



Katherine Semar Schools

RE POLICY

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Katherine Semar Schools

RE POLICY

INSPIRE CURRICULUM

- At Katherine Semar Schools we have developed the INSPIRE curriculum, which is underpinned by what we believe makes an outstanding curriculum for our children; offering them opportunities to question, be challenged, investigate, experience, communicate, create and understand. Learning is developed in a cross-curricular approach wherever appropriate and the children are given real contexts for their learning which motivate them by creating a genuine purpose for learning.

OUR AIMS IN RE – What do we want to do?

- Our syllabus promotes a multi-disciplinary study of religion and worldviews, developing students' knowledge, critical faculties and curiosity about the world in which they live. It prepares them both for life within the large and diverse County of Essex, but also in the wider world, where they will encounter a huge range of ideas and beliefs.
- Our high-quality RE will support pupils' **religious literacy**. In the context of our syllabus, being religiously literate means that pupils will have the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religion and worldviews. Pupils will be able to make sense of religion and worldviews around them and begin to understand the complex world in which they live. RE is primarily about enabling pupils to become free thinking, critical participants of public discourse, who can make academically informed judgements about important matters of religion and belief which shape the global landscape.
- At Katherine Semar Schools, RE is a valuable part of the curriculum offering opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally and cross culturally. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge discrimination.
- In-line with The Essex agreed syllabus for religious education 2023 we aim to ensure pupils:
 - engage with challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development
 - explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics, and to express their responses. This also builds resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
 - build their sense of identity and belonging, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
 - learn to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice

- consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It encourages empathy, generosity and compassion.

OUR IMPLEMENTATION – How will we achieve our aims?

RE long term plan

- At Katherine Semar Schools, we follow the programmes of study from the Essex agreed syllabus for RE (2023).
- Each year group will teach the areas of RE identified in the school's long term plan to ensure coverage of knowledge and skills.

RE as multi-disciplinary

- RE is about developing religious literacy, therefore this syllabus promotes an understanding of religion and worldviews which best fulfils this purpose. This is one rooted in a multi-disciplinary understanding of the subject. This provides a balanced diet ensuring that pupils are seeing religion and worldviews through different lenses, and places RE within a strong, and well-established academic tradition.

What do we mean by a discipline?

- A discipline is widely understood to have:
 - An intellectual history/tradition which is manifested institutionally through higher education
 - A body of knowledge founded on core concepts and theories
 - A particular object of research/investigation, although this might be shared across disciplines
 - Specific terminology and language to define and explain concepts
 - Research methods and modes of enquiry according to its specific requirements
 - A specific stance towards the nature of reality (i.e. views the world through a particular lens)
 - Particular grounds upon which valid truth claims are made/ways of validating knowledge (epistemology)
 - A group of intellectual followers (academics) who conduct new research in that discipline and bring changes to it over time

What do we mean by multi-disciplinary?

- RE as an academic school curriculum subject is not itself a single discipline; instead it is rooted in a range of different disciplines or disciplinary fields. We need to understand which disciplines it draws on in order to understand the object of investigation and the research methods to employ in RE. This ensures that content chosen for RE is appropriate and well-established within academic traditions and ensures that pupils use and develop a range of subject-specific skills.

How do we understand RE as a multi-disciplinary subject?

- In our syllabus we assert that RE is rooted in three key disciplines or disciplinary fields. These are theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences. In this syllabus they are re-contextualised for the school context in the following ways:



RE- Learning Through a Lens



Theology Lens - Thinking through Believing

- Ask questions that believers would ask
- Think like theologians
- Explore questions and answers that arise from inside religions and worldviews



Philosophy Lens – Thinking through Thinking

- Ask questions that thinkers would ask
- Think like philosophers
- Explore questions and answers raised through considering the nature of knowledge, existence and morality



Human & Social Science Lens – Thinking through Living

- Ask questions that people who study reality would ask
- Think like human and social scientists
- Explore questions and answers raised in relation to the impact of religions and worldviews on people and their lives

Enquiry led learning

- Each unit is based on an enquiry question and the stages of learning builds knowledge and skills which allows pupils to express their opinions on the enquiry question using the following sequence:



Stages of Learning- Sessions



Stage 1 - Engage

- The enquiry is introduced by exploring the conceptual focus and core question



Stage 2 – Enquire & Explore

- The concept is researched and explored through core knowledge and the learning lens



Stage 3 - Evaluate

- Pupils respond to, analyse and evaluate their understanding of the core question



Stage 4 – Express

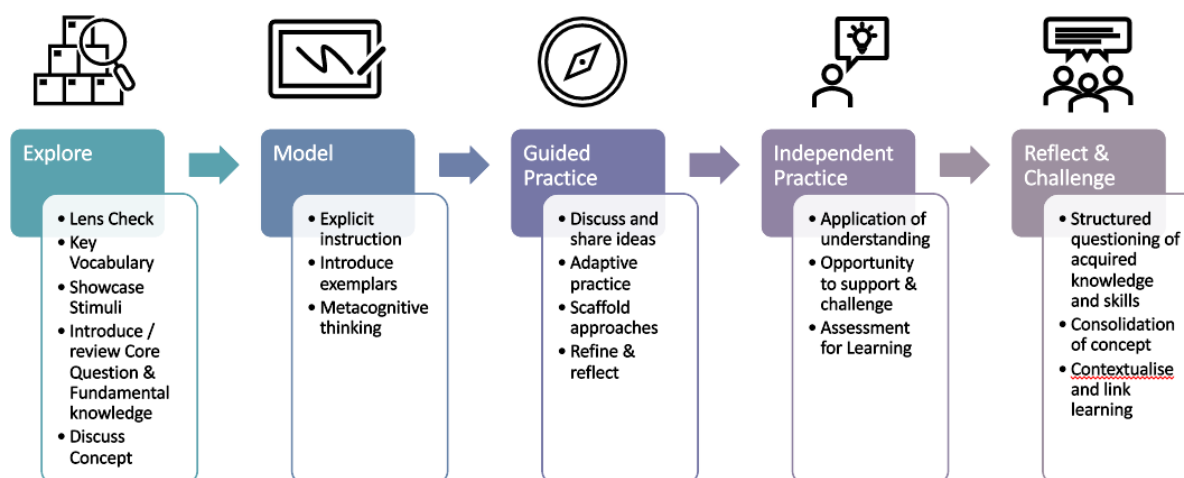
- Pupils express the knowledge and understanding they have gained to answer the core question

Session sequence

- Each unit within the sequence of learning builds upon this session sequence:



Session Sequence



Key learning experiences

- We understand that first-hand experience is an essential element of an outstanding RE curriculum and therefore ensure it is a high priority for all learners.
- Visiting places of worship, meeting religious believers and exploring artefacts ensures children gain these first-hand experiences.

Challenge and Support for all Learners

- We understand that every learner develops differently, and we adapt our provision continuously to ensure every child receives the correct balance of support and challenge in order to achieve their very best. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children (including those who may be gifted and talented or have additional needs) by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.
- Our syllabus has the following features which allow us to ensure challenge and support for all pupils.

Hallmarks – ACE Standards

| Accessible | Consistent | Engaging |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity of opportunity • Scaffolded up, not differentiated down • Multi-Dimensional, Multi-Media & Multi-Sensory • Clarity of instruction – Teachers & Pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality & Presentation • Unit Structure • Session Structure • Pedagogical approaches – Rosenshine’s Principles / Cooperative Learning / Kagan Structures • Planning and Resources • Aims & Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitched-Up Planning • Inspiring and exciting content • Meaningful Outcomes: Session & Unit • Purposeful Activities • Linked Learning • Active Participation • Integrated Challenge |

Assessment

We use MAPP (Mapping attainment and progress for pupils) to assess children’s progress against the expectations of our INSPIRE curriculum. We assess children against both the requirements and standards of the National Curriculum as well as our school’s own raised expectations for all children within religious education .

OUR MONITORING – How will we monitor the effectiveness of our RE policy?

At Katherine Semar we believe that the most effective way to monitor the impact of our RE policy is to utilise and triangulate a broad range of moderating activities, involve our stakeholders, and apply these regularly, consistently and robustly. Through our annual Monitoring, Evaluation and Review cycle, we employ the following monitoring activities in RE.

Lesson Observations and Learning Walks

- Senior Leaders and Subject Co-ordinators regularly undertake planned lesson observations and learning walks. These have a clear focus, and feedback and findings are used to inform individual and whole-school Continuing Professional Development (CPD), School Development Planning and future monitoring activities.

MAPP (Mapping attainment and progress for pupils)

- We use MAPP to assess children’s progress against the expectations of our INSPIRE curriculum. We assess children against both the requirements and standards of the National Curriculum as well as our school’s own raised expectations for all children. This is analysed annually and used to inform our school development plan.

Work Scrutinies

Work scrutinies are carried out by subject coordinators, Senior Leadership Team and whole staff.

Pupil Progress Meetings

- Half-termly pupil progress meetings are held between class teachers and senior leaders. These review the progress of each child as an individual and ensure quality first teaching and relevant interventions ensure every child makes maximum progress.

Pupil Conferences

- Every child from Year Two to Six has a learning mentor from the senior leadership team. They have individual pupil conferences each term which supports children to take ownership of their own learning, review their progress and set themselves development targets.

Governor Visits

- As part of the Governors' Monitoring, Evaluation and Review cycle, lead governors in each subject, make regular visits to school to monitor progress towards the school development plan.
- Monitoring activities include a range of teaching and learning observations, discussions with subject co-ordinators, meetings with pupils, visits to subject specific celebration assemblies, work scrutinies and subject leader reports.

Pupil interviews

- Senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors take regular opportunities to listen to the views of pupils in relation to their experience of RE at our school and their feedback actively informs subject development through our curriculum action plan.