

# RE Newsletter SPRING 2015



Welcome back from half term – there is lot to update you on!

Thomas a Kempis once wrote:

*Nothing, how little so ever it be,  
if it is suffered for God's sake,  
can pass without merit in the sight of God.*

As we approach Lent, let's take time to reflect on our life journeys and to ponder what God might want to speak us about during the this time of reflection leading up to Easter.

## The Christianity Project

Exeter Diocese has been asked to be part of the Wave 2 pilot in the second half of the summer term. Schools interested in participating should contact [tatiana.wilson@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:tatiana.wilson@exeter.anglican.org); As well as trying out and commenting on the draft materials we will particularly looking at different models for assessing RE without levels.

## GCSE and A Level RE Reforms

These have been published:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/403357/GCSE\\_RS\\_final\\_120215.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/403357/GCSE_RS_final_120215.pdf)

### Some key changes:

GCSE RS students will spend at least half of their time developing knowledge and understanding of 2 religions, with the option to spend up to three-quarters of their time studying 1 of the 2. Students will also be able to study texts and learn about critiques of religion and other non-religious beliefs through the study of philosophy and ethics.

A level RS students will study at least 1 religion in depth through 3 of the following areas of study: the systematic study of religion, textual studies, philosophy of religion, and religious ethics. Through these, students will also be expected to engage with the works and arguments of key theologians, scholars, philosophers and/or ethicists.

### Here is a link to the DFE analysis and responses to the RS consultation (pages 20 -30)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/403347/Reformed\\_GCSE\\_and\\_A\\_level\\_subject\\_content\\_Government\\_response.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/403347/Reformed_GCSE_and_A_level_subject_content_Government_response.pdf)

### And here is the NATRE statement

<http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/natre-welcomes-release-of-exam-criteria/>

***Making a Difference?" – A Review of Religious Education in Church of England Schools***

Subject leaders, heads and governors should read this report which can be downloaded [here](#) and carefully consider the recommendations in Section 3. *It will be important for schools to have reflected on their own practice following the finding and to have addressed some of the key messages in preparation for SIAMS.* For further advice and guidance contact your Diocesan Education Officer.

## **The National Society's Religious Education Conference 2015**

Conference Flier- </media/2149954/hod%20conference%20flyer%20-%2025%20june%202015.docx>

This year's annual Religious Education Conference takes place in London on Thursday 25th June 2015 at the Hallam Conference Centre near Oxford Circus.

<http://www.cavendishconferencevenues.co.uk/marylebone-euston-conference-venues/>

Following the Church's review of the provision of RE in Church of England Schools (*Making a Difference?: A Review of Religious Education in Church of England Schools 2014-*

<https://www.churchofengland.org/education/publications.aspx>) we welcome subject leaders from both primary and secondary schools. The focus of the conference is on improving standards of teaching and learning in RE.

Places are limited and will be offered on a first come first served basis. For further information please contact [jemma.adams@churchofengland.org](mailto:jemma.adams@churchofengland.org).

## **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 Salisbury diocesan website: <http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/resources-library/schools/siams-inspection>



### **British values in SMSC**

You might be wondering what the new requirement to promote British values in Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development actually means for your classroom. You can access the DfE's guidance on British Values [here](#). Check out some interesting blogs on the subject by [Mary Myatt, Independent Consultant and Ofsted Inspector](#) which links to some practical guidance from the Diocese of Norwich and an excellent blog from the Church of England's (C of E) [Chief Education Officer Nigel Genders](#).

OfSTED and SIAMS rightly look at bullying, especially in the context of SMSC and RE and it is recommended that schools draw on the advice published in the CoE publication [Valuing All God's Children](#). The report considers how school can address all forms of bullying and in particular homophobic bullying and the resources in the appendices form a very helpful checklist.



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.

### **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>



### **Funding available to pay for supply cover**

Teachers who wish to attend meetings during the day often decline these opportunities through reluctance to place strain on their school’s finances. A ‘Leadership Fund’ is now available for practising RE teachers to facilitate their active involvement in national curriculum and policy development work with RE organisations. [See how you can apply here.](#)

### **Email a believer**

**Do you or your pupils have questions about a faith or belief?** Would you like to find out how people’s beliefs affect their lives? RE:online’s ‘e-mail a believer’ feature gives the opportunity for your questions to be directed to people from a number of faith and belief backgrounds. They will get back to you as soon as possible with their responses. [To email a believer click here.](#)





### Watch this space...

There is a new series for KS2 RE from the BBC, in association with Lat Blaylock RE today Adviser will be broadcast in March. The 5 programmes are half an hour each and look at Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Islam and are perfect to teach primary RE. These broadcasts will not be available on DVD so keep an eye out for



### Webinar: Teaching about Islam in primary How? Why? What?

**Are you concerned about subject content when teaching about Islam?** This webinar will improve your confidence and knowledge of Islam, providing you with examples of engaging and effective practical strategies for learning about and from the faith, enabling you to create a planned and progressive learning experience for children. Non-NATRE members pay only £30: if you **use a NATRE member's discount you can get up to £20 off the price.** [Book now](#).them.



### The Jewish Way of Life

The [Jewish Way of Life resource](#) is a highly recommended resource which is featured on the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities website. The resource concentrates primarily on two young Jews named Sarah and David. With sections looking at who Jewish people are, what they do and what they believe, Jewish Way of Life is exceptionally helpful for teaching about Judaism. It is also suitable for pupils to explore independently. The resources section of this website also contains some useful articles for teachers' subject knowledge. [Access here.](#)



### 2015 Spirited Arts

This year's themes and entry form for the 2015 Spirited Arts competition are now available on the website. Check out NATRE's Spirited Arts gallery and [get creative with our 2015 Spirited Arts competition!](#)

We hope you and your students will engage with these themes and enjoy working on them as much as you did this year. We look forward to seeing your entries for 2015.



### Interfaith Explorers

Interfaith Explorers is a unique, free online learning resource that is designed to give value to RE and PSHE lessons, helping pupils explore cultural diversity, respecting differences and embracing similarities. The learning unit was originally designed for Years 5 and 6, but could be adapted for other ages and is supported by a range of classroom and teaching resources. [To find out visit the Interfaith Explorers website.](#)

### 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>	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 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**

**Facilitator:** Tatiana Wilson, Diocesan Education Officer

**Dates:** Wed 10<sup>th</sup> June

**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.

*What matters most in what we learn from school and home  
is not the knowledge we accumulate  
but the kind of person we become.*

‘Thought for the Day’, [Lord Sacks \(10 December\)](#)