

ETHICS CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Intent

Summary of curriculum intent: In Ethics, we aim to enable Ada Lovelace students to become ethical citizens using the disciplines of Ethics and Philosophy, both igniting their intellectual flame to think clearly and help them realise the agency they have to positively impact the communities in which they live. The curriculum plays an important role in encouraging students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education as well as development of students' literacy.

Subject specific skills:

The following skills are spiralled throughout the Ethics curriculum:

- Questioning: asking and answering philosophical questions, including Socratic questioning in dialogue with others
- Problem solving: identifying and comparing a variety of solutions to moral dilemmas by applying their thinking and ethical theories
- Application of ideas to local and global communities: making links between ethical views and issues they encounter everyday
- Evaluation: making critical judgements on alternative views and using reasoned justifications for judgement
- Oracy: academically articulating opinions in rigorous debate and discussion
- Literacy: reading and writing fluently and accurately

Subject specific knowledge:

In term 1, students encounter key philosophical questions and theories. In year 7 this takes the form of a broad overview of Philosophical thinking from Ancient Greece to modern day. In year 8, their foundational knowledge of philosophical questions from the previous year allows them to contextualise and engage in an indepth study of existentialist philosophical questions. In year 9, they further develop their philosophical questioning skills by applying ethical theories to modern day dilemmas e.g. the value of the universe.

In term 2, students study ethical theories and moral dilemmas. In year 7, this takes the form of considering a broad range of moral laws (both absolute and relative) and applying them to moral dilemmas, such as the trolley problem. In year 8, students' prior understanding of moral laws allows them to study four detailed ethical theories (found on A level syllabi) and consider their

suitability to follow in everyday life decisions: Utilitarianism, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics and Virtue Ethics. In year 9 students use ethical theories studied in both year 7 and year 8 to analyse current arguments surrounding the role and purpose of the family and Gender Theology.

In term 3, students study applied ethical issues. In year 7, we cover the ethical decisions students may make in their everyday lives and that impact their local communities: voting/Brexit, the food they eat, the items they buy, the environment, medical ethics. In year 8, their prior understanding of local ethical issues and their increased maturity allows them to encounter hard-hitting global ethical issues: war, capital punishment, human rights, free speech, weapons of mass destruction, animal rights. In year 9, we cover the Medical Ethics. Students explore a range of arguments surrounding topics like IVF, transplants, saviour siblings and surrogacy.

The Ethics curriculum is not part of the national curriculum but has been uniquely developed at Ada Lovelace to stretch students beyond national requirements and support their critical thinking and engrain enquiry into their approach to learning across the curriculum. Much of the content is inspired by A-level syllabi content but is taught in a way appropriate to students' age and ability.

Assessment objectives:

The Ethics Curriculum has been developed alongside a detailed understanding of the RE and English curriculums to ensure complimentary skill and knowledge development in student's journey through the whole Ada Lovelace curriculum whilst carving a unique curriculum which avoids duplication. For example, the Ethics curriculum is backwards planned to best prepare students for the philosophical and ethical themes studied at KS4 RE, and using both the higher-order AO2 evaluation skill throughout the RE curriculum and the assessment objectives for GCSE English Language speaking and writing (see Annex A). At KS3, students study 50 minutes of RE a week and 100 minutes of Ethics.

The Ethics assessment criteria is made up of a series of 'I can' statements across five key skills, and then a framework of pass/merit/distinction for oracy in line with the framework used in English Speaking assessments. Knowledge is also assessed using knowledge ladders which are regularly RAG rated prior to and following low-stakes knowledge tests (these scores are also tracked in their books). Examples of these documents are annexed below. The pink and blue feedback sheets students receive after assessed work, make it clear that skills and knowledge are not distinct from each other and allow students to understand how to improve. The Ethics curriculum is taught to students of all abilities and in mixed ability groups (in contrast to the sets taught in for EBACC subjects). We believe the nature of the subject suits mixed ability classes because of the nature of deep thinking and enquiry being challenging to accurately capture in traditional written assessments. Lessons are structured to meet bronze, silver and gold objectives in order to allow for in class differentiation and stretch of the highest ability. Lessons include resources adapted

for various abilities to cater for the mixed-ability groups. There is an emphasis on key terms and vocabulary to support lower-ability students but also to stretch the vocabulary of all students by encountering tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary throughout lessons.

Implementation

Sequencing of knowledge and skills (demonstrated by curriculum map)

As explained above knowledge is sequenced using a spiral approach by term: philosophy, ethics and applied ethics. The year 7 topics offer a broad introduction to each discipline which allows the year 8 topics to build on this foundation using more in-depth study of theory/mature topics and the year 9 topics put into practice applying the range of ethical theories students are now familiar with to emotionally and academically challenging topics.

The skills of oracy, evaluation and literacy are embedded across every unit and lesson throughout the three years and the difficulty level (using increased challenge of content and requirement of skill level) is scaffolded upwards each topic. Alongside this is a spiral approach to the skills of questioning (term 1 in both years), problemsolving (term 2 in both years) and application of ideas (term 3 in both years).

Lesson structure/content:

Lessons are not identical but often include the following features, including many strategies to aid students' memory:

Enquiry question starter task and oracy-based discussion and sentence level parameters

- Key term introduction / expansion of vocabulary
- Reading of text with challenging vocabulary
- Use of reading skills to comprehend new information and an exercise to test/expend understanding
- Mini-plenaries for each bronze/silver/gold objective
- A structured oracy-based activity e.g. debate / opinion line / changing traffic lights
- A writing task synthesising discussions or big ideas into structured writing and argument
- Recap/links to previous lessons

- Regular low-stakes testing/quizzing
- Knowledge organisers for recall of key knowledge

Each term includes one or two Philosophy4Children style enquiry lessons which encourage students to lead their own enquiry based on a given stimulus and does not include any written communication. They use their own ideas to construct questions and then explore these questions whilst the teacher takes a back-seat as the facilitator.

The curriculum delivers high-quality literacy through:

- Explicit teaching of sentence structure (art of the sentence)
- Explicit strategies for vocabulary acquisition and use (e.g. glossaries)
- Explicit teaching 'reading skills' and reading of complex texts: predict, clarify, question, respond
- Reading aloud using the 'control the game' strategy and modelling reading through teacher-read aloud
- Text dependent questions at word, sentence and paragraph level to interrogate understanding of the text
- Promoting reading through wider reading lists and preps
- Explicit teaching of paragraph structure using given writing frameworks for debates, arguments and evaluation
- Building writing stamina through opportunities to write extended pieces
- Explicit teaching of speaking skills, listening and debate using the Oracy Toolkit and structured talk activities
- Asking effective questions using question frames and Socratic questioning.
- Dedicated time to correct literacy mistakes using the literacy marking code
- Oracy-based assessment and feedback
- Peer assessment of oracy (promoting metacognition of speaking skills)

Impact

Key assessment principles

Students will be assessed according to both knowledge ladders (for each term) and assessment criteria (consistent throughout the year), both of which are made visible to students on their blue or pink feedback sheets. Their progress will be monitored throughout the course using peer and self-assessment in lessons, low stakes quizzes on mini-white boards and in mini-plenaries, in-depth marking of assessed homeworks (2 a year) with written feedback and time to respond/improve their work. Students are also formally assessed at the following quarterly assessment points using a pass/merit/distinction framework, given WWW and EBIs:

- Q1: a peer-assessed knowledge test and self-assessed reflection completed
- Q2: an oracy-based in-class assessment (dialogue performed) and peer-assessed knowledge test
- Q3: an oracy-based in-class assessment (speech/debate performed) and peer-assessed knowledge test
- Q4: an oracy-based in-class assessment (podcast recorded and performed) and peer-assessed knowledge test

We also ask students to complete a survey each term to gain their feedback on the curriculum development which informs future planning and design.

Annex A – Assessment Objectives / Grade descriptors from RE and English curriculums (used implicitly to inform backwards planning and guide student progression throughout the curriculum)

Religious Studies Assessment Objectives:

AO1 Describe, explain and analyse, using knowledge and understanding.

AO2 Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints.

Religious Studies Grade Descriptors:

To achieve grade 8, candidates will be able to:

- demonstrate relevant and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of a wide range of beliefs and practices with well-integrated reference to sources of wisdom and authority
- demonstrate detailed understanding of common and divergent views and practices within and between religions or beliefs
- construct a sustained and convincing argument on matters of religion or belief based on critical analysis and evaluation of different perspectives and using accurate specialist terminology

To achieve grade 5, candidates will be able to:

- demonstrate mostly accurate and appropriate knowledge and understanding of a range of beliefs and practices with reference to sources of wisdom and authority
- demonstrate some understanding of common and divergent views and practices within and between religions or beliefs
- construct a reasoned point of view on matters of religion or belief based on some analysis and evaluation of different perspectives, and using mostly accurate specialist terminology

English Language Assessment Objectives:

READING

- Read and understand a range of texts to:

- AO1 Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas; Select and synthesise evidence from different texts
- AO2 Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to; achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views
- AO3 Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts
- AO4 Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references

WRITING

- AO5 Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences; Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts
- AO6 Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

- AO7 Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting
- AO8 Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback to presentations
- AO9 Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations

Spoken Language Descriptors:

English Language Grade Descriptors:

Pass	Merit	Distinction
<p>In addition to the general criteria, to be awarded a Pass a Learner's performance in his or her spoken language assessment must meet all of the following criteria –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses straightforward ideas / information / feelings, makes an attempt to organise and structure his or her presentation, makes an attempt to meet the needs of the audience, and listens to questions / feedback and provides an appropriate response in a straight forward manner. 	<p>In addition to the general criteria, to be awarded a Merit a Learner's performance in his or her spoken language assessment must meet all of the following criteria –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses challenging ideas / information / feelings using a range of vocabulary, organises and structures his or her presentation clearly and appropriately to meet the needs of the audience, achieves the purpose of his or her presentation, and listens to questions / feedback responding formally and in some detail. 	<p>In addition to the general criteria, to be awarded a Distinction a Learner's performance in his or her spoken language assessment must meet all of the following criteria –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses sophisticated ideas / information / feelings using a sophisticated repertoire of vocabulary, organises and structures his or her presentation using an effective range of strategies to engage the audience, achieves the purpose of his or her presentation, and listens to questions / feedback, responds perceptively and if appropriate elaborates with further ideas and information.

Grade 8

Critical reading and comprehension

In relation to a range of texts, to achieve grade 8, candidates will be able to:

- summarise and critically evaluate with detailed and perceptive understanding
- understand and respond with insight to explicit and implicit meanings and viewpoints
- analyse and critically evaluate, with insight, detailed aspects of language, grammar and structure
- substantiate their understanding and opinions with illuminating references to texts and contexts
- make convincing and apt links and comparisons within and between texts.

Writing

To achieve grade 8, candidates will be able to:

- communicate with impact and influence
- produce ambitious, accomplished and effectively-structured texts
- use a wide range of well-selected sentence types and structures and precise vocabulary to enhance impact
- spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately so that writing is virtually error-free

Grade 5

Critical reading and comprehension

In relation to a range of texts, to achieve grade 5, candidates will be able to:

- summarise and evaluate with accuracy and clear understanding
- understand and make valid responses to explicit and implicit meanings and viewpoints
- analyse and evaluate relevant aspects of language, grammar and structure
- support their understanding and opinions with apt references to texts, informed by their wider reading
- make credible links and comparisons between texts.

Writing

To achieve grade 5, candidates will be able to:

- communicate effectively, sustaining the reader's interest
- produce coherent, well-structured and purposeful texts
- vary sentence types and structures and use vocabulary appropriate to purpose and effect
- spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately with occasional errors

