmental issues.	
	Spring 2	**Topic: Christianity** **Why are Good Friday and Easter Day the most important days for Christians?** Rationale: In this unit the children continue to explore Holy Week by focussing on the events at the end of this important week. Pupils will learn about the theological beliefs behind the Easter story (what the death and resurrection of Jesus mean for Christians – new life, eternal life, love of God). They will understand that this has an impact for Christians today and how they understand their lives. They will have the opportunity to ask and respond to questions which are raised through learning about the beliefs behind the Easter Story eg Is it true that joy follows sadness? Is it true that hope wins in the end? They will express their views on some of these questions, supporting their answers with sound reasons. They will have the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences, feelings and ideas associated with the beliefs behind the Easter Story (sadness and joy, fear and hope etc). Whilst the Easter story is recapped in this unit it does not just ask pupils to retell the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday or Holy Week. It is anticipated that this unit develops understanding about beliefs and, therefore, develops depth of understanding.	This unit builds on work about Jesus in Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and all of the units on Easter.
	Summer 1 **Summer 2**	**Topic: Diversity and Worldviews** This unit mainly focuses on consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity as well as the other worldviews the children have been learning about throughout years 1-6. There is also, however, **some opportunities for pupils to respond** to puzzling/interesting questions raised by their study different worldviews. These can be discussed and help develop Critical Thinking. There is also opportunity for pupils to reflect on their own feelings, beliefs, values and ideas as a result of their learning about the RE concepts – Personal Reflection.	This unit focuses on consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding of different worldviews taught throughout their time at Ribbon.