

minutes with a camera looking for photos that sum up what these words mean. Then create a PowerPoint presentation that shows what the cathedral is all about in relation to your eight chosen concepts. Lat writes: 'Learning from the sacred space is powerful where pupils are making choices, not where they fill in the blanks on a factual worksheet.' Thirdly there is also a website all about RE Trails: [www.retrails.org.uk](http://www.retrails.org.uk) which has already been mentioned on page 1

### Exemplification of Standards

### RE in Secondary Schools

A new resource has very recently become available at the following web address: <http://curriculum.gcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/assessment/exemplification/index.aspx> It provides examples of pupils' work across KS3 at levels 3-8. This is very helpful material if you want to check out how your marking and assessment compares with that of other teachers.

### Resources on Buddhism

Are you familiar with The Clear Vision Trust? Check out their website for some excellent resources to support your teaching on Buddhism. Staff at this Trust have paid particular attention to the findings and recommendations of the Warwick report on resources used to teach about world religions and have been working to update their resources in line with these. <http://www.clear-vision.org/Home/Home.aspx>

### A free DVD on Islam

A Muslim organisation is making available to teachers free copies of the epic film 'The Message: The Story of Islam'. It portrays the story of the Prophet Muhammad and the birth of Islam. To claim your free copy, email Sema: [islamdvd@nym.hush.com](mailto:islamdvd@nym.hush.com)



REsilience is a project for teachers of RE in maintained secondary schools. Its purpose is to help increase their confidence in addressing contentious issues, particularly when such issues are linked to religious justification for violent extremism. REsilience is managed by the Religious Education Council for England and Wales (REC) under contracts with DCSF (for England) and DCELLS (for Wales).

**Why?** 'Religious extremism' raises controversial and

highly sensitive issues. It is much talked about and a popular focus for media interest. Most young people are aware that throughout history some extremists have used religious arguments to justify violence against people with whom they disagree. Whether young people are equally well-informed about the motivation for such attacks, or about the attitude of a religion's mainstream members, is less certain. An important aspect of community cohesion is the dispelling of ignorance that creates suspicion and barriers between communities. RE educates young people about religions in this country; but raising or responding to students' questions about religious extremism poses challenges to even the most experienced teachers. Hence the need for REsilience.

**Who?** REsilience is for teachers of RE (whether or not they are formally qualified as RE teachers) working in maintained secondary schools in England and Wales.

**How?** Reasons for lack of confidence in tackling controversial issues in RE lessons vary from teacher to teacher, and circumstances vary from school to school. REsilience, therefore, will work with individual schools to help identify needs and plan to meet them. The issues arising from religious extremism require specific teaching and learning methods. REsilience aims to help teachers encourage students to debate, engage in dialogue and develop respect and understanding. Using thinking skills and approaches which encourage collaboration, students can be enabled to recognise and consider wider perspectives. REsilience training is provided through:

- a mentor who will support each school through the process;
- a catalogue of relevant resources, with 'gateway' documents which give a brief overview of a controversial issue and 'signposts' pointing to reliable sources for the teacher to research further. As each school's needs will be unique, the mentor will collaborate with teachers to provide a tailor made package of support.

**When?** Following piloting in the first half of 2010, REsilience will be offered to schools during the period September 2010 to March 2011. Mentors will support individual schools and teachers over a six week period through face-to-face meetings, email or telephone contacts. The frequency of communication will be determined by the needs of the school. Building confidence requires a process, not an event. REsilience will put teachers in contact with their peers (individuals and groups) sharing similar interests, and encourage the building of informal networks that can survive long after the project itself ends.

More information can be found at: [http://www.re-silience.org.uk/images/stories/pdf/flyer\\_a4.pdf](http://www.re-silience.org.uk/images/stories/pdf/flyer_a4.pdf) from where the above information has been taken.

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

www.slough.gov.uk  
**Slough**  
Borough Council

Issue 2

Autumn 2010

### RE on show

This year begins with an exhibition of artwork from three schools which responded to the SACRE's (Standing Advisory Council on RE) competition. The judges very much enjoyed looking at all the entries and there are certificates for



highly commended entries in addition to gift token prizes for winners in the primary and secondary categories. All entries will be on show at St Mary's Church in the centre of Slough from 4.00pm on Thursday 2nd September when the exhibition will be officially opened. From then it will be possible for anyone to view the exhibition on weekdays at lunchtimes and between 3.30-5.00pm until the 11<sup>th</sup> September and thereafter until the end of the month whenever the church is open.



The Religious Studies Centre is having an open afternoon on Wednesday 22nd September from 2.00-5.00pm. As we highlighted in our last edition the centre is a free resource for all Slough LA schools and is there to help you. It is located at Slough Islamic Primary School, Wexham Road with parking access from Grasmere Avenue and is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 3.30-5.30pm. It has been underused lately and should this trend continue the future of the resource could be called into question. Please do come along and browse through the wealth of material available and meet members of the committee to share any ideas about how the centre could better meet your needs.

In June members of the Slough SACRE joined those from other nearby SACREs to hear a presentation about RE Trails. They were encouraged to consider creating trails illustrating the religious life of their areas. Once we got thinking about it we realised Slough had a great deal to offer. The creation of a trail is something pupils and teachers in schools might like to have a go at. There is a very helpful website with examples and advice: <http://www.retrails.org.uk/>

Why not take a look at this and see if you could come up with an interesting trail in your area. If you accept this challenge, let us know so we can publicise it widely amongst other local schools and perhaps to the community at large.

Another means raising the profile of RE is joining in with the national celebration of RE to be held throughout the month of March 2011. There hasn't been such a celebration since 1997. This is an opportunity to shine the spotlight on the excellent work being done in RE, strengthen community links and raise public awareness of RE's distinctive and positive contribution to society and social cohesion. There's a website with news and ideas about this celebration to stimulate your thinking:

[www.celebratingre.org](http://www.celebratingre.org)

Finally, this coming term is a very busy with religious



A month long celebration of religious education in England and Wales in March 2011

festivals and to make sure you have all the information you need dates and details can be found at the following addresses

[www.reonline.org.uk/festivals.php](http://www.reonline.org.uk/festivals.php)  
[www.culham.info/tvr/festlist.html](http://www.culham.info/tvr/festlist.html)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/)  
[www.holidays.net](http://www.holidays.net)

These sites have lots of links to others with information about all the religions included and their festivals.



We'd love to hear from you about good things that are going on in RE. Our details are as follows:

Jo Fageant, Chair of the SACRE  
Tel: 07885 697447  
Email: [jo.fageant@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:jo.fageant@oxford.anglican.org)

Jo Osborne (Vice Chair and Centre Resources Officer) Email: [sloughrecentre@waitrose.com](mailto:sloughrecentre@waitrose.com)  
In January the long awaited updated non-statutory

## National guidance on RE

guidance on RE was published entitled: *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*. Copies are available from DFE publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham NG15 0DJ, Telephone: 0845 6022260 quoting reference number DCSF - 00114-2010. Alternatively it can be downloaded from <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00114-2010&>

This publication is intended to support the provision of high-quality RE in maintained schools in England. It sets out non-statutory guidance about RE in the curriculum and highlights its links with spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, personal development and well-being as well as community cohesion. In addition to providing an explanation of the legislation relating to RE, it outlines what is considered to be good practice for school governors and headteachers and also good practice for people who manage, plan, teach and support RE. This is an important document for those who have responsibility for RE to be familiar with. Every school should make an effort to get a copy.

In June the DFE published a report of Ofsted's most recent findings about RE in schools across the country. The evidence base from which conclusions were drawn was small but the report set out interesting recommendations. Many were aimed at local authorities and SACREs with one being:

- *provide more guidance on teaching about Christianity and non-religious world views, and effective ways of balancing the need to foster respect for pupils' religions and beliefs with the promotion of open, critical, investigative learning in RE.*

Other recommendations specifically relate to what schools should do eg:

- *ensure that RE promotes pupils' spiritual development more effectively by allowing for more genuine investigation into, and reflection on, the implications of religion and belief for their personal lives*
- *make proper provision for continuing professional development for subject leaders, specialist teachers and others with responsibility for teaching RE in order to improve its quality*
- *provide more opportunities to use fieldwork and visitors in RE.*

If you'd like to read more about Ofsted's findings and the recommendations made in the report you can download it from:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Transforming-religious-education>

Although there have been few CPD opportunities in

## Support for RE

Slough for RE subject leaders, if you are able to travel further afield there are some interesting courses on offer:

The focus for CPD in the Diocese of Oxford in the autumn will be **Global Citizenship** with particular reference to those parts of the RE curriculum that require an exploration of ways in which faith motivates and guides responses to issues of social justice, sustainability etc. The course will be run in partnership with World Education Berkshire which has been awarded funding to help subsidise this training. This means a full day course in November together with two follow-up afternoons, one in March and another in May will cost only £64+VAT for schools in the diocesan service agreement, £110+VAT for non-service agreement schools. The November day will be held at Oxfam House in Oxford and the regional locations for follow-up afternoons will be negotiated with participants. Full details of this training and an application form are available from [penny.bingham@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:penny.bingham@oxford.anglican.org)

RE Today Services Ltd has a good range of courses on offer. For primary teachers there are courses on promoting community cohesion through RE and how to be an effective RE coordinator. For secondary teachers there are courses on assessing pupil progress, active learning in KS3 and a course designed for teachers new to RE ie NQTs and teachers of other specialisms. These, like everything RE Today does, are high quality CPD opportunities. Details can be found at [www.retoday.org.uk/courses](http://www.retoday.org.uk/courses) If you can't get to courses, have a look at a new

## Online CPD Handbook

online CPD Handbook: <http://www.re-handbook.org.uk/> There is just too much in this resource to try to summarise it here. It is certainly worth having a browse through it.

Another means of accessing support for RE is to

## NATRE membership

become a member of the National Association of Teachers of RE. For an annual subscription of around £60 (£59 at a discount rate if you subscribe through Jo Fageant— use the email address on page 1 to contact her) you receive a magazine with excellent articles on RE mostly written by teachers, a themed book of lesson ideas, the NATRE journal *Resource* and access to the website with lots more good material. Being a member enables you to be part of the RE community and there are currently (though you'd need to be quick) bursaries on offer for the development of innovative RE projects. Take a look at the website if you're not familiar with it

to get an idea of the range and quality of support it offers. There is a fairly new section on music for use in RE which groups varied pieces of music into around 60 different themes. It could save you hours! ([www.natre.org.uk/music](http://www.natre.org.uk/music))

The website also has some excellent and extensive guidance on selecting and using different sorts of resources in RE. You can look at it on line but much of the advice is also presented as pdf files that you can download. This resource draws on the findings and recommendations of a research project carried out by the University of Warwick a report about which was published earlier this year. It includes guidance relating to books, school produced materials, websites, digital resources, artefacts and visual images as well as visits and visitors. For each type of resource the guidance provides a brief summary of the Warwick report's findings, key questions for teachers, stimulus materials to support discussion and decision making. All this can be found at [www.natre.org.uk/rg](http://www.natre.org.uk/rg)

A new online resource helps you to get to grips with

## Evaluating RE in your school

the self evaluation of provision and quality of RE in your school. It also has another purpose and that is that the system provides local authorities with anonymous information about the provision and quality of RE in its schools as compared with schools nationally. Your local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on RE) has a duty to monitor and support RE in Slough schools but it's difficult for it to do this without access to relevant information. If you choose to use this tool it might help prompt some local authority RE related initiatives. The tool is in two parts:

Part A allows the subject leader to make judgements about the characteristics of RE in their own school using the recognised Ofsted four-point judgement scale. Part B requests quantitative and other data about the RE provision and the involvement of staff in CPD, learning outside the classroom and the ways in which RE may be supported in school. Take a look at: [http://betterre.reonline.org.uk/lead\\_manage\\_sef/](http://betterre.reonline.org.uk/lead_manage_sef/)

## Resources from RE Today

**Just Now Stories** is a A4 ring binder pack of material for primary schools which explores issues of social justice. It supports not only RE but also PSHE and Citizenship as well as drawing on literacy work. The pack includes stimulus and worksheets which can be photocopied for use within purchasing schools. For more information go to <http://shop.retoday.org.uk>

**Tackling Tough Questions** is obtained from the

same place but is a resource aimed at 14-19 year old students. It centres on a 85-minute DVD debate that explores the big questions of religion and philosophy on the subject of evil. The three programmes on evil, suffering and death use original stories from British young people of many different faiths to explore the issues. The script was written by Professor Russell Stannard of the Open University and the DVD is supported by a comprehensive pack of classroom materials written by Lat Blaylock.

There are now several very helpful websites to

## Learning Outside the Classroom

support teachers in planning learning outside the classroom. With our focus on community cohesion and the contribution RE can make to this agenda, it is not surprising that these sites include excellent ideas relating to RE.

First of all there's [www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk) This gives a lot of background information about the thinking behind the push for learning outside the classroom. There is a specific section on using Sacred Spaces to support RE which includes consideration of parental sensitivities about children visiting places of worship. There are also lots of links through to other useful websites.

The second site to mention is:

<http://www.engagingplaces.org.uk/home> . This, like LOTC, is about much more than RE. It has information about all sorts of 'engaging places' including a number valuable for RE. Several cathedrals outline on this site the pre-prepared sessions they offer (eg Salisbury: a prisoners of conscience roleplay linked with one of the cathedral's windows, art within the cathedral etc; St Paul's offers a session on the science of the cathedral which involves considering some of the things Sir Christopher Wren had to think about, including gravity and the importance of arches and foundations, and the materials selected for the building) whilst making it clear that schools can negotiate something more specific to their own needs. Most present themselves as being able to address a number of curriculum areas in interesting ways thereby potentially making visits more cost effective from a school's perspective. Something that is definitely worth finding is Lat Blaylock's paper entitled, *Inspiring learners through sacred places* : <http://www.engagingplaces.org.uk/teaching+resources/art68331> in which he provides some imaginative ideas for making best use of visits to places of worship. Just one example from this article:

*In Liverpool Cathedral recently we set up this activity: Choose eight words from a list of 30 that might say what matters here at the cathedral. Spend 20*