

Developing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE: Regional Expression of Interest (EOI) form

Introduction

This RE Regional Expression of Interest form should be read in conjunction with *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE*, the report and recommendations agreed by the Religious Education Council (REC), the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and Culham St Gabriel's Trust (CSTG). The report gives the background to the regional strategy, and is available on the CSTG website at ...,

Networks of RE practitioners in any region of England or Wales will be able to benefit from the regional strategy by expressing an interest in developing their work and by applying for resources to make their developmental ideas possible.

In the summer term of 2014, up to four regional pilots will invited to exemplify the regional strategy. In the academic year 2014-15, subject to evaluation and review of the pilots, practitioners in all regions of England and Wales may be able to use this Expression of Interest (EOI) form to apply for resources to support regional work in RE.

Background briefing for pilots and applicants

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* identifies the following aims for regional hub activity:

- (a) To create informing, connecting, inspiring and energising regional networks of teachers of RE;
- (b) To promote practical wisdom through two-way engagement between RE research and RE pedagogy, leading to improvement in standards of teaching and learning in RE;
- (c) To build capacity of RE leadership locally, regionally and nationally, by developing confidence, expertise and vision.

The paper is clear that regional hubs are definitely not intended to be a new organisation and should not become a new bureaucratic structure.

Pilots and applicants might also find it useful to bear in mind the following practical points that regional networks could think about and address:

- The central focus of regional activity needs to be the RE teacher's needs and intentions in improving teaching and learning.
- Hubs can be started and maintained by any RE partner but need a leader whose time to coordinate the activity is identified, recognised and paid for – a professional partner to 'hold the ring'.
- Hubs can be as small or large as they like. There is no 'right' size. It might help to think of regions as hubs, subdivided into smaller action research sets or action learning networks. Hubs and sets can be territorial but they can also link teachers in schools that are statistical neighbours, members of an academy consortium, partners with the same university, or RE teachers living in the same area.
- Linking teachers locally and nationally through carefully integrated use of social media, such as #Teachmeets, @reonline_tweets, @rethinkREnow and #REchatuk can support and build insights.
- The difference that hubs can make to teachers' capacity could be crucial. Hubs can transcend discussions about 'what works in the classroom' and get to 'why it works' and 'how it can work better'. The action research element of critical questioning and quality assurance can be had through university/school interaction.
- Pedagogical understanding and commitment in teachers needs openness and inclusivity. Hubs may decide to focus on a particular pedagogical model offered by a nearby university; but it is also good to encourage teachers to be versatile pedagogically, and to keep developing their repertoire of different pedagogical models.

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* also contains two regional 'scenarios' which give an idea of the diversity of approaches that can be used. On its final page, in Appendix 5, the paper offers a conceptual diagram of the possible ingredients of regional hub activity.

Before you express an interest in funding

Before applying for resources to help develop a regional strategy for RE, it is strongly advised that applicants take the following three steps:

1. Read the paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* in order to gain a strong shared understanding of the purpose of regional hubs.
2. Contact CSTG Consultants on regional strategy, Alan Brine on alan@cstg.org.uk or Mary Myatt on mary@cstg.org.uk , to organise a meeting or conversation that will help you with your aims.
3. Reflect on the three developmental questions:
 - a. What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?
 - b. How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners to work with?
 - c. What are the success measures?

Expression of interest in funding (EOI)

After taking the three steps identified above, please complete this brief EOI form to express an interest in benefiting from Culham St Gabriel's resources to support regional development. Please note, the upper limit for each pilot is £2,000. Projects which require more substantial funding should use the normal individual or corporate grant application process.

Region: Berkshire (SACREs of six unitary authorities working together)
Your name and professional position: Jo Fageant, Adviser to West Berkshire and Slough SACREs Jan Lever, Adviser to Reading and Wokingham SACREs Anne Andrews, Adviser to Bracknell Forest and Windsor/Maidenhead SACREs
Your contact details: Jo Fageant: jefconsultancy@hotmail.co.uk Jan Lever: jan@janlevereducationconsultancy.com Anne Andrews: anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org
If successful, the details on the person or organisation to whom the funding should be sent: <u>Jan Lever Education Consultancy and Training Ltd</u> Tel: 01202 377192 or 07973 752250 Web: http://www.janlevereducationconsultancy.com Company Registration No.: 07225363 VAT Registration No.: 169429665 Address: The Cabin, 8 Davenport Close, Upton, Poole, Dorset, UK BH16 5RE

In RE terms, I would describe my region as (delete as appropriate):
An area where much is already happening but could be better joined up

Title and brief description of your proposed regional activity for improving RE (maximum 100 words):

Improving the educational effectiveness of visits to places of worship.

We aim to develop a training seminar for volunteers from faith communities who host visits to places of worship. The session will be run twice, once in each of east and west Berkshire. Invitations will go to a range of faith communities across Berkshire. Members of groups A and B from each of the six participating SACREs will take part so they can develop, along with other visit hosts, as leaders with expertise and vision in supporting school visits. They will also have a role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of visits.

Next, please complete the questions below, making use of your conversations with CSTG consultants and your reflections on the three developmental questions.

Please write up to 200 words in answer to each of the following three developmental questions:

What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?

RE advice, local and national, advocates visits to places of worship for pupils of all ages. However, these experiences often miss their potential because teachers and hosts do not understand how they can best contribute to pupils' learning and progress in RE

This initiative aims to improve planning, teaching and evaluation of visits and, hence, learning outcomes. It will grow a group of visit leaders supporting confidence, expertise and vision in their host and teacher colleagues. It will do this by developing with visit hosts and members of SACRE Groups A and B improved understanding of the RE curriculum, particularly as found within the locally agreed syllabus shared by the six participating SACREs. It will explore age appropriate approaches and the development of interactive, pupil-centred presentations and materials. It will consider the necessary liaison between schools and hosts about learning objectives and intended outcomes and support the development of documentation to help this process. The intention is to increase the educational effectiveness of visits. The two sessions will be complemented by meetings funded by SACREs ie RE subject leaders meetings on the same theme in each of the six local authorities and a meeting bringing teachers and hosts together.

How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners (individuals,

Two sessions, in different locations, will be delivered for potential hosts of visits to places of worship including members of groups A and B from each of the six participating SACREs. These will be led by three advisers who serve these SACREs and lead teachers from the six SACRE funded teacher sessions. Other partners will include the *Welcome Days* workers at Reading Synagogue; members of *RE Inspired* who lead visits in East Reading and Wokingham, the

<p>schools, networks or organisations) to work with?</p>	<p>Muslim Chair of the Slough SACRE who organises mosque visits and providers of <i>The Jewish Way of Life</i> exhibition. Sessions will provide an opportunity to share expertise already developed amongst the 'hosts' and explore new/additional material prepared by the advisory/teacher team. They will involve presentations, group discussions and group work to develop shared documentation.</p> <p>In addition, and separately funded there will be: 6 sessions, one in each LA, between April and July on the same theme from teachers' perspectives Days of visits organised for teachers to some of the places of worship in East Berkshire from which hosts have been drawn (similar days have already taken place in Reading for teachers in parts of the west of Berkshire) The production of photographic resources.</p>
<p>What are the success measures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognised increase in confidence and expertise amongst visit hosts (and teachers from the SACRE funded sessions) • Improved clarity of intention between schools and visit hosts about RE learning objectives • The development by the places represented of information which can be shared with schools about facilities within each place and the types of visits possible • The development of a shared request/booking form which includes details negotiated with schools about visits including learning objectives • The development of a shared feedback form to affirm good practice and support continuing improvement. • Evaluation led by Group A and B members of SACREs working with lead teachers demonstrating increased educational effectiveness of visits through improved liaison between schools and hosts. • Alongside this, but separate from it, those attending individual LA meetings for teachers of RE will receive an update on this initiative, exemplars of documentation and contact details helpful in organising visits. This information will be also be made available to other teachers via LA websites. Sessions will also consider the importance of negotiated intentions/objectives of visits that specifically link with the RE curriculum.
<p>Timescale: Dates for the two seminars in the summer term will be set in March, fliers and invitations created before the end of the Easter holiday for distribution at the start of the summer term.</p> <p>Starting date: A planning meeting of the three advisers will take place at the end of April 2015</p> <p>Finishing date: End of July 2015</p>	
<p>Please identify the cost of the activity up to a maximum of £2,000, and break the cost down into specific actions. £800 - Planning meeting with three advisers and development of seminar resources</p>	

£1200 – Two seminars: Adviser time, venues, refreshments, travel expenses (£600 for each session)

Once you have completed this EOI form, please send it by email to one of the CSTG consultants, Mary Myatt mary@cstg.org.uk or Alan Brine alan@cstg.org.uk . The trust will then decide on your EOI and respond to it as rapidly as possible.