



RE Newsletter

Autumn Term 2024

THE VALUE OF RE

*Choose my teachings instead of silver. Choose knowledge rather than the finest gold.
Proverbs 8.10*

In the picture above, taken at the Orthodox church in Brookwood cemetery, you will see several of the prophets that are revered in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This icon has the means of the prophets – David, Job, Joseph, and Abraham, (the name Noah is just outside the picture in my photograph), and next to each of them the word ‘**Righteous**’.

What does it mean to be righteous? Does it mean the same to everyone? The New Testament expands this idea from the teachings of Jesus, and the picture he paints of the righteous life in the Sermon on the Mount as retold by Matthew.

This summer’s violence has been a good demonstration of the opposite of righteousness. Jesus teaches his followers to ‘turn the other cheek’, not meaning that they should allow others to walk over them, but that they should employ creative non-violence to reassert their humanity. What might that look like in your school’s context? How might you explore matters of racial and social equality in the RE classroom, and of course elsewhere in the curriculum? How can we use RE as a vehicle for creative non-violence?

If you want to explore the idea of creative non-violence further, look at the [Bible Project](#) videos from the [Sermon on the Mount](#) series that explore this topic.

Remember to sign up for training, the RE Leadership Development Network, and contact me directly for any bespoke training required.

I look forward to hearing from you. Have a great term.



Anne Andrews by [email](#) or phone 07884 655097
Diocesan RE Adviser

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DIOCESAN TRAINING THIS TERM



All RE training events and booking links for this term can be found below and on the [website](#). Click on the date for the live link to the booking page. Please ensure that you book on Eventbrite for all the advertised courses.

Please ensure that the person booking has entered the correct, delegate email into the required fields on the booking form. Incorrect email addresses mean that we cannot send you the link or joining information.

Bookings usually close four working days before the start of the course so ensure that you book in time to receive the link for any online courses and the joining instructions for in person courses.

RE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

***All these sessions are online and run from 4 – 5.30pm, using Teams.
Sign on through the [website](#) on Eventbrite up for all 6 sessions for £60 (+VAT) or 1 credit if your school is in the SLA, £120 (+VAT) if you are not.
Topics correct at time of publication, but subject to change***

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Autumn Term 2024:

Thursday 3rd October 2024 - Christianity 101. The basics and how to teach them

Wednesday 27th November 2024 - Humanism in the classroom, led by a range of speakers from Humanists UK.

Spring Term 2025:

Tuesday 28th January 2025 - Case studies and how to use them

Thursday 20th March 2025 - Appropriate and Meaningful? Using retelling, re-enacting and experience.

Summer Term 2025:

Wednesday 21st May 2025 - Assessment – moving pupils on in their learning

Tuesday 1st July 2025 - Resource Roundup – a sharing session.

If you teach in Milton Keynes, Bracknell Forest or Windsor and Maidenhead look out for fliers about the additional SACRE funded networks taking place in those areas.

OTHER TRAINING THIS TERM

SO, YOU'RE THE NEW RE LEADER?

Church House Oxford, 23rd September 09.30-3.30.

A fun and practical session for new RE leaders and co-ordinators. Come along and learn about the role and responsibilities and meet other new RE leaders.

SLA: £150+VAT; non-SLA £200+VAT per person or 1 Credit

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW DIOCESAN SCHEME OF WORK

Online, 4th November 1-3.30pm

A guide for all schools on using the new diocesan scheme of work and how to implement it.

SLA: Free; non-SLA £65+VAT per person.

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIANITY REVISITED

Church House, Oxford, 22nd November 09.30-3.30

An introduction to Understanding Christianity for schools that already have the pack and need training or a refresher.

SLA: £150+VAT per person; non-SLA £200+VAT per person or 1 Credit

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DIOCESAN SCHEME OF WORK

The [Diocesan Scheme of Work 2023](#) is now on the website. It offers 6 units per year group from EYFS to Year 6, with some additional units for schools to select from, covering Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hindu Dharma, Sikhi and Humanism. The units should help schools to deliver the key requirements of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Locally Agreed Syllabuses but have a more explicit disciplinary approach. I am pleased to say that SIAMS inspections have begun to recognise that the scheme provides a basis for quality RE.

The units should not be taught in the order that they appear on the overview, as this has been organised by strand, not by terms. It is up to each school to decide how to construct the curriculum that suits the context and the cohort. It is also up to schools to check the extent to which the curriculum fits the Local Agreed Syllabus, especially if the school is VC.

There is further work to do on the syllabus, particularly to create some units to fit the new Pan-Berkshire and Milton Keynes syllabuses, and to produce some further support materials. Providing the funding is available, I intend to run another 4 sessions with teachers from a range of primary phases. Look out for information about the project early in the new term if you are interested in being part of the development process. You do not have to be from the Berkshire area to participate in writing the units.

There is also a page on the website where I would like to showcase resources and plans written by teachers to accompany the scheme. At this moment, the page is not live as no-one has offered anything to share, so if you have created anything that you are proud of, please do share. I am particularly interested in any adaptations of units for mixed age or mixed phase classes.

NATIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND UPDATES

STRICTLY RE

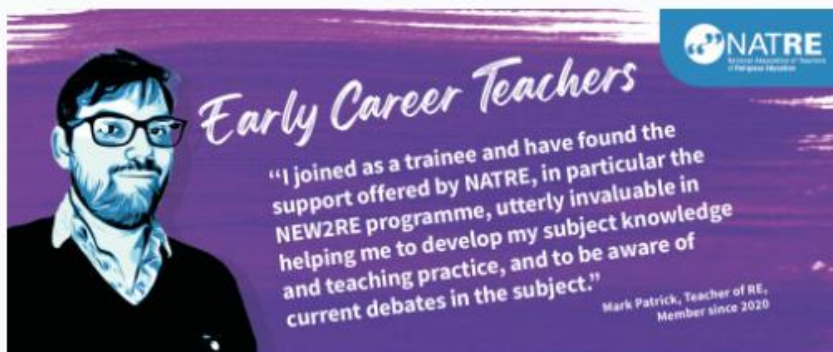
Watch out for information about Strictly RE, the major national weekend training session, which will take place online during the last weekend of January 2025. Information will be on the [NATRE](#) website.

NEW2RE MONTHLY WEBINARS

NATRE are organising regular monthly webinars for teachers new to RE, whether ECTs or experienced teachers. These are going to be free to sign up to. Read details on the picture below or click on the picture to go to the webpage. If you do sign up, please consider writing a report for the next edition of this newsletter, so that other people can find out about the sessions. This is a new initiative, designed to enhance teachers subject and pedagogical knowledge.

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EMPOWER YOUR TEACHING: JOIN OUR NEW2RE MONTHLY WEBINARS



RELATED RESOURCES

[Cultivating flowers](#)

USEFUL LINKS

[Council for Subject Associations \(CfSA\)](#)

Are you an Early Career Teacher (ECT) in religious education seeking to enhance your skills and subject knowledge? Or perhaps you're an experienced teacher new to teaching **Religious Education**, including **Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)**, **Religious and Moral Education (RME)**, and **Religious Studies**?

NATRE offers an incredible opportunity for you! Join our FREE monthly webinars, explicitly designed to support you in developing your teaching abilities and knowledge in both Religious Education and Religious Studies, all while providing valuable evidence to meet the ECT standards.

The sessions are a mix of taught sessions and Café NATRE (A hot seating activity with a group of volunteers answering delegates' questions)

[▶ Discover the sessions - All running from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM](#)

While our webinars are open to all, **becoming a NATRE ECT member can provide you with additional support**. The membership allows you to access exclusive resources, connect with a community of like-minded educators, and receive personalised assistance to excel in your teaching journey.

OFSTED RE SUBJECT REPORT



Ofsted published the subject report: [Deep and Meaningful?](#) In April. This report was based on the findings of some deep dives into RE as well as some specific research visits. It builds on the Ofsted Research Review from 2021 and reiterates some of the findings from that report.

Below are the summaries of the main findings from the report, and there are summaries of the main recommendations at the start of the report. Many of these messages are similar to the messages we have been giving about RE for the last few years.

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The RE curriculum often lacked sufficient substance to prepare pupils to live in a complex world. The RE content selected rarely was collectively enough to ensure that pupils were well prepared to engage in a multi-religious and multi-secular society.

A superficially broad curriculum does not always provide pupils with the depth of knowledge they require for future study. In most cases, where the curriculum tried to cover many religions, like equal slices of a pie, pupils generally remembered very little. In cases where the curriculum prioritised depth of study, pupils learned much more.

The RE curriculum rarely enabled pupils to systematically build disciplinary knowledge or personal knowledge.

Where RE was weaker, the knowledge of traditions specified for pupils to learn was overly and uncritically compartmentalised. Sometimes, pupils were presented with over-simplistic assertions about religious traditions, which were often based on visible entities, such as places of worship.

What schools taught was rarely enough for pupils to make sense of religious and non-religious traditions as they appear around the world. Curricula did not identify clearly the suitable mix of content that would enable pupils to achieve this.

There was a profound misconception among some leaders and teachers that 'teaching from a neutral stance' equates to teaching a non-religious worldview. This is simply not the case.

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Interestingly, these findings are not vastly different from those reported back in 2013 both by Ofsted and the Church of England Education Office. These findings can be used by schools to audit their provision, and they have also made several recommendations about curriculum, teaching and assessment that apply to schools. The issues around insufficient content and coherence for statutory non-examined RE at Key Stages 4 and 5 were highlighted, as well as the way that large gaps between learning do not allow for pupils to make good progress.

Do take some time to read it through carefully and consider what response if any you need to make. I'm please to say, that most of the SIAMS reports that I read, indicate that RE in our church schools is of high quality. So, read the report and keep up the good work.

REPORTS FROM SUMMER TERM RE NETWORKS

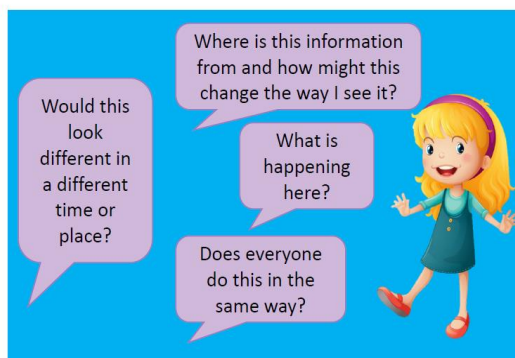
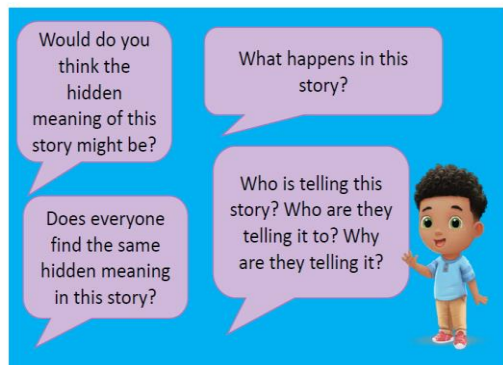
DISCIPLINES AND PROGRESS – SUMMER 1

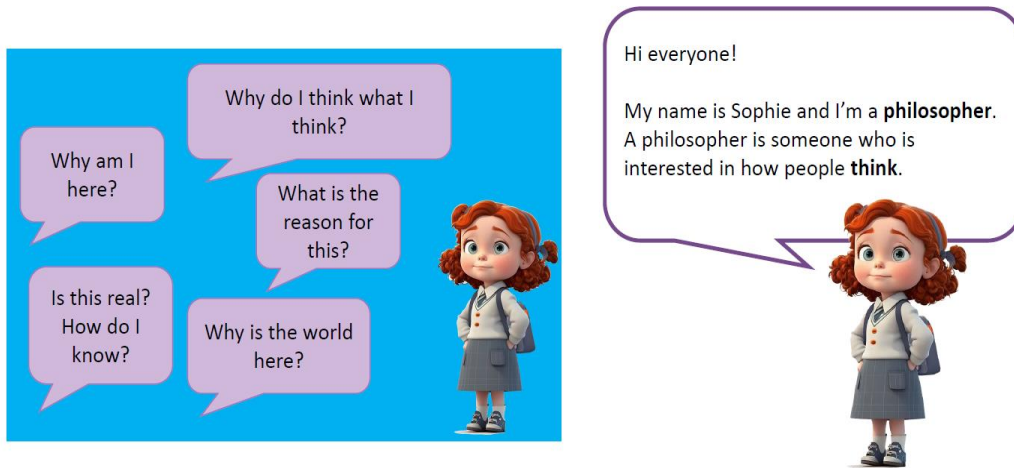
Many of us are still getting to grips with the 'ways of knowing' or 'disciplines' or 'lenses' in RE, and how to make the best use of these ideas in helping pupils to make progress.

This session in the first half of the summer term gave delegates a chance to think about the skills that using the disciplinary lenses require and introduced them to three characters that may help pupils to understand. Some of you will remember the [RE-Searchers project](#) that was presented at the Diocesan RE conference in 2015, which used characters to help pupils learn the methodologies of study: Ask-it-All Ava (inquiring and asking questions); Have-a go

Hugo (experience), Debate-it-all Derek (dialogue) and See-the-story Suzie (text work). Gillian Georgiou, from Lincoln Diocese has created Theo (a theologian), Livvy (a social scientist) and Sophie (a philosopher) who can be used to introduce the pupils to the disciplines.

We looked at the type of questions that could be asked by each of these characters and explored a really useful document produced by the Dioceses of York and Lincoln: [Getting Better at ways of Knowing in RE](#). This document sets out some further examples of the outcomes and the methodological questions that can be used to help pupils attain them. I hope to use these ideas to form the basis of a more coherent assessment system for the diocesan scheme of work.





© Gillian Georgiou, Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education

RESOURCE ROUND-UP – SUMMER 2

This session was an opportunity to review some of the latest resources for RE. Here is the list of the key things that were shared:

1. Diocesan scheme of work – updates. All units are now on the website.
2. Ofsted Deep Dive Subject Report:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subject-report-series-religious-education>
3. Understanding Humanism for Schools: <https://understandinghumanism.org.uk/>
4. RE Online Professional Development Portal:
<https://www.reonline.org.uk/professional-development/>
5. Nobody Stands Nowhere: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFRxKF-Jdos>
6. Worlds Apart: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXXj_YB--g
7. Real People, Real Faith:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC7KZodmZ0SqBqwvpv4bfTL3EN3j8TLTR>
or on <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/real-people-real-faith/>
8. <https://www.re-hubs.uk/> - portal with all sorts of information about places of worship and speakers
9. Books at press –resources for EYFS: <https://www.booksatpress.co.uk/>
10. [RE Podcast](#) – series of podcast about a wide range of religious subjects.

If you have other resources that you would like to recommend, please do get in touch.

RESOURCES

Please note that the Diocese of Oxford does not offer an endorsement of any of the resources listed. Please use your professional judgement to decide whether these materials are suitable for your school.

GOD AND THE BIG BANG



EXPLORING THE INTERACTION OF SCIENCE AND FAITH

Based at the University of Durham, God and the Big Bang gives students in Year 5 to Year 13 the opportunity to discover, discuss and debate the compatibility of science and faith



The workshops equip students with the tools to form their own opinions on some of life's biggest questions, exploring curiosity, evidence and human responsibility

Enquiries and Bookings
sarah.moring@durham.ac.uk

www.gatbb.co.uk  @GatBB_UK  @GatBB_UK

SPRINGS DANCE COMPANY



Several diocesan schools have r had sessions from Springs Dance company over the last few years, and they continue to offer cross curricular opportunities to explore dance and Christians concepts.

Have a look at the website to see if one of this term's sessions would suit your school.

"Thank you for doing that amazing lesson with us. I loved it!" - Pupil, Seabrook school

This term Springs Dance company are offering **Creation, The Christmas Story, and Parable**. Further details can be found at <https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/index.php/join-in/schools-workshops>

To book and to find out more please email touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or call **07775 628 442**.

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The Pan-Berkshire SACRE hub, funded by a NASACRE/Westhill Award is pleased to announce that the most recent films in the [Real People, Real Faith](#) Series are now available on the NATRE website. Humanist, Baha'i and Buddhist films have been added to the collection and so offer teachers the opportunity to engage their pupils in a wider range of religions and worldviews.

For each worldview there are six films – two for each of KS1, KS2 and KS3. Each film is accompanied by a brief introductory document with summary and suggested activities.

The full list of films is as follows:

Baha'i
Buddhist,
Christianity – Anglican, Baptist and Catholic.
Hindu
Humanist
Islam – Sunni and Shia
Jewish – Orthodox and Reform
Sikh



Filmed in locations across Berkshire, mostly in places of worship, these films explore some of the key features of these traditions, offering a wide diversity of voices within each worldview. Build them into your planning, especially if you are finding visits to places of worship hard to fund and organise.