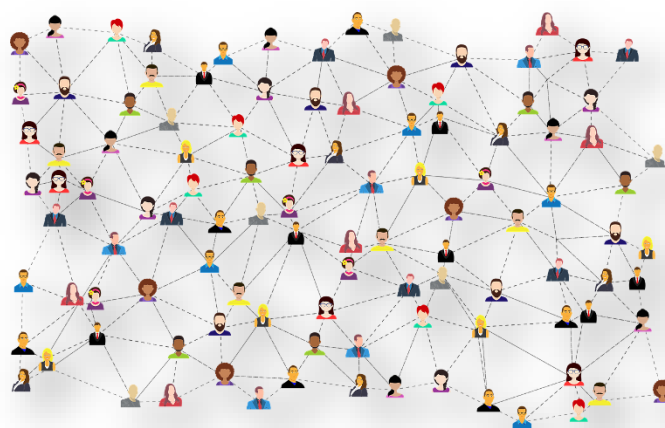


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OF ENGLAND

RE News



Support and Challenge—the National RE Community

Welcome to this spring term edition of RE News. I hope you have enjoyed a break over half term and are looking forward to the events in this second half of term. In this edition of RE News, we think about importance of the RE community, both locally and nationally. We also hear from some teachers and pupils who have been participating in and learning about the lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews in our region.

As ever, if you have anything to share in the next edition of RE News, please do get in touch. I look forward to hearing from you!

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Inside this issue

Strictly RE 2022.....	2
Teacher-Led Action Research	3
Holocaust Memorial Day 2022	4
Living Faith.....	5-6
Upcoming RE training.....	8

Special points of interest

- Celebrating excellent practice in RE
- The latest news and views from around the country
- Exciting new resources to support you in the classroom

Building Community: Strictly RE 2022

On the weekend of the 29th-30th January 2022, RE teachers and subject leaders from across the country gathered together for the annual NATRE (*National Association of Teachers of RE*) conference, Strictly RE. For the second year running, this event was held virtually, which enabled significant numbers of teachers and leaders to participate.

The event involved a number of keynotes on teaching about worldviews, the different types of knowledge in the RE curriculum and dharmic traditions. It also included a significant number of workshops and seminars delivered by primary and secondary teachers from across the country.

It feels like a big ask to give up your weekend after a busy week of teaching, and I was once again astonished at the number of teachers who were present. It speaks, perhaps, to two things: firstly, that many RE teachers feel that they would benefit from additional support and secondly, that RE teachers are amazing human beings who are committed to doing their best for the children and young people in their classes!

Several key themes emerged from the event. The first was the different types of knowledge mentioned in the Ofsted RE research review. Several seminars looked at how to develop pupils' substantive and disciplinary knowledge, as well as considering the impact of personal knowledge on learning in the RE classroom. The second was around better reflecting the diverse lived reality of religious and non-religious worldviews, with several seminars offering case

studies that focused on Sikhi, Buddhist, and Muslim worldviews. Thirdly, many seminars focused on using texts and developing writing in both primary and secondary contexts.

Interspersed between keynote presentations and workshops/seminars, delegates could visit a virtual exhibition space, which included materials from GCSE and A Level exam boards, Culham St Gabriel's Trust, Story Tent, RE:Quest, the Bible Society, the Jewish Museum and Understanding Humanism, amongst others.

Initial feedback from the event showed that RE teachers and subject leaders found it incredibly useful professional development, but that its key power was in providing opportunities for teachers to connect with each other. NATRE also runs and supports local networking opportunities. Our regular RE cluster meetings across are affiliated with NATRE; these are open to all and free to attend, and provide a chance for teachers and leaders of RE to find out about RE-related training, resources and issues, as well as offering a forum for sharing good practice and asking questions. You can find out more about these the support we offer on the back page of this newsletter.



“RE teachers are amazing human beings who are committed to doing their best for the children and young people in their classes...”

Building Community: Teacher-Led Action Research

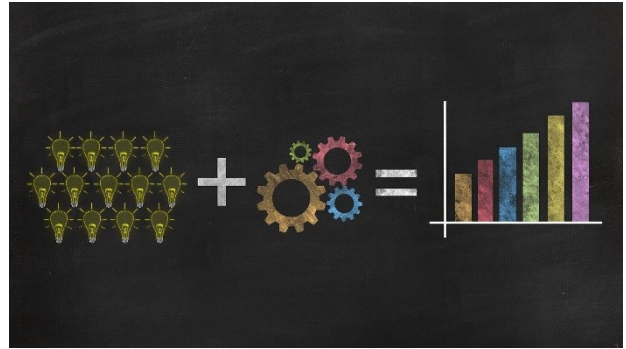
As we seek to develop and improve our teaching, many of us are encouraged to adopt **evidence-based practice based on educational research**. [Chi \(2021\)](#) recently published an overview of her findings on the impact of educational research on educational practice and found that, in reality, this research has only limited impact on classroom teaching and learning. She posits the following reasons for these findings:

1. Research-based knowledge tends to be too theoretical, abstract and general, whereas the practical knowledge needed by teachers is context-specific;
2. Researchers can address issues that are not important to teachers—in other words, it is the researchers and not the teachers who determine the agenda for educational research;
3. Teachers can find the work of researchers inaccessible in terms of both its technical language and the ways in which it is disseminated;
4. Teachers lack the time to engage with research—the impetus is on teachers to identify, engage with and implement the most appropriate research for their context.

The [Chartered College of Teaching](#) has made great strides in both making educational research more accessible and relevant to teachers, particularly through its journal, [Impact](#); many teachers engage with this research in ways that impact positively on their teaching practice.

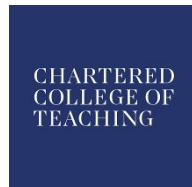
However, Professor Vivienne Baumfield (2008) notes that whilst engaging *with* research is really important to developing teaching practice, so too is engaging *in* research. **Action research**—research that is carried out

collaboratively, is context-based and is focused on improving educational practice—is something that many consider to be an important tool for ensuring all pupils and adults in schools across the region can flourish.



To that end, **we have established an action research project to look at assessing pupil progress in RE**, particularly in relation to the different types of knowledge outlined in the [Ofsted RE Research Review](#). Twenty-two church and community primary schools and academies across the region are participating. We are investigating ways of assessing pupil progress in RE in relation to both substantive and disciplinary knowledge in schools with single-form entry and schools with mixed-age/phase classes. Our method will involve practical action—mapping opportunities in the curriculum to gather evidence of progress and designing practical teaching activities that enable this to take place,—evaluation of the impact of this work and reflection on possible ways forward. We intend to produce a variety of practical support materials that will be published on the diocesan education website in due course.

We will keep you updated on the progress of this research. Our thanks go to the leaders and teachers at the participating schools and academies for their commitment and time.



HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2022

Boston St Thomas CE Primary Academy

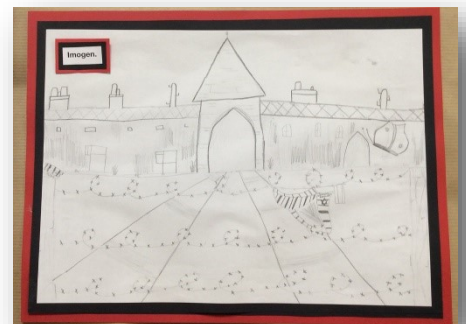
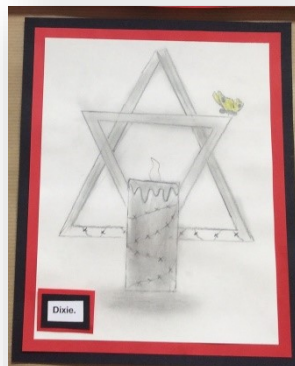
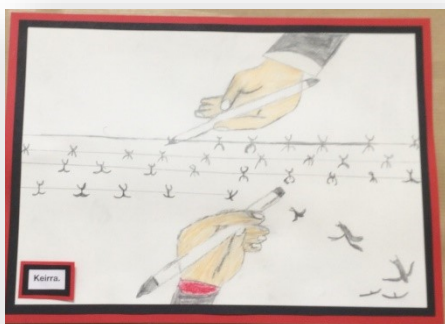
Sapheron Shaw, RE subject lead at St Thomas CE Primary Academy in Boston, shares what pupils have been doing to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2022:

“Freedom artwork – commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day 2022

Holocaust Memorial Day is marked on 27th January every year. This can be a difficult historical event to commemorate in a primary school, simply because of the magnitude of the horrors that occurred. At St Thomas', Year Six pupils engaged with commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day following a very interesting debate: 'Is it right for someone with no Jewish heritage to create artwork to commemorate The Holocaust?'

To enable this philosophical debate, we encouraged interplay between RE, History and English. This interplay allowed the children to retrieve and apply their substantive knowledge relating to anti-Semitism in Germany in the 1930s and 40s and their knowledge from writing biographies of Anne Frank's life. Pupils were also supported to draw upon their RE disciplinary knowledge of evaluating sources of authority, as well as questioning the world around them by working as philosophers. The session drew upon art exhibitions and used The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's resources for the children to decide whether it would be ethically appropriate for them to create art work. As a group, they drew their own conclusion: it would only be acceptable if the art was created with reverence, respect and a focus on the freedom of Jewish people.

The Year Sixes approached this very maturely and they made connections to British Values: they recognised the importance of raising the profile of the importance of the freedom of all people, whether they hold religious or non-religious world views, by commemorating this day.”



Questions to Consider:

How effectively do we ensure pupils are able to understand the impact of context (historical, geographic, cultural, etc.) on religious beliefs and ways of living?

LIVING FAITH

Barton St Peter's CE Primary

Anna Crosby, RE subject leader at Barton St Peter's CE Primary, has been working hard to ensure that pupils gain a confident understanding of the ways in which context affects ways of believing, living and thinking. Pupils in KS1 have been learning about Mary, the mother of Jesus, and have been exploring the different ways in which people around the world depict Mary artistically, looking at Jyoti Sahi's *Dalit Madonna* (© Methodist Modern Art Collection). They have been supported to reason about why different Christians might imagine and depict Mary in different ways, and what this might mean about their beliefs and practices. KS2 pupils have also had the opportunity to visit the Islamic Centre in Scunthorpe and talk with Imaam Sayful Ahmed about what it is like living as a Muslim in our region.

Many thanks to Anna for generously sharing the resource she created after the KS2 visit to the Islam centre.



FARMINGTON SCHOLARSHIPS

Farmington Scholarships are open to all headteachers and teachers of RE in UK primary and secondary schools, as well as to teachers of RE in UK special schools. One of the purposes of the scholarship is to empower RE leaders to carry out research relevant to their context that will develop the effectiveness of RE. Funding is provided to cover the cost of a replacement teacher to free up the scholar to carry out their research. All Farmington scholars are provided with a tutor with whom they meet frequently and all scholars are expected to attend the Farmington annual conference, both at the beginning of their period of study and at the end.

We have a long tradition of successful Farmington scholars in this region. This year, **Emely Keane** at St Mary's CE Primary in Welton and **Julie Childs** at Utterby Primary are participating in the Farmington Scholarship programme. Emely's research focus is on developing technical vocabulary through the RE curriculum. Julie is researching the impact of increasing pupils' knowledge of diversity within religious worldviews and developing critical thinking skills on challenging misconceptions and bias. We will share the outcomes of their research in due course!

If you would be interested in finding out more about the Farmington Scholarship or would like to apply to join the programme, please visit their website [here](#).

Farmington Institute

Harris Manchester College, Oxford

LIVING FAITH

Scamblesby CE Primary

Charlie Luff, RE subject leader at Scamblesby CE Primary, has been supporting pupils to learn more about the global nature of Christianity. Pupils have been learning about the impact of geography and culture on Christian practice and life, as well as developing their ability to reason about the importance of diversity within religious and non-religious worldviews. Thank you to Charlie and to JJ for sharing examples of what they have produced.

How Global is Christianity?

There is not a single country on this planet that doesn't contain Christians. In this essay, I will help you understand that Christianity has spread around the world and that anyone can be a Christian.

Largest religions by country in 2010 (darker colour represents greater prevalence)



Percent of population
 >90% <90%
 ■ Buddhism
 ■ Christianity
 ■ Folk Religion
 ■ Hinduism
 ■ Jainism
 ■ Judaism
 ■ Muslim
 ■ Unaffiliated

As this map shows, Christianity is a massive religion. Nearly the whole of North and South America, Mid and South Africa, Russia and Australia follow the religion Christianity.

In Christianity, it doesn't matter what colour your skin is. If you are from different parts of the world and your skin is a different colour, you can still be Christian. Not all Christians are white British. The Christian community is varied. Jesus was probably dark skinned.



In Bangladesh, people light candles in memory of their dead loved ones. They light the candles in remembrance of them. The candle is lit until the wax is melted. The light lives on and defeats all darkness.

There are Christians all over the world. I am going to tell you about African Christians. Just because people have different colour skin and they are from different countries, they can still be Christian.

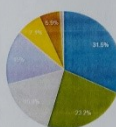
As you can see in this picture, these African Christians are in a deep prayer, but where are they? They're not in a church, in a river or outside. They are in a place that looks like a barn or a warehouse. You shouldn't be surprised that they're not in a church because they don't have to be. It doesn't matter where you pray, you just have to do it with respect.




Look at these two churches. Do you think they are totally different? Would you be surprised to hear that they are related? The picture on the left side, that is a church in Christ Church, New Zealand that was

destroyed in an earthquake in 2006. You can see it in New Zealand. The debris was left and wasn't taken away so people can come and see it. The picture on the right is located in the same country and the same city. It is made out of cardboard so it is friendly to the environment.

In 1865, Christianity overtook folk religions to become the largest faith in the world. However, it is predicted that in 50 years (2071), Islam will be the largest religion, with Christianity in second place.



As this pie chart shows, Christianity is a massive religion. Nearly a third of the population is Christian! (31.5%)

In the Philippines, people actually get crucified after getting whipped with a hot metal whip to feel closer to God.

As I have demonstrated, anyone can be Christian. Christianity is truly global. It doesn't matter what colour your skin is or where you're from or how old you are, anyone can follow whatever religion they want and anyone can be Christian.

by JJ Ringguth-Round 15th July 2021



RE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The Religion Media Centre has produced [factsheets](#) about a range of different religious and non-religious worldviews, including factsheets that providing context for understanding the way in which religion relates to world events.



CDEC
Cumbria as a Beacon
of Global Citizenship

Cumbria Development Education Centre has collated a number of different [virtual tours of places of worship](#), including some local to Cumbria, and some further afield.

[RE:Quest](#) has recently updated its teaching and learning resources. This is a website that focuses on Christian worldviews, and has a particularly useful number of resources that explore diversity within Christianity.



Karl Blyton, headteacher at Blyton cum Laughton CE Primary, has recently updated [#PicturesBooks4RE](#). This is an invaluable resource for identifying relevant picture books to align with RE-related themes.

[#PictureBooks4RE Part 1 \(2022\)](#)

[#PictureBooks4RE Part 2 \(2022\)](#)



Upcoming Courses

Date	Time	Training
8th March 2022	4pm to 6pm	<i>Understanding Christianity</i> refresher session
15th March	1pm to 3pm	RE Bundle Session 6: Assessing Pupil Progress
15th March	4pm to 6pm	RE Bundle Session 6: Assessing Pupil Progress (<i>repeat</i>)
30th March	10am to 3.30pm	Annual Conference for headteachers, senior leaders and chairs of governors
27th April	1pm to 3pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Using Texts in RE
27th April	4pm to 6pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Using Texts in RE (<i>repeat</i>)
17th May	1pm to 3pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Writing and RE
18th May	4pm to 6pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Writing and RE (<i>repeat</i>)
15th June	1pm to 3pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Developing Vocabulary in RE
15th June	4pm to 6pm	RE Bundle Optional Session: Developing Vocabulary in RE (<i>repeat</i>)

For further details, please email the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.

To book, please see our [website](#).