

# RE Newsletter AUTUMN 2014



Welcome back from half term – there is a lot to update you on. Attached with this newsletter is an update from the Learn Teach Lead RE Project. If your school is not yet involved in this – we hope that they will be soon through supporting your local RE hub.

## ***“Making a Difference?” – a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools***

was published in September, pledges to raise the standard of RE in all its schools by better equipping teachers and providing improved resources.

The review, led by Alan Brine, OfSTED’s national lead for RE, found that, in contrast to community schools, good and outstanding RE was found in the majority of C of E secondary schools due to the high quality of subject expertise amongst the teachers. But at primary level the report reveals there are similar challenges to those found in community schools and recommends a more robust and challenging approach to the teaching of Christianity. This, in turn, will complement the improved teaching of other faiths.

It shows that where there are subject specialists (secondary) RE is significantly better than in community schools. Therefore it concludes that more input is needed on RE as part of Initial Teaching Training, ITT, and more needs to be done to encourage RE specialists to become primary teachers.

The Church of England’s Chief Education Officer, Revd Nigel Genders, said:

“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 next year, which will ensure a greater depth in the teaching of Christianity in schools. But the government has a major role to play too, and this review shows how important it is that they implement policies that will ensure the subject is valued for the vital part it plays in society so that RE is taught with the depth and rigour that students deserve.”

Subject leaders, heads and governors should read this report which can be downloaded [here](#) and carefully consider the recommendations in Section 3. For further advice and guidance contact your Diocesan Education Officer.

## **The Christianity Project**

There will be INSET opportunities for your staff and neighbouring community schools from January

explaining how to improve the teaching of Christianity through offering a more theological approach. Work in pilot schools across the diocese has been very positive and the expectation is that all schools will incorporate this approach into their teaching in the future. As soon as this web based resource is launched we will be in touch.



The *Making a Difference* [report on RE in Church of England schools](#) highlights the positive impact on RE of the RE Quality Mark programme, both as a means of developing and recognising effective subject leadership and as providing an audit tool to monitor effectiveness through its self-evaluation documents. The REQM is available for schools of all types; further details on all aspects of the programme are on its website at [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org). The REQM project will be holding its second conference for schools which have achieved the REQM on Saturday 7 February in Birmingham, thanks to generous support from the Hockerill Educational Foundation, at which Rebecca Nye will be speaking about her research into children's spirituality. More information is available on the REQM site, or by e-mailing [admin@reqm.org](mailto:admin@reqm.org). Some SACREs within the Diocese are offering bursaries for schools applying for this award.

### **The Hockerill/NATRE prize for innovation in RE Teaching: winners announced!**

The Hockerill Foundation and NATRE are pleased to announce the winners of the 2014 Competition, now in its fourth year. Entries were once again of a very high standard and truly representative of the excellent teaching of RE in our schools. First prize in Primary Education was awarded to



**Gill Tewkesbury at Pilton Bluecoat CE Academy in Barnstaple**, and in Secondary Education went to Erica Melton and Helen Smith at Pate's Grammar School in Cheltenham. More information about the prizes, including [how to enter](#) the next year's competition, can be found on the [Hockerill website](#).

### **Congratulations Gill we are so delighted – what a fantastic achievement!**

Gill's entry follows the life of Jim, an 18 year old student who has just finished his A-levels and is planning to work as a Gap year student for a charity in Africa. Each week Jim sends a letter, e-mail or text to the class telling the children what he is doing as well as asking for help and advice. The children follow Jim on his journey as he learns more about the Christian faith. The materials have also been developed to work alongside a geography topic, namely Africa. The materials draw together the Key Stage 2 "Beliefs in Action in the World", "Sacred Writings" and the "Inspirational People", parts of the previous curriculum supported by Devon and Exeter Diocese and is easily transferrable to the new scheme looking at "How do we make moral choices?" (Beliefs in Action) and "How should we live?". It is currently being used for Year 4 children but can be adapted easily for other year groups

The judges commented that this is a creative, innovative way of opening up and applying Christian belief and teaching. The entry makes excellent use of following fictional 18 year old Jim on his Gap year journey and showed very deep learning from religion. Uganda is chosen because there is an

excellent link with a local Barnstaple charity working there. In short this entry ticked all the boxes for the judges including transferability to other schools and adaptability to other religions.

Gill is happy to share her scheme of work with any schools interested and only asks that teachers and pupils feedback to her on how it has gone. School can access the resources in drop box [Click here to view Hockerill](#)

### **OfSTED inspections and RE CW and SMSC.**

In the wake of the 'Trojan Horse' events in Birmingham it seems that Ofsted have become more interested in this area of the curriculum. Pretty much every secondary inspection report during the summer term mentioned RE and as you may well have read Ofsted has revised their guidance on RE CW and SMSC. Our colleague in Bristol, Katy Staples, has developed a guide to these changes which is on the diocesan website: <http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/resources-library/schools/siams-inspection>

### **RE Today Re-styled**

If you are an RE Today subscriber or a **NATRE** member, your September mailing would have brought you the newly-styled *REtoday* magazine. Along with its cleaner, fresher look, *REtoday* now offers you even more value; 96 pages worth of classroom ideas and news from the RE world, which also includes NATRE's journal *Professional REflection*, formerly known as *REsource*. You too can get a copy of our *REtoday* magazine, curriculum books, as well as many new benefits, such as discounts on courses, online seminars, FREE downloadable resources, access to RE Advisers and much more by [becoming a NATRE member](#). View a copy of the [REtoday magazine](#) here.

### **'Discovery RE' and 'Christian Concepts Unpacked'**

We have been asked for our views on Discovery RE. Discovery RE was based on the Poole Bournemouth Agreed Syllabus [www.discoveryschemeofwork.com](http://www.discoveryschemeofwork.com) is the website that will tell you all about this. Like any scheme of work it has its good bits and bad bits. First you should note that it has obviously been developed for community schools rather than church schools.

Salisbury Diocese has developed a number of units in the same style (and in the style of something called the Christianity project which is being launched later this year) to supplement this. These units are on their diocesan website as a free download. They are called 'Christian Concepts Unpacked' and here is the link: <http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/resources-library/schools/re-support>

### **Subscribe to RE Today Services**

[RE Today Services news](#) When you subscribe to a feed, it is added to the Common Feed List. Updated information from the feed is automatically downloaded to your computer and can be viewed in Internet Explorer and other programs. [Learn more about feeds](#). [Subscribe to this feed](#)

## Resource from NATRE: Helping teachers interpret the DfE standards in relation to RE

What is it for? This is a support tool to help individual teachers interpret the DfE standards in relation to RE. It could be used for self-audit or in the context of professional development. The RE exemplification material simply illustrates the particular RE applications of the general standards and also refers to further helpful sources of information such as the REC's Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE and the RE Quality Mark's criteria for achieving that award.

Who wrote it? This guidance material was produced jointly by [NATRE](#) members and the Professional Development Committee of the [RE Council](#).

Are RE teachers required to follow it? Unlike the DfE Teacher Standards, this is not a statement of a statutory requirement. It is something teachers can use as they wish to support their own development and for subject leaders to use in work with colleagues. Any suggestions as to how it might be improved will be welcomed. [Click to download the document](#)



### Recommended websites

[RE Online](#): promoting excellence in RE teaching

[Discovery RE](#): an enquiry-based approach to RE for F1 to Y6

[RE:Quest](#): 'asking the big questions'; exploring the Christian faith

### E-mail a Believer

Have your questions answered by a team of experts from seven belief traditions. The team are all educationalists. [pof.reonline.org.uk](http://pof.reonline.org.uk)



**Look for #REChat** You can search previous chats including one over the summer on creative RE as well. A new topic every month tweeting online for an hour

### Best on Twitter for RE

@CofE_Education	The Church of England's Education Division
@fionajmoss_	RE. Exec Officer for NATRE and leads #REChat
@gilesfreathy	Specialist Leader of Education: RE, Humanities and Thinking Skills
@hartleyian	Head of Hums in Plymouth. RS specialist,
@HuffPostRelig	Sharing light in the digital darkness. Email: <a href="mailto:religion@huffingtonpost.com">religion@huffingtonpost.com</a>
@ltlre	Learn Teach Lead RE project in Devon & Cornwall.
@MarkChater	Director of Culham St Gabriel's Trust. Supporting RE & SMSC through research, development and innovation.
@MaryMyatt	I see some great stuff in schools. I talk with students, teachers and leaders about learning, leadership and the curriculum. I advise and inspect.
@NATREupdate	NATRE is the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education – check out our website to find out more
@reonline_tweets	News from the world of Religious Education / Religion in the news / what's new on the RE:ONLINE website.
@REquestUK	RE:quest is the definitive toolkit for teaching Christianity in RE. Exploring the BIG questions!

@RE_Today	RE Today Services works to support multi-faith RE in schools by providing consultancy, teaching and learning resources and a subscription service.
@threefaiths	Three Faiths Forum (3FF) works to build understanding between people of all faiths and beliefs.
@TrueTube	Short films, big stories. Free videos, lesson plans for teachers of RE

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

contact [educationevents@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:educationevents@exeter.anglican.org); or phone Fran Bradley 01392 294921

### **Course title: SIAMS The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools – an introduction**

<b>Facilitators:</b>	Tatiana Wilson, Diocesan Education Officer
<b>Dates:</b>	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, The Old Deanery, Exeter
<b>Time:</b>	09:30 – 15:30 including a light lunch
<b>Cost:</b>	Staff - £180 or £130 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)
<b>Governors</b>	£80 or £50 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)

#### **Course description:**

The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) is a significant way in which Church schools are judged. The course unpicks the rationale behind the inspection framework and offers strategies to support effective self-evaluation as well as ideas for further improvement. It is aimed for new staff and governors and hopes to prove to be an interactive, informative and enjoyable day.

#### **Intended outcomes:**

- An introduction to the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Framework including
- Unpacking the 4 core questions:
  1. How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?
  2. What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?
  3. How effective is the religious education?
  4. How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?
- Strategies for effective self-evaluation
- What research evidence tells us?
- Case studies of best practice

***Please bring a copy of your school's most recent SIAMS self-evaluation form and action plan with you as you may want to annotate these through the day***

### **Course title: Effective Religious Education**

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Tatiana Wilson, Diocesan Education Officer
<b>Dates:</b>	Thurs 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Jun  
**Time:** 09:30 – 15:30  
**Venue:** The Old Deanery, Exeter  
**Cost:** Staff - £180 or £130 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)  
Governors - £80 or £50 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)

**Intended outcomes:**

- To enable schools to understand how Religious Education underpins all aspects of SIAMS for VA and VC schools To unpack the Statement of Entitlement for all Learners in Church of England Schools
- To draw on current research findings to understand the current strengths and challenges for RE
- To develop methods for the effective monitoring and assessment for RE including Assessment for Learning
- To look at new resources available to support RE teaching
- To explore the characteristics of effective subject leadership in RE
- To review and develop RE development plans

**Course description:**

This course is for Subject Leaders, link RE governors and school leaders keen to improve the quality of provision within their school.

**Course Title: Compelling RE**

**Facilitator:** Katy Staples

**Date:** Thurs 12<sup>th</sup> Feb

**Time:** 09:30 – 15:30

**Venue:** The Old Deanery, Exeter

**Cost:** Staff - £180 or £130 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)

Governors - £80 or £50 subscription rate per person (plus VAT where applicable)

**Intended outcomes:**

Attendees will

- be equipped with exciting strategies for raising standards in RE
- gain a deeper understanding of the main features and beliefs of world faiths
- explore how assessment can be effectively managed to monitor progress
- explore how enquiry led learning in RE can ensure pupil engagement

**Course description:**

This course will help participants gain confidence in understanding the central tenets of 6 major world faiths so they can explain these to other colleagues and inform their own teaching. Different strategies for exciting and challenging RE will be offered and a clear understanding of assessment and progression in RE and how to monitor, this will be explored.

The course is a whole day with a mixture of teaching styles employed, including short presentations, group activity, discussion and open forum. The sessions aim to be friendly, participation is invited and the experience of all members valued.