

Epistemic Insight




The 'Surrounding You' Strategic Approach to Transition

An Invitation to Teachers of Year 7 | Autumn/Spring 2020

Could
**'Surrounding
You'** help to
make your
students' transition
from Year 6 into
Secondary School
a more **positive**
and **rewarding**
experience?



This autumn many of our Year 7 students will be coming into their first term of secondary school with a mixture of excitement and uncertainty.



Significant disruptions to their experiences of the final months of primary school mean that many have missed out on the support and activities that usually help them to prepare. Only a few have been able to go on a transition day to “Big School” and all of our children will start the school year with the added pressures of new rules designed to keep our communities safe.

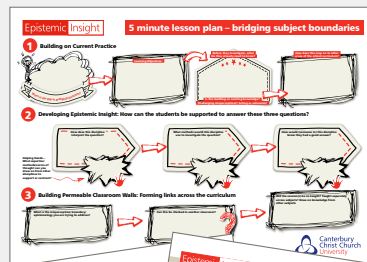
This strategy begins with the idea that we can empower our Year 7s by providing activities that capture their interest and imaginations and help them help them to see themselves as compassionate and rational problem-solving agents. Tools that work with their timetables reduce the sense of a fragmented curriculum and enable them to see how their subjects are working together.

‘Surrounding You’
is designed to help teachers looking for ways to ease children through transition.

Your involvement is tailored to your role and commitments:

- Leading a school entry strategy to improve children’s experiences of transition and/or
- Developing your teaching practice in a subject like RE, based on action-research with support from our team and/or
- Learning about the strategy and tools available and participating in a teacher survey

Are you a **middle** or **senior leader**, or **non-specialist** or experienced **RE teacher** interested in **developing** the use of action-research and **creative approaches** to enhance the **transition programme** in your school?



The **Epistemic Insight** Initiative at Canterbury Christ Church University invites you to join a team of researchers/teachers across schools, universities and community organisations. We provide free professional development and a shared enthusiasm for innovation and research in education.

With access to resources and research tools, teachers can plan, track, evidence and evaluate interventions that will lead to both engaging activities in lessons and a deepening of students' disciplinary knowledge.

We are working with teachers to co-create resources that will be useful in the classroom as well as adaptable to online live teaching and accessible independent learning.

'Surrounding You' can be scaled to involve two teachers from different subjects working in partnership.

The strategy and resources can be used as part of a pastoral/PSHE tutor programme as well as RE and other relevant subjects across the school. Or, with more participating teachers (for example, teachers of science, English, history, geography, DT) it can expand into a big picture of the ways that school and the wider community supports the students' scholarly and character development (*including opportunities for curriculum mapping for school leaders*).

'Surrounding You' is ready to work with your RE and PHSE specialists

Two vital areas in school supporting personal development are RE and PSHE/tutor time. In Church of England schools, teachers are encouraged to facilitate students' experiences of key principles in a balanced RE curriculum; comprising of theology, philosophy and human/social science (*Chipperton, Georgiou, Seymour and Wright 2018*). Learning in the RE classroom involves identifying big questions, investigating and understanding methodologies, having balanced and informed conversations, as well as examining contextual and relational elements in areas explored. The PSHE programme, from KS1 to KS5, supports wellbeing, relationships and preparations for living in the wider world (*PSHE Association 2020*).

It is through these subject areas in particular that students can share and compare their experiences of life and build the knowledge, rationality and compassion needed to help themselves and others to flourish.

RE and PSHE offer students the opportunity to engage in dialogue about some of the Big Questions that have been raised by recent local, national and global events, including:

- **What gives value, meaning and purpose to human life?**
- **What is freedom?**
- **How might we investigate different perspectives on 'truth'?**
- **What tools and methods might be useful to enable us to negotiate our way through difficult experiences, choices and decisions?**
- **What is the role and value of the branches of knowledge across subject disciplines in school?**

To summarise

Would you like to be involved? You will have access to resources and tools to support and enhance your planning. You can be involved in action-research, with opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and use the experience and expertise of wider academic communities.

Joining the 'Surrounding You' project offers teachers involved the following:

- **Accessible resources** to support Year 7's positive transition into secondary school
- **Activities to encourage a dialogue** for students to develop their understanding of the school community as 'one body of many interdependent parts'
- **Developing a vision** of enabling students to flourish and develop critical-awareness and compassionate moral agency
- **Collection of evidence and student voice** to support curriculum developments in line with the inspection frameworks (for middle and senior leaders)
- **Professional development** for action-research available to colleagues including student teachers and mentors
- **Opportunities for action-research to be published and presented** to the academic community and at international conferences taking place throughout 2020/21
- **Can be combined** with other relevant initiatives including 'Essential Experiences of Science' and 'Crest'

Interested? Want to find out more? Email lasar@canterbury.ac.uk

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