

Progression in Religious Education

As pupils progress through their Religious Education they should be looking deeper into spiritual, ethical, moral and social issues and in increasing breadth across different religions and worldviews through time and around the world.

Units/schemes of work within a Religious Education curriculum should not be stand-alone 'topics', disassociated from each other. Rather, learning should be planned and sequenced to support pupils in building an ever-increasing picture over time, constantly building their knowledge and understanding of key subject knowledge and specialist vocabulary around concepts about Believing, Living and Thinking, so that the investigation, exploration and reflection of their own and others' responses to 'Big Questions' can continuously increase in depth, breadth and complexity.

For example, let us consider another example 'Big Question' such as 'Why do some Muslims believe that certain people may go to Heaven when they die?'

In order for pupils to be able to meaningfully and eloquently respond, they will need to have a solid understanding – not just a superficial recall – of certain concepts, such as good and bad, life and death, beliefs about heaven and hell and the soul, as well as Muslim beliefs about the five pillars, Allah as Judge and Creator. They will need to have informed understanding of how these concepts relate to the Thinking, Believing and Living of Muslims, and Reflecting how these not only affect each other, but how they compare with other religions and worldviews, including their own. This cannot all be achieved within a single unit/scheme of work, but as part of a carefully planned and sequenced learning journey.

Naturally, pupils' learning based on Big Questions should be constantly monitored to ensure that understanding of the concepts beyond the simple recalling of key subject knowledge and specialist vocabulary is secure, before progressing on further or expanding enquiries.

Throughout enquiry learning pupils will need to develop skills to be able to:

- build and use a specialist vocabulary to communicate accurately and respectfully their knowledge and understanding of what others believe and practise, how these differing belief systems relate to each other and may affect a way of life
- apply their broad specialist vocabulary to access, interpret, analyse and reflect on a range of written and spoken religious and non-religious sources and texts when investigating beliefs, values and traditions of others, their teachings, practices and forms of expression and ways of life
- Apply, interpret, analyse and evaluate what they have learnt about other religions and worldviews in relation to spiritual, ethical, moral and social issues
- develop, communicate, reflect on, apply and evaluate their views and beliefs, particularly in relation to '**Big Questions**' such as identity and belonging, truth, morality and justice, the environment and humanity.

In order to reflect and respond to these questions effectively, pupils will additionally need to demonstrate the attitudes of appreciation and respect for all, open mindedness and curiosity. Pupils will also develop a wide range of skills, including literacy, problem solving, team-work, self-awareness, imagination, ICT and language and literacy. * see 'why teach RE?'

Teachers can refer to the '**Religious Education Skills Spectrum**' to monitor that pupils are **Reflecting**, both for themselves and others in their local community and beyond, to 'Big Questions' relating to:

- What people believe and do (**Believing**)
- How people respond to big questions and issues (**Thinking**)
- How beliefs and values make a difference to lives (**Living**)

As pupils move through the Religious Education curriculum and the 'Big Questions' increase in complexity, depth and breadth, so too must the expectations of pupils to explain 'what' the beliefs, practices and values are and the relationships between them, as well as explaining 'why' these are important and may make a difference to people, and 'how' they relate, change or impact on a wider world view. Therefore, the enquiry learning should continuously build on the skills in accordance with the '**Religious Education Skills Spectrum**'.