

## Seminar K

**Session leader:** Prof Berry Billingsley

**Co-presenter / accompanying teacher:** Mina Cullimore

**Session title:**

Epistemic Insight in the classroom: Using research engaged teaching to create ways to help pupils to ask and explore big questions in an age of science and technology.

**Key questions addressed:**

- Why is student agency all the buzz right now – how does it apply in RE and what do we mean by scholarly thinking, epistemic agency and epistemic insight.
- What are some of the big questions? And if some questions are big, what are the ‘small’ questions?
- Can the coronavirus crisis motivate schools to initiate greater collaboration and cooperation between teachers – and who if anyone wants this outcome?
- What is the value of applying a collective approach to the organisation and themes we explore in research engaged teaching – across the school and curriculum subjects?

**Main content and activities of session:**

This conference comes at a particularly relevant moment in the unfolding story of our research. The world is consumed with anxiety over a new disease and we find ourselves in a world of education that for now at least has lost some of the assumptions and certainties that used to shape the format and content of the school timetable.

This prompts us to ask two questions – how is this crisis influencing the ways that students, parents and educators view the purpose of education and – what should be the role of education in relation to helping young people to navigate the current coronavirus crisis?

To respond to these questions my colleagues and I will begin with some examples of research engaged teaching from the Epistemic Insight Initiative. We will explain that workshops have bridged science and other disciplines– to give us (for example) a richer and more meaningful account of what a Renoir painting looked like to its original audience. We explain why developing these ‘epistemic insights’ can help to prepare children for a fruitful exploration of ways to relate science and religion.

I will then talk about current events and the way we have adapted our planned activities to focus on emerging opportunities and areas of need.

This will lead me to my two central questions – Thus, ‘what is education for’ and ‘how can education help young people to navigate the current crisis?’ Drawing on the EI framework and the research so far, I will propose five principles and invite feedback on them as a way to answer both of our questions.

I hope via this session or what you now already know you are open to joining a national co-creation and action research initiative – the Epistemic Insight Initiative.

Taking part can be as simple as filling in a 15 minute survey or as much as designing your own action research with your class.

You could be a university tutor, teacher or student teacher... our team will support with online data collection, sample surveys, permission forms and writing publications.

We will start the session with the findings of a survey – of teachers’ preferred problems to solve with research. Please help us by filling it in now. Find out more at

<http://www.epistemicinsight.com/research-and-coronavirus/>

**Links to resources, publications, etc :**

[www.epistemicinsight.com](http://www.epistemicinsight.com)