



Autumn 2008
Primary

R.E. NEWSLETTER

Special points of interest:

- Successful Bid
- Gifted and Talented in RE
- NASACRE AGM May 2008

Cambridgeshire Advisory Service

To: RE Subject Leaders

NEWS!

Successful Bid

There was great excitement in May 2008 when it was announced that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SACREs, one of seven successful bids out of 24 national bids, had secured, from NASACRE, the maximum amount possible to support a project that allows pupils from rural and city primary schools to meet and engage in interfaith dialogue. Below is a summary of the bid.

“Together We Learn”

‘Finding a pathway to discover more about one another’s religious beliefs and practices.’

This is about developing mutual respect and understanding of each others’ beliefs, values and cultures between pupils from several small, isolated, rural primary schools in Cambridgeshire with those from two large inner city primary schools in Peterborough. The

project is about assisting schools to communicate between each other in such a way that it will encourage relationships being formed, pupils to question and answer each other about religion, beliefs and how they impact upon their daily lives, city life and rural life, and further the pupils’ own spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It will also lead to deeper, more compelling learning experiences in Religious Education for all pupils.

It is hoped that a DVD and other material will be produced for all schools to access as a teaching resource. It is also hoped that this will be a model for other schools to follow.

Why is this bid needed?

The statutory duty to promote community cohesion comes into effect in Sept 2008. All schools must be seen to be doing something to promote this and it

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will be reported upon by Ofsted in future inspections. High quality Religious Education has been identified as one of the ways that this can be promoted. However, in recent months, a number of schools have reported that they are getting an increasing number of withdrawals or pupil refusals to go on trips to meet with people from other faiths.

Islamophobia and a misunderstanding of Islam have been particularly noted by some head teachers and subject co-ordinators. This project is about addressing ignorance and prejudices on all sides. The possibility of pupils meeting outside of school and then talking together through video conferencing in school, sharing thoughts, beliefs and practices should encourage a deeper understanding and respect of one another. This can only be a good thing.

Watch out for future news as to how the project unfolds in the next few months.

Gifted and Talented in Religious Education

Many teachers who attended the course 'Gifted and Talented in RE' by Lat Blaylock, at Swynford Paddocks Hotel, Newmarket, reported how inspirational it had been. This was the first time that the eastern region had pooled resources to promote high quality courses in RE for teachers /subject leaders, with a national figure leading the course, at a greatly reduced price compared to other professional providers. It was a huge success. It is hoped to have one per year. There were teachers from several authorities and one of the outcomes from the course was a desire to create a register of pupils who are gifted and talented in RE. Lat suggested having an Eastern Regional Conference for such pupils and he would be willing to lead this. With this in mind I intend to focus at the network meetings in the next term how we identify gifted and talented pupils in RE. Look out for further courses that will be delivered later in the year.

Network meetings

The main foci of the meetings are going to be 'Promoting Community Cohesion through quality RE' and how we identify 'Gifted and Talented in RE'.

These are very important meetings. The need to share resources, support one another and be aware of what is happening in RE is vital for the subject to move forward. If you can't come to any of the network meetings please try and send a substitute.

Last year there were very good numbers in the autumn and spring meetings, though the summer meetings were less well attended. It is so good to see more familiar faces regularly. It is also obvious how many of you have progressed forward on assessment of learning and for learning in RE. This is very good because it will raise the standards in RE and make the subject more rigorous, challenging, interesting and fun for the pupils.

Remember there are more venues for network meetings this year so that there is a fairer distribution of locations for meetings.

More News! Free Professional Development! Pilot CPD course for primary RE

The TDA has agreed to provide funds to support 15 primary teachers in the Eastern Region who would be interested in developing subject knowledge and pedagogical approaches to the teaching of RE for classroom teachers and subject leaders in the primary sector. This has come about because TDA recognised that the Primary PGCE course only gives a half day session to the teaching of RE in its entire course and many teachers' knowledge and understanding of faiths were inadequate. This was also identified by Ofsted (Making Sense of Religion 2007) and RE Council's Teaching Commission Report (2007). It is hoped this course will address the shortfall in subject knowledge. It will also support significantly the duty for schools to promote community cohesion as

from Sept 2008 and provide evidence for OFSTED. The credits gained from the course will count towards a Masters Degree. There will be strong links to learning outside the classroom and online tutoring. The cost of supply cover and tutors' fees will be paid for by the TDA. It is hoped that the course will start after half term in November 2008. You will be receiving a flyer in the next few weeks informing you of this opportunity. I do hope that many of you will consider the benefits of this training towards your professional development. If you want to express interest in this training or want to have some idea about the pilot now please contact Sue Ward, (one of the tutors for the course) RE Adviser for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on susan.ward@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

NASACRE AGM May 2008

See www.nasacre.org.uk

At the annual general meeting in May there was considerable disappointment expressed at the decision to put on hold the possibility of a National Strategy for Religious Education by the Government. In its place the Government have offered extra funds to train new SACRE members from faith groups in the country over the next two years. This strengthens the role and work of the Local Authority SACREs. The Government is not ruling out the possibility of a National Strategy for RE but until all Local Authorities revise their Agreed Syllabuses, using the non-statutory National Framework for RE, (NFRE) it is less likely to happen in the near future. However, the wish for this to happen was expressed very clearly.

Another development that has been agreed by the Government is to review and revise the Circular 1/94 on Religious Education. This has been the statutory document that has guided all authorities in the teaching of RE for the last 15 years. The second part of the document on Collective Worship is to be revised at a later date.

For further details about the conference and

the superb keynote speech delivered by Karen Armstrong, talking about why it was so important to have quality Religious Education in all schools, look at the web site www.nasacre.org.uk or www.re.ccceducation.net/sacre

Courses and Consultancies for 2008/9

The courses for next year and the network meetings are detailed in a booklet that was sent out in June 2008 but can also be also found via the CAS homepage: [Http://www.cas.ccceducation.net](http://www.cas.ccceducation.net).

Please book early so that your place can be guaranteed.

In the last six months I have been supporting several schools through consultancies at weekly staff meetings. INSET has been provided on a range of topics including teaching AT2, assessing AT2 and AT1, critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, and making RE fun. These consultancies have proved to be very popular and useful. Please consider whether it would be worth your while to offer whole school training. This is a very good economical way to train all staff and promote quality RE in your school. It gives teachers an opportunity to address fears and concerns and receive the latest guidance on matters related to the subject.

Details of the courses for next term and those from Ely Diocese with Dr Shirley Hall are included at the end of this newsletter.

Peterborough Courses 2008/9

Due to significant changes in the administration in the Unitary Authority the Religious Education courses for teachers have not yet been finalised. These will be sorted out as soon as possible and I will be contacting all schools in the near future. The following themes are to be covered: philosophy for children, assessment of AT2: moving forward, how to engage all in collective worship, G&T in RE: Meeting their needs, exploring AT1 and AT2 through games, Teaching Christianity through dance and drama.

Materials and Resources.

Thank you to schools that are continually sending me examples of pupils' work to help provide models for assessment tasks. Also thank you to schools that have been sending me photographs of work. I particularly enjoyed looking at the wedding photographs of pupils from Great Staughton Primary School. They seemed to have had a great time acting out a wedding in their local church.

Through the school post, all schools will be receiving another excellent resource that we have been able to secure for free. The DVD - "The Jewish Way of Life" has been produced for largely Key Stage 2 pupils but it is also useful for Key Stages 1 and 3. It has been reviewed by our Jewish representative on Peterborough SACRE and has been deemed to be very worthwhile. This is the second DVD we have been able to provide for all schools. I do hope that you find them useful.

Details of the courses and network meetings in the autumn term

RE Network Meetings

14/10/08 - Isleham Primary School, near Ely
Code 18462
16/10/08 - Eynesbury Primary School, near St Neots
Code 18463
21/10/08 - Borrowmoor Primary School, March
Code 18464
22/10/08 - Monkfield Park Primary School, Great Cambourne Code 18465
23/10/08 - Meldreth Primary School, near Royston Code 18466
All 4.14 pm to 5.45 pm

2/12/08 - **Philosophy for Children**
Hemingford Grey Pavilion,
2.00 pm - 5.00 pm Code 18306

To book a place on the above or request further details, please phone 01480 375634 or e-mail CAS@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Diocese of Ely RE Meetings

25/9/08 - Farcet School near Peterborough
1/10/08 - Thriplow School near Royston
2/10/08 - Great Paxton School, near Huntingdon
8/10/08 - St Peters Junior School, Wisbech
9/10/8 - Teversham School, Cambridge
16/10/08 - Diocesan Office, Ely
5/11/08—All Saints School, March
6/11/08 - Wormegay School, West Norfolk
13/11/08 - Linton Infants School, Cambridge

The theme for these meetings is "Ideas for Collective Worship"

All 4.15 pm to 5.15 pm

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