



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
SUBJECT LEADERS'
NEWSLETTER**
For Primary, Secondary & Special Schools
Summer 2016

Introduction

Welcome to the RE Newsletter for the summer term.
Where is this year going? I cannot believe we are already in the summer term. I hope you all had a wonderful Easter break and managed to relax, recoup and eat plenty of chocolate to give you the energy required for the very busy term ahead!

You will find introductory information in this newsletter about the new "Understanding Christianity" Project which will be officially launched at Lambeth Palace in May. The project will provide an exciting professional development opportunity for all Diocesan and community schools and academies.

You will also find details of useful resources for RE and of local and national professional development opportunities for the coming term. Local RE CPD is provided by the Diocese of Peterborough and support is open to all schools.

The RE Teacher Network Support Meetings will also continue. Further details are included in this newsletter and on the Diocesan website - <http://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/news-and-events/events?tags=school>

The June RE Network Meeting will focus on more effective use of the local church and we are delighted to be able to welcome the new Schools and Families Officer from Peterborough Cathedral - Alex Carton who will join us.

I wish you all a very happy and successful term ahead and I look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Kindest wishes,
Lesley

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National RE NEWS

Understanding Christianity

The "Understanding Christianity" project was initially developed in response to the Church of England's commissioned report, "Making a Difference - A Review of Religious Education in Church of England Schools" (2014).

This report revealed that there was a lack of depth of teaching about religions and beliefs, particularly in Primary Schools. It found many similar challenges in Church of England schools to those found in community schools and recommended a more robust and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity. It was felt that if this were addressed that it would in turn, complement the improved teaching of other faiths.

The Church of England's Chief Education Officer, Revd Nigel Genders, said, at the time: "This important Review shows that RE is exceptionally well taught in Church of England secondary schools because it is taught and led by specialist teachers who are properly trained. We want to see that training improved for all teachers, so that all our children get the very best quality of RE in all schools. *Making a Difference* provides the data we need to ensure that we can now take decisive steps to improve the quality of RE in all our primary schools. We are launching our own Christianity Project, which will ensure a greater depth in the teaching of Christianity in schools".

After 18 months of development involving the Church of England Education Office, RE professionals, diocesan professionals, theologians, faith community representatives and "RE Today" advisers the project is finally due to be launched at Lambeth Palace in May. Following this, RE Advisers will be trained as "Accredited Trainers" and roll out training opportunities to schools in their areas.

The training package of professional development and supporting materials which will be available are intended for use in Diocesan schools but will also be suitable for community schools and academies. The focus on the development of Christian concepts fits in well with most Agreed Syllabuses for RE including "Growing Together" (Northamptonshire's Agreed Syllabus).

I will be undertaking accredited training on behalf of the Diocese of Peterborough and will then launch the training package in the autumn term. Further information will be available later in the summer term.

RE Graduates

The Government reintroduced bursaries for teacher trainees in RE for 2015/16. A number of charitable trusts and organisations pooled resources to make potential teacher trainees aware of the Government funding and the exciting career opportunities available in RE teaching in a campaign entitled "Beyond the Ordinary".

A recent news article from The Times reported on the rise in graduates wanting to teach Religious Education. The article highlighted the success of the campaign which has helped contribute to a 31 percent rise in applicants to study RE PGCE.

Read more in the article which can be found at:

http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/education/article4696031.ece?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=professional_march_newsletter&utm_content=2016-03-09_1305

Ofsted RE National Lead Announcement

Ofsted have announced the appointment of two HMI with shared responsibility for the RE National Lead position. Suzanne Lithgow, HMI and Mark Evans, HMI will have joint responsibility for the role.

Alan's Blog - RE Online

Many of you will already know that former HMI for Religious Education, Alan Brine, writes a "Blog" for the RE Online website (part of Culham St. Gabriel's Support for teachers of RE). If you have not already accessed this why not take a look:

<http://www.reonline.org.uk/supporting/re-matters/?term=alans-blog&taxonomy=news-tags>

In March Alan's Blog focused on Harvard University's new free online class for teachers of RE developed to promote religious literacy. Launched on 1st March, the course is designed to help improve understanding of religion in human affairs. Further detail on this can be found at:

https://www.edx.org/course/religious-literacy-traditions-scriptures-harvardx-hds-3221-1x?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=professional_march_newsletter&utm_content=2016-03-09_1236

Young Ambassadors' News

The teams of Young Ambassadors for RE have been busy carrying out research for their assignments, set by the REC, on how their chosen religious or non-religious worldview prepares people for life in modern Britain. As part of their research, the Young Ambassador team from **St Bede's Interchurch School** in Cambridge visited the Jain temple at the Oshwal Centre in Potters Bar; their teacher reported that they were warmly welcomed and were privileged to witness puja and have lunch with members of the Jain community.

They were also able to film a question and answer session about the Jain faith, and are now looking forward to collating their findings into a presentation for the Young Ambassadors' conference.

The Young Ambassadors at **Archbishop Sentamu Academy** in Hull have been working with another local school to produce an e-book on Christian and Muslim life in the home, school and community. The students have been filmed talking about their beliefs and practices and have gathered photos from their places of worship. The book will be interactive with games and activities and will be available as a free online resource for teachers to use when teaching about living faith from a Christian and Muslim perspective. This work has been supported by Paul Hopkins from Hull University, and Marilyn Cowling and Sue Holmes from Hull and East Riding SACREs. The Young Ambassadors will be attending the Local Agreed Syllabus launch on 17th March to talk about the project and the value they see in RE.

For further information about the Young Ambassadors scheme go to:

<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/young-ambassadors/what-is-the-young-ambassadors-for-re-scheme>

RE Quality Mark Grants

Thanks to REC members Keswick Hall Trust, Culham St Gabriel's Trust and Westhill Endowment Trust, there are a number of grants available for small schools (fewer than 150 pupils) and schools requiring improvement which would like to apply for the RE Quality Mark. The grants are managed by the RE Council and schools can indicate on their application forms if they would like to be considered for a grant.

For more information about the RE Quality Mark and to download the application form, please visit the REQM website at: <http://reqm.org/> or email Sylwia Urbaniak, the new REQM Administrator at: admin@reqm.org.

Local RE News

RE Teacher Support Network Meetings

The Spring RE Network Meeting took place at the Stimpson Avenue Mosque in Northampton and focused on developing knowledge and understanding about Islam. Sayfullah Nasir, local Imam and Muslim faith representative at the University of Northampton, led the session and was supported by a number of Muslim school pupils and a university student from Northampton. Twenty five teachers enjoyed Sayf's presentation, watching prayer time and listening to the young people's experiences.

The next RE Network will focus on making the most of a church visit to support learning in RE

Peterborough Cathedral Schools and Families Officer

Alexandra Carton has joined Peterborough Cathedral after six years as Education Officer at Southwark Cathedral where she delivered an education programme for faith and non-faith schools across inner and outer London. She previously worked in an educational role at St. Paul's Cathedral and spent four years as a Primary School teacher in Barnes, London. She grew up in Kettering where she attended Southfield School for Girls, going on to study Drama, Theatre and Teaching at the University of Roehampton.

The appointment coincides with the completion of the Cathedrals "Visitor and Education Centre" with its classrooms, displays about the history of the Cathedral and exhibition space.

Alexandra will be developing education programmes for children, young people and their families as well as holiday programmes and special events, and promoting visits from pupils of all ages.



Alex tells us:

"I'm a primary teacher by trade, somehow ending up as Education Officer at Southwark Cathedral and, since January 2016, Schools and Families Officer at Peterborough Cathedral. From time to time I miss the school environment and having my own class to plan for and build a relationship with, but this job has such variety and challenges me in other ways and I get to work with children of all ages, backgrounds and cultures in the Cathedral every day. The Cathedral is my classroom now! And what a classroom to have!"

My job involves developing and delivering activities that enable young people to engage with the building, its history and its Christian faith and it really is a gift of a resource for learning; here children can touch living history and experience living faith, touch stones carved over 1000 years ago, walk in the footsteps of pilgrims past and listen to music in the place where it has been sung for centuries.

From September, we will be offering a new programme for primary and secondary schools aimed at supporting the locally agreed syllabuses for RE and the national curriculum. The opportunities for supporting the Christianity units of study seem obvious, but I want to bring the subject alive for children by providing activities that are exciting, engaging and experiential. We will do this through the use of object handling, costumes, role-play, art and ICT so that Christian concepts are explored in interesting memorable ways and children are given opportunities to reflect, consider and respond to the building and the faith and beliefs practiced here.

For me, the most important element of a school's visit is to ensure that all the children, from whatever their culture or background feel welcomed, valued and accepted during their time here. The children may not remember everything they learnt, but they will remember how warm and friendly the people were, if they had fun and how they felt during their visit.

We are very excited about the works ongoing at number 25 Minster Precincts, the new Visitor and Learning Centre opens this summer and will contain an interpretation exhibition space on the ground floor and our new 'school rooms' on the top floor. These facilities will give us a safe space for schools to leave their belongings and eat their lunch, but more importantly will enable us to deliver workshops in a suitable setting, from making stained glass windows to sculpting grotesques we plan to offer a range of activities to complement a visit to the Cathedral, providing a package that schools can book that adds value to their experience of learning about the Cathedral.

Look out for the new programme, launched in summer term 2 and consider making a booking a visit to the Cathedral for a cross-curricular experience that will leave them amazed, curious and eager to discover more!

If you are interested in making a booking do contact us. Although the new activity programme isn't yet live, we are accepting bookings for the summer term and can create a bespoke package for you. The Cathedral is running free Saxon archaeology days for KS2 in June - children can work with Cambridge Archaeology Unit and explore the Cathedral's Saxon story on selected dates in June - contact us on the number or email below for more information:

01733 355307

education@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk

Interfaith Day at Friars Academy

An interfaith day took place at Friars Academy in Wellingborough on 21st March. Run by Wellingborough Interfaith Group, it involved 28 students learning more about 6 different world faiths, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism and the Baha'i faith through participatory workshops.

The students learned about the 'Golden Rule' of each faith and found that although all faiths are different, their golden rules are actually very similar in nature and, therefore, that faith should unite and not divide people.





Wellingborough Interfaith Group leaders were very impressed by our young people all involved thoroughly enjoyed the day.

RE Resources

Cumbria and Lancashire Education Online

Cumbria and Lancashire Education Online (CLEO) have produced a series of interactive resources covering different faiths. These resources are suitable for teaching RE at Primary level. See:

http://www.cleo.net.uk/consultants_resources/religiouseduc/A3poster/ppdf.pdf?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=professional_march_newsletter&utm_content=2016-03-09_1219

Humanist Toolkit

This toolkit from the British Humanist Association explores Humanist ideas relating to celebration. The resource is suitable for pupils aged 7-11 and consists of teaching notes, lesson guide, a class presentation and worksheets.

Access at

<http://humanismforschools.org.uk/teaching-toolkits/toolkit-2-teaching-notes/>

"What is Humanism?"

"What is Humanism? How Do You Live Without a God? And Other Big Questions for Kids" by Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young is a thought provoking book intended for 7-11 year olds. ISBN 978-0-750287-73

Hindu Council UK Website on Reincarnation

The Hindu Council UK has set up a website focusing on reincarnation, one of the key beliefs of Indic religions. The website looks at Reincarnation in relation to issues such as gender orientation, phobias, child prodigies, abortion and euthanasia.

Visit: <http://reincarnationuk.org/> for more information.

The Hindu Council also has a question and answer section with video clips which can be accessed at: www.hinduismquestionandanswer.com

Another useful site for Hinduism is The Hindu Academy at:

www.hindu-academy.com

Hinduism Workshops for Schools

Avesha Presentations offer a variety of resources on Hinduism, serving schools and educators all over England, Wales, and Scotland. They work with Foundation Stage, Primary, Secondary, SEN, University Religious Studies students, trainee teachers, and other professionals. They also run CPD courses and INSET sessions, specialising in dynamic, reflective workshops for teachers and students of all ages, experiential at all levels, with more academic content included where appropriate. The half or full-day workshops are run by co-founder of ISKCON Educational Services Indriyasha Das and his wife Krishna, who provide a nationwide service.

For more information on workshop content and fees, visit:

www.hinduismworkshops.co.uk

To make a booking, contact:

Email: admin@hinduismworkshops.co.uk or bookings@hinduismworkshops.co.uk

Tel/Fax: 01923 351 209

Mob: 07940 963 014

Early Years Ideas

The National Association for Teachers of RE (NATRE) have produced this guide with ten flexible learning ideas in RE for 4 and 5 year olds. Access the information at:

http://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/10%20beginnings%20for%20RE%20in%20the%20Reception%20Class.pdf?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=professional_march_newsletter&utm_content=2016-03-09_1308

JTrails

JTrails believes that Anglo-Jewish history and heritage is an important national, cultural resource that deserves general recognition. They aim to promote it through their own programmes and by working with existing Jewish and non-Jewish community, historical and heritage organisations, communities and individuals.

JTrails is setting up some 30 Jewish heritage trails in England, based on a major, interactive website and a series of local heritage events and outreach programmes at key locations. Each trail will have a clear map of sites, places and heritage, with a history and chronology of the community and sites. There will be plenty of interactive features to allow contributions of photographs, memorabilia, family stories etc. and there will be special areas for school age children and educators, as well as discussion forums and archive areas.

Marcus Roberts has set up a Jewish Trail in Northampton and has led tours for the local community and council.

Further information about the JTrail in Northampton can be found at:

<http://www.jtrails.org.uk/trails/northampton>

CPD Opportunities

Local Opportunities

Dates for your diary		
Course	Date and Time	Venue
"So, You are the New Subject Leader for RE?" (Day 2 of the 2 day course for new or recently appointed Subject Leaders for RE - All Key Stages)	Tuesday 26 th April 2016 9.30am - 3.30pm	The Diocese of Peterborough, Bouverie Court, Northampton
"Exciting RE for KS1 - Exploring RE and SMSC" led by Gill Vaisey, Independent RE Adviser (RE Subject Leaders and Teachers of RE - KS1)	Thursday 5 th May 2016 9.30am - 3.30pm	The Diocese of Peterborough, Bouverie Court, Northampton
RE Teachers' Support Network Meeting - "Using Church Visits More Effectively for Better Learning in RE" (RE Subject Leaders and Teachers of RE - KS1 and 2)	Tuesday 28 th June 2016 4.00pm - 6.00pm	The Diocese of Peterborough, Bouverie Court, Northampton

All courses are open to all schools and academies.

For further details, costs and bookings please go to the website:

<http://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/news-and-events/events?tags=school>

or contact Erica Kendall on 01604 887006 or e-mailing:

education@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

National Opportunities

National RE Conference: "RE - Am I Bothered?"

The Diocese of St Albans, The RE Society of Bedfordshire and RE Today Services are running a national RE conference in collaboration with Center Parcs Woburn Forest on Saturday 18th June 2016.

There will be numerous workshops, lunch and refreshments and an RE publishers fair, as attendees will be able to use the Center Parcs facilities until 10.30pm on the day.

Tickets are £90, with £10 off for those who book by 15th January. For more information, and to download a booking form and programme, please visit:

<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/re-conference-18-june-2016/>

NATRE Courses

For NATRE courses go to:

<http://www.natre.org.uk/> and click on "Courses and Events".

Sharing Good Practice

Many thanks to Sandy Ettridge, RE Subject Leader who tells us about exciting work that has been taking place at her school.

"At Brigstock Latham's CE Primary School, we have been trying to raise the profile of Christianity in really creative and exciting ways.

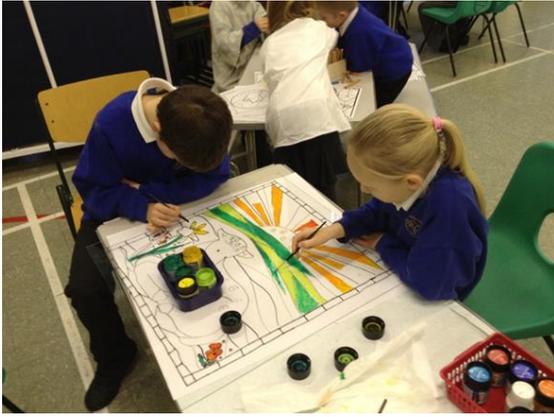
We run a 'Day 10' curriculum, which involves organising our children into cross-phase groups...and it takes place every 10th day.

Each term, our 'Day 10' curriculum has a focus, and the school joins together to plan a range of creative and practical activities linked to that focus. We have used the Day 10s over the last term for the development of RE and, in particular of Christianity.

(This learning has run in addition to our regular RE themes).



Each member of staff took ownership of a Christian symbol, and planned activities linked to that symbol. Over the course of a term, the children worked on each of the activities, and we had some really exciting outcomes-many of which will stay with our school for many years.



We have a 2 metre glass-painted cross, with all of the symbols on its panels; we have displays of fish and doves in the hall; the children also learnt about light, the trinity and the lamb through art and drama. The follow-up work and pupil chats showed the impact of the unit of work- even on our youngest children.

We think that we have created something that is beautiful and meaningful for us all”.

