

REView February 2015

National News

Religious Education Classes 'Needed' in Schools

The BBC featured an article on the 2015 Strictly RE Conference and the importance of RE. Developing young people's "religious literacy" would help to make them less vulnerable to radicalisation.

'Good religious education has never been more needed,' said Ed Pawson, chairman of the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education

'But pupils will miss out unless the government addresses a shortage of RE teachers'

The government said training bursaries would help to recruit more RE staff.

To read the whole article click [Religious education classes 'needed' in schools](#)

Strictly RE

Over 170 teachers and professionals of Religious Education (RE) from across UK attended the '*Strictly RE*', The National Association of Teachers of RE's (NATRE) first-ever national conference, on the 31st January 2015 at the Grand Connaught Rooms in London.

'*Strictly RE*' was designed to inspire and equip teachers and professionals of RE with knowledge, techniques and resources on how to deliver excellent RE, through key note speakers, a choice of over 16 interactive and thought provoking seminars, as well as opportunities to collaborate and share best practices with peers.

Key notes on the day were delivered by Trevor Cooling, Professor of Christian Education at Canterbury Christ Church University, who discussed 'Interesting times - where are we going in RE?' and **Dilwyn Hunt**, Independent RE Adviser, who spoke about 'RE and assessment without levels?'

Lord Nash Writes to SACREs

Lord Nash, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, responsible for faith schools, has written to all SACREs across the country, emphasising the importance of good teaching of religious education and the central role of SACREs and local authorities.

Lord Nash reminds SACREs of the new responsibility to promote British values through SMSC (copy of letter attached)

RE Quality Mark

The REQM project will be holding its second conference for schools which have achieved the REQM on Saturday 7 February in Birmingham, thanks to generous support from the Hockerill Educational Foundation, at which Rebecca Nye will be speaking about her research into children's spirituality. More information is available on the REQM site, or by emailing [**admin@reqm.org**](mailto:admin@reqm.org). The REQM is available for schools of all types; further details on all aspects of the programme are on its website at [**www.reqm.org**](http://www.reqm.org).

Young Ambassadors for RE / All Party Parliamentary Group

The Young Ambassadors for RE team from St Bede's Inter Church school had the opportunity to meet MPs at an event hosted by the APPG on RE at Westminster, on 27 January 2015. The event gave MPs the chance to pledge their support for RE, and the Young Ambassadors once again excelled at championing RE to their representatives in the House of Commons. The Young Ambassadors programme has also had its first application from a Welsh school – we look forward to finding out more about their students in the coming months!

Applications to the YA scheme are assessed on a rolling basis, and so if you know of any schools which might be interested in taking part, please spread the word! Further information and an application form can be found on the RE Council website

RE Regional Pilot

Based on Recommendation 4 of the 2013 Review of RE, the REC, NATRE and Culham St Gabriel's have launched the RE Regional pilot to work towards more robust arrangements for training and supporting teachers of RE across the country. There are now 13 RE hubs supported by CSTG and several operating independently or in partnerships with universities and NATRE, which are developing their own regional strategies, adapted and suited to their own professional development priorities; we hope that this exciting initiative will lead to real, grass-roots improvements in the quality of RE.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day took place on 27 January 2015, this year marking 70 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau as well as the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnia. The theme, illustrated by a candle passing between two hands, was 'Keep the Memory Alive'. As part of the commemorations, 70 candles designed by sculptor Anish Kapoor were lit in special ceremonies across the country, the first of which was conducted by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Lighting of candles symbolically linked the 70 events taking place in each corner of the UK, and mark each of the years that has passed, while emphasising the importance of passing on the memory of those who were murdered, giving meaning to their deaths by encouraging everyone to mark the past and attempt to create a safer future.

New Items on the RE Council Website

MPs publicise their support for high quality RE: Sixteen MPs from across the main political parties took part in an All Party Parliamentary Group event to publicise their belief that good RE should be available for all young people.

Carter Report on Initial Teacher Training published

The Carter Report on Initial Teacher Training has now been published following a consultation to which the REC contributed. It makes a series of recommendations and Secretary of State Nicky Morgan has made an initial response. The government will commission an independent working group made up of expert representatives from the sector to develop a core ITT framework; RE professionals have long recognised the need for this. The REC will seek proper representation of RE on the working group to try to make sure all trainees receive adequate preparation for teaching RE.

Teach:RE course

Culham St Gabriel's are delighted to announce a 'bulk buy' offer for universities who would like ITT students to undertake the TeachRE course. Please contact kathryn@cstg.org.uk for more information about this offer. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation about the course is now available to view and use at www.teachre.co.uk

3forRE

This scheme to support those undertaking a master's degree with an RE focus still has a very small number of places available for 2014-15. Please see www.cstg.org.uk/grants/3forre for more information.

'Energising RE 2015'

Culham St Gabriel's are hosting a free Conference for RE teachers, taking place on 3-4 October 2015 at Wokefield Park, Reading. The theme of the conference will be 'Energising RE: Learning from our successes | collaborating for improvement'. For more information, visit the **Culham St Gabriel's website**, where an online application form will be available shortly.

NATRE conference: 'RE: Reviving and Thriving'

NATRE are hosting a conference for all teachers of RE in Bolton on 9 May 2015. All primary, secondary and special school teachers are invited to join us at 'RE: Reviving and Thriving conference' a two day event which will be full of seminars and workshops featuring academics, RE professionals and practising RE teachers from all sectors. To find out how you can book your place visit the NATRE website.

2015 Spirited Arts competition

NATRE's 12th Annual 'Art in Heaven' Competition 2015.

Five themes to choose from ~ create using drawing, painting, art, video, sculpture or other media. 30+ prizes and web uploads for winners and commended entries

Supported by NATRE and RE Today.

Find out this year's themes and download the booking form. Check out our gallery to get inspired.

All schools are invited to submit an entry to NATRE's 2015 Spirited Arts competition, which is well underway, with entries coming in from primary and secondary schools. There is still time to take part, so visit the **NATRE website** and get your entry in before the 31 July 2015.

RE Today professional development webinars

RE Today has new online seminars. Teachers struggling to get out of the classroom for CPD training can now take part without leaving their desk!

This term's primary webinar is: '**Teaching about Islam in primary: How? Why? What?**', for teachers wishing to improve their confidence and knowledge of Islam as well as gain practical examples of engaging and effective strategies for learning.

This term's secondary webinar is on '**Promoting British Values; the Rule of Law**', for teachers who want to find out what the new non-statutory duty to 'promote fundamental British values as part of SMSC' mean for the RE classroom.

'The Islamic Belief System'

The Al Khoei Foundation welcomes a new publication about Islam. After several years of research by a group of scholars under the direction of Dr M A Shomali, Director of the Islamic Centre England a book called *Islamic Belief System* (ISBN: 978-1904934233) has just been published by the Institute of Islamic Studies, affiliated to Islamic Centre of England. This book comes in seven units and 240 colour pages with lots of learning activities explaining the fundamental tenets of the Muslim faith in plain and lucid language.

'Getting to Good in Primary RE': opportunities for regional RE improvement consultants

Culham St Gabriel's Trust and the Jerusalem Trust are supporting a new project: 'Getting to Good in Primary RE', a regional strategy for improvement and support. The project is about improving the quality of RE teaching and learning in primary schools, and seeks to develop and embed improved strategies, responding to the 2013 Ofsted Report and the REC's review of RE in England 2013. There are currently vacancies for two part-time regional RE improvement consultants to join the regional strategy team. The role will include working closely with schools and local authorities

to bring new CPD opportunities to new places in the north-west and Yorkshire/Humberside. To find out more about these roles, visit the **CStG website**.

Hockerill Educational Foundation / NATRE Prize opens

The 2015 Competition for the "Hockerill NATRE Prize for Innovation in RE Teaching" is now open. If you know of any RE teacher who you think should enter either write to Derek J Humphrey at info@hockerillfoundation.org.uk or ask the teacher to go to the website www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk from where the entry form can be downloaded. Closing date 31 May 2015

Hockerill Educational Foundation grants open

We are now accepting applications for grants for the 2015-16 Academic year. If you know of any colleagues who are intending to follow a teaching career in RE (Primary and Secondary), either studying currently and on a two or three year course, or who will be starting their course in September then please direct them to our website at www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk for further details, guidance and an application form. The first closing date is 31 March 2015.

News from the Hindu Council UK

The Hindu Council UK took part in a Q&A session on Hinduism at a boys' school as part of their provisions of resources on Hinduism. The themes and topics of the questions included: hereditary Caste systems, Nazis and the Swastika, the role of temples, the importance of Gita, and the risks attached to an evolving religion like Hinduism. Jay Lakhani's responses to and discussion of these questions have been uploaded to YouTube, and can be viewed on the Hindu Council UK Youtube channel

NASACRE

Local News

NASACRE Annual Conference and AGM 2015

Date: Thursday 21st May 2015 11:00am - 4:30pm **Venue:** The Council House, Birmingham

Cost: £90 per delegate

Meeting the Challenge

Keynote speaker: **Charles Clarke** Visiting Professor in Politics at the University of East Anglia

Seminar leaders: **Denise Cush** Professor of Religion and Education at Bath Spa University

Mary Myatt Lead Ofsted inspector, Culham St Gabriel's Lead Consultant for Teacher Conferences, adviser, writer and trainer

Provisional programme

11:00 Arrival, registration and coffee

11:30 Welcome and introductions

11:40 Keynote address: Charles Clarke

12:10 Question time

12:45 Business meeting

1:30 Lunch

The afternoon will comprise seminar addresses from Denise Cush and Mary Myatt, with opportunities for SACREs to ask questions, share, discuss and reflect before the announcement of the Westhill awards and closing remarks from our new Chair. 4:30 Conference closes

MAKE A BOOKING

Email Data Base

Julie Stevens has been busily compiling a database of RE subject leaders. If you are concerned that you are not receiving information about courses or materials that we send out from the office please email Julie at Julie.Stevens@eastsussex.gov.uk

SACRE Members Attending Governor Training Sessions

SACRE members are to attend 4 Governor Training Sessions to raise awareness of the work of SACRE and support governors in ensuring that they meet their statutory duties for RE collective worship and SMSC.

Teaching Christianity in the Primary School

The RE Consultant held a Day Training session on the 15th January. This was well attended and participants valued the time to spend on deepening their theological understanding of the Christian Tradition.

Self-Evaluation in RE

13 subject leaders braved the cold weather to attend training on self-evaluation on February 5th. 29 had booked on the training but snow and sleet meant that numbers were down. The training had to finish early because of snow. It is hoped to hold a follow up session when the weather improves.

Future Courses 2015

Thursday March 19th

Effective RE subject Leadership
The Hydro Hotel Eastbourne

NB Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Promoting British Values

Wednesday 29th April

This course aims to help schools meet the new requirements of the Ofsted framework for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) and incorporate the new DfE guidance 'Promoting British Values as part of SMSC in Schools', into their current SMSC provision.

This day is aimed at headteachers, senior leaders and those with a responsibility for pupils' Spiritual Moral and Cultural development in church and non-church schools. The day will help schools explore ways to meet the requirements of the Ofsted framework update December 2014: '*The way the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including British values*' and to help incorporate the new DfE guidance '*Promoting British Values as part of SMSC in Schools*' into their current practice.

RE Conference to be held in the Autumn Term

Plans are in place for East Sussex to hold another RE Conference this Autumn. The keynote speaker will be **Dilwyn Hunt** (See above)

We will be notifying schools as soon as we have a date and a venue.

Combatting Extremism

The RE Consultant sent out a document to all schools regarding this.

Lilian worked with Monawar on the government's REsilience Programme.

Monawar Hussain is the founder of the Oxford Foundation.

The Oxford Foundation (TOF) is passionate about young people and in empowering them through innovative educational solutions to realise their fullest potential.

TOF utilises theology, poetry, interfaith dialogue, drama, art, music, storytelling, successful role models and 1-2-1 mentoring to inspire young people to achieve and contribute in a meaningful way to society. In addition the broader objects of the foundation are:

- promotion of religious harmony by educating young people and the wider public in different religious beliefs and cultures including a deepening of understanding of their distinctive features and common ground in order to promote good relations between persons of different faiths and to challenge extremism in all its manifestations; and
- advancement of education of young people and the wider public, especially but not exclusively through educational programs and arts based activities, so as to develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible persons.

Monawar and other Muslim scholars sent an 'Open Letter' to IS following the attacks in France.

This is the executive Summary which in the light of recent world events is important for schools and teachers to know when teaching about the Qur'an.

- *It is forbidden in Islam to issue fatwas without all the necessary learning requirements. Even then fatwas must follow Islamic legal theory as defined in the classical texts. It is also forbidden to cite a portion of a verse from the Qur'an—or part of a verse—to derive a ruling without looking at everything that the Qur'an and Hadith teach related to that matter. In other words, there are strict subjective and objective prerequisites for fatwas, and one cannot 'cherry-pick' Qur'anic verses for legal arguments without considering the entire Qur'an and Hadith.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to issue legal rulings about anything without mastery of the Arabic language.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to oversimplify Shari'ah matters and ignore established Islamic sciences.*
- *It is permissible in Islam [for scholars] to differ on any matter, except those fundamentals of religion that all Muslims must know.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to ignore the reality of contemporary times when deriving legal rulings.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to kill the innocent.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to kill emissaries, ambassadors, and diplomats; hence it is forbidden to kill journalists and aid workers.*
- *Jihad in Islam is defensive war. It is not permissible without the right cause, the right purpose and without the right rules of conduct.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to declare people non-Muslim unless he (or she) openly declares disbelief.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to harm or mistreat—in any way—Christians or any 'People of the Scripture'.*
- *It is obligatory to consider Yazidis as People of the Scripture.*
- *The re-introduction of slavery is forbidden in Islam. It was abolished by universal consensus.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to force people to convert.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to deny women their rights.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to deny children their rights.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to enact legal punishments (hudud) without following the correct procedures that ensure justice and mercy.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to torture people.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to disfigure the dead.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to attribute evil acts to God. □.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to destroy the graves and shrines of Prophets and Companions.*

- *Armed insurrection is forbidden in Islam for any reason other than clear disbelief by the ruler and not allowing people to pray.*
- *It is forbidden in Islam to declare a caliphate without consensus from all Muslims.*
- *Loyalty to one's nation is permissible in Islam.*

After the death of the Prophet, Islam does not require anyone to emigrate anywhere