

RE Curriculum and Pedagogy Guide

The curriculum is pieced together using the following principles:-

C1: Disciplinary Knowledge

We want our pupils to take from their primary education a delight in learning and to see possibilities everywhere; to be well set up for life. We see disciplinary knowledge as a way of revealing to them different ways of learning and hence opening up the world to them. We want children to understand what it is to engage in theological discussion and debate. We here echo Martin Robinson's call for our children to become 'philosopher kids' in his book 'Trivium 21C': *'We want our pupils to grow into 'Philosopher Kids', who are curious to know and to question; who can lead as well as follow; who like to feel, to think; who are notable for their eloquence and willingness to take part in the big conversation of life. We want them to engage thoughtfully in dialogue and argument; to appreciate and make beautiful things; to be confident grappling with difficult ideas; to appreciate quiet reflection and contemplation. We want them to be caring and compassionate- able to flourish both as individuals and contribute actively to the flourishing of those around them.'* Pupils engage in Philosophy for Children across the school.

C2: Substantive Knowledge

We look to ensure substantive knowledge is taught and learned in a carefully planned progression. We make links back to previous relevant knowledge and make this explicit to the children in the elicitation exercises we carry out at the outset of each unit. Knowledge must lead to greater understanding. *'We have reached a point in our evolution where we know a lot, we know a hell of a lot but we understand very little; never before in human history has there been such an accumulation of knowledge as there has been in the last 100 years but look where we are. What was that knowledge for? What did we do with it? The problem is that knowledge alone is not enough; we lack understanding.'* Manfred Max-Neef. To have understanding we need to live the knowledge, we need to belong, when you belong you understand, when you are separated you can accumulate knowledge but understanding is holistic.

C3: Botheredness & Purpose

Where we can, we aim to narrow the focus of a topic and go deep and/or provide a moral or practical purpose for the learning. This way we hope our pupils will become not just enthused but inspired or concerned or morally engaged in the knowledge they are encountering and this will lead to deeper thinking and questioning around a given topic.

C4: Spirituality

We look to identify opportunities for spiritual reflection and growth when planning and in practice. We want our pupils to have a reverence for learning and life; to be

experiencing awe and wonder daily; to have a sense of something bigger beyond themselves. We want them aiming to live their lives by strong values and principles. We want our pupils to understand the influence of Christianity on our culture, community and way of life. We strive for spiritual growth...we are committed to developing our understanding and appreciation of the interconnection of the self with the universe; including inculcating and polishing all the innate qualities that allow one to feel a better communion with a higher sense of being.

C5: Threads

Wherever possible we plan for units of work to deliver one of our core threads as well as the subject specific objectives. Our threads represent a core body of understanding: substantive and attitudinal, and a means of linking knowledge and providing for an overarching spirituality/ purpose/ focus for our curriculum.

In defining desired outcomes for Year 6 pupils (at the end of the thread) we therefore look to:-

- a) our own beliefs about the purpose of primary education (i.e. what we would like to bring to the equation)
- b) our community context (ie what our community brings to the equation)
- c) our core values as a school (ie what our church distinctiveness helps to bring to the equation)

C6: Stories

Where possible we link learning with stories from the Bible and other religious texts as well as linking to stories in literature, for example the Selfish Giant. We recognise the importance of narratives, *'The human mind seems exquisitely tuned to understand and remember stories- so much so that psychologists sometimes refer to stories as psychologically privileged, in that stories are treated differently in the memory compared with other types of material.'* (Willingham, 2004)

C7: Oracy

We offer structured opportunities for pupils to share and debate ideas with others. We are committed to P4C as a way of working. We look to an approach which gives pupils the means to share their voice, turn outwards to the world, to communicate with it, have a relationship with it and make a difference to it.

RE Teaching methods used in RE lessons/ units.

Lessons/ units will/ may include the following strategies:-

Re 'Engagement':

E3: High expectations & formative intervention

If a pupil or pupils struggling to understand the learning we support them:-

- **WAGOLL-** folder of best work from the year before to demonstrate expectations to the pupils.
- **Pre- teach**—pre-empt learning taking place the next day and pre-teach the

objectives beforehand to boost confidence.

E4: Engaging activities to start unit/ lesson:

- **Stimulus**- look at objects/ pictures/ video- discuss
- **Visit**- pupils go on a visit to place of interest to stimulate their interest/ questions/ ideas.

E5. Quality of Teacher Questions (ref also techniques to develop MASTERY)

- **Keeping it open**
- **Tell me**- don't always ask why because it's too interrogative—instead use 'tell me' which invites conversation and is more pen ended. Say, 'Tell me what you have done.' // Say, 'Tell me what you're going to do first.'
- **Exploring alternative views**_(re-stating a view, speculation. distinctions, alternative views)
to encourage children to develop an understanding and appreciation of diversity;
- Can you put it another way? Is there another point of view? What if someone suggested that..? What would someone who disagreed with you say? What is the difference between that view and...?
to promote personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through exploring these questions;

E8: Working together, talking

by working collaboratively to develop pupil' interpersonal skills, such as listening, sharing, and respecting the views of others; in doing so to instil appreciation of different views and interpretations;

Debates- groups / pairs to persuade other groups/ pairs re their point of view

- **Role play**—pupils engage in role play/ freeze frames/ hot seating etc around the subject.

E9 Vulnerable learners

For some vulnerable learners or those with SEND, their needs provide additional barriers to engaging with learning. Therefore it is important for teachers to adapt and use strategies to promote engagement, such as:-

- **breaking larger tasks** into small steps and offer a motivator for successful completion of each one.
- keeping focused **activities short** and intersperse with child-led activity.

Re Thinking:

T1: Generating thinking/ P4C

to encourage children to ask and reflect on challenging questions arising from the study of religion and belief; to engage in authentic dialogue and theological enquiry;

- **Ordering**—eg put list of statements in order- most important first/ most difficult first/ etc
- **Building an enquiry**- using unifix – build a line of enquiry block by block. Vary by using multifix- if contribution moves thinking sideways- add to side// if takes it forward- build on top

Re Clarity of Learning:

CL1: Know their starting points

- **Elicitation** - task in maths around key skills/ concepts in upcoming maths unit

CL2: Be clear about the end point and the big picture

- **Sharing the learning intention**- needs to be clear and unambiguous. Careful to separate clearly the task instructions from the learning intention; provide examples alongside the learning intention to ensure they are fully understood.

CL3: Be clear about the steps to get there

- **Success Criteria**- The purpose of the success criteria is to make the children absolutely sure about what is in the teacher's mind as the criteria for judging their work . The success criteria can take many forms. Examples might include a model algorithm; a modelled piece of writing; a writing frame; a self-evaluation checklist; a learning mat or a list of vocabulary. Basically they are a visual aide-memoir for pupils and a reference point for teachers when explaining and then evaluating learning during a lesson

Re Pupil autonomy:

PA1: Pupils exploring their own ideas and questions

- **Immersion**- before asking them what they know, pupils immersed in the topic / provided with experience to stimulate their interest/ ideas/ existing knowledge.

PA2: Pupil self-evaluation

to enable learners to become aware of their own beliefs and values and their own spirituality; this to guide their own ethical decision making; this to have a positive attitude to the search for meaning;

- **Journal entries**- pupils record their understanding re a topic or concept in their books or reflection journals

Re Proof of learning:

PL1: All student response systems

- **Randomiser/ numbers on each chair/ Lolly pop sticks**--Have lolly pop sticks with pupils' names written on. Vary the way you use the lolly pop sticks, for example have a 'joker' stick which allows you to ask anyone you want or use other randomiser strategies. Call out number on a chair to answer. Use randomiser on white board. Use all 3 different methods in each lesson to keep it from going stale. Have pupil photos to pull out of pack.
- **Card fans**— ABCD, Yes/No, 1-5, Strongly agree---Strongly disagree---For example give pupils multiple choice answers and ask them to vote A, B, C or D. (see *Embedded FA p 90*)

PL2: Picking up on and responding to needs quickly:

- **Do a quick check-** move quickly around room picking up on how well the pupils 'get' the learning. Work out how many pupils are struggling and respond immediately through-
- **Mini-lesson-** provide those pupils who need it with another mini-lesson- explaining concept in different way

PL3: Feedback pupils to teacher

- **Elicitations-** pupils revisit these
- **Artwork-** pupils asked to represent their understanding as a piece of art
- **Stories—** pupils tell/ write a story to demonstrate learning. Use anecdotes, analogies, parables.

PL5: How can we help our vulnerable/SEND learners with this?

Proving learning is particularly challenging for vulnerable children and those with SEND because they tend to show their learning in very individual ways. The challenge is therefore how to demonstrate both how and why progress is taking place, for example:- ideas to support organisation include-

- *Using post it notes – one idea per post it notes, then write each one as a discrete sentence*
- *Talking tins (pupil records one idea/sentence at a time)*

and the use of technology, for example:-

- *Speech-to-text software.*