

Handbook for the Teaching of Religious Education



Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education
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of
Religious Education**

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Foreword

In view of the current reform, teaching, learning and assessment need to reflect the evolving needs of a differentiated classroom environment within a lifelong learning framework. This is in line with the philosophy underlying the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) consultation documents that have been launched in May 2011.

The Form 1 and Form 2 curriculum promote ways that support the development of lifelong learning within a framework which is built on the principle of a continuum of learning. The documents serve as a pedagogical tool intended to help teachers meet the different needs of the learners. Apart from this handbook there are two documents for each subject for each form. The first lists the teaching objectives and learning outcomes that need to be covered in a year. A second document which includes teaching and learning examples is intended as additional means of support for teachers as they work with the range of learners in class. The Form 1 and 2 curriculum offer greater autonomy and flexibility to teachers. The learning and teaching process is envisaged to be active, engaging, meaningful and purposeful. Within this process, valuable information will inform further planning and guide the process that will lead to further improvement of learners.

The learning outcomes will now guide the learning and teaching process. This is an output model directly linked to the direction that is being promoted by the national qualifications framework which is directly referenced to the European qualifications framework. All outcomes are directly tied to the revised attainment level descriptors which describe in detail the learning achieved by the individual learner. The attainment level descriptors illustrate the evidence the teacher needs to elicit from a range of activities during the learning process through well thought-out tasks that demonstrate learners' understanding, progress and achievement.

This learner-centred curriculum respects the diversity of learners that we meet in our daily lives as educators and the ways in which they learn. It is built on the belief that all learners can learn. It is our responsibility as educators to provide the contexts and the pedagogical tools to make learning a meaningful process for all learners, to provide learners with experiences that lead them to experience success in their educational journey, supported by the necessary scaffolding and then to challenge them to the next steps and then to the next steps after that as learners grow into self-directed learners within a lifelong learning context.

Professor Grace Grima
Director General
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Preface

The Secondary Curriculum for Form 1 and 2 reflects the aims and philosophy of the recently published draft National Curriculum Framework (2011) which aims at developing learners who are capable of successfully developing their full potential as lifelong learners. The achievement of these aims depends on the following cross-curricular themes for their success: eLearning; Education for Sustainable Development; Intercultural Education; Education for Entrepreneurship and Creativity and Innovation.

This Form 1 and 2 curriculum document reflects the principle of diversity of student learning needs. It recognizes the reality present in society where students have various differences in backgrounds, aptitudes, interests, intellectual abilities, needs, language competence and learning styles. The Form 1 and 2 curriculum document provides scaffolding to ensure that learners are supported through appropriate teaching and learning approaches whatever their level.

The National Curriculum Framework clearly states that current theories of learning are based on the social constructivist approach where individual learners construct their own meaning and where one needs to move away from teacher centered to learner centered learning. This should lead to students becoming more active learners responsible for their own learning and where the teacher moves away from having a central role to a situation where the learners acquire more responsibility for the learning that takes place.

This new documentation has been written in a style to assist teachers to develop their teaching practices. Successful education relies upon enthusiastic and committed teachers who are willing to contribute to the evolution of increasingly effective schooling processes. I look forward to seeing the quality of education continuing to evolve and that the intentions of the New Curriculum Reforms will become a reality for all our students.

Raymond J. Camilleri
Director
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1. Introduction

The purpose of the new curriculum has the overall aim to help schools and their teachers to improve the quality of their teaching and to enable students to raise their level of educational attainment. This is a common concern for many countries within the EU and the wider world.

It is being proposed that the traditional concept of having a syllabus that is time tabled is being replaced by the concept of a curriculum that is managed. This requires teachers to be given a unitised syllabus which covers all of the content that can be realistically and effectively taught within each year of schooling. This has led to the writing of a Teaching Objectives Framework.

Each unit to be taught contains much more than syllabus content, it contains pedagogical suggestions for good practice. The unit is not a strait jacket; it is given as an inspiration and catalyst for teachers to develop their own ideas according to their professional understanding and the abilities of the students in their classrooms.

It is presumed that curriculum content is constantly evolving as our society rapidly changes. The new document should be seen as a flexible evolving tool to support the overall aims of education.

There are a number of paradigms that underpin this approach to curriculum.

These are namely:

- That every student is entitled to a quality curriculum that enables him/her to reach the highest level of attainment that they are able to achieve;
- That in order to do this, student centred learning is an important approach to teaching and learning;
- That all students are on a continuum of ability (not failure) and that such a continuum needs to be identified within strands of learning for each subject. For each strand of learning there are ten levels;
- That the concept of diversity means all students (be they 'the gifted' or 'the least able') should be encouraged to work at their optimum level. In this context the term special educational needs is no longer required;
- That the curriculum management paradigm provides an important professional tool which can be practiced at all levels of the schooling process.

Each subject has the following

1. A Teaching Objectives and Learning Outcomes document
2. The aims for each subject.
3. Strand definitions to indicate the focus of teaching throughout a student's school career.
4. Attainment level descriptors that indicate the learning outcomes of student learning at all levels of schooling.

5. A Teaching Objectives Framework that indicates the syllabus to be taught and which accepts that at each level and in every class there will be a variety of student learning outcomes.
6. Approaches to teaching and learning that are specific and differ for each subject.
7. A number of units which have important sections that relate to the above paradigms
8. e learning perspectives

Each Unit has a number of features

- A front page which indicates
 - the code and title of the unit
 - the length of a lesson
 - the number of hours in which it may be taught
 - the key words to be addressed
 - the points to note especially about the subject approach to teaching and learning
 - a statement about resources including references to e learning
- A subsequent set of five pages which indicates;
 - the teaching objectives
 - examples of teaching activities and experiences that a teacher may wish to use or develop.
 - a column which indicates the range of learning outcomes that can be expected as a student response to each teaching objective. These relate to students attaining across the attainment levels five to ten. Subjects which are not taught at Primary School target different levels
- A set of three pages indicate
 - examples of work within the same teaching objectives for students who are working within attainment levels one to four.
- In some units, a final page that
 - indicates aspects of e Learning that is relevant to that unit

2 General Guidelines in using the curriculum documentation

2.1 Who is the curriculum documentation for?

Curriculum documentation is for teachers, heads of schools, education officers and education support staff and audit teams. The curriculum documentation provides information and suggestions for schools when planning a balanced school curriculum in every lesson for every student. The teacher may

- Make use of this handbook to strengthen the development of students with suitable learning experiences.

- Adjust and revise curriculum units to support overall curriculum planning.

This curriculum has been written for ALL students.

2.2 The aims of the Religious Education curriculum

Religious Education, from its very definition and nature, should contribute to the development of human beings by supporting and enabling their personal search for meaning. Search for meaning is at the basis of every area of learning. However, “the distinctive contribution which Religious Education has to make to the curriculum is located by its recourse to living belief systems for its content. This is true not only at the level of facts but also the ethos and values which are conveyed for such study. Distinctiveness of Religious Education is never self contained. Religious experience is distinctive when it is in a dynamic relationship with other forms of experience”¹.

Students need to be strengthened in their identity and so equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes that foster respect and dialogue. Christian anthropology is at the basis of Catholic Religious Education², since humanity and human dignity are focal concerns of the Christian message. Students, however, should also be gradually made aware of the different Christian denominations that constitute other faith traditions, of the richness of the diverse wisdom traditions that shaped the major World Religions and that continue to influence the history of humanity, as well as of the secularist and atheistic philosophies that partly shaped the dominant culture and worldview we live in today.

Religious Education in schools should enhance harmony between the different fields of learning and the faith perspective. It seeks to present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge. It should seek also a necessary and healthy inter-disciplinary dialogue with other fields of knowledge. Through inter-disciplinary dialogue, religious education in schools underpins, activates, develops and completes the educational activity of the school.

In the context of Maltese society, the main aims of Religious Education are more specifically to:

- support the personal search of students for truth and meaning in life and to help them develop a healthy relationship with self, others, creation and God;
- cater for the spiritual, religious, and moral dimensions of students;
- give students the possibility of discovering the person and the salvific message of Jesus Christ as the response to the human quest for truth and meaning;

¹ *The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education*, Christian Education Movement, London, 1995.

² The Catholic Religion is prevalent in Malta and endorsed by the Maltese Constitution.

- encourage students to recognize the continuity between Jesus and the Church by familiarizing themselves with the Scriptures and the Christian Tradition;
- encourage students to acknowledge themselves as belonging to a Tradition of worship, values and life that still gives shape to life in community;
- give students the opportunity to understand and appreciate critically the responses to the fundamental questions about meaning in other Christian denominations as well as in the major World Religions;
- help students form their own personal worldview and empower them to face the challenges of life and to discover their role in the society and in the community where they belong.

2.3 Approach to teaching and learning for Religious Education

As literature and history, religion is envisioned as a synoptic reality that embraces all the realms of meaning. What distinguishes religion from other 'academic' subjects is that religion is basically concerned with the ultimate reality and the ultimate meaning of life and its experiences.

In the context of the process of teaching and learning, religious education goes hand in hand with human development, is intertwined with it, and fosters the capacity to explore and analyse life's broader realities.

Religion and Education may at face value not get along well together. But they are worse off when apart. Religion in Western civilization has for long been almost synonymous with culture and culture was greatly inspired by religion.

In Malta, for centuries, Catholic Christianity has been our cultural heritage and has served as the standpoint which shaped our vision of life. However, an increasingly secularized and complex culture has relocated religion in society in general and in the lives of people. Institutionalized religion is indeed in crisis, yet the wisdom of the great religious traditions still constitutes a major point of reference in a globalized world.

The educational process or journey needs to take this into account. Education itself is basically a spiritual journey, and religious education in particular, through talk about virtues and attitudes, seeks to enable students to connect with themselves, with others in true and authentic relationships, and with God.

Religious Education aims to find a common focus for one's spirit-seeking heart and knowledge-seeking mind that embraces reality in all its amazing dimensions (Parker J. Palmer). It is an area of learning in schools meant to identify and address the questions of ultimate meaning in life making it possible to connect fruitfully a tradition received with the demands in life to form a personal worldview.

Through a student-centred teaching/learning process of **exploration/inquiry, of imagination, of self-awareness, of self-reflection, creativity and a readiness towards assessment**, religious education enables an increasingly broader understanding of personal feelings and thoughts enriched also by the experiences of others. This attitude engages students in the **knowledge and skills** of a meaningful dialogue with the different ethnic and ethics realities including a thorough understanding and openness towards those who harbour different opinions.

2.4 The Teaching Objectives Framework for Religious Education

For each subject there is reference to the Teaching Objectives Framework that is structured to provide a unitized curriculum. The Teaching Objectives Framework identifies the content to be taught in any one year of schooling and in doing so relates to an effective syllabus/course of study that can be taught within the time available. The time available has been worked to within the assumptions that there are thirty weeks in a scholastic year and that a unit of work is seven hours long comprising of ten, forty minute lessons. It is acknowledged that different schools will have variations on this system but the one presented is the baseline for all schools.

The Framework identifies the units and their titles that are available in any one year throughout the eleven years of schooling in Primary and Secondary education. Each unit has a set of teaching objectives that cover the seven hour period that has been allocated. In this way it is possible to identify the content that can be reasonably expected to be taught. This is not a learning outcomes Framework. For each teaching objective there will be a range of learning outcomes according to the diversity of attainment of students within any one classroom.

The Teaching Objectives Framework is the heart of the curriculum.

Religious Education

Teaching Objectives Framework

	Unit Titles	Key Teaching Objectives
Form 5		
Teaching Block 1	Telescope (faith and culture)	Students are enabled to understand the meaning of faith and how this faith can be lived today in today's culture; the relevance and significance of faith in Jesus Christ; and the role of the Holy Spirit in their life. How Mary Our Mother is a living icon for those in quest of a spirituality relevant for today's

		culture.
	Tree (sin in genesis...fall and hope)	Students are enabled to study the first Chapters of Genesis - the cause of the fall and the intentions behind the fall and the effects of the fall; explore through different case studies various ethical issues (question of choices/discernment) facing mankind today; and be enabled to discover and share how dialogue is one of the means that enables a synthesis faith with culture, and enables people to share a good vision of life and young Christians to share/witness their beliefs in a culture of unbelief.
Teaching Block 2	Radar (discovering and understanding)	Students are enabled to discover and understand their role in today's society/culture/world the kind of choice orientation emerge from a culture of non-belief in contrast to one of belief (salient points from the social teachings of the Church); be enabled to understand and to share the hallmarks of Christian morality; and become familiarised with different prayer methods and how these can be used and shared with others in different life circumstances.
Teaching Block 3	Revision and Consolidation	
Form 4		
Teaching Block 1	Subcultures	Students discover the many subcultures in our society, and the subcultures that existed during the time of Jesus Christ; the common factor in subcultures, and how they can be of benefit to the 'big' culture and visa versa; and how Jesus Christ lived among sub cultures – His attitude.
	Plug (connectedness)	Discover religion as a way beyond culture; that notwithstanding the diversity that exists even in our Church, there is one common language – the Bible, Holy Tradition, and the wholesomeness of the human person that goes beyond cultures; and discuss how to make a synthesis between faith and reason.
Teaching Block 2	Star Wars (good triumphs over evil/ reconciliation)	Students discover/discuss in depth the problem of evil from the Christian Biblical perspective; the language of sin that disconnects men from themselves, others and God; and the importance of reconciliation and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
	Allies / pact / treaty (friendship)	Discover Jesus Christ as a role model, in authenticity and intimacy with Himself, His Father and others; how through Him truth and love the art of dialogue become bridges towards

		connectedness; and how through marriage and the Sacrament of Matrimony, Christians show the face of God the love between two people.
Teaching Block 3	The Mighty (simple yet great people who let God work through them).	Discover different people who lived their call to the full; be enabled to explore the art/skill of discernment and the richness of different spiritualities and how these enable one to live one's call – primordially to holiness, then other calls, to the full.
	Cross (suffering: road to wholesome maturity)	Discover that the suffering is part of life; that 'the cross' is a 'bridge' to Heaven and to live life to the full; interpret the reality, the process that evil is everywhere and good always triumphs; and the faith journey of suffering of various people, especially that of Jesus Christ (the Paschal Mystery including its liturgy and symbols) and the suffering in the Church - present and past.
Form 3		
Teaching Block 1	Uniqueness	Discover the uniqueness of who they are as people who believe and their catholic identity, its meaning and implications.
	Wipers (sin destroys man's authenticity)	Discover how sin can disconnect people from themselves, others and God, how certain beliefs, behaviours even addictive ones can annihilate one's authenticity.
Teaching Block 2	Megaphone (calling/different callings in life)	Discover the different calls in life, how these calls can be of benefit to humanity, and enrich Christianity; how being a Catholic is a call in life, and the role of the Holy Spirit in one's call, and Mary our Mother who lived her call to the full.
	Facebook (connecting people with themselves...others)	Discover how through a journey of friendship with Jesus, students can be connected with themselves, and with others; the many ways that this journey can be facilitated in today's cultural and religious milieu; that their Catholic/Christian identity is part of a Tradition which connects them with the past and with the reality of the present.
Teaching Block 3	Crystal (pure, holy, spiritual)	Discover in depth the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist as the Sacrament of life giving and of consolidating connectedness with God and neighbour.
	Zebra	Discover the meaning of the challenge and virtue of integrity, of faithfulness and fidelity – virtues that enable one's identity and the living to the utmost of one's faith call; the meaning of

		commitment and the reasons why commitment is being shunned from today.
Form 2		
Teaching Block 1	Caterpillar	Discover the process of ‘unfolding and becoming’, as a human human-faith process; how the Sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation enable this process toward Christian and human emotional maturity.
	Network	Students are introduced to the art/skill of communication even on the religious level and be enabled to communicate their life experiences and celebrate them including their emotional faring; get more familiarized with the Psalms and message of some psalms; and how the students can communicate religious experiences among themselves.
Teaching Block 2	Hike	Discover and reflect on the religious history of humanity from primitive religions to the monotheistic faith, reflect on the journey of the writing of the Sacred Text and the meaning of Tradition in the Catholic faith; and how history is its wholesomeness came to its fulfilment in Jesus Christ; and how one can ‘hike’ in life with the wisdom of the past letting oneself be guided by the Word of God.
	Missteps	Discover the ‘choices in life’, the meaning, implications behind choices, (emphasize on liberty/freedom...); that faith/spiritual journey enables missteps to become opportunities for growth; examples of different persons biblical and non-biblical who became wiser and holier through their missteps (case studies of different choices according to their psychological religious level).
Teaching Block 3	Raw diamond	Discover that God has a plan for everyone, but first discover who God is for themselves; how does the student perceive God (journey with many biblical and non-biblical people who accepted God in their life and his divine plan); and be introduced to a dialogical form of prayer and later on to centering prayer.
	Steer/guide	Discover, study different personalities, biblical and non-biblical, even persons from different religions/cultures, who through their discovery of God’s plan for themselves, left an imprint in the world; what is really ‘steering’ the students in their life towards its fullness, and be introduced to developing a

		philosophy of life.
Form 1		
Teaching Block 1	My Journey	Reflect upon the concept of life as a journey, including the anthropological and spiritual dimensions; the history of salvation as the journey of the People of God towards Christ.
	The Power Within	Explaining how by being true living temples of the Holy Spirit, human persons come to their fulfillment.
Teaching Block 2	Choosing the way	Through a right relationship with Jesus Christ, we can make the right choices in life.
	The Haversack	Through Jesus Christ, students identify the Bible as an essential guide in their life.
Teaching Block 3	Challenges	Students identify challenges and risks in their life-journey, and how as Christians they can respond to these challenges.
	Never alone	Explaining how God is and will be a faithful companion throughout the life journey.
Year 6		
Teaching Block 1	Labyrinth	Discover and learn about the three monotheistic religions, though different are able to worship one God, discover the major feasts of the monotheistic religions – Holy Scriptures as the Christian Sacred Book and Easter as the principal Feast in the Christian Liturgical Year.
	Bridge	Manifest how the different religions foster good relationships. Whilst appreciating their own Catholic culture, students learn how to appreciate the cultures of others as a source of mutual enrichment.
Teaching Block 2	Unique	Discover that the 'object' of their faith is Jesus Christ – through Him we discover and cultivate a culture of stewardship - Gospel narratives culminating in His Passion, Death and Resurrection.

	Signature	Discover the universal significance of the sentiments expressed in the Our Father and how this prayer as a prayer of commitment is the basis of Christian witness.
Teaching Block 3	Salvation	Discover God’s universal will to save mankind, and the implications of “Thy Kingdom come” - key events in the History of Salvation – The Missions.
	Symbols	Discover and learn the Christian Symbols (esp. the liturgical ones) as expressions of Christian identity and witness - appreciate symbols of other religions as a means to enrich their spirituality.
Year 5		
Teaching Block 1	Praise	Discover their responsibility towards themselves, others and the world around them, enriched from episodes from the Sacred Texts, from the Social Teachings of the Church, from the lives of dead or alive role models who showed wholesome responsibility for the world and left an imprint.
	Relationships	Discover and come to understand themselves in relation to others as they are introduced to issues of gender and sexuality – Jesus Christ as role-model in His relationships with His friends (males and females).
Teaching Block 2	Discovery	Enriched through case studies, students discover what commitment and Christian witness mean in their culture, in society at large.
	Superstar	Discover through Christ’s life, mission and teachings how to show respect towards and be responsible in our relationship for creation and fellow men (including gender equality).
Teaching Block 3	Survival	Discover how the sacred texts keep us on our way to God — Fundamental attitudes towards God and neighbour in key figures (God’s friends) throughout the History of Salvation - The Ten Commandments guidelines for our duties towards God and neighbour.
	Praying Hands	Familiarise themselves with the different methods of prayer requesting and listening; relationship between prayer and commitment – the prayer of the community – the Holy Mass (explanation of the two main parts).

Year 4		
Teaching Block 1	Prism	A journey through the community/country of Jesus, enables students to understand better that they are part of a community, of a village, of a country – Gospel narratives showing Jesus’ good relations with people from different countries, races, religions.
	Golden Chain	Discover the main characteristics that bind us together as human persons, and as Catholics, living together in society, country, village, church - the main elements that can break our relationships; how we can re-link when they fail. Sharing views and experiences of World Mission Day, World Children’s Day, Refugees’ Day...etc.
Teaching Block 2	One in Christ	Episodes from the Gospel of St. Mark showing how Jesus lived, worked, shared his opinions and even cared for in many ways with those who were different from him ethically and ethnically.
	Being strong	Discover how a journey through the realm of the key human virtues (the four “cardinal” virtues) are signs that they are going up; their practice is a sign of a strong character – How Jesus practiced these virtues throughout His life and especially during His Passion, Death and Resurrection..
Teaching Block 3	Talents	Discover what a talent is, from the human and faith perspectives (gifts and charisms of the Spirit); practical ways of sharing talents with others, communities {the Parable of the talents}; and sharing also suffering with others – the virtue of compassion.
	Belonging	Discover that notwithstanding our differences, through the gift of the Holy Spirit in Baptism Jesus lives in us, building us in one family. Appreciate being members of a living church - to whom/which they belong.
Year 3		
Teaching Block 1	I’m alive	Through their daily experiences, students discover what makes them truly human, truly Christians, fully alive – fostering daily routing habits of sharing, praying, through their compassion, tolerance, etc. we grow in human virtues (see the four “cardinal” virtues).
	Islander	I am not an islander, though born on an Island! – Students discover the reality behind the first Christian community - Acts1- 2. The reality of sharing – who rather than what is to be highly emphasized, and sharing with whom rather than sharing

		what for sharing's sake. Introducing the ecclesial aspect of our faith.
Teaching Block 2	Footsteps	Discover that through Jesus Christ, God shared His divine life with mankind: Qualities from Jesus' life are studied, students discuss how these can be lived and shared in their daily life in their present world. Students acknowledge the common Christian heritage and traditions of the Maltese people, and be aware that many religious customs have roots in Christian heritage.
	Shalom	A peaceful world through the eyes of children [students], introducing and discovering Christ's teachings in the Sermon on the Mount – narratives showing that Jesus practiced what He preached; how we can follow His example in daily living – Prayer, concrete and differentiated. – uttering requests to God and sharing with Jesus their experiences
Teaching Block 3	Sorry	Students discover and demonstrate how they can pardon and mend their ways when they fail, displeasing God and hurting themselves and others – the Act of Contrition.
	Peacemaker	Discover various symbols, signs of reconciliation, what peace really means, and how reconciliation and peace can be celebrated in various traditions and, for Christians, especially in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist the Prayer of St Francis of Assisi.
Year 2		
Teaching Block 1	Rainbow	Discover, appreciate, that as children of God, God loves each one for what he/she is rather than for what he/she has or does (true love); when we pray God, we pray for our needs, but also for the needs of all – The Our Father.
	Crackers! Bang!	Through concrete stories, discover the need of being together going beyond appearances (occasions – traditional and/or Christian – for celebrating as one big family, thus enhancing the reality of being together and the need to go beyond appearances}.
Teaching Block 2	Right? Wrong?	Discover the hurts caused by people who do not learn to go beyond appearances, and fail help, care, for those who seem different - how should we behave in similar occasions.
	My buddy	Through a journey in the life of The Jewish boy Jesus, born among ethnic realities, a child who had friends, used to play, pray and study the Word of God, as children do today; grown up, how He behaved with friends and sinners (Gospel Stories).
Teaching	I pray, we pray	Discover that Jesus is still alive, among us, to-day; He gives us

Block 3		His Spirit to help us grow in love thus leading us towards His and our Father (Easter - Pentecost narratives); we grow in our relationships with Jesus and with each other through daily prayer - basic attitudes at prayer and prayer times (learning about the Sign of the Cross and the Glory be...)
	Give me five	Discover the Eucharist as the celebration of being together with Christ in our midst – the basic sentiments, attitudes and prayers during the Eucharist.
Year 1		
Teaching Block 1	Being one	Notwithstanding diversity, students discover and celebrate their commonalities, in an ambience of awesomeness and gratitude towards God, the loving Father of all.
	God the Creator	Discover and appreciate the awesomeness and love of God the Creator. All is created through Him. All is a gift; celebration of this gift of creation through various expressions of joy, wonder and thanksgiving at God’s Creation (Gen 2).
Teaching Block 2	Creation and me	Discover that God’s banner over me is love: As part of God’s creation, God gave me so many gifts (my senses, abilities, mind, heart and especially so many people who care for me – For God, I am really “special”!).
	Brothers and Sisters	Discovering that we are all children of God: Out of His love God gave us His Son to lie among us and we can live together as one big family. Share prayer to Mary Our Lady, Mother of all who shared Jesus with all.
Teaching Block 3	Hand in hand	Discover the many ways and means that we can live as God’s children in His family, loving, caring for each other as Jesus loved and cared - Celebrations of gratitude for all those who care for us.
	Family meal	Discover the many ways that we can celebrate the friendship and the joy of being together as one family - human and Christian – introducing the Sunday Eucharist.

Below are Teaching Objectives Frameworks for Levels 3,2 and 1. At these levels the framework is not year specific. The Frameworks provide a point of teaching reference for students whose chronological age does not match the attainment range for their age.

Teaching Objectives Framework for Level 3

The Religious Language <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>	The Spiritual Dimension <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>	The Word of God <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>	Personal Catholic Worldview <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>
Recognise religious symbols and their meanings.	Share feelings, experiences and their work with others.	Reflect on religious events in stories and be able to answer simple questions about stories they have heard.	Be aware that each pupil is personally valued and that others are special too.
Communicate their feelings after listening to a religious story.	Appreciate the value of others and of being part of a group.	Further understand the existence of someone mighty who we call God and that Jesus is his son.	Express their ideas, beliefs and feeling towards others.
Understand that parables and religious stories contain a moral meaning.	Start to develop an understanding of moral values.	Understand religious stories and recognise that they can relate such stories to their own life and learn from them.	Recognise, identify and celebrate the similarities and differences in people.

Teaching Objectives Framework for Level 2

The Religious Language <i>The teacher will teach and encourage students to :</i>	The Spiritual Dimension <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>	The Word of God <i>The teacher will encourage and teach students to :</i>	Personal Catholic Worldview <i>The teacher will teach students to :</i>
Recognise and photos and symbols related to religious traditions and celebrations.	Explore what it means to be part of a group.	Recognise and use religious gestures appropriately such as making the sign the cross.	Explore what it means to be part of a group and to learn how to share with others.
Recognise and participate when	Appreciate the world around them and start	Know how to express their religious beliefs,	Express their ideas and feelings in a variety of

listening to religious music that is familiar to them or stories about the life of Jesus.	to develop the skill of reflection.	for example, praying and singing.	ways.
Create the right environment when preparing for prayer, a religious celebration and Mass.	Explore the things, times and events that are special in their lives, for example, music, food and celebrations.	Become aware when the word of God is being read and when prayers are being said and react appropriately.	Recognise the similarities and differences in people.

Teaching Objectives Framework for Level 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at becoming aware of the meaning of religious stories, symbols, events and pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities related to becoming aware of the special elements in Christianity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at becoming aware of the Word of God as found in the Sacred Scriptures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at being aware that people can communicate and express their views, ideas, feelings and beliefs in many different ways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at encouraging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities related to responding to a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at becoming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at responding to

<p>response to religious stories, symbols, events and pictures.</p>	<p>range of stories from Christianity and other religions and cultures.</p>	<p>familiar with a range of stories from Christianity and the Word of God.</p>	<p>people who can communicate and express their views, ideas, feelings and beliefs in many different ways.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at developing familiarity with religious stories, symbols, events and pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities related to exploring the special elements in Christianity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at knowing how people express their religious beliefs, for example by praying and singing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at finding out about how people share feelings and experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at developing an understanding of the meaning of religious stories, symbols, events and pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities related to religious ideas expressed in a range of ways, through stories, pictures and sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at knowing how to express their religious beliefs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at developing a sense of responsibility to others.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at developing and communicating their individual responses to a range of views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities related to religious ideas expressed in a range of ways, through stories, symbols, pictures and sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at relating religious stories to their own lives and to develop a sense of identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve in activities of people and objects in the environment : development of sensori-motor cognition strands through activities that aim at developing a sense of responsibility to others: in groups and communities.
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2.5 The value of a unitised curriculum

There is a clear relationship between the volume of content to be taught as projected within a syllabus/course of study and the level of attainment that each student can achieve. The greater the volume of content then less time is available for teaching each aspect of that content. By writing a unitised curriculum the balance between the range of content and the time available for student learning can be achieved. For this new curriculum, in many areas this has meant a reduction in what was being offered in the preceding syllabus. Each unit then has a specific set of objectives which can be reasonably expected to be learned as the allocated time for that unit is made available on the school timetable.

In addition by having a unitised curriculum it is easier for the teacher and the subject Head of Department to manage the curriculum for they are able to quantify the number of specific objectives that it has been possible to deliver and subsequently to make decisions about which units should be presented in which order throughout each year of schooling

2.6 Strands of learning for Religious Education

A strand of learning represents a goal that a student can attain throughout Primary and Secondary education. Each subject will have several strands of continuous learning called attainment level descriptors, which begin in Year One of Primary School and end in Form Five of Secondary School. Each strand is defined and the strands for Religious Education are:

Strand 1. The Religious Language

The understanding of the religious phenomenon and of how religion sustains and contributes to the development of cultures and societies, particularly in Western ones, through the arts, politics, sciences, education and philosophy; The ability to read and interpret symbols and religious language, and to understand and critically appreciate other religions;

Strand 2. The Spiritual Dimension

The education of the sense of beauty and wonder, of emotions and of attitudes as they have found expression in the Roman Catholic tradition, together with the ability to formulate, express, and possibly answer, fundamental existential questions. The education in, through and with Jesus Christ, of relationships/ connectedness with oneself, others, all creation and God;

Strand 3. The Word of God

The ability to understand and encounter the Word of God as found both in the Sacred Scriptures and in the Sacred Tradition. The ability to learn from the witness to the Christian faith throughout the ages and particularly in modern times;

Strand 4. Personal Catholic Worldview

The formation of virtues and values, together with the ability to read one's own situation in a critical and analytic manner in the light of the Christian message. The ability to apply the Christian message; and to live in a community in respect of diversity and in commitment to humankind;

2.7 The use of the attainment level descriptors for Religious Education

There are ten levels of attainment level descriptors. Level Four is equivalent for Year One and two in Primary school and each level then progresses at two yearly intervals.

Each strand of learning has a set of attainment levels which describe the progression in student learning. There are ten attainment level descriptors that cover the full range of attainment of ALL students. The attainment level descriptor Four is indicative of what the average student can learn by the end of Year Two in Primary education. Each subsequent level represents the range of attainment that an average student can be expected to achieve every two year years. Attainment levels one, two and three are indicators for students who may not attain level four at the end of Year Two. Attainment level ten is for those students who significantly exceed the expected level of attainment at Form Five.

The attainment level descriptors are observable statements of learning outcomes that students can attain. There are approximately eight of these statements in each attainment level descriptor. The statements are referred from the Teaching Objectives Framework and indicate a sample of what can be expected to be learned. Once a student has attained the majority of the learning outcome statements in a attainment level descriptor they are assumed to be working within the next level. The attainment level descriptors for Religious Education are:

Strand 1 - The Religious Language

Attainment Level 1

Student encounter activities and experiences. Student follows a slow moving object. Student watches their hand when it moves. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, tipping a container in order to pour out its contents. Student makes sounds when not distressed. Student shows interest in adults. Students use emerging conventional communication. They vocalize sounds similar to models immediately and imitate at least one invisible gesture immediately. Student encounters activities and experiences. Attempt to activate an object by giving it back to the adult. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time.

Attainment Level 2

Students start to familiarise themselves with religious symbols. They appreciate quiet moments and relaxation especially when they create an atmosphere of silence before Mass or a moment of prayer. Students are presented with knowledge about other religions and they start to show interest and engage themselves in activities related to other religions. Students recognise different religious symbols and start to recognise pictures and photos of religious traditions and celebrations which they have participated in, such as Holy Communion, feasts and Confirmation. They start to recognise differences in pictures of celebrations from other religions. Students start to communicate their emotions and ideas about their religion. They are attentive and they co-operate during group activities. The students listen and react when they hear religious music that is familiar to them or stories about life of Jesus. They participate in celebrations such as Christmas, Easter.

Attainment Level 3

Students listen attentively to religious stories and they start to communicate their feelings after listening to a story. They recognise religious symbols and can understand them further. They appreciate and further understand other religions and can recognise symbol or pictures which portray other religions. Students listen to stories about Jesus and understand that the parables and religious stories contain a

moral meaning. They start to be able to communicate ideas, emotions and they also start relate some parables which they have heard.

Attainment Level 4

Students will be able to discover the differences in class. Students will acknowledge their common ground. They are part of a big human family and they will recognise that they belong to a culture. They will acknowledge that they also share a religion and a faith. Students narrate themselves by recalling prayers or stories they learned within their families. Students will learn to celebrate their faith: principal feasts/ national and liturgical. Students will describe their experience of a particular religious celebration. Students will be encouraged to ask the relevant questions about this celebration. Students will be able to describe who they are and where they belong to.

Attainment Level 5

Students acknowledge the common Christian heritage and tradition of the Maltese people. Students acknowledge and describe that not all the students have the same character and feelings. Students will become aware of the different religious traditions. Students will be enabled to cultivate respect for diversity. Students demonstrate respect and tolerance for all those different from us. Students indicate the many dimensions of their experience in their daily life. Students discover and celebrate their commonalities. Students develop awareness about how easily they can hurt others. Students will be enabled to discover the importance of being familiar with main concepts of Religion.

Attainment Level 6

Students will learn about the three monotheistic religions. They will reflect and describe how Abraham is their father in faith. Though different, students are enabled to worship one God. Students discover what is common among the three monotheistic religions. They manifest how these three monotheistic religions worship one God in different ways. Students will be able to understand that the different cultures of these monotheistic religions are an enrichment for themselves and others. Students describe how these different cultures are a source of enrichment. Through the cultures of others, students also appreciate their religious culture. Students familiarise with their process of unfolding and becoming in their human and faith growth. They will understand what religion means for them and how they can communicate it with themselves and others. Students will learn about primitive religions and the three monotheistic religions. They will be able to understand the concepts of freedom and liberty and their relationship. Students will be enabled to discover the meaning of God in their life. They will be enabled to understand the importance of being familiar with key concepts of their religion.

Attainment Level 7

Students will explore the concept of their life as journey. Students will research the symbols of journey and pilgrimage. Students will discover the footprints of God in their life. Students will reflect on the religious history of humanity from primitive religions to the monotheistic faith. Students will be introduced to the basic beliefs of the great world religions. The students will reflect on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Students will view this history as a great human-divine adventure with Jesus Christ as its fulfilment. Students will familiarise with different religious means of communication. They will be able to discover and describe the conditioning factors related to liberty and freedom. Students will be able to understand the importance of building a solid philosophy of life.

Attainment Level 8

Students will be enabled to understand individualism as a major characteristic of their culture. They will describe how through connectedness they will counteract individualism. They discover religion as a way beyond culture towards connectedness. Students understand subcultures and their influences. Students will reflect on the importance of dialogue with society in the discernment of truth. Students will be enabled to understand dialogue with society as an effective tool in the wake of secularism and relativism. The students will understand the language of sin as disconnectedness within themselves, with others and with God. Students will be able to describe how through a language of love they can build connectedness within themselves, others and God. Students will be enabled to understand how dialogue with society is an effective tool of communication which enhances a bridge between faith and culture. Students will be able to relate various experiences related to freedom and liberty. They will be able to understand the meaning of building a Christocentric way of life.

Attainment Level 9

Students will be enabled to acknowledge the world as a global village and the challenges facing humanity and the Christian. Students will be enabled to understand the meaning of culture and how faith meets culture. Students will be able to narrate how a synthesis between faith and culture could be lived in their daily life. Students will get familiarized with the root of sin as described in Genesis thus being able to explore various ethical issues from different dimensions (case studies provided) Students will acknowledge the culture of non-belief as a challenge to the Christian worldview. Students will be able to describe how through faith, they can live their Christian life in a culture marked by non-belief and agnosticism. Students will be able to understand how communication can affect the challenges facing humanity through a Christian perspective. They will be able to narrate how a synthesis between faith and culture in relation to liberty and freedom could be lived in their daily life. Students will be able to describe how through Faith, they can live their Christian life in a culture marked by non-belief.

Attainment Level 10

Students will be able to understand the meaning of relativism. Students are enabled to search for the best sources of truth. Students are enabled to discuss the truth of Christianity in the face of relativism. Through case studies students will be able to discuss and demonstrate the relevance of Christian Truth in today's context of emerging cultural and ethical challenges.

Strand 2: Spiritual Dimension

Attainment Level 1

Student encounters activities and experiences. Student follows a slow moving object. Student watches their hand when it moves. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, tipping a container in order to pour out its contents. Student makes sounds when not distressed. Student shows interest in adults. Students use emerging conventional communication. They vocalize sounds similar to models immediately and imitate at least one invisible gesture immediately. Student encounters activities and experiences. Attempt to activate an object by giving it back to the adult. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time.

Attainment Level 2

Students begin to become conscious of their own emotions and can start to communicate these emotions. They can appreciate moments of relaxation with help of relaxing religious music and observing pictures of nature and all creation. Students begin to recognise that other people have emotions and that everybody is unique. Students appreciate and engage in moments of silence during prayer time and begin to understand how we engage in moments of prayer and recollection by joining hands or making the sign of the cross. They start to recognise other religious symbolic gestures and symbols. Students start to appreciate the beauty of creation and of nature. They can appreciate that there is someone mighty who is God and that he created all that is around us. They listen and react to religious music and stories and can start to participate in religious activities and celebrations.

Attainment Level 3

Students are more sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others and can express their own emotions better. They listen attentively to religious stories and can communicate their ideas and feelings towards the stories. They can relate stories from their own life and communicate what they have learnt from the stories they have listened to by using simple words and/or phrases. Students give support to each other and show respect for each other. They can start to relate to religious stories and apply them to

situations on their own life. They reflect on what makes them happy, sad and angry and they start to understand what can make a situation good or bad. They care about the environment which they understand is a precious creation of God.

Attainment Level 4

Students will try to understand and explore the world around them through play. Students will develop a sense of wonder at the richness and beauty of the world. Students will be enabled to create new prayers. Students acquire new understanding of the world and of themselves. Students learn to observe and go beyond appearances in a culture which enhances the image. Students will be enabled to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. Students will develop their self-esteem and self-confidence by recognising and appreciating signs of growth and change in body, mind and heart. Students learn basic prayers of praise and gratitude in family and community.

Attainment Level 5

Students experience and describe how they share community life in class. They manifest who they are rather than what they have. Through this discovery of who they are, students will be able to pray for themselves, for the world and for others. They acknowledge the richness of their talents. Students manifest how they share their talents. Students demonstrate how they can pardon and mend their ways when they hurt others. Students will be able to become aware and demonstrate how they can help the people in need in their community. Students will understand the meaning of worshipping God.

Attainment Level 6

Students discover the major feasts of the three monotheistic religions. They discover the role of religions in the unity of the world. Students also discover worship as the deepest expression of spirituality. Students manifest how the different religions foster good relationships. Students will also describe how through different religions relationships are amended. Through the common symbols the students will enrich their spirituality. Students will learn to explain the symbols of their own religion. Students discover how the sacred texts lead them to God. Students will be enabled to understand the key tools to build a philosophy of life – human/Christian.

Attainment Level 7

Students recognise that they are in a process of growth and change. They reflect on the changes in their life as different stages along their journey of life. Students recognise and appreciate the signs of growth and change in body, mind and heart as signs of God's plan of love for their life stories. Students realise

that every choice has its consequences on the progress along life's journey. They become aware that their personal experiences are limited. Students demonstrate that as human beings they are in search of fulfilment. Students understand the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives in their search for the whole truth. Students discover how they can build positive attitudes towards other religions. Students familiarise with different forms of prayer.

Attainment Level 8

Students are enabled to discover what makes them authentic as human persons. Students will be able to describe the many ways one can enhance/destroy the authenticity of the human person through different attitudes towards other religions. They are also enabled to discover the sense of calling in their life. Students are enabled to discern the different callings in life. Students will be able through experience, to narrate how different callings can be of benefit to society and the church. Students search for spirituality as a reading of the signs of the times. Students will be familiarized with different types of spiritualities. Students will be enabled to appreciate and describe the depth of the Christian Liturgy as the highest form of prayer. Students will be familiarised with different types of spirituality.

Attainment Level 9

Students are enabled to discover life as a process of discernment. Through various case studies students will be able to explore and get familiarized with the art/skill of discernment. Students will be able to explore and narrate how different cultural and daily life situations demand different prayer methods. Students will be able to describe how the role of the Holy Spirit as an agent of Evangelization is necessary in today's cultural milieu. Students will be able to understand how Mary Our Mother is a living icon of spirituality for today's culture. Students will be able to understand how to live their baptism and confirmation in their daily life. Students will be able to demonstrate through case studies how different religions can live together in harmony.

Attainment Level 10

Students are enabled to discuss and narrate the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of various biblical and outstanding Christian personalities who were able to discern the truth in their lives. Students are enabled to discover how Religious Orders, Ecclesial Movements etc. are agents of discernment and sources of spirituality in today's Church. Students are enabled to discern and to think critically about the influence of secularism in their life. Students are enabled to use Biblical Texts in order to discover how the Word of God leads them towards new, more mature visions /dimension/perspectives in their outlook on life, suffering in life, death and life after death.

Strand 3: The Word of God

Attainment Level 1

Student encounters activities and experiences. Student follows a slow moving object. Student watches their hand when it moves. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, tipping a container in order to pour out its contents. Student makes sounds when not distressed. Student shows interest in adults. Students use emerging conventional communication. They vocalize sounds similar to models immediately and imitate at least one invisible gesture immediately. Student encounters activities and experiences. Attempt to activate an object by giving it back to the adult. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time.

Attainment Level 2

Students are aware that when the word of God is being read or prayers are being said, they need to help in creating an atmosphere where silence is embraced and essential. They recognise religious gestures such as making the sign of the cross. They listen to and react to relaxing, religious songs and a silent atmosphere. Students recognise religious symbols and gestures. They engage in simple religious activities and listen to simple religious stories. They will reflect on religious events in their own life and recognise photos depicting these events. Students will also recognise photos of people who care for them. Students recognise others' emotions and can communicate their own. They listen attentively and react when listening to religious music and stories. They start to answer simple questions about religious stories and the Roman Catholic faith. They use religious gestures appropriately; such as making the sign of the cross before saying a prayer.

Attainment Level 3

Students engage in reciting simple religious prayers and participate in religious activities and role plays. They will reflect on religious events in stories and be able to answer simple questions about stories they have heard. Students recognise stories about Jesus Christ and start to understand that parables and religious stories have a moral meaning which they can apply to their own life. They start to participate in religious discussions and understand the existence of someone mighty who we call God and that Jesus is his son. They listen to and react to the life of Jesus and can communicate ideas and emotions towards the story of his life.

Attainment Level 4

Students narrate how they are part of creation. They recognise God as creator of the world around them. Students describe the world around them. They also narrate stories of creation. Students learn

that Jesus is their best friend and the son of God. They will recognise how Jesus is a friend indeed. They will narrate stories of Jesus with those in need. Students learn about the sign of the cross. They experience the Eucharist as a celebration of being together.

Attainment Level 5

Students are introduced to the experience of the first Christian community. Students will be able to indicate the attitudes and characteristics in Acts I and II. Students will be enabled to understand that praying together enhances community. They appreciate the Church to which/whom they belong. Students will be able to demonstrate what it means to become followers of Jesus in their daily life. They discover their Christian vocation through Baptism and Eucharist. They discover the on-going need of reconciliation with God and with others within the community. Students discover various symbols of reconciliation and celebrate together signs of reconciliation within the community. Students will be able to understand what it means to have missteps in life. Students will discover that with the help of the Biblical Text they will understand God's divine plan. Students will understand the importance of Biblical or non-Biblical role models in their life.

Attainment Level 6

Students are enabled to discover God's universal will to save mankind. Students discover the universal significance of what sentiments are felt and expressed in the Our Father. They discover the implications of "Thy Kingdom come". Students learn the relationship between prayer and commitment. They familiarise themselves with the different methods of prayer: requesting and listening. Students show what commitment means in daily life. Students will be able to discover that the object of our faith is the person of Jesus Christ. Students will understand the meaning of Sacred Text and Tradition in our Catholic faith. Students will familiarise with the relevance of biblical texts in their life. They will learn the relationship between prayer and commitment. Students will be enabled to understand the 'necessity' of missteps in their life. Students will be able to understand the relationship between God and His divine plan in one's life. Students will familiarise with role models – past and present, biblical and non-biblical ones.

Attainment Level 7

Students identify the main events of the journey of the People of God in the history of salvation. Students will be enabled to describe the timeline throughout the history of salvation and its parallelism with our life journey in Christ. They research the life of an Old Testament character to discover his/her life as a journey with God. They recognise Jesus' life as a journey towards Jerusalem. Students are enabled to understand Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. Students also research the life of a New Testament character to discover his/her life as a journey with God. Students will understand the

Christian implications of baptism and confirmation. They will discover psalms as spiritual-biblical companions in their journey of life. Students will be able to understand and to describe the relevance of Catholic Tradition as distinct from cultural tradition.

Attainment Level 8

Students show how the narratives in Genesis 1 to 11 throw light on the struggle between good and evil. Students will be able to describe how this struggle between good and evil is still part of today's culture. They are enabled to discover Jesus as role model. Students will be able to narrate and describe qualities of Jesus and how these could be contextualized in their daily life. Students are also enabled to discover Jesus as connecting people with themselves, others and with God. The students will realize the importance of analysing and interpreting how different religions live the struggle between good and evil. Students will be able to narrate and celebrate Reconciliation as Sacrament. Students will familiarise with stories of people who tried to live their baptism and confirmation. Students will be enabled to discover the importance of psalms in the Catholic religion and in other religions. Students will be enabled to understand the connection between Sacred Texts and Catholic Tradition. Students will familiarise with non-biblical persons who sought God and accepted him in their life. Students will familiarise with key issues that leave an imprint in their life as part of their faith journey.

Attainment Level 9

Students will be able to narrate from Scripture stories of persons who encountered evil and mishaps through faith: Jacob, Joseph, Ester, David, Judith, Job, Daniel and Jeremiah. From the New Testament, Our Lady, Centurion, Canaanite Woman. Contemporary persons such as : Jaggernestein, Thomas More, Ganna Berretta Mola, Giuseppe Frascati, Mother Theresa, Padre Pio, Blessed John Paul II. Students will be able to discuss how modern people pertaining to various prayer movements try to live their Christian vocation in their daily life. Students will be able to evaluate how the various issues in today's world – poverty, injustice, war, famine, racism, homophobia, can be counteracted through the living of the Gospel. Students will be enabled to familiarise with the teachings of the Church in relation with the sacraments in their Christian daily life. Students will be able to discern relevant messages from the psalms. Students will be familiarised with how they can live the Catholic Tradition in daily life. Students will be able to describe how they can leave an imprint in other people's life.

Attainment Level 10

Students will be introduced to the Gospel of St. John, including the symbols. Students will be able to discuss various texts from the Gospel of John. Students will also be able to elaborate on the text of St. John: 'I am the way, the truth...' in conjunction with the search for Truth in the Christian perspective.

Strand 4: Personal Catholic Worldview

Attainment Level 1

Student encounters activities and experiences. Student follows a slow moving object. Student watches their hand when it moves. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, tipping a container in order to pour out its contents. Student makes sounds when not distressed. Student shows interest in adults. Students use emerging conventional communication. They vocalize sounds similar to models immediately and imitate at least one invisible gesture immediately. Student encounters activities and experiences. Attempt to activate an object by giving it back to the adult. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time.

Attainment Level 2

Students become aware of their own emotions and that others also have emotions and feelings. They use different methods of communication such as gestures, signs, symbols etc. in order to communicate their emotions. They show that they understand the meaning of “yes” and “no”. They appreciate quiet moments and relaxation especially when they create an atmosphere of silence before a moment of prayer. Students recognise religious symbols and gestures. They engage in simple religious activities and listen to simple religious stories. Students will also recognise photos of people who care for them. They start to engage in and participate in religious activities which emphasise religious values and virtues. They will do this with a small group of students. There will also be moments when they will be encouraged to reflect on their own. Students recognise others’ emotions and can communicate their own. They listen attentively and react when listening to religious stories and they start to answer simple questions about religious stories and the Roman Catholic faith and values. They use religious gestures appropriately; such as making the sign of the cross before saying a prayer. The students start to become familiar to stories from the life of Jesus Christ.

Attainment Level 3

Students engage in reciting simple religious prayers and participate in religious activities and role plays. They will reflect on religious events and values in stories and be able to answer simple questions about stories they have heard. They learn how to appreciate diversity and the sense of community there can be amongst us. Students recognise stories about Jesus Christ and start to understand that parables and religious stories have a moral meaning which they can apply to their own life. They start to participate in religious discussions and understand the existence of someone mighty who we call God and that Jesus is his son. They listen to and react to the life of Jesus and can communicate ideas, values and emotions towards the story of his life. They will start to be able to apply the Christian messages and values to their own life and live in a community in respect of diversity.

Attainment Level 4

Students demonstrate a care for others and the world around them. They show how they are concerned for each other and for the environment. Students appreciate and express gratitude towards those who care for them. They appreciate and thank God for the gift of others and the gifts of creation in their daily lives. Students will develop a sense of gratitude as part of their character formation. They develop skills of gratitude towards themselves and their community.

Attainment Level 5

Students discover the virtues that make them fully human. Students describe the characteristic of these virtues which entitles them to live together. They learn what enables them how to live together in the community. Students also discover how the family, the school, the teacher, the local community provide the context for social interaction. They discover the obstacles that divide community/world. They discover the need for forgiveness in a divided community/world. Students will describe their Christian vision of a peaceful world. Students describe different ways of enabling the Christian vision of a peaceful world.

Attainment Level 6

Students discover their responsibility towards themselves, others and the world around them. They understand themselves in relation to others and they are introduced to issues of gender and sexuality. They are enabled to identify areas of commitment in their daily lives. Students are enabled to understand that this commitment is the basis of the Christian witness. Students are enabled to understand the notion of witness through case studies. Students cultivate a culture of stewardship. Students will understand the meaning of Christocentric views and attitudes. Students will be familiar with the meaning and formulation of a human and of a Christian value.

Attainment Level 7

Students are enabled to understand their identity as part of a Tradition. Students will discover the tradition of values and beliefs as the Tradition to which they belong. They are also enabled to have the true vision of life. Students will be enabled to understand failures and mishaps as opportunities for growth. Students are enabled to see this growth – through analysis and the reading of the signs of God’s plan as part of their faith journey. Through prayer and liturgy, students are enabled to feel part of a larger community. Students will be able to understand how amidst today’s culture, they still can nurture Christocentric views and attitudes.

Attainment Level 8

Students reflect on their choices so far in life. Students describe how different choices affect their life. They discuss how meaningful relationships influence their choices and actions. They discuss other

influences on their choices and actions: peer groups, media, etc. Students become aware of the mark of the divine in their own being as a sign of God's love and His will to empower them to live fully. They research one or more characters in whose life journey the Holy Spirit was manifest. Students will reflect and be able to describe the role of suffering as a road map towards maturity. Students will discuss how they can transmit Christian values and beliefs to the community.

Attainment Level 9

Students are enabled to understand their identity as part of a Tradition. They are also enabled to have the true vision of a good life. Through prayer and liturgy, students are enabled to feel part of a larger community. Students will be able to discover that the Gospel is a way of life amidst life challenges. Students will be able to explore how to be witnesses of their Christian belief in their daily life. Students will be able to describe their role in making the right choices/decisions in the face of various cultural, ethical issues.

Attainment Level 10

Students will be able to integrate the real meaning of being fully alive, as a Christian, amidst a world torn by divergent ideologies. Students will be able to show how the holistic approach in being a Christian is a synthesis between the doing and the being. Students will be able to discover and discuss the meaning and relevance of suffering in the world advocating the absurdity and illusion of happiness. Students will be able to discuss how the search for Christian Truth enables them to live and to share with others the illusions that lead to delusions.

2.8 The use of attainment level descriptors for national benefit

Attainment levels of all students should be assessed on an annual basis. This will allow all of the stakeholders to evaluate the progression in learning made by each student. The data collected will give a simple score of the number of the attainment level reached in each strand. This data can then be collated by the school, by the college or by the Department of Curriculum and e Learning to give a general picture of year-on-year progression of attainment. The data base will be used with clearly defined ethical responsibility so that students, classes or schools cannot be identified by other schools or colleges. This data is very informative to support school development planning as it provides objective evidence of the year on year progress that is being made. This data can be used to celebrate success.

2.9 The use of attainment level descriptors within lessons

The reference to the learning outcomes levels within a unit is to give the teacher a rough guide as to the possible range of student attainment in a class. Within a class of students there will be a wide range of diverse levels of student attainment. In order to support the teacher to appreciate this wide range of attainment it is possible to gauge the approximate level within which students find themselves. For

example in Form One we might expect all students to be at level seven which is the average level for Religious Education for that year group. Yet within such a Form One class the diverse range of ability may be as wide from level one to level nine. In planning a lesson, teachers need to be aware of this possible range of ability so that effective teaching and learning can take place.

It is very important to note that an attainment level descriptor is a very indiscrete tool not to be used for weekly purposes at a classroom level. Within any one level reflecting annual attainment there will be many sub levels of attainment that different students will reach during a teaching block. Teachers should see the use of attainment level descriptors within the subject units to be a rough guideline to encourage their own more precise planning.

2.10 Avoiding the misuse of attainment levels and indicators of learning outcomes

It is important to note that the results of the attainment level assessment should not be used:

- to inform daily progression because any group of students at one attainment level will still have different levels of understanding
- to indicate a student's actual level of attainment on a daily basis.
- to assume that working in one lesson is equivalent to a year's progress.
- to assume that a student attainment level is the same across different units within the same strand

2.11 Avoiding the misuse of learning outcomes

The indicators of learning outcomes identified within the units are based on the teaching objectives. These indications of learning outcomes are only a small sample of all the learning outcomes that will emerge from a teaching objective. Teachers need to be aware that there are many learning outcomes that different students will achieve during the course of a unit. Teachers should not teach to the learning outcomes.

It is also important that teachers do NOT assume that the indicators of learning outcomes in the unit reflect the focus of the whole unit. The driver of the units is the set of teaching objectives NOT the indicators of the few stated learning outcomes.

When using the indicators of learning outcomes in the units it is important to acknowledge that these are a very rough guide for the teacher to begin to bring down the extensive range of other possible learning outcomes that a teaching objective will facilitate.

3. The structure of units in the Religious Education curriculum documentation

The curriculum documentation is written in the form of units and has the following content;

3.1 Unit code and title

The title of each unit reveals the content of the unit and each unit is coded for the schools or teachers to record information collected. The consecutive numbers 7 and 8 in the Form 1 and 2 units reflect the year of schooling and have no relation to the attainment levels.

3.2 Strands and Attainment Levels

Each unit reveals the specific strands that are being delivered so as to remind teachers of the teaching aim of that specific strand and provide relevant learning experience for students.

3.3 The teaching objectives

The specific objectives for each unit are drawn directly from the general objectives within the Teaching Objectives Framework. There are the specific teaching objectives within each unit. These unit specific objectives are in two categories, a set for those students who are within their year related range of ability and then a set for those whose ability requires a further level of assessment. Selected from mainstream teaching objectives, these objectives are adapted to suit the needs of students with learning difficulties.

Teaching Objectives facilitate the focusing of knowledge, skill and attitude to be included in a unit. Usually there are three to five teaching objectives in a unit. Teachers may adjust the requirement of target attainment according to students' abilities, and then plan teaching and a variety of class activities accordingly.

3.4 Vocabulary

Relevant vocabulary included in the units that students need to experience and learn.

3.5 Points to note

These should cover reference to the subject approach to teaching and learning, but they may refer to health and safety issues that teachers need to consider and deal when teaching the unit.

3.6 Resources

A list suggesting teaching material required when teaching the unit. These include a variety of materials to support e Learning.

3.7 Examples of teaching experiences and activities

The teaching and learning content of each unit should correspond to the teaching objectives of the curriculum units. Next to each exemplar teaching situation the specific teaching objective is clearly stated. The examples given for each specific objective reflect ideas to catalyse and inspire teachers to think of their own ideas and materials. The teaching examples indicate different activities for students who are attaining at different levels. The activities are also written in such a way as to encourage student centred learning. In creating student centred learning opportunities the teacher must appreciate the difference between teaching objectives for the lesson which indicate the focus of the learning opportunities provided, and the learning outcomes which indicate a range of possible responses that students may give.

3.8 Differentiated Learning Outcomes

The differentiated learning outcomes show an indicative range of attainment levels for different students. They are given as a rough guide to stimulate the teacher's planning. In their class the range of attainment may be wider or narrower. In preparing the unit the teacher should reflect on the range of ability of the students in that class. There can do so by referring directly to the attainment levels. As a consequence of the range of attainment levels the teacher may need to plan for different teaching activities occurring at the same time.

4. The units for Religious Education

The units have three consecutive parts. The first part relates to the attainment levels of students from 5 to 8. The second part refers to attainment levels of students from 1 to 4 and in this part the objectives are similar to those in the first part but they may have a third part which refers to eLearning activities that relate to all levels of attainment.

The teacher is expected to select the range of objectives (from parts one, two and three) needed according to the range of attainment levels of the students in their class.

5. Assessment Strategies

Assessment needs to be effective, meaningful and must have a purpose. The purpose of Assessment for Learning is to provide feedback for teachers and learners on the teaching and learning taking place on a day to day basis at classroom and school level. This evidence will enable the teacher to adjust the learning programme accordingly in order to improve the quality of learning. Assessment tasks and procedures should be consistent with the aims of each strand of the subject and with the activities being done in class to achieve these aims. In this way assessment will be a vital part of the learning programme. The teacher needs to think of assessment tasks that disclose what has been learnt, what needs further prompting and the next step in learning for the student.

Assessment strategies refer to the different method of data collection and how they are reported in both formative and summative contexts. A number of basic specific strategies include clear and shared learning intentions, specific and reachable success criteria, effective questioning, feedback that feeds forward, self and peer assessment. Assessment for learning and teaching is an essential part of promoting students' active participation at the level of their understanding.

There is an important distinction between strategies to assess attainment as opposed to achievement. Assessment of attainment relates to the 'academic' work in the subjects of the curriculum. Assessment of achievement relates to the broader issues that relate to attainment but includes other concerns such as student effort and motivation. In this context we can have a student at level three who is a high attainer and a student at Level nine who is a low attainer. Understanding this distinction is important if the teacher is to ensure that effective progression in learning takes place.

Assessment of the attainment level descriptors should only be summative once a year. Attainment level descriptors contain a number of learning outcomes that reflect a small example of all the learning outcomes arising from the units and their objectives. In assessing an attainment level descriptor the teacher should recognize each of these learning outcomes and use 'a best fit' approach in deciding which learning outcomes within a level that a student has attained.

Assessment of unit- based work should be formative and ongoing. As students complete their work examples of it can be kept. The teacher may also make written comments in their own diary and separately encourage the students to write their own evaluation. The collection of this formative data can be used to inform the attainment level that best fits the student. It is important that the evidence be collected systematically to allow objective judgment as well as subjective reflections about the achievement of the learner.

A classroom culture where a growth mindset is promoted needs to be created. It is a culture where learning is a priority, where learners yearn for that information that will stretch their knowledge, where the classroom changes into learning communities. Assessment for learning strategies are further elaborated in the Appendices.

6. Facilitating student centred learning with Curriculum documentation

The curriculum documentation is written to encourage the teacher to ensure that every student has the maximum opportunity to learn. One important element is to reflect on the limited ineffectiveness of the traditional approach of teacher led teaching and to explore the value of student led or student-centred learning as being a more efficient way of encouraging student curiosity and raising standards of educational attainment

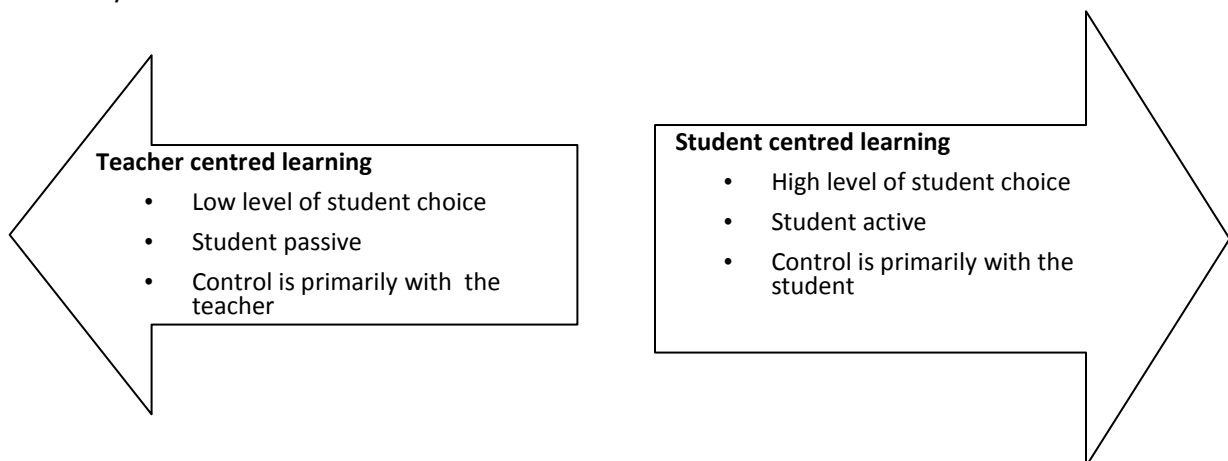
Traditionally teachers have taught their children using the same teacher led teaching method. They have decided on the lesson and one activity that they want to teach to all the students at the same time. Every student had the same experience and sometimes follow up exercises were given for two different groups. Teachers are encouraged to change their approach from teacher-led teaching to student centred learning.

6.1 What is student centred learning?

There are many terms linked with student centred learning e.g. Flexible learning, Experiential learning, Self-directed learning. Student centred learning is about the shift in power from the expert teacher to the student learner. The paradigm shifts away from teaching is to move the power from the teacher to the student. In student centred learning, the teacher is a leader who is perceived as an authority figure in the classroom but is sufficiently secured within themselves to trust the capacity of the others to think and learn independently. The learner has full responsibility for their learning.

6.2 Teacher-centred and student-centred contrary perspectives

There are two very different approaches to enabling students to learn. One is where the teacher tells the students all that he thinks that they need to know. This direct teaching usually is given from the front of the class and the teacher controls all of the student learning by efficiently telling the whole class what needs to be learned. At the other end of the spectrum there is student centred learning where the teacher is only one of several resources available to each different student in the class.



6.3 Student centred learning continuum

Within the various understanding of student centred learning there are a range of interpretations. In the limited interpretation the teacher decides what each individual student needs to know and sets the behavioural objectives to indicate efficient learning. Each student only learns what the teacher tells them but the information is specific to each student. At the other end of the student learning continuum, the student is in total control of what they learn and when they learn it. In this case the transmission of knowledge is not so efficient, but the control of the learning and understanding is very effective because it is monitored by the student themselves. In between these two extremes there are many interpretations of the term 'student centred learning'. The key factor is that the student is in control of the flow of learning information, no matter what are their disability related barriers to learning.

6.4 Implications for curriculum design

In order for a teacher to encourage student centred learning, there needs to be a clear curriculum framework through which students can progress, week by week and year by year. This framework should provide a curriculum of opportunity for each student to follow during their career through school. At the school and classroom levels there needs to be effective and appropriate curriculum design with the following features:

- a. The curriculum should be unitized with clear objectives
- b. Within a unit students should have a choice of what they wish to learn in the lesson

6.5 Lesson planning for student centred learning

Student centred learning requires the teachers to plan their lessons effectively. A lesson plan for a group of students should address the following questions:

- a. Are the indicative learning outcomes clear
- b. What are the identified learning processes for the beginning, middle and end of the lesson?
- c. What resources are identified?
- d. Is there any guidance for behaviour management?

6.6 Understanding the difference between the teacher's lowest conceptual level which is above the students' highest conceptual level

Across all of the range of ability there is evidence that teachers in a teacher-led teaching context, significantly overestimate the level at which their students are capable of learning. Teachers use their

lowest level of understanding to give students access to their lessons. Again and again, at all levels of attainment, there is evidence that the majority of students in a class fail to have a high enough level of understanding to appreciate the lowest level of their teacher. The teachers continue to teach what they know but fail to recognize that many of the students have no idea what the teacher is saying or doing. This is one of the greatest problems with teacher led teaching. Student centred learning would overcome this as the students level of understanding is the starting point which they control.

7. The use of curriculum documentation for curriculum planning

The value of unitized Curriculum documentation is that they support curriculum planning at both the school and classroom level. This approach means that the attainment of the students drives the balance of the school curriculum and not the subjective decisions of the school’s senior management team. In the three tables below we can see that a unitized curriculum within a scheme of work allows the senior managers monitor at a school level what is happening at the classroom teaching level as well as at the classroom timetabling level.

7.1 Teaching hours for the allocation of subjects

At a school level the scheme of work allows for the allocation of teaching hours in Form One

Maltese	English	Mathematics	Integrated Science	Religion	Total teaching hours
84	105	105	84	42	
Geography	Arts Education	History	PSD	Social Studies	
21	21	42	42	21	
ICT	PE	+ 1 foreign language option	+ other option		
21	42	84	42		756 hours

(The above data is based on scholastic year 2010-2011)

7.2 Yearly planning statement

This document can then be converted into a yearly planning statement for each class. This allows the senior management team to understand and then monitor what is happening across one year in any one class.

School Yearly Planning 2011-2012

Form One

	Teaching Block (TB1)	Teaching Block(TB2)	Teaching Block (TB 3)
Maltese	Unit 1 Jiena Unit 2 Film li ma ninsa qatt Unit 3 Int sabiħa o Malta tagħna Unit 4 Darba waħda	Unit 5 Logħob u festi Unit 6 Sur editur Unit 7 L-istorja ta' Jo Unit 8 L-iskola	Unit 9 Jason Unit 10 Storja ta' vera Unit 11 Naraw fejn aħna Unit 12 Aħna tfal bravi
Maths	Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers Unit 2 Angles Unit 3 Number patterns & co-ordinates Unit 4 Decimal number & money Unit 5 Fractions	Unit 6 Metric measures & time Unit 7 Triangles & scale drawing Unit 8 Accuracy & number machines Unit 9 Polygons & symmetry Unit 10 Displaying data, central tendency & probability	Unit 11 Using letters instead of numbers Unit 12 What are directed numbers? Unit 13 What are straight line graphs & transformations Unit 14 Solid Shapes & Volume Unit 15 Solid Shapes & Volume
Geography	Unit 1 Map Detectives	Unit 2 Exploring Malta (1)	Unit 3 Exploring Malta (2)
English	Unit 1 The way we live Unit 2 Going on holiday Unit 3 The world of science Unit 4 The world around us and beyond Unit 5 Families	Unit 6 Friends Unit 7 The right job for me Unit 8 Let's sing & play Unit 9 Adventure Unit 10 Let's play this game	Unit 11 Different ways of buying & selling Unit 12 Let's imagine Unit 13 Television Unit 14 Follow the rules Unit 15 Let's save the world

History	Unit 1 Beyond history Unit 2 Meeting civilizations	Unit 3 The Roman eagle spreads its wings Unit 4 The Roman eagle spreads its wings	Unit 5 Under the rule of the crescent Unit 6 Studying history
Social Studies	Unit 1 Living in a society –socialisation	Unit 2 Living in a democracy	Unit 3 – The person as a consumer – goods & Services
PSD	Unit 1 Getting to know my new school environment & peers Unit 2 All about me	Unit 3 Respecting ourselves & others Unit 4 Understanding growing up changes & making responsible choices	Unit 5 Roles & responsibilities within different social contexts Unit 6 Making good use of my time
Music (General) Music (Option)	Unit 1 Musicking Unit 1 note values, time names & signatures Unit 2 Pitch & pitch inflections	Unit 2 Music in Art Unit 3 Intervals & aural awareness Unit 4 The triad & its application	Unit 3 A golden treasury of medieval & Renaissance music Unit 5 Writing & performing strands
Textile Studies	Unit 1 One way to sew it up! Unit 2 Christmas Stocking	Unit 3 taking a look at textiles Unit 4 rags to riches	Unit 5 Creative Design Unit 6 Colour your Life
PE	Unit 1 Fast, high & far Unit 2 Let's dance	Unit 3 That's a cool work out Unit 4 A cool routine	Unit 5 Just between us Unit 6 Send it up high Unit 7 Outdoor 1- follow it, find it
Integrated Science	Unit 1 In the lab Unit 2 Grouping Unit 3 Ecology Unit 4 Energy around us	Unit 5 Energy & sustainable living Unit 6 Chemical reactions Unit 7 Cells & body systems Unit 8 Reproduction	Unit 9 Acids & alkalis Unit 10 Materials Unit 11 Electricity Unit 12 Forces
Religion	Unit 1 My journey Unit 2 The power within	Unit 3 Choosing the way Unit 4 The backpack	Unit 5 Challenges Unit 6 Never alone
Art	Unit 1 The magic of line	Unit 2 A kaleidoscope of colour	Unit 3 Patterns galore Unit 4 Textures to see, textures to touch
Drama	Unit 1 Let's polish it	Unit 2 How do I behave?	Unit 3 We become someone else

Italian	Unit 1 Start Unit 2 Myself & others Unit 3 On the road Unit 4 In the city	Unit 5 What do you do? Unit 6 My identity Unit 7 The family Unit 8 Whose is it?	Unit 9 My home Unit 10 The Colours of life Unit 11 Daily routine Unit 12 What day is today?
French	Unit 1 Recognising French in various forms Unit 2 My school mates Unit 3 All about myself Unit 4 My clothes, likes & dislikes	Unit 5 Life at school Unit 6 Consolidation & revision Unit 7 My family Unit 8 Time & date	Unit 9 Where am I? Unit 10 Let's visit Paris! Unit 11 Where is all? Unit 12 Consolidation & revision
German	Unit 1 Let's start Unit 2 All about myself Unit 3 Family & friends Unit 4 How much, how many?	Unit 5 Daily routine Unit 6 What is the weather like? Unit 7 Free time & hobbies Unit 8 Yes, of course	Unit 9 What I can do & what I want to do Unit 10 Have you heard? Unit 11 At home Unit 12 Consolidation & revision
Arabic	Unit 1 Let's get started Unit 2 The Arabic Alphabet Unit 3 All about me Unit 4 Identifying yourself & others	Unit 5 Sentence structure & punctuation Unit 6 Family & relatives Unit 7 Colours, Shapes & descriptions Unit 8 My house; types of houses	Unit 9 My school & its environment Unit 10 Can you tell me where is.....? Unit 11 Numbers (1-10) days of the week & months Unit 12 What I have learnt this year
Design & Technology	Unit 1 Gifts of the forest Unit 2 Plastic investigator	Unit 3 Test it yourself Unit 4 Treasures from under ground	Unit 5 One way operation Unit 6 Sensible energy sources
ICT	Unit 1 Collecting and sharing information	Unit 2 Texts, pictures and numbers	Unit 3 Presenting and publishing information

Spanish	Unit 1 Ready, set, go! Unit 2 Hello, how are you? Unit 3 Where are you from? Unit 4 the family is well, thanks.	Unit 5 How hungry! Unit 6 Everyone has their favourite colour Unit 7 Home, sweet home Unit 8 Come on!	Unit 9 My daily routine Unit 10 It's raining cats & dogs Unit 11 More beautiful than most Unit 12 Beach or mountain?
Graph Communication	Unit 1 grasping the principles of basic geometric construction Unit 2 constructing angles & patterns by means of compass & set squares	Unit 3 Constructing triangles & quadrilaterals Unit 4 Constructing circles & polygons	Unit 5 Projecting isometric drawings Unit 6 Introducing information graphics
Home Economics	Unit 1 Discovering Home Economics Unit 2 Pyramid power	Unit 3 Smart snacking Unit 4 Breakfast Time	Unit 5 Sweet Endings Unit 6 Roll up your sleeves

7.3 Weekly Timetable

This document can then be used to identify a time table for any one class according to the relevant teaching block. So for example if we take the subjects for Teaching Block One above we can then produce a timetable for that Teaching Block.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers	PSD Unit 1 Getting to know my school...	English Unit 1 The way we live	Int. Science Unit 1 In the lab	Geography Unit 1 Map Detectives
English Unit 1 The way we live	PSD Unit 1 getting to know my school..	Maltese Unit 1 Jiena	Italian Unit 1 Start	Religion Unit 1 My journey
Maltese Unit 1 Jiena	PE Unit 1 Fast, high & far	Maths Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers	Religion Unit 1 My journey	Maths Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers
ALM Unit 1 Musicking	Italian Unit 1 Start	Maths Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers	English Unit 1 The way we live	Italian Unit 1 Start
Maths Unit 1 Properties of whole numbers	History Unit 1 Beyond History	Italian Unit 1 Start	Maltese Unit 1 Jiena	Maltese Unit 1 Jiena
Home Econ. Unit 1 Discovering home	English Unit 1 The way we live	Int. Science Unit 1 In the lab	ICT Unit 1 Collecting & sharing information	English Unit 1 The way we live
Home Econ. Unit 1 Discovering home	Int. Science Unit 1 In the lab	PE Unit 1 fast, high & far	Social Studies Unit 1 Living in a society-socialisation	Int. Science Unit 1 In the lab

Such a system means that there is a direct and manageable link between what is being taught in the classroom and what is planned at a senior management level. This also means that the results of the attainment levels of student assessment can influence that balance of hours allocated to each subject. If this happens then it is possible to say that the balance of the subjects taught in any school is driven by the student's level of attainment i.e. it is a student centred curriculum.

8. The important contribution of eLearning

eLearning is about making learning more flexible by providing access to tools that give greater possibilities to teaching and learning. The question, "What can teachers and students do today that they could not do without technology?" has to be the guiding rule that helps teachers and students use the tools to achieve skills that are expected in a 21st century learning environment. Digital technologies give control over to the users as to when and where they study while allowing them to develop at their own pace. Digital technology has the potential to provide a student centred learning environment tailored to meet individual needs.

8.1 Digital Technologies

eLearning provides a range of technologies including:

1. Generic software applications, word processors, spread sheets, and statistical tools which can be used to develop ideas and skills and to present and publish results and findings;
2. Subject specific software;
3. Presentation technologies - including interactive whiteboards, projectors, digital cameras, recording mics and presentation software;
4. The Internet - which provides access to a range of digital resources including on line libraries, databases and "Cloud computing".
5. Conferencing - which includes e-mail, Blogs and Wikis, discussion boards, bulletin boards and chat tools that can support a range of collaborative activities;
6. Multimedia to support a variety of learning styles and includes the use of images, sound, video and animation;
7. Computer assisted assessment - automatic on-line testing which will be available on the National VLE. Some teachers are already using such software that is available on the Web;
8. Computer assisted learning - using the computer to support learning e.g. online tutorials that might include video or animation and feedback within a structured framework;
9. Video conferencing, involving the use of audio and visual communication can be used to share ideas collaboratively;
10. Streaming - digital audio and video delivered via the web can give students access to real situations that might otherwise be inaccessible;
11. Simulations and Models that enable students to explore real world models and develop practical skills in a safe environment;

12. Games including robotics, game consoles and 3D worlds where the student learns through experimentation and interacts with others in a simulated environment;
13. Visualisation tools including mind mapping and concept mapping tools that are used to represent complex information.
14. The list is not exhaustive and the creative teacher will be helped and supported in exploiting emerging technologies to enhance the teaching and learning.

8.2 Leaders' role

Digital technology plays a critical role in allowing teachers to focus on student-centred approaches. Integrating digital technology into the curriculum is an essential way to retool our schools and turn them into learning spaces that will prepare our learners for tomorrow. Integrating technology into the curriculum is not the same as being competent in using the computer. Leaders should stop thinking about technology training and how it can be used in the classroom and start thinking about curriculum training that incorporates technology.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1:

Flexibility in curriculum management progression from a Unit to Teaching

The flexible hierarchical structure of the curriculum

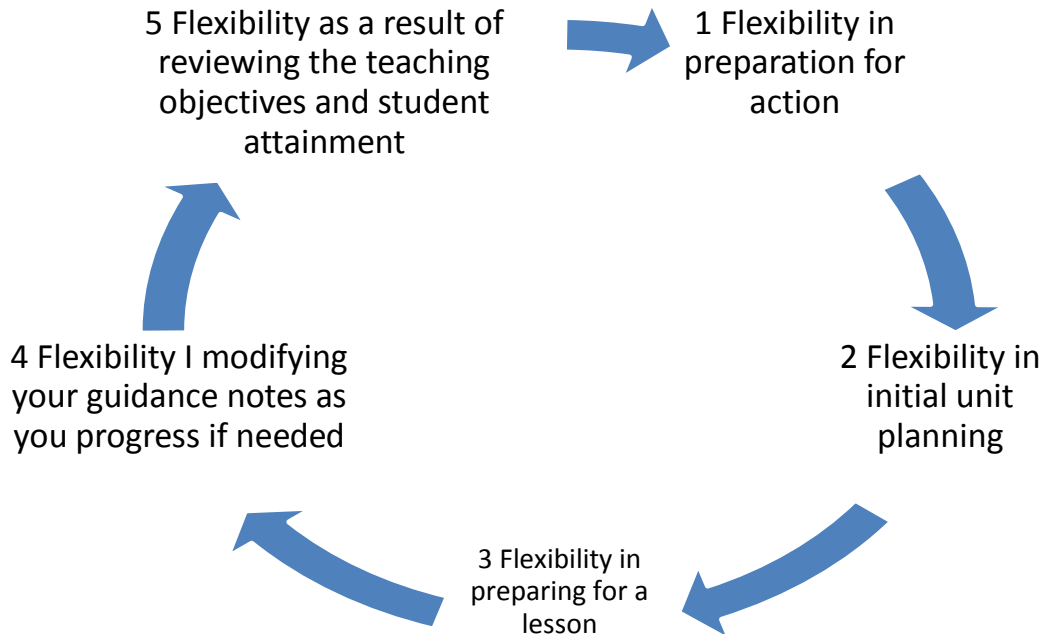
At each level in the hierarchy of the schooling system the curriculum can be flexibly managed. This is more fully explained in the footnote.

- The central curriculum from the DCMeL
- The curriculum of opportunity the whole set of units for each subject at a college and school level
- Subjects scheme of work with the strands, their units and Level descriptors at HOD level
- Subject units all the units that make up the scheme of work for each subject at a classroom level
- Unit teaching objectives for the teacher's delivery of the subject
- Lesson procedure guidance possible more detailed notes for a lesson
- Student learning outcomes macro for the class and micro for the student

Different forms of flexibility when managing the units at a classroom level

1. Flexibility in preparation for action
2. Flexibility in initial unit planning
3. Flexibility preparing for a lesson
4. Flexibility in modifying the teaching plan as you progress
5. Flexibility as a result of reviewing the teaching objectives and student attainment

Flexibility in developing a teaching implementation strategy at the classroom level



1. Flexibility in preparation for action

Decide the order and how many units to teach within a year and in which teaching blocks.

Flexibility is in choosing the units in the order that suits you.

1.1 Flexibility in initial unit planning

- Read the unit as a whole to ensure that you have a picture of what it says.
- Ensure that you appreciate the approach to teaching and learning for that subject e.g. Science and enquiry.
- Reflect on the approach you will take to student centred learning.
- Decide on the teaching situations and learning activities that would suit your class of students Review and if necessary rewrite the range of possible learning outcomes so that they reflect the range of students' attainment levels in your class.

1.2 Flexibility preparing for a lesson

Decide on Unit Teaching Objectives for the week

- Insert the teaching objectives for the whole unit
- Identify some key words to be stressed throughout the unit
- Indicate some of the key teaching materials that you will use

Decide on appropriate vocabulary

Flexibility in deciding the key words to be used

The plan shown below is to illuminate what is meant by flexibility. It is not intended that the teachers has to write a similar plan although the teacher may make some sort of preparation guidance notes especially if there is an LSA in the class

Decide on work station groupings of students

1. For group one the objective and activity come from unit; In this case the planning follows the guidance
2. For group two the objective is a different one and the activity is as per unit; **Flexibility** In this case is that the order of the objectives is different for different students in the same class as some may have progressed more quickly
3. For group three the objective is the same as group two but the activity is different; **Flexibility** in this case is in the change of teaching activity
4. For group four the objective is from a different inclusive objective and the activity comes from The unit; **Flexibility** in this case is in the change of level of objective

1.3 Lesson notes

- Make a note of the approximate amount of time that you would devote to teacher centred teaching and student centred learning. You may have two 10 minutes teacher directed sections followed by a 10 minute student reviewed section within each lesson.
- Write the teaching situations and try to make them exciting.
- Write the guidance for teaching those activities to maximise student centred learning.
- Ensure that each supporting LSA has the activity that they are to do demonstrated to them (not just explained).
- Make sure that everyone knows that the learning outcomes are possible indicators of student response and not teaching objectives.

2. Flexibility in modifying your guidance notes as you progress

2.1 During the lesson

- During the lesson activities glance at the adults to check that they are doing what you expect. If the adult is not doing what you want either show them there and then or talk to them after the lesson.
- Ensure that any behaviour guidance is clear and adhered to.
- At the end of the lesson review the subject content that has been covered and evaluate if you need to make changes for the coming week. You may keep the same content for the whole teaching block or you may insert new activities or content.

Flexibility as the plan of the lesson progresses then you can evaluate:

- The appropriateness and effectiveness of the teaching materials,
- The teaching interaction situations,
- The groups and the effectiveness of the adult support
- The quality of achievement from the student
- The actual responses the students give that indicate the level of learning outcomes

Constantly refer back to the subject unit:

- Ensure that the spirit of the unit as shown in the objectives and indicative learning outcomes are clear in your teaching plan
- Reflect on the effectiveness of the delivery of your teaching objectives in the spirit of the unit
- Check that your subject approach to teaching and learning meets the guidance in the Teachers' Handbook
- Reflect on whether you have assessed the student at the correct level of attainment that he can achieve without adult intervention

The modifications to subsequent lessons may be needed if not all objectives are covered. By modifying the teaching plan as the teaching block progresses, adjustments to lessons can be made according to:

- the speed at which the teacher successfully completes the teaching objectives
- the teaching situations can be modified according to the spontaneous inspiration of the teacher

- the student learning outcomes can be individually adjusted, as the learning progresses for different students

2.2 Reviewing the teaching objectives and student attainment once the unit is completed

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching objectives
- Evaluate the learning outcomes for each student
- Use the above information to inform the planning of the next unit

2.3 Flexibility with the Teaching Objectives

The teaching objectives are to inform the teacher's delivery of the subject content.

- All of the teaching objectives contribute to the Teaching Objectives Framework for the subject.
- The teaching objectives reflect the syllabus of the Central Curriculum that are appropriate to the level of attainment of our students
- Teaching objectives should NOT be referred to as learning objectives. (Learning objectives do not exist within our diversity paradigm)
- Teaching objectives challenge the quality of the teacher's knowledge of the subject they are teaching.
- For ease of access then for Form 1 there are a set of teaching objectives for students who are attaining at levels 5,6,7 and 8 and a later set in the same units for students who are attaining at levels, 1,2,3 and 4.

2.4 Flexibility in evaluating learning outcomes

Macro Learning Outcomes are based on the level descriptors and they give us an indication of the range of student responses within an annual review context. They allow the teacher to appreciate the broad range of levels of student attainment in the class and to reflect on the general differences across a class of students.

Micro Learning Outcomes are based on the response of the students to their teaching experience within a lesson. When a lesson activity is first planned the micro learning outcome will be an estimate by the teacher.

- Once the lesson has been taught the teacher can write a realistic outcome statement.
- Each student will have his/her own expected learning outcomes.
- The ability to attain an outcome should be where the student is in control of the learning and NOT where the teacher is promoting an answer.
- During a Teaching Block a student should develop their learning outcome attainment.

3. Flexibility as a result of reviewing the teaching objectives and student attainment

In order to allow learning and teaching to inform each other it is important to review the activity in the classroom from both a teacher and a student perspective. The following criteria may help the teacher to reflect on the flexible criteria that may influence modifications of the teaching and learning process.

Critical review criteria

1. Are the teaching objectives from the Scheme of Work unit correctly copied?
2. How are the students put in groups at clearly defined work stations?
3. Does the range of activities fit the allocation of time for that lesson?
4. Is there an appropriate share of the amount of time between teacher centred teaching and student centred learning?
5. Do the teaching activities maximise student centred learning?
6. Are the teaching situations exciting?
7. Do the student learning outcomes differentiate the range of outcomes to be found within one level of attainment?

8. Is there an effective range of student learning outcomes expected for each teaching activity?
9. Do the supporting adults have clear written directions?

Note on curriculum management and flexibility

- At every hierarchical level of the schooling process the curriculum can be flexibly managed to ensure that the best quality of education is provided to the students. The different levels of management are DCMeL, College, SMT, HOD and Classroom.
- By curriculum management we are referring to the process whereby the co-ordination of the levels of attainment of each of the students are matched by the managed provision of the full range of educational resources, human, physical and financial.
- In a curriculum that is underpinned by the need to respond to diversity and student centred learning, then at each level there are two important features. In this case we are referring to curriculum management features for classroom teachers.
- The first feature is the need for teacher freedom to flexibly make decisions on how best to use the resources available. The second feature is the need to have responsibility so that the decisions that are made need to be evaluated.
- In this case the EO and HOD give the teacher a set of units which the teacher has flexibility to deliver. Conversely the teacher then is responsible to the HOS and EO for the evaluating the effectiveness of the planning as indicated by the progression in attainment of the students.
- Flexibility and responsibility of managing the curriculum at the higher levels will be referred to in another paper. At every level it is the successful progression in attainment level of the students that drives the management of the full range of curriculum resources.

Appendix 2: Assessment for Learning - important general principles

Assessment for Learning (AfL) occurs when evidence is used to adapt the teaching to meet the needs of the students. Assessment for Learning enhances learning for all types of students because it is there to build a bridge between what is known and what lies on the next step.

1. Understanding what students know

Before starting to teach a new topic or concept, we need to become aware of what are the pupils' perceptions on the subject. Techniques that can be used include Brainstorming, Questioning, Survey, Concept Mapping, Mind web, Discussion, Short test, Evaluate written work done at home or at school.

2. Effective Questioning Techniques

We should consider the use of open challenging questions which allow a range of correct responses and require students to think. More wait time is required. This wait time has to be of around five seconds. Students usually leave the answering of questions to the few most able students in class or else when we use a 'hands up' technique, only those that are sure of the answer put up their hand as the others would not want to risk. What about the rest of the students? How will we know that these students have grasped the concept or the skill? Therefore avoid the hands up technique and give everybody an opportunity to answer. Questions can be of the following type:

- **Literal Questions**
Simple recall: Who? Where? When? What?
- **Application Questions**
Can you think of another situation similar to this?
Do you know of another story that deals with the same issues?
Do you know where else this can be used?
- **Analytical Questions**
What makes you think that?
Can you support your view with evidence?
Why do you think this was written/given in such a way?
Why did you decide to do it in such a way?
- **Synthesis Questions**
What is your opinion?
What evidence do you have to support your view?
Given what you know about... what do you think?
If you were.... what would you think
- **Evaluation Questions**
What makes this ... successful?
Does it work if done in another way?
Which is better and why?

3. Oral Feedback during the lesson

Feedback is fundamental. It gives the opportunity to students to improve in their learning. Feedback has to be from teacher to student, student to teacher, and student to student. Good Oral Feedback should

1. focus on the student's work not on the person
2. state specific ways on how the work can be improved
3. compare the work the student produced with what was previously done
4. do it all along the activity
5. be critically constructive use
6. give comments that push the learning forward
7. use a language that does not intimidate the students
8. consider all the students' comments
9. focus on the learning intentions explained at the beginning

4. Oral and Written Feedback after the lesson

'It is the nature, rather than the amount, that is critical when giving pupils feedback on both oral and written feedback'. (Black 2004)

Written feedback can be in the form of grades or comments or both. A numerical mark does not tell the students what needs to be improved in their work and therefore an opportunity to enhance their learning is lost. When a comment is written next to the grade, students tend to ignore the comment and all the corrections the teacher does. The mark becomes a measure of their ability.

Give students the correct advice that would lead them to correct their mistakes. This advice has to be concordant with the learning intention. The advice should be a very short piece of information about where the students achieved success and where they could improve against the learning intention.

The work should go back to the student who must be given time to carry out the requested changes. The work will then go back to the teacher who will correct it and give another advice on what can be done next to enhance learning.

Comments need to begin with what has been a success by showing what needs to be improved and by giving advice on how this improvement can be achieved.

The feedback given has to cause thinking and students need to be given time to answer

- Focus on specifics by asking a specific question about what went wrong
- Delve and ask questions that prompt a student to be more specific

The feedback given should stimulate the student to improve. It should be challenging enough to motivate the students to learn. Visible improvements will increase the students' self-esteem.

5. Promoting Self-Assessment and Peer-Assessment

Self-Assessment

Many studies show significant progress made by children who have been trained to be self-evaluative. At the end of every lesson students are asked to produce reflective comments about their learning, followed by a teacher's summary, unravelling misconceptions that might have been created and

providing links with future learning. Self-evaluation has to be linked with the learning intentions and this will lead to student progress, more persistence and a higher self-esteem from the students' part.

Training students to be self-evaluative

1. Explain why a self-evaluation is needed. Significant progress is made by students who are self-evaluative. When they compare their learning against the learning intentions, they understand where they stand in their learning. Then they can ask the necessary questions to move forward.
2. Recap the learning intention a number of times during the lesson.
3. Be prepared with a number of questions for the end of the lesson.
What did you find most difficult to learn?
Is there something which you are still unsure about?
Is there anything you need to know more about?
4. Give students some thinking time (15-30 seconds) to answer the above questions.
5. Use different approaches to get the answers for the above questions such as whole class responses, paired-responses, group responses.

Peer-Assessment

When students are given the opportunity to verbalise what they have learnt, their brain will start processing the data by giving it a structure, forming bridges between what is new and those concepts/perceptions that they had before. This will make students aware of what has been learnt and what needs further clarification. Therefore it is of extreme importance that teachers give space and time for students to speak about the topic in question. Peer-assessment is the ability to assess the work of others, whether it is written, spoken, painted or any other practical piece of work. Students will be able to perform peer-assessment only if the teacher has given them clearly stated success criteria against which they can perform assessment. Skills which form the basis of peer-assessment: Students have to learn to observe to form an opinion and to know why they have formed that opinion.

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Appendix 3: Digital Technology Enhanced Learning

Using Digital Technology to enhance learning is a requirement of the National Curriculum. It is the entitlement of all students. The entitlement documents that follow are not intended to be exhaustive, but indicate where Digital Technology might usefully support students in acquiring knowledge, being creative, collaborative and in communicating appropriately and effectively.

In many secondary schools access to Digital Technology at this point in time poses a number of challenges, so careful planning is necessary to use even a small amount with all students. The situation in Primary schools is less challenging as each class has at least three PC and the teacher's laptop. As any reform is a journey rather than a one-off event, it is envisaged that the entitlement documents will be updated periodically to accommodate new emerging technologies. It is not intended that all of the suggested links and possible activities be used and those described may be used in different ways. Some activities and ideas lend themselves to using the teacher's laptop and the interactive whiteboard at its most basic function. Other activities and ideas work best with a networked system and portable computers, and which make best use of the virtual learning environment. Students may be able to use ICT at home and this should be encouraged where it is appropriate.

The suggested ideas (at the end of each unit) exploit the software that already exists in school or is available freely in the public domain or cloud. Many of the activities are straightforward and easy to put in operation. Others may require support from e-Learning Champions in the school. In any case the best idea is for class teachers to consult the school's e-Learning Champion about what they want to do and how it might fit in the curriculum. It is not the intention of the e-learning entitlement documents to deliver students' ICT capabilities although some activities will consolidate what the students learn during discrete ICT and Computing lessons.

The PC and other digital technology

Primary and secondary school students need to be taught 21st century skills if they are to thrive in the technology-infused job sectors they will enter in the future. We need to fuse the traditional 3 Rs with critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration. It is no longer enough to instruct students in spoken and written communication. They need to be taught to communicate electronically including netiquette, email and Web interactions. Collaboration today happens also virtually, where materials and documents are shared without regard to physical space. More collaboration will be occurring in 3D, immersive environments so students need to be adept at navigating virtual worlds. It follows that students should be given opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability through the use of digital technology and Web 2.0 tools to support their learning in all subjects.

Students should be given opportunities to support their work by being taught to:

- find things out from a variety of sources, selecting and synthesising the information to meet their needs and developing an ability to question its accuracy, bias and plausibility;
- develop their ideas using ICT tools to amend and refine their work and enhance its quality and accuracy;
- exchange and share information, both directly and through electronic media especially Web 2.0 tools; and,
- review, modify and evaluate their work, reflecting critically on its quality, as it progresses.

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy in its various forms represents the process of learning. The six levels by Bloom have been simplified in some cases, like the three storey intellect inspired by Oliver Wendell Holmes and adapted to education by Art Costa, but basically Bloom's Taxonomy still represents how people learn. Bloom's revised digital map is an update of the original 1950 and 2000 map and accounts for the new behaviours, actions and learning opportunities that emerge with new technologies. The digital taxonomy addresses the following skills:

Key Term	Thinking skills	Digital skills	
Remembering	Recognise, listen, describe, identify, retrieve, name, locate, find	Bullet pointing, highlighting, bookmarking, social networking, social bookmarking, searching, Googling, local bookmarking.	Low order thinking skills ↑ ↓ High Order
Understanding	Interpret, summarise, infer, paraphrase, classify, compare, explain, exemplify	Advanced searching, Boolean searching, blogging, twittering (micro-blogging), categorising, tagging, commenting, annotating, subscribing.	
Applying	Implement, carry out, use, execute	Run, load, play, operate, hack (reconfigure or re program a system), upload, share, edit	
Analysing	Compare, organise, deconstruct, attribute, outline, find, structure, integrate	Mashing-up (as in layering of images on maps), link, validate, reverse engineer, crack, media clip	
Evaluating	Check, hypothesise, critique, experiment, judge, test, detect, monitor	Comment in blogs, post, moderate, collaborate, network, refactor (as in improving code readability, i.e. undertaking tiny changes in program code to improve software), testing new code	
Creating	Design, construct, plan, produce, invent, devise, make	Program, film, animate, blog, video blog, mixing and remixing, wiki-ing, publishing, video casting, podcasting, directing	

Appendix 4: Matching software to Attainment Levels 1 to 3

The following level 1, 2 and 3 attainment level statements all contain examples of software that can be used to support teaching activities.

Level 1:

A1i Using Big Bang, Switch It Patterns to attract attention, student may be passive or resistant.

A1ii Using Switch It Series, student shows alertness and simple reflex responses.

A2i Switching on a fan or tape recorder using a switch, watch and track images on a screen using Big Bang, Big Bang Patterns.

A2ii Turn towards familiar music and stories and respond to familiar events in a story. Repeatedly press a sequence.

A3i Communicate intentionally to ask for computer, press the Go button on a BeeBot to repeat a movement. Show pleasure at the responses e.g. Switch It Series build up.

A3ii Initiate a program - e.g. Touch Games, Switch it Maker 2 to start the sequence. Anticipate the next step in a program e.g. Choose and tell Legends. Use two switches to make a choice e.g. Switch Skills for Two, Choose and Tell Series. Use Choose it Maker 2 to make a simple decision. Show awareness of problem-solving e.g. pressing a switch repeatedly when the computer has been switched off.

Level 2

A4 Students recognise their own image (digital photographs in Switch It! Face Maker), start a story on a DVD.

A5 Matching activities in Skill Builders Matching Skills, Sorting Skills, recognising numbers and alphabet letters in Choose It Maker 2, Clicker 5. Use a communication grid to make needs and wants known Boardmaker Plus, The Grid 2.

A6 Use the computer or portable communication device to send a message, write their own name in Clicker 5, Symwriter. Save and retrieve work they have done in Clicker 5. Follow a set of instructions to control the Constructa-bot, Pro-Bot. Switch on the computer and load a familiar program independently

Level 3

A7 Choose which images to include in Switch It Maker 2. Give directions and instructions and use symbols to write messages in Clicker 5, Symwriter, Communicate in Print 2

A8 Record own voice on Easi-Speak or computer program e.g. Switch-it Maker 2, put together their own slide sequence using Switch-it Maker 2, select and insert a clip art into a word processor, Select a range of tools from a toolbar in Clicker 5, make animation in Textease.

Appendix 5: Online resources for attainment levels 1 to 3

The following list details sources of free software and guides that can be used to support students with individual educational needs and the use of Assistive Technology.

ACE Centre Advisory Trust <http://www.acecentre.org.uk>

ACE Centre access software, a free version of Switch Access to Windows plus Windows shareware.

Call Centre <http://www.callcentrescotland.org/resources>

Downloadable communication boards and resources, BoardMaker V6, Clicker 5 and PowerPoint resources.

Children's BBC (CBBC) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/>

BBC web site for children with switch accessible online games.

Communication for All <http://www.communication4all.co.uk/>

An interesting website which supports inclusion

Crick Software Ltd <http://www.cricksoft.com/uk/> and <http://www.learninggrids.com/uk/>

freely downloadable Clicker 5 grids, a software package used to support students across all curricular areas.

Do to Learn <http://www.dotolearn.com>

Games, songs and fun activities.

Enchanted Learning <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html>

Online curriculum material including Languages, Physical Sciences, Geography, Sciences, Maths, Music.

Help kidz learn <http://www.helpkidzlearn.com>

a number of activities which can be used with a switch, tracker-ball or other hardware.

Hiyah <http://www.hiyah.net/software.html>

downloadable games including pre-literacy and early maths skills.

Inclusive Technology <http://oneswitch.org.uk/>

Ideas, games and resources for art, music and playing video and computer games using switches.

Intellitools Inc <http://www.intellitools.com/>

Activity exchange area including the Intellikeys concept keyboard and Classroom Suite.

Jigsaw Planet <http://www.jigsawplanet.com/>

Can create a puzzle with a minimum of 6 to a maximum of 200 puzzle pieces.

Mayer-Johnson resources www.mayer-johnson.com

Software downloads and a 30 day trial version of Boardmaker symbols.

Meldreth Manor <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/meldreth/textandinfo/comp.html>

Meldreth Manor School has downloadable PowerPoint and Illuminatus switch activities.

Northern Grid for Learning <http://www.northerngrid.org/sen/dbsenmain.htm>

Appendix 6:

Attainment Level One explanation.

This appendix is for teachers of those students who are attaining at Level One. In psycho-medical terms the students at this level have profound and multiple learning difficulties. A number of these students will be attending mainstream schools whilst some students at this level attend St Miguel and Helen Keller schools.

A theoretical underpinning to early thinking skills

An overview of Piaget's stages of cognitive development

First Stage Sensorimotor	Birth to 18 months	Infant interacts with the world through actions such as crying, regulated gestures, and exploring.
Second Stage Pre-Operational	2 yrs to 7 yrs	Pre-schoolers relate to their world through symbolic reasoning, magical thought, and continued sensorimotor activity.
Third Stage Concrete-Operational	7 yrs to Adolescence	Children begin demonstrating logical thought by using concrete examples from the world around.
Fourth Stage Formal Operational	Adolescence into Adulthood	Adolescents go beyond concrete examples and begin engaging in abstract thinking.

The sensori motor development

In order to understand how to develop thinking in pupils who are functioning at attainment level one, we adopted an approach based loosely around sensori motor perspective on cognitive development from 0-2 years of age Piaget (1955). This approach is illuminated in the following text whereby the six strands formed the focus of learning, and the three levels of circular reaction formed the developmental levels of progression in learning that became the basis of the P scales 1-3.

Piaget's sensori motor development and the attainment level scales,

A) Strands of development adapted from Uzgiris and Hunt (1975)

1) The Development of visual pursuit and the Permanence of Objects

Fixating on and tracking objects, recognising the continued existence of partially hidden and hidden objects, retrieving partially hidden and hidden objects

2) Means of Obtaining Desired Environmental Events

Increasingly complex ways of asking for things to happen. Getting repetition, various ways of getting objects, strategic planning for achieving ends.

3) The Development of a) vocal and b) Gestural Imitation

- a) differentiated coos and distress sounds, imitation of sounds already in repertoire, imitates some new sounds, will imitate most sounds
- b) Imitates familiar own body actions, imitates visible gestures, imitates invisible gestures, imitates new models of gestures

4) The Development of Operational Causality

Increasing levels of understanding about what makes things happen. (Some overlap with scale 2). Profound egocentricity, self at the centre of all events, self and others making things happen.

5) Construction of Object Relations in Space

Increasingly complex understandings of spatial relations. Tracking, grasping, appreciation of spatial effects e.g. gravity and position of objects.

6) The Development of Objects in Relation to Schemes

Reflexes, simple undifferentiated schemes, differentiated schemes, dropping and throwing objects, socially instigated schemes.

B) Piaget's Stages (levels) of Development,

From Hogg and Sebba, 1986

There are three main levels which are divided into six stages, two levels at each stage

Primary circular reactions, based on reflexive responses leading to schemes that are repeated and generalised;

Secondary circular reactions, leading to the co-ordination of secondary schemes, where learned habits emerge into intelligent behaviour;

Tertiary circular reactions, leading to the invention of new means through mental combinations with trial and error and dependence upon feedback as a basis for new learning.

C) The adaptation of the above approach to thinking means that we have six strands of learning i.e

- 1) *The Development of visual pursuit and the Permanence of Objects*
- 2) *Means of Obtaining Desired Environmental Events*
- 3) *The Development of a) vocal and b) Gestural Imitation*
- 4) *The Development of Operational Causality*
- 5) Construction of Object Relations in Space
- 6) The Development of Objects in Relation to Schemes

Within each of these strands at Level One, there are a further three sub levels each of which is divided into two further levels. This makes a total of six sub levels in total

Sub-attainment level 1i

1, 2, 4. Student encounters activities and experiences. Student follows a slow moving object. Student watches their hand when it moves.

3a. Student makes sounds when not distressed.

3b. Student shows interest in adults.

5. Student turns head in direction of familiar adult on hearing or seeing them.

6. Student touches an object.

Sub-attainment level 1ii

1. Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. Student notices the disappearance of slowly moving objects.

2. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, student grasps an object visually directing his hand to the object.

3a student responds to infant like sounds.

3b student attempts to imitate action but does not succeed

4. student repeats arm actions to keep an object active consistently

5. student is able to localize the source of a sound visually

6 student may give intermittent reactions, student interacts with several objects at the same time by taking them to their mouth.

Sub-attainment level 2i

1. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects. Student pulls off a screen to obtain an object.

2. Pupil's begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. Student repeats an action moving their hands systematically to produce an interesting event.

3a student vocalizes similar sounds to adults

3b student imitates a familiar gesture immediately

4. student accepts and engages in coactive exploration. Student produces a dominant act during a pause to suggest a procedure.

5. student reacts to new activities and experiences. Student follows a rapidly moving object and locates it visually only when it lands into views.

6. Student interacts with several objects at the same time by visual inspection

Sub-attainment level 2ii

1 student finds an object completely covered in three places and searches directly under the correct screen.

2. Student begins to be proactive in their interactions. Student moves the body to regain an object and continues to play with it.

3a student imitates familiar words

3b student models unfamiliar gestures immediately.

4. student cooperates with shared exploration and supported participation, for example, in a familiar game the student responds during pauses.

5. student performs actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, for example, student drops objects into a container and reverses it to get it out

6. student bangs two objects together

7. student communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, for example, showing a consistent dislike for certain flavours or textures.

Sub-attainment level 3i

1. student sustains concentration for short periods. Student finds an object under three super imposed screen.

2. student remembers learned responses over more extended periods. Student understands the relationship of a support and reaches for a object

3a student imitates unfamiliar sounds but not in a similar way.

3b student attempts to imitate unfamiliar actions they can see.

4. student participates in shared activities with less support. Student attempts to suggest a procedure to create a new event of interest to them

5. student observes the results of their own actions with interest. Student acts on a place with objects appreciating the force of gravity

6. student explores materials in increasingly complex ways, Student shows more varied actions adapted to specific objects such as swinging objects

7. Pupils begin to communicate intentionally; They seek attention; they request events or activities

Sub-attainment level 3ii

1. student searches to find an object under the correct one of three screens.

2.They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, tipping a container in order to pour out its contents.

3a.b. Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They vocalize sounds similar to models immediately and imitate at least one invisible gesture immediately

4. They attempt to activate an object by giving it back to the adult. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time e.g. uses a stick to get an object without demonstration.

5. Pupils may anticipate known events, for example, drops several objects repeatedly to see where they land.

6. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, for example, feeling the textures of different parts of a plant.

When another person is present, a student will show objects to encourage social interaction.

7. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, for example, touching one substance rather than another.

These levels form the bases of the learning outcomes that are being developed attainment Level One within the Maltese curriculum. At this level of teaching the access is on the six strands of learning and the national curriculum forms the learning context and environment within which the students can learn. So for example the students may not be learning Science but in terms of cause and effect when ice-cream melts on their body then in scientific terms materials are changing their properties from solids to liquids.

The application of this approach is particularly relevant in the teaching of mathematics at attainment Level One.

