Waltham Gateway Academy

"We cannot live in a world that is not our own, in a world that is interpreted for us by others. An interpreted world is not a home."
St Hildegard of Bingen

Religion and Worldviews education matters because understanding people matters.

In a diverse and changing world, children need more than knowledge about different religions. They need the opportunity to encounter the beliefs, values, questions and experiences that shape how people understand themselves, their communities and the world around them.

Our Religion and Worldviews curriculum enables pupils to develop curiosity, wisdom and understanding. It gives them the language and knowledge to talk confidently about religious and non-religious worldviews while recognising that no tradition is experienced in exactly the same way by every person.

Through meaningful, lived examples, pupils learn that worldviews are not simply lists of beliefs: they are expressed through people's choices, relationships, communities, traditions, values and responses to life's big questions.

We want pupils at **Waltham Gateway Academy** to leave us being able to say, **"I know what I think, I understand why others may think differently and I have the knowledge and skills to explore those differences thoughtfully."**

This is central to our commitment to British Values. Through Religion and World views education, pupils develop mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by encountering authentic and diverse perspectives. They develop individual liberty as they consider how people form and express their own beliefs and values. They develop the foundations of democracy through listening carefully, discussing differing viewpoints, asking questions and learning that disagreement can be respectful and constructive. They develop an understanding of the importance of the rule of law by exploring how religious and non-religious worldviews influence ideas about responsibility, justice, fairness and how communities should live together.

However, our curriculum is not simply about teaching children to tolerate difference. We want children to understand difference. We want them to have the knowledge to challenge misconceptions, recognise stereotypes and engage intelligently with the world around them.

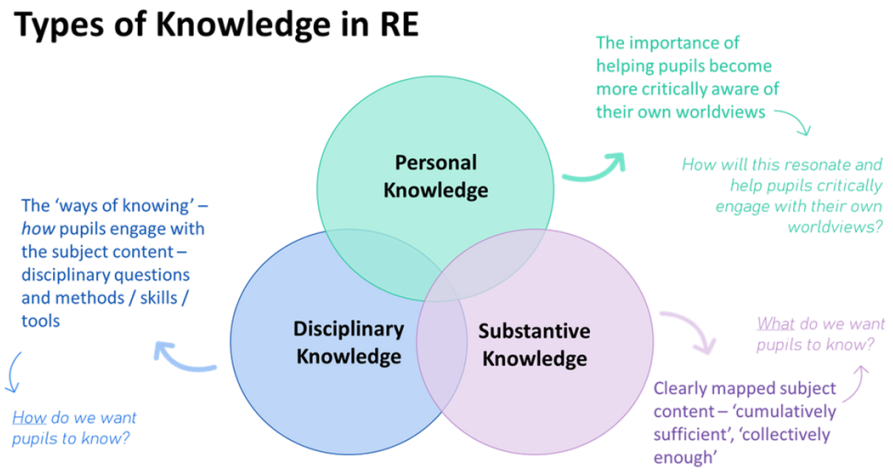
Our curriculum therefore develops pupils who are knowledgeable, curious, reflective and respectful. It gives children opportunities to encounter worldviews different from their own, to examine evidence, to ask challenging questions and to reflect critically on their own developing worldview.

At the heart of our approach is the belief that every child should be equipped to live well together. Religion and Worldviews education helps children to do this by giving them the knowledge, vocabulary, confidence and critical thinking needed to participate positively in a diverse society.

OUR AMBITION

We do not want children simply to learn about religion. We want them to learn how to make sense of religion and worldviews.
We want them to **know more, understand more, question more deeply and think more critically** as they progress through the academy so that they are increasingly able to engage thoughtfully and confidently with the diverse world around them.

Types of knowledge in RE



Ways of Knowing

A distinctive and important feature of our LDBE curriculum is that pupils do not simply learn about religions and worldviews; they learn how to investigate and make sense of them.

The LDBE Religion and Worldviews approach places pupils' ability to make sense of what they learn at the heart of the curriculum. This means that substantive knowledge and disciplinary knowledge work together. Pupils need to know important content but they also need to become increasingly skilled at asking questions of that content.

Across the curriculum, we use three familiar characters to make these disciplinary approaches accessible to pupils:



Theo **Livvy** **Sophie**



Theo – The Theologian

"What do people believe?"

Theo helps pupils explore the beliefs, teachings, sacred texts and sources of authority within religious and non-religious worldviews. Theo encourages pupils to:

- identify and explain beliefs;
- explore important religious and non-religious texts;
- consider the significance of sources of authority;
- ask what a belief means to people;
- identify different interpretations;
- use evidence from sources to support explanations.

Theo helps pupils to become increasingly knowledgeable and thoughtful interpreters of belief.



Livvy – The Human and Social Scientist

"How do people live?"

Livvy helps pupils explore the lived reality of religion and worldviews. She encourages pupils to consider how beliefs and values are expressed through people's lives, communities, practices and cultures. Livvy encourages pupils to:

- investigate how people practise their beliefs;
- explore the influence of context;
- consider similarities and differences between people's experiences;
- use information and evidence about communities;
- recognise diversity within religious and non-religious worldviews;
- understand that people's lived experiences may be different even when they share a worldview.

Livvy helps pupils to understand that worldviews are lived by real people in real contexts.



Sophie – The Philosopher

"How do people reason about themselves and the world?"

Sophie helps pupils explore questions, arguments, ideas and reasoning. She encourages pupils to think critically about the questions raised by religion and worldviews. Sophie encourages pupils to:

- ask significant questions;
- consider different answers;
- identify reasons and evidence;
- construct and communicate their own reasoned responses;
- challenge ideas respectfully;
- recognise that questions may have more than one reasonable response;
- distinguish between an opinion and an argument supported by reasons.

Sophie helps pupils to become thoughtful, critical and reflective thinkers.

The three ways work together; **Theo, Livvy and Sophie** are not three separate subjects. They work together to help pupils develop a richer understanding. This creates a curriculum in which pupils move beyond "What do Christians/Muslims/Hindus/Sikhs believe?" towards deeper questions such as:

- What evidence can we find?
- How do people interpret this belief?
- How does this belief affect people's lives?
- Why might people's experiences be different?
- What reasons do people give for their views?
- How convincing is this explanation?
- What questions does this raise?

Curriculum Aims

- Build a coherent body of knowledge about religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Develop accurate subject vocabulary and the ability to apply it.
- Develop disciplinary knowledge: making sense of, understanding and evaluating religion and worldviews.
- Use authentic stories, sources, artefacts and lived-experience to enrich the curriculum.
- Recognise diversity within religious traditions and avoid stereotypical representations.
- Develop respectful dialogue, critical thinking, reflection and reasoned responses.
- Ensure all pupils, including pupils with SEND, access an ambitious curriculum.
- Prepare pupils to participate thoughtfully in a diverse local, national and global community.

Inclusion and SEND

Religion and world views is an entitlement for every pupil. Given our developing school context, accessibility is considered at the planning stage. Teachers use explicit vocabulary teaching, visuals, concrete examples, structured talk, chunked information, repetition and carefully chosen scaffolds. The route into learning may be adapted but curriculum ambition remains high.

- Pre-teach essential vocabulary.
- Use visuals, artefacts and concrete examples.
- Provide sentence stems and structured talk.
- Break complex sources into manageable sections.
- Use alternative recording methods where appropriate.
- Provide challenge through comparison, evidence and evaluation using our values of **CARE, CURIOSITY AND COURAGE.**

Oracy, Vocabulary and Ways of Knowing

Purpose	Language pupils are taught to use
Describe	This shows… / A key feature is… / This practice involves…
Explain	This is important because… / This may influence…
Compare	Both… / However… / In contrast…
Use evidence	The source suggests… / This evidence indicates…
Evaluate	One interpretation is… / This is convincing because…
Reflect	This makes me think… / Another person might…

Religion and Worldviews provides a rich and purposeful context for developing children's oracy, vocabulary and thinking. Through carefully planned discussion, questioning and dialogue, pupils are given regular opportunities to articulate their ideas, opinions, beliefs and thoughts about meaningful questions while learning to listen carefully and respond respectfully to the perspectives of others. The subject introduces children to increasingly precise and subject-specific vocabulary, enabling them to communicate their thinking with greater clarity and confidence. Importantly, our classrooms provide a safe and respectful environment in which children can explore ideas, ask challenging questions, disagree appropriately and change their thinking when they encounter new evidence or perspectives.

Progression

The LDBE Religion and Worldviews curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that pupils build knowledge, deepen understanding and develop increasing disciplinary expertise as they move through the school. Across each phase, pupils revisit and build upon prior learning, developing a secure body of substantive knowledge alongside the vocabulary and disciplinary skills needed to explore it.

Through the LDBE Ways of Knowing, pupils increasingly develop their ability to think as Theo the Theologian, Livvy the Human and Social Scientist and Sophie the Philosopher. They move from identifying and describing, towards explaining, interpreting, comparing, questioning, analysing and evaluating.

The progression documents set out the key knowledge, vocabulary, concepts and disciplinary skills pupils are expected to develop across the curriculum. They provide a clear pathway from EYFS through to Year 6, ensuring that learning is cumulative rather than isolated and that pupils have regular opportunities to retrieve, revisit and apply prior knowledge.

Assessment

Assessment in Religion and Worldviews is an integral part of teaching and learning. It enables teachers to understand what pupils **know, remember and understand**, while also identifying how effectively they are developing the skills needed to make sense of religion and worldviews.

Assessment is therefore focused on both what pupils know and how they use that knowledge. Across the curriculum, teachers assess pupils' development of substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and personal knowledge. Substantive knowledge considers what pupils know and remember about religious and non-religious worldviews. Disciplinary knowledge considers how pupils use different ways of knowing to investigate and interpret that knowledge, including through Theo the Theologian, Livvy the Human and Social Scientist and Sophie the Philosopher.

Personal knowledge provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own developing worldview and consider how their experiences and perspectives influence their thinking.

Assessment is woven throughout lessons through questioning, discussion, retrieval, vocabulary, observation, written responses and pupils' ability to explain and apply their learning.

Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses and use discussion to identify misconceptions, gaps in knowledge and opportunities for deeper thinking. Pupils are encouraged to articulate their ideas using increasingly precise religious and disciplinary vocabulary, justify their views with evidence and respond thoughtfully to alternative perspectives.

Progress is demonstrated when pupils **know more, remember more, understand more** and become increasingly skilled at thinking and reasoning about religion and worldviews. As pupils move through the school, we expect their responses to become increasingly detailed, informed, evidence-based and critically engaged.

Assessment also supports inclusion. Teachers use ongoing assessment to identify barriers to learning and adapt teaching, vocabulary, questioning, resources and scaffolding so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can demonstrate what they know and understand.

Our assessment approach is therefore purposeful rather than burdensome. We do not assess children simply to generate data; we assess to improve teaching, deepen learning and ensure that pupils are developing the knowledge and disciplinary skills needed to engage thoughtfully with religion, belief and the wider world.

Review and Governance

The Religion and world views curriculum is reviewed annually by the subject leader and senior leadership team. Governors are informed of strengths, implementation priorities and actions through the school's established curriculum monitoring and reporting processes. Review considers planning, teaching, pupil work, pupil voice, staff confidence, assessment and adaptations.

References

Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education – Primary RE Curriculum Materials.
Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education – Religion and Worldviews guidance.
Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report (2024)
National Content Standard for Religious Education (2023).