

What is Enquiry Based Topics?

Our enquiry approach is designed to make the exploration of the curriculum an active process of investigation.

Enquiry based topics are exciting and interesting, however, teachers are aware of the need to keep the curriculum at the centre and keep ensuring consideration of: what are the pupils learning? What is the context doing to challenge them? and what is it doing beyond our normal classroom activity?

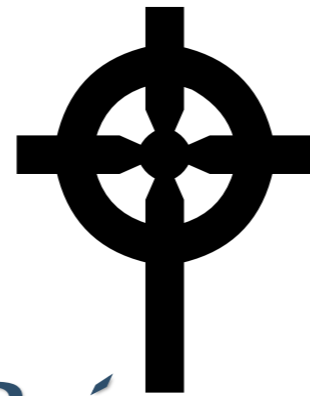
Step 1—Hook into learning and Launch Day

Teachers provide an initial stimulus experience that helps children connect with the content and skills of the unit of work. These can take many forms, e.g. a visit from a Roman soldier, finding a message in a bottle, a video diary excerpt, strange foot prints on the classroom ceiling etc.

Pupils have a launch day where they take part in a range of activities. Following this they give input on what they would like to learn in each AoLE and do throughout the topic. Younger classes have choice e.g. on trips, stories, etc. This is evidence on the class topic display and in KS2 in pupils books.



St. Robert's Catholic



Primary

Enquiry Based Learning

'Jesus In Us'

Jesus and the 'Good News' that He brings is the basis of our school life.

Why take an enquiry based approach to learning?

Due to the implementation of the new curriculum, we are ensuring our pupils are provided with opportunities to be; Ambitious, Capable Learners, Enterprising, Creative Contributors, Ethical, Informed Citizens and Healthy, Confident Individuals.

This is all achieved through enquiry based topics as:

- It is planned around the distinctive needs the children.
- It promotes curiosity.
- It has a clear outcome, designed to raise standards.
- It gives a real context for the application of basic skills.
- It allows writing to be meaningfully embedded.
- It integrates empowering learning (learn to learn).
- It is underpinned by leading research about quality learning and brain-based learning.

Step 2—Client

Pupils have a client they work for in the topic, which provides with an authentic context for their learning. They themselves took on an expert group role. They have an enquiry question which by the end of the topic they should be able to answer. Throughout the topic children take part in a range of activities that answer mini enquiry questions, and build up to the final commission and learner forum.

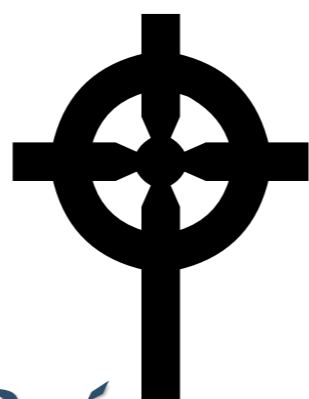
Step 3—Commission

Each unit of work has an agreed outcome that is shared with the children and may be negotiated with the children. e.g. art exhibition, PowerPoint presentation, class debate etc.

Pupil Voice

Active planning input from the children is integral to enquiry based topics; we want the children to feel that they are able to drive part of their learning journey. This is essential to ensure that the curriculum meets the ongoing varied needs and interests of the children. Pupil voice is used throughout the topic to steer learning by asking children to pose questions that they want to know more about. Teachers refer to children's questions throughout the topic so that children can see that their contributions are valued and their questions drive their learning.

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Parental Involvement

For every topic, parents will receive an Enquiry Based Topic overview of learning. This will tell you the 'What if....?' question the children are basing their learning on. It will provide you with a brief overview of activities that the children will undertake. This year, we are encouraging parents to respond to our launch day and share their ideas around the topic e.g. visits, their expertise or AoLE activities that could be covered.

Step 4—Learner Forum

At the end of each unit of work there is a reflection and evaluation of learning. This focuses on what has been learnt and how it has been learnt; we want the children to become reflective learners. The learning needs to culminate with a publication of some description. For one topic per year, parents are invited to a celebration of the learning and participate in activities with their child e.g. Victorian Christmas craft afternoon, raft making at Bryngarw.

