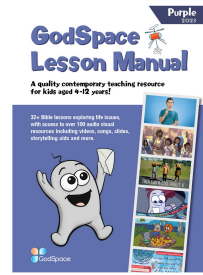


# Curriculum Review – *GodSpace Purple*

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Reviewed November 2022. Version 1.  
RI Curricula are referred to by the Department of Education Qld as RI Program Materials.



## Executive Summary

In 2019, the Multi-Faiths RI Network commissioned an independent review of common curriculum materials used by Religious Instructors in Queensland Schools. The focus of the review was to assist Principals to be confident that curriculum materials comply with Department of Education Queensland policy requirements. This report is a review of the curriculum materials used by many Christian Religious Instructors, against 15 policy areas of focus. The review purpose and process is outlined in a separate document on the website [multifaithsri.org.au](http://multifaithsri.org.au).

## Outcome:

***GodSpace Purple is highly compliant with the relevant Department of Education Queensland policies.***

There are 8 themes. Themes 1 to 7 each have 4 lessons and theme 8 has 3 lessons. The lessons are organised around the stories about Jesus and Daniel from the Bible, and how to apply principles for good living to everyday life. There is 1 Instructor manual, with each lesson differentiated for 4 different age groups, with lessons organised around the same idea and bible concept.

There are quality colour magazines for students with engaging activities aligned to each lesson. The Instructor manual provides support for community members who may not be teachers to confidently organise themselves and engage with students and schools in respectful and sensitive ways.

This edition has improved representations of inclusivity through illustrations and instructions to consider students with sensory sensitivities for key activities. This edition also has supporting videos with quality animations, and Auslan instructions to communicate some key bible verses.

The analysis was conducted by four experienced teachers who did a lesson-by-lesson review for compliance with Department of Education policy.

Review coordinator:  
Dr. Jill Willis, Associate Professor of Education, November 2022.

# Curriculum details

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## **GodSpace Purple**

GodSpace Purple is a one-year program for Instructors. It is published by Burst Christian Resources that is affiliated with affiliated with Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.

### **Instructor's manual with detailed instructions**

- 224 pages.
- There are 8 units. Units 1 to 7 each with 4 lessons, and Unit 8 has 3 lessons. These units are organised in themes:
  1. Questions about God and Me
  2. How is Jesus Different?
  3. How do People respond to Jesus?
  4. Does Jesus Understand Me?
  5. Peacewise – Responding to conflict
  6. Daniel – An Example in Following God
  7. Prayer
  8. What Difference does Jesus make?
- Each lesson has differentiated plans and suggestions for four age groups, and a mixed age group outlined in the Instructor's manual, with each age group having a separate student booklet. As the lessons are organised around the same idea and bible concept, the Instructor can choose activities that are appropriate for the ages and interests of their groups.
  1. Explorers ages 4 - 6
  2. Adventurers ages 6 - 8
  3. Navigators ages 8 – 10
  4. Voyagers ages 10 – 12
  5. Mixed ages
- Each lesson plan contains information for the Instructor about
  1. Aim, overview, bible verse and resources in an overview
  2. Big idea and core value
  3. Lesson aim
  4. Learning Outcomes
  5. Lesson Notes
  6. Question activity – such as a game, song, show and tell
  7. Explore activities – such as a Bible focus with scripted teaching sections and links to visual aids or activity in workbook
  8. Discover activities - such as a prayer or song.
- There are reflections points for Instructors throughout the manual, including a detailed mid-year review guide.

### **Student Magazines**

- Quality colour magazines for students include engaging activities aligned to each lesson.
- The magazines have activities that are highly visual with engaging and inclusive illustrations, puzzles, opportunities to draw and reflect.

# Lesson by Lesson Review

- Reviewed as compliant.
- Reviewers noted that while these activities are compliant, RI Instructors would need to take additional care with these activities.
- Reviewers indicated that caution should be exercised and that this lesson or part of the lesson may cause compliance concerns.

- Sections of this lesson were not compliant.
- N/A Not applicable.
- \* Updates in new edition have addressed the issues raised.

The codes refer to the Infants manual (I), Lower Primary (LP), and Upper Primary (UP).

Unit	1				2				3				4				5				6				7				8			
Lesson	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
1. Appropriate age and lesson time																																
2. Supporting a cooperative arrangement. No leaving of materials																																
3. No proselytizing or promotion of outside school activities and publications																																
4. No activities or content that would cause harm to a child (physical, psychological or emotional well-being)																																
5. Supports and promotes a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment																																
6. Responds to diverse learning needs – level and age																																
7a. A safe physical and cyber learning environment - supports wellbeing																																
7b. Fosters behavioural strengths																																
7c. Builds positive relationships (peers, staff, parents, community) and promotes positive social interactions																																
7d, e. Encourages inclusivity, diversity																																
8. Safe supportive environment, free from bullying, discrimination, harassment																																
9. Responsive to school behaviour plan, safe supportive and disciplined learning environment																																
10. Smart choices - healthy food and drink																																
11. Consistent with Code of School Behaviour																																
12. Risk - suggests undertaking an assessment and identifies where risk assessment is needed																																
13. Promotes responsible care and use of animals																																
14. Does not include activities using items that may cause allergic reactions																																
15. Supports effective communication between students, parents communities that is inclusive and valued																																

# Review Commentary

## Strengths

- 1. The Instructor handbook is detailed and well designed.** The lessons are clearly outlined with scripted suggestions for Instructors, that are in clear and child-friendly language.
- 2. The Instructor handbook provides practical advice to support community representatives in their roles.**

Each lesson has clearly outlined learning outcomes, lesson notes and choice of activities. This is so that the RI Instructors may choose appropriate activities based on the students' needs within the class. The introductory pages of each of the manuals provides reminders to get to know students, to respectfully acknowledge different views, and suggestions of what to say when students ask challenging questions.

There is a clear emphasis on the use of appropriate language and respect for students by the RI Instructors. Sensitivity to student experience is shown throughout, for example where the topic focuses on praying for people who are sick (p.g. 54) Instructors are advised to use prayer language that Jesus will 'help' friends and family.

- 3. The resources promote inclusion and diversity in engaging and sensitive ways.**

The resources present diversity as a strength. For example, there are videos where children teach Auslan versions of bible verses and illustrations of students represent a range of ethnicities and include a student in a wheelchair. Where there are activities that involve props like balloons (lesson 25) Instructors are reminded that some students have sensory sensitivities. The lessons about managing worry through trusting God (lesson 15) and managing big emotions (lesson 16) give age-appropriate strategies and teaching tips about being sensitive to student responses. In lesson 19 the Overlook, Talk and Get Help strategy is an age-appropriate and positive approach to conflict, helping students to be empowered with when they can overlook minor irritations but seek help when they need it or are in an unsafe situation. Students are represented as creative, with student lego creations featured. The focus of each lesson teaches character strengths such as being honest, resilient, respectful and forgiving others.

- 4. The lessons have a variety of interactive learning activities.**

- A number of different teaching strategies are suggested to elicit student engagement and interaction, such as using visual aids, songs, puppets, drama, crafts, and real-life case studies.
- Uses age-appropriate language for students to explain biblical stories and implications. Scripts for Instructors to use with puppets are age appropriate and engaging.
- Each lesson contains numerous options for the teacher to select from depending on the diversity of each class. Options for songs and PowerPoint resources are high quality.
- Lesson plans are clearly scaffolded. All lessons are planned for an indoor classroom with no specialist equipment needed. The usual resources that children would have and regularly use in their classrooms are used such as glue, scissors, pencils, crayons. They are low risk.

## Commendations for publishers:

- The publishers were highly responsive to suggestions for small improvements in the pre-publication phase.

## Policy Compliance

The curriculum materials are highly compliant with the 15 policy areas of focus identified in collaboration with the Department of Education policy advisors, drawn from:

- The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.
- The Department of Education's Safe, Supportive and Disciplined School Environment Procedure
- P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework
- Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework
- Inclusive Education Policy
- Statement of expectations for a disciplined school environment
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- The Code of School Behaviour

- Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities
- Animal Use in Queensland state schools
- Smart choices - healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools
- Parent and Community Engagement framework

The curriculum materials offered many opportunities for students to consider issues and develop values that are identified as desirable educational goals within the Australian curriculum. Some of the strengths of the curriculum in helping students develop as responsible, caring and global citizens are outlined. The activities that were noted as considerations are flagged as blue in table 1, while activities requiring some greater caution have been noted with an orange flag and are explained in detail. These cautions could be addressed by the publishers in future editions, and easily adapted by Instructors to ensure current policy compliance.

Chapter 5 - Section 76 of the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 requires that materials are for Year 1 students or older ages. While the Connect B1 manual does have lessons for kindergarten ages 4-6 these lesson materials may support Year 1 Instructors to differentiate their activities. They would not necessarily imply that RI classes would be conducted with Prep students.

### **Overall Comment from the review team:**

God Space Purple is an innovative and well-considered resource that aims to provide clear scaffolding and appropriate pedagogies for non-trained teachers (i.e. Instructors who are volunteers in school classrooms). The lessons are appropriate for primary-school children. The lessons provided ample opportunities for all children to get involved and contribute through discussions, reflections and activities.