

What is the Lancashire Field of Enquiry?

The Lancashire Field of Enquiry is a medium-term planning model that is central to the delivery of this syllabus. Use of this model will enable teachers to fulfil the aims of the syllabus and support pupils' personal search for meaning as they explore what it is to be human. Through this model we ensure that the teaching of religious education is embedded within the disciplines of theology, philosophy, ethics, and social science. A given key question provides the central line of enquiry across each year group (see pages 17 & 18) and then focus questions provide a point of exploration within each religion. Each unit of work should be structured to include the following four elements:

Shared human experience - the nature of being human.

Living religious tradition - principal religious traditions encountered in the world.

Beliefs and values – the theology that lies at the heart of these traditions.

The search for personal meaning – a lifelong quest for understanding.

If all four elements of the Field of Enquiry are in place, then this syllabus will be secure.

Shared Human Experience This refers to those inclusive experiences, common to all human beings, which raise questions of meaning, purpose, identity, origins, destiny, value, and authority. These experiences include love and loss, thankfulness and despair, community, and solitude. The questions that these experiences raise for all humans, religious and non-religious, include: • Why do we look up to certain people in our society? • What would the ideal community be? • What do we mean by 'being fair'? • Is death the end? Should death affect the way we live our lives? This may be seen as the 'we' aspect of the field of enquiry and delivery often starts from here with pupils involved in selecting questions to explore.

Living Religious Traditions This refers to the ways in which people who are, for example, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews or Sikhs follow their religions and their ways of life today. While planning ask, 'How does this relate to the lives of people who follow religion and secular beliefs today?' For example: • Many Muslims today follow Muhammad's example by reading about stories of the Prophet in the Hadiths. • The Khalsa [baptised Sikhs], the story of Baisaki, symbols and names [Kaur, Singh] all relate to many Sikh's identity. • Examples of Christian prayer – in Jesus' life and how this relates to Christians today. • Humanist naming ceremonies to welcome babies into our society. This may be seen as the 'they' aspect of the Field of Enquiry (although if I am a member of the religion explored this may also be a 'we' or a 'me' aspect) and serve as gateways to exploring the underlying beliefs that they express.

Beliefs and Values This refers to the beliefs and values that lie at the heart of the ways of life and religious practices of the faiths studied – as identified by members of the faith communities. Teachers need to identify the theology that lies at the heart of this

aspect of the Field of Enquiry, which is expressed by the living religious tradition. Theology enables pupils to consider where beliefs come from, how they are applied in different contexts and how they relate to each other. It involves investigating key texts, beliefs and traditions of religions and worldviews. For example:

- Many Muslims believe that Allah chose Muhammad to be the perfect role model, and excellent exemplar [although no one is perfect except Allah] for humans to follow.
- The belief held by many Sikhs that the Great Guru [God] expects service to others [sewa] as part of everyday living.
- Most Christians believe that God is a compassionate Father and is there for them to turn to.
- Many Humanists believe that this life is all we have, and that we should live it as well as we can. This may also be seen as the 'they' aspect of the Field of Enquiry [although if I am a member of the religion explored this may also be a 'we' or a 'me' aspect] and be discovered as pupils ask why people express themselves through living religious tradition.

The Search for Personal Meaning This refers to the development of the sense of personal meaning for every pupil – how have the insights derived from the other three aspects of the field of enquiry, shared human experience, living religious tradition and their beliefs and values, aided the development of my beliefs, values and attitudes and search for meaning? This aspect of the field of enquiry will contribute to the provision of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. For example:

- What do I think of Muhammad's example? Who do I choose to copy/ be influenced by? Who do my family think I should be like? Why is this? What do I think? How might the example of Islamic leadership be an influence or challenge to me?
- Have I been through any belonging ceremonies? Why [not]? If I was to choose a symbol or name to represent what is important to me and who I am what would it be? Who do others think I am? What can I learn from the community life of the religions I am studying?
- Do I have any use for prayer? Why [not]? How does that compare to the Christian prayers I have looked at? Should we pray at school? How might I advise a Christian minister writing a prayer (e.g.) for my class? Where else might I turn for support, special time for reflection? How could I evaluate the impact of praying in other people's lives?

This may also be seen as the 'me' aspect of the Field of Enquiry and requires pupils to make sense of concepts and ideas through a philosophical lens after reflecting on insights explored during religious study.

Pupils are encouraged to think independently, consider, and ask questions, sift arguments, and explore alternatives as they reflect and develop a sense of personal meaning. This supports the development of communication, reasoning and critical thinking skills and deals with morality and ethics. Teachers must aim to create a 'safe space' where pupils are free to express their own religious or nonreligious identities. The skills to manage controversial and sensitive issues need to be mastered as part of curriculum implementation. Each of the four elements should be explored in every curriculum unit for the Field of Enquiry to be secure. Please note that it is not expected that each element would be taught as a separate lesson. Activities linked to 'Shared Human Experience' and 'Personal Meaning' lend themselves to discussion and debate at the beginning, during and end of a unit of work. To provide depth, challenge and rigour, teachers are advised to start their planning by first identifying the beliefs and values that lie at the heart of their chosen religion/ belief. This will

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ensure that each unit has a ‘theological nugget’ at its heart. A Field of Enquiry planning template is made available to support teachers with their medium-term planning and can be downloaded from the RE website. Medium term planning exemplifications are also available to support teachers when planning a unit of work. Lancashire schools can download these for free from the RE website and they are also available by subscription by contacting: advisory.support@lancashire.gov.uk