



RE News

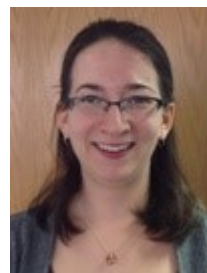
Effective Religious Education

In this edition of *RE News*, we will be thinking about the implications of the new Ofsted inspection framework and SIAMS evaluation schedule for our understanding of what effective RE looks like. We will look at the key elements of these documents that relate to your classroom practice and consider the potential impact of the changes.

Throughout this edition of *RE News*, we will look at practical examples of effective RE from around Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire that are helping pupils navigate the world of religion and belief more confidently.

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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Special points of interest

- Celebrating excellent practice in RE
- The latest news and views from around the country
- Upcoming RE training and support

Effective RE: Ofsted and SIAMS

This year has been a busier year than most: not only have we seen the introduction of a new evaluation schedule for SIAMS inspection, we have also been given the new Ofsted framework for inspection. Of course, as everybody knows (!), inspection frameworks should not drive what happens in schools, but should be a mechanism for checking how effective a school is or is not. Nevertheless, the publication of new inspection frameworks provides schools with the opportunity to take a step back, breathe, and think about how things are going.

Both Ofsted and SIAMS use similar language in their new documents. Ofsted has a clear focus on curriculum; it expects schools to have an understanding of what is being taught, how it is put together and why this matters. This is what Ofsted means by ‘curriculum **intent**’: the understanding a school has of its specific context, the requirements of the National Curriculum and, where appropriate, the locally agreed syllabus for RE, and the way in which

This is what SIAMS calls ‘**provision**’ - it refers to the ways in which various things are implemented to enable schools to realise their vision. Lastly, the SIAMS evaluation schedule asks schools to show evidence of the **impact** of this provision.

How does this relate to RE? For Ofsted, the key is being able to articulate how RE contributes effectively to the broad and balanced curriculum. For SIAMS, it is important to show how the effectiveness of RE can help the school community realise its vision.

RE subject leaders need to consider the following questions:

- Do teachers and senior leaders know what RE brings to the broad and balanced curriculum? Or, perhaps better: do teachers know what pupils would lose if RE was *not* on the broad and balanced curriculum?

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this is used to design an effective curriculum for the pupils. Ofsted then wants to look at how this curriculum is **implemented** and what **impact** this has on pupils’ attainment and progress. The new SIAMS evaluation schedule is underpinned by similar thinking, although it focuses on the bigger picture of the school community, not just the curriculum. For SIAMS, schools need to show they have a clearly articulated **vision**. A vision is not a statement of self-identity; rather, it is future-focused—a destination towards which a community is travelling. For SIAMS, it is necessary to show how the school’s vision is compatible with an explicitly Christian vision for humanity, society and the natural world. The various strands of the evaluation schedule provide opportunities for schools to show evidence of how they are travelling towards this destination. This includes, but is not limited to, the school curriculum.

- Are teachers clear on *what* they are teaching in RE and *how* learning is put together (sequenced)?
- Are teachers clear on what *effective* RE looks like?
- Are teachers and senior leaders clear on how RE can help the school community realise its vision?



THE CHURCH
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RE Statement of Entitlement (2019)

Along with the new SIAMS evaluation schedule, this year has seen the publication of an updated [Statement of Entitlement](#) for RE. This document sets the expectations of RE in church schools; it emphasises the ways in which effective RE can help prepare children and young people for “life in all its fullness” (John 10.10), as well as fostering a respectful attitude towards human dignity, difference and diversity. The SIAMS evaluation schedule draws on the *Statement of Entitlement* to set out its description of effective RE in church schools.

The *Statement of Entitlement* unashamedly highlights the academic rigour the Church of England Education Office expects of RE in church schools. It notes the need for a “high-quality sequential” curriculum that enables pupils to encounter a range of religions and worldviews. Teaching about Christianity should help pupils understand it as a “living and diverse faith” through study of biblical text and theological ideas. Learning about any religion or worldview studied should focus on core concepts and questions. Key to effective RE, according to the *Statement of Entitlement*, is ensuring the curriculum reflects the disciplines that underpin the subject: theology, the human/social sciences and philosophy. It is important to ensure pupils encounter a balance of these disciplines, in the same way that the science curriculum at KS1-KS3 provides a balance between biology, chemistry and physics. It is in this way that schools can be confident that pupils have the opportunity to develop religious literacy.

The *Statement* clearly states that Christianity should be the majority study in RE in church schools, constituting at least 50% of curriculum time (how this is delivered over the course of a phase or key stage may depend upon the requirements of a particular locally agreed syllabus). At KS4, all pupils should follow a recognised and appropriate qualification, which should include a significant element of study focused on Christianity. The *Statement* recognises the importance of teacher confidence, stating that at least one member of staff should have a qualification relating to RE or have received specialist RE training. In addition to this, any member of staff involved in delivering RE should have access to subject specific professional development. The responsibility for monitoring standards in RE sits with school governors.

In a church school, pupils and parents can expect that RE will have a high priority within the broad and balanced curriculum. This needs to be modelled by senior leadership teams, including school governors, who can clearly articulate the ways in which effective RE contributes to the whole school curriculum and the ways in which it can help the school community move towards realising its vision. For more support with this, please contact the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.

Effective RE:

- ◆ **Objective, critical and pluralistic**
- ◆ **Coherent curriculum that enables progress through ordered and sequential learning, developing both knowledge and skills**
- ◆ **Balanced curriculum drawing on the disciplines of theology, human/social sciences and philosophy**
- ◆ **Provision for monitoring pupil progress and attainment, and for measuring the impact of teaching and learning**

Encountering Sikhism

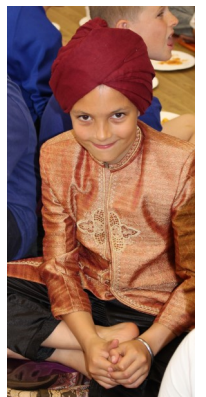
On the 22nd May, me and my fellow pupils in Ellison Boulters' year 5 and 6 participated in a Sikh Langar Experience. Firstly, to show respect, we removed our shoes and socks and washed our hands. We were split into two groups of servers and those playing the role of people going in. As servers, we had to wear vibrantly coloured headscarves and treat our customers with respect.

Next, Mrs Sagi, who was born in India, demonstrated how to make chapattis, helped by her son (Pranav) one of our class mates. After that, the food was served by the helpers. We had potato curry and chapattis. We then listened to a well-known Sikh story, 'The King and the Guru', which taught us that everyone entering a langar should be treated equally, a strong belief for Sikhs as taught by the Gurus. After the brilliant story we watched a film of a Sikh man going to the Golden Temple where tens of thousands of meals are served every day in the langar.

All of our teachers dressed up as if they were helping out at the langar. All food is free and if you are homeless and cannot afford a meal you can go to the Gurdwara where the langar is. The langar taught us to respect and treat others with equality, no matter how rich or poor they are.

We were grateful for our food as people had given up their time to provide us with a spectacular experience. The langar was an amazing experience which I will never forget through my school life!

Many thanks to Lewis King, Ruby Dawson, Zander Lyall and other pupils in Years 5 and 6 at Ellison Boulters C of E Primary School for sharing their experience of the Sikh langar!



Opportunities in RE



Innovative Spaces of RE for Real

The Faiths & Civil Society Unit, Goldsmiths, University of London, and the Education for Social Justice research group at London South Bank University, are launching a new project to explore and showcase innovative approaches to education about religion(s) and worldviews in schools.

The project builds on the Faiths Unit's 2015 report *RE for Real – The Future of Teaching and Learning about Religion & Belief*. A particular focus is on the study of the category of religion, belief and worldview – what counts, and how does it relate to ideas of the secular – as well as exploration of the real religious landscape, as opposed to a more generalised or stereotypical presentation of religion, which has often been presented in RE.

There is much brilliant, innovative RE going on already all around the country that is exciting, challenging and engaging, but which is patchy and could be extended. This project will highlight key examples and will complement debates about change in policy and practice with evidence of existing new practices from which others can learn.

They would like to hear from schools which are already innovating in their teaching and learning about religion(s) and worldviews. If you would like to be involved in the project, please complete the short questionnaire below:

<https://lsbu.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/innovative-re-copy>

“I Wonder...?” Club at Little Gonerby

Year 1 and 2 Children at Little Gonerby Church of England Infant school in Grantham have been enjoying a weekly club entitled “I wonder...?” It is led and planned by Mrs Jennie Fytche who is a school's worker for Grantham Christian Ministries Trust. “I wonder...?” aims to provide opportunity in a creative safe space for children to have fun and explore Christian beliefs through the stories of the Christian faith.

Each week the children experience a story from the Bible in the style of a Godly play group story-telling with some individual response and group discussion. Following this, children are invited to use craft materials during their reflection time to explore the story further. They may also explore the Bible through Lego building and construction with playdough. Children are invited to ask and answer big questions and respond to what they have heard. Some children simply choose to retell the stories to one another using the story material gaining further insight and understanding. It is a space where children can listen to one another's thoughts. The responses of the children are often quite profound as the experience of the Bible is explored and meaning formed reflectively.

This lunchtime club provides a multi-sensory approach to learning, it develops the language and communication skill, everyone is given opportunity to speak and for their thoughts to be listened to. It is time for reflection, where time is given to learn. There are usually moments of stillness and quiet, as well as moments of laughter. It's a great way to spend a lunchtime!

Jennifer Bayley, RE subject Leader



Congratulations!

Congratulations to the pupils and staff at **Barrowby Church of England Primary School**, who were recently awarded the **RE Quality Mark at Gold level**. This is testament to the commitment, enthusiasm and expertise of the members of the school community—well done!

For more information about the RE Quality Mark, please visit the [REQM website](http://www.reqm.org.uk).

If you are seeking other opportunities for developing your practice in RE, you could consider pursuing research with the support of the Farmington Institute. The Farmington Scholarship is an opportunity to carry out research into a range of issues connected to RE. The scholarship entitles you to up to thirty days paid cover in order to carry out your research. It also enables you to attend an annual conference at the University of Oxford. You can find out more at <http://www.farmington.ac.uk/index.php/farmington-scholarships/>.



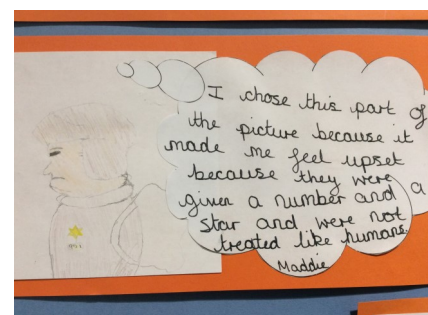
Holocaust Memorial Day 2019

Pupils at John Harrison Church of England Primary School have been reflecting on the impact of the Holocaust, along with similar events throughout human history and in the world today. **Anna Crosby**, RE subject leader, writes:

“At 12 years old, Helga Weiss was still a child when she was transported to Terezin concentration camp in what was Czechoslovakia. A talented artist and confined to her barracks, Helga asked her father, Otto, what she could draw. His reply was simple: ‘Draw what you see’. The pictures outline what many words cannot and give a unique insight into the tragedy that was camp life and the cruel treatment of the Jewish population. Year 5 and 6 used these moving pictures to really 'look' through a viewfinder and see what Helga saw and understand the horrors of the holocaust. The reflections by the children show how effective a lesson this truly was.”

For further support teaching about the Holocaust in the context of RE, please see the guidance provided by the Holocaust Education Centre based at University College, London:

<https://www.holocausteducation.org.uk/teacher-resources/>



RE at Long Bennington C of E Primary

Pupils in years 4 and 5 at Long Bennington C of E Primary School have been engaging with Christianity and Hinduism in RE lessons this year.

In year 4, pupils have been learning about the key concepts of **dharma**, **karma** and **moksha** in Hinduism. To help them make connections between these concepts and Hindu practice, they have been playing a special version of snakes and ladders. This has really helped them explore the idea of duty (**dharma**) and think about the consequences of actions (**karma**) that do or don't fulfil a person's duty.



In year 5, pupils have been using the *Understanding Christianity* resource to investigate key concepts in Christianity and think about how they impact on diverse ways of living as a Christian. They have particularly enjoyed engaging with the 'Big Frieze', an artistic representation of the 'big story' of Christianity. The RE subject leader, **Lindsey Kirkham**, has recorded the pupils' thoughts:

"I think that being made in God's image means we all have a bit of God in us."

"I think the repeated paint pots in the picture of Kingdom of God means the world gets back together again."

"In the panel about the Incarnation, I think it shows that Jesus' death is more important than his birth because the picture of the stable is smaller than the picture of the cross."

"In the panel about Gospel, I can see a plaster in shape of cross—I think this means that Jesus helps make the world better."

The pupils have really engaged in discussion with enthusiasm, and feel really excited by the new ideas they have encountered.



NATRE Spirited Arts

Many of you will be familiar with NATRE's *Spirited Arts* competition, which takes place annually and encourages children and young people to express artistically their understanding of key religion and belief themes.

NATRE are now calling for entries to its *Spirited Arts* competition 2019. School are invited to send up to ten entries in one of the categories or in a number of them. This year's categories are **Pilgrimages and Journeys, Questions, questions, Where is God?, Window on the soul and Mysteries of life**. The competition is open to pupils aged 5 to 19 and the deadline for submitting entries is 31st July 2019.

This is an exciting opportunity to carry out some cross-curricular work that engages, challenges and inspires pupils to develop their curiosity about matters of religion and belief—do share your pupils' work with us as well!



RE Support and Training—Autumn 2019

Please contact Patricia Dixon at patricia.dixon@lincoln.anglican.org for more information or to book.

Date	Course	Description	Venue
17th September 2019 1.30pm to 2.30pm 10th October 2019 1.30pm to 2.30pm 21st November 2019 1.30pm to 2.30pm	RE Cluster Meetings	These are an opportunity to get to know other RE teachers/subject leaders, to share good practice and find out about new resources and local/national updates. These meetings are open to all and free to attend. They are affiliated with NATRE.	Burgh Le Marsh Primary Haxey Primary Morton Primary
18th September 2019 1pm—4pm (drop-in session)	RE Surgery	This drop-in session is open to all RE teachers and subject leaders from Early Years to KS5. It provides an opportunity to ask questions about RE curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, resources, and so on. It is free to attend. Please let us know that you will be coming in order to book a time slot.	Boston St Thomas C of E Primary
26th September 2019 9.45am—3pm [Session 1]	Understanding Christianity	This course takes place over four sessions across three terms. It enables schools to access the <i>Understanding Christianity</i> resource through a nationally-recognised training programme.	Diocesan Education Centre 103 Newport Lincoln LN1 3EE
3rd October 2019 9.45am—3pm	Teaching Judaism	This course provides RE teachers and subject leaders with the subject knowledge they need to feel confident teaching Judaism at KS1—KS3.	Diocesan Education Centre 103 Newport Lincoln LN1 3EE

In addition to these central courses, the Diocesan RE Adviser is able to deliver the following ‘off-the-peg’ sessions at a time and venue of your choice:

- Understanding Christianity
- RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement (*Teaching Islam, Teaching Hinduism, Teaching World Religions and Worldviews*, etc.)
- RE in Church Schools
- RE Curriculum Design
- Assessing RE
- Preparing for the RE Quality Mark

She is also happy to provide bespoke training and support for your context. Please email her at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org for further information.

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