

Ofsted Report

May 2021

3 Types of Knowledge

- ‘substantive’ knowledge: key knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions
- ‘ways of knowing’: pupils learn ‘how to know’ about religion and non-religion
- ‘personal knowledge’: pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study

Substantive Knowledge



Should Include:

- different ways that people express religion and non-religion in their lives, including **diverse lived experiences** and the complexity of the fluid boundaries between different traditions
- knowledge about artefacts and texts associated with different religious and non-religious traditions
- **concepts** that relate to religious and non-religious traditions, such as 'dharma', 'incarnation', 'ritual', 'authority', 'prayer', 'sacred', 'anatta' and 'moksha'
- the very concepts of 'religion' and 'non-religion' and **debates** around these ideas

Substantive Knowledge



Coverage

Unfortunately, some leaders interpret the legislation in percentage terms, for example by devoting 51% of RE to the study of Christianity and 49% to 'other religions'

Leaders should, however, take care that the knowledge that pupils build does not become overly 'siloed' by how the curriculum is planned.

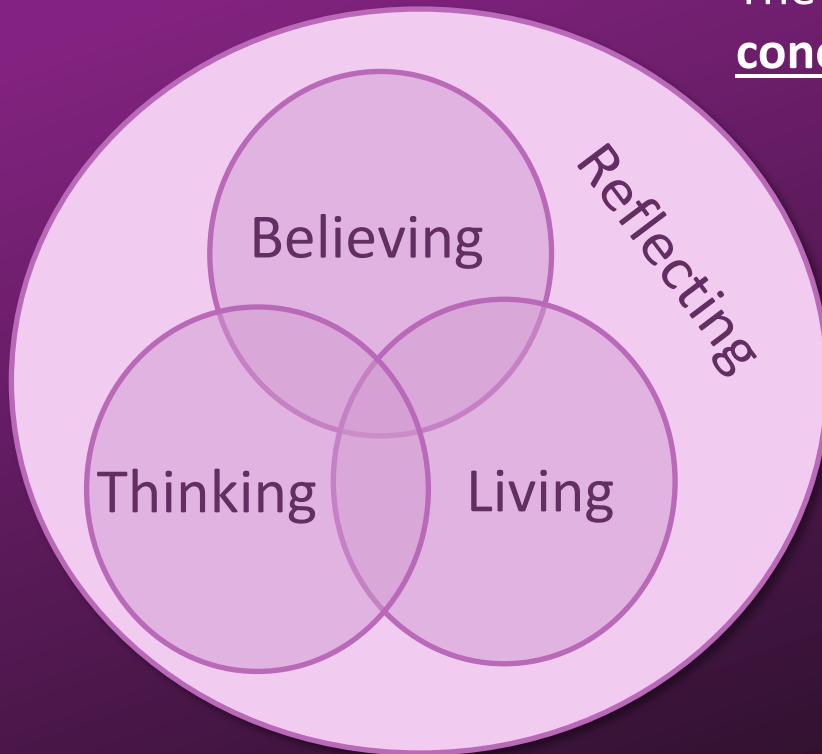
Diversity

Context

Personal knowledge

Highly selective in identifying substantive content for reflection that relates to pupils' developing identities.

They should contain plenty of content and concepts within specific religious traditions.



Otherwise... what can be developed is more like PSHE knowledge (for example, 'knowing the importance of caring for others') rather than 'personal knowledge' developed through substantive RE content.

This can happen to such an extent that pupils consider RE to be a form of citizenship or PSHE education.

Ways of Knowing

When pupils learn a range of 'ways of knowing' can help prevent over-simplifying or stereotyping religion

Tools

- how knowledge came about
- the type and suitability of method to derive that knowledge
- the status of claims
- the difference between conceptions and misconceptions

Conversation

- to learn about the experiences of faith practitioners (case studies) **REal Resources**
- to learn how knowledge about religion might be gained through **interviews** ('ways of knowing')
for pupils to recognise their own assumptions ('personal knowledge') as they listen to an individual from a faith community
- to apply previously learned generalisations about religion that can be 'tested' through an encounter with 'lived' faith practitioners

“Better RE”

Assessment

‘substantive’ knowledge

‘ways of knowing’

‘personal knowledge’

GCSE-style questions ... would be an insufficient assessment tool within a curriculum that intends for pupils to also learn how sacred texts, religious literature and other sources of wisdom can be interpreted within diverse traditions.

...the assessment of KS3 pupils that draws on GCSE exam-style questions is inappropriate, not only because pupils will not have had the opportunity to learn the domain of the GCSE programme of study, but also because it (incorrectly) implies that generic exam skills are sufficient to assess the whole impact of the RE curriculum.

Progression

Assessment

'substantive' knowledge

'ways of knowing'

'personal knowledge'

	What do people believe and do?	How do people respond to ultimate questions and big issues?	How do beliefs and values make a difference to lives?
Mastering	Explain how similarities and/or differences in beliefs and practices occur through different interpretation, or through the influence of sources and/or historical events and cultural traditions.	Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of examples of beliefs, sources, historical events and cultural traditions that are used to explain the similarities and differences in shared values and/or responses to ultimate questions and issues.	Evaluate the impact of holding certain beliefs and values and of belonging to their community of shared beliefs/values.
Firming	Describe beliefs, practices and sources. Make links between these.	Describe responses or experiences to ultimate questions and issues, linking with values, beliefs and sources. Identify the shared values linked to these responses. Formulate own ultimate questions.	Describe features, actions, symbols that impact on the life of a believer, making links with/suggesting the beliefs and values behind these.

