

Key end points for this unit include:

- Judaism is a religion with one God.
- Abraham and Moses are important people in Judaism.
- Torah is a sacred text in Judaism.
- The synagogue is a sacred place in Judaism.
- Shabbat and Hannukah are festivals in Judaism.

This unit introduces children to Judaism through the themes of special people, texts, places, and times. It mirrors the structure of the earlier unit on Christianity, helping children make meaningful connections to prior learning and develop their understanding of religion through a consistent and accessible framework.

Later in Year 1, children will encounter Judaism again in multifaith units focused on creation and belonging. From Year 2 onward, they will continue to build on this knowledge through units exploring Jewish perspectives on places of worship, leaders and teachers, symbols, and religious expression. As with all PKC RE units focused on a particular religion, we encourage teachers to model inclusive and accurate language to reduce misconceptions. For example, using phrases like “some Jewish people...” or “many Jewish families...” helps children understand that religious practice can vary widely among individuals and communities.

Where possible, teachers are encouraged to enrich lessons with locally relevant content. If your school has Jewish pupils or links with a synagogue or members of the Jewish faith, you might invite visitors to speak to the class or organise a related educational visit. These real-life connections help bring learning to life.

Each lesson includes suggested tasks, which can be adapted to suit the needs of your class. Reflection questions support children in relating their learning to their own experiences and developing the confidence to express personal thoughts in a respectful and thoughtful way.

Lesson sequencing

The first lesson in this unit aims to answer the question: What is Judaism? For children in Year 1, this lesson will provide a basic understanding that Judaism is a very old religion, and followers of Judaism believe in one God. Children will also understand that Jewish people may practice their religion differently. Children will reflect on how, in their own lives, they show they care about things in a variety of different ways.

In lesson 2 children will learn about two important figures from Judaism; Abraham and Moses. Children may have learned about Moses in their first unit of RE which offered an option for teachers to learn about three important religious figures in more detail. Both Abraham and Moses are also important figures in Christianity. In Judaism, Abraham is considered the 'father' of the Jewish people. In the Torah (which is also part of the Christian Old Testament), God promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation. The story of Abraham is also found in the Christian Bible and he is considered an important person who trusted in God. Moses is important in Judaism because he led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. He received the Ten Commandments from God, which are central to Jewish beliefs. Moses is also important in Christianity and his story is part of the Old Testament. Teachers can make connections between Christian and Jewish beliefs during this lesson.

In lesson 3 children will learn about the Jewish sacred text; the Torah. This lesson explains that the Torah is not a book, but is written on a scroll. They will learn that the Torah contains rules that many Jewish people try to live by. These rules include the Ten Commandments, given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. (Children learned about Moses in Lesson 2). Children will learn how Jewish people show respect to the Torah by not touching it directly and using a pointer when reading it.

In Lesson 4, children learn about the Synagogue, the Jewish place of worship. They will learn that many Jewish people attend a Synagogue to pray, to learn more about their religion and to celebrate festivals. Children will learn that the Torah is kept in a special place within a Synagogue, called an ark. Children will learn more about the Synagogue when they study the unit, 'Sacred Places', in Year 2. Children have previously learned about churches in Christianity and will be able to make connections between the two.

In Lesson 5 children will learn about two Jewish festivals, Shabbat and Hannukah. Shabbat is a weekly festival which marks a period of rest and Hannukah is celebrated annually and celebrates a miracle thought to have happened in Jerusalem over 2,000 years ago. Children will learn how some Jewish people celebrate these festivals and will make connections to the Christian festivals they studied in the previous unit. Children will learn that some Jewish people light candles on a Menorah during Hannukah.

The final lesson in this unit offers an opportunity to assess children's understanding of the content of this unit. Some tasks are suggested but we encourage teachers to consider what will work well for their class. If children are able to write to show their knowledge, then a written assessment task might be suitable. If children would better show their knowledge in another way, then teachers may prefer to capture their knowledge through conversation or by asking children to draw or explain certain aspects of this unit. The knowledge goals in the plans will help teachers to focus on the essential knowledge we want children to take from this unit.

The key concepts touched upon in this unit include: religion, belief, worship

Children will build on their understanding of these concepts as they move through the curriculum.