

RE CENTRAL

Friday March 17th 2017

9.00-3.30

Encountering Faith in
the RE Classroom

How do you engage children with religion as it is lived in this country, in all its many and varied forms?

How do you bring other faith experiences into your classroom in a meaningful and appropriate way?

Recent national reports have emphasized the gap between traditional text book RE and actual religious faith, calling for a less stereotyped version of religion to be explored in schools.

This one day RE conference, featuring national RE leaders, will explore these issues, focusing on the way religion is lived in the world around us.

The keynote and discussion groups will explore activities and resources to facilitate genuine faith encounters in the classroom and in places of worship and raise religious literacy. Everyone will have the opportunity to attend each of the workshops, as well as the Keynote.

This conference is for all teachers who wish to engage with the latest thinking in religious education and who want to ensure that their classrooms are places where genuine encounters with faith and belief can take place safely.

Cost: Schools in Diocesan Service Agreement: £125 (+VAT)
Schools not in the Diocesan Service Agreement: £150 (+VAT)

To book this training course, please contact Donna Finlay via E mail
training@oxford.anglican.org or 01865 208272

Keynote: Who needs RE anyway?

This keynote will invite you to consider RE and its place today in light of recent research. We will explore the importance of religious literacy for our pupils and for RE lessons. Also we will discuss how we can help RE in our schools to reflect the society that pupils live in, with time to find out about and try out examples of classroom activities that can help us in this endeavour.

Lead: Julia Diamond-Conway

Julia was a primary teacher in London for fourteen years, and during this time worked as an AST for RE. She currently works for RE Today, writing articles for their magazine and teaching materials. Julia has also been involved in the production of the Understanding Christianity materials. She is a frequent presenter at conferences and training sessions for RE Today and has been involved in setting up Ambassadors of Faith and Belief schemes in London.



Each of the main Workshop/Discussion Groups will run 4 times

1. Promoting Religious Literacy through effective Religious Education

We will explore how an enquiry based approach to religious education can support the development of religious literacy amongst children and young people. We will discuss how a balanced curriculum for RE can ensure depth and breadth of understanding of religion and belief. Examples of practical teaching and learning activities to promote religious literacy will also be shared.

Lead: Kathryn Wright

Kathryn works as a freelance RE Consultant for the Diocese of Norwich, Diocese of St Albans and as a lead consultant for Culham St Gabriel's Trust managing and developing the Teach:RE course. She is trained as a Section 48 (SIAMS) inspector and as an RE Quality Mark assessor. She is also studying part time for a PhD researching pedagogy in religious education.



2. Big Questions and their relevance for spiritual development

How important it is for children to explore big religious questions. What it is we gain by developing the skills to explore such questions. How we may be engaging with questions which are fundamental to our existence we become less likely to be subject to what others tell us and become more autonomous individuals able to think for ourselves.

Lead: Dilwyn Hunt

Dilwyn taught RE in the classroom for eighteen years before becoming an adviser, first in Birmingham and then in Dudley. He currently is an independent RE adviser working for local authorities, SACREs and schools up and down the country. He is the author of numerous popular RE classroom resources and books and is in demand as a speaker at RE conferences and workshops for primary and secondary teachers of RE.



3. Power of Personal Testimony

Encountering people of faith is important in the RE classroom to help pupils understand that RE reflects real people, their beliefs and lives. Explore ways to get the most out of encounters with those of other faiths. Think about ways in which 'encounter' can successfully happen in your RE classroom above and beyond inviting in visitors.

Leads: Alex Wolvers and Julia Diamond-Conway

Alex qualified from Westminster College, Oxford with a BEd with a specialism in RE and was a RE and humanities teacher at St Edward's Middle School before going to live in Asia. In her last teaching job she was the RE and Worship lead and now works for the Lichfield diocese as a spiritual distinctiveness advisor and for Youth for Christ as part of the schools team writing and editing RE:Quest as well as running RE days for schools



4. Crossing the Bridges:

This will explore how to make the most of visits to a places of worship taking account of appropriate, purposeful learning intentions relevant to different age groups of children. It will work with a resource developed by advisers, teachers and SACRE members across Berkshire demonstrating its flexibility and its value in facilitating communication between schools and those who host visits.

Lead: Jo Fageant

Jo was the RE adviser for the Diocese of Oxford for many years. Following her 'retirement' in 2015 she has maintained her commitment to RE through her role as adviser to two SACREs and as a trustee of the Culham St Gabriel's Trust. She is passionate about the potential that visits to faith communities offer both for children's understanding of different religious traditions and for the development of respect for diversity and difference.



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Clergy Workshop/Discussion Group: This workshop will run once only for all clergy and will include more general background about RE as well as the more particular ways that clergy can support the religious literacy. We will consider multi-faith concerns alongside perceptions of faith and spirituality beyond the confines of the traditional Christian perspective.



Lead: Robin Sharples

Robin currently works as a schools' adviser for the Diocese of Oxford serving church schools in Berkshire. Robin studied theology at London Bible college and trained as a teacher in Birmingham subsequently working in schools in Solihull, Hereford and Worcester and leading Hallow CE (Aided) Primary School as Headteacher. Robin has particular interests in school ethos and spiritual development as well as RE and Worship. He is the author of, and runs, the 'Worship Workshop' training courses and website. As a governor in various schools Robin has served to look after building, safeguarding and a range of curriculum matters.

Timetable

09.00-09.20	Coffee & registration
09.20-09.30	Welcome & housekeeping
09.30-10.15	Julia Diamond-Conway Keynote: "Who Needs RE Anyway?"
10.20-11.05	Workshop & Clergy workshop
11.10-11.25	Coffee and networking
11.30-12.15	Workshop
12.30-13.15	Lunch
13.15-14.00	Workshop
14.15-15.00	Workshop
15.00-15.30	Plenary, evaluation & finish

Venue and directions

Oxford Belfry Hotel
Milton Common
Thame
Oxfordshire
OX9 2JW



From the north (Bicester, Birmingham, Manchester, M42, M6) Exit the M40 at Oxford Services (Junction 8/8a). At the slip road roundabout, take the second exit signposted A418 to Aylesbury. After half a mile, turn right onto the A40 to Milton Common and Wallingford. The hotel is 1.5 miles along on the left-hand side.

From the south (London, High Wycombe) Exit the M40 at Junction 7. Turn right following the A329 towards Thame. Immediately after crossing over the motorway, turn left onto the A40. The hotel is 300 yards along on the right-hand side.

Nearest train stations Haddenham and Thame - 7 miles Oxford - 14 miles

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