

DIOCESE OF LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION

NAME OF COMMITTEE:	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
DATE OF MEETING:	8 March 2011
SUBJECT:	Religious Education Report – An update from the Diocese of Lincoln
REPORT on behalf of:	Diocesan Director of Education
NAME OF CONTACT OFFICER:	Paul Thompson
CONTACT OFFICER TEL NO:	01522 504017
CONTACT OFFICER EMAIL ADDRESS:	paul.thompson@lincoln.anglican.org
IS THE REPORT EXEMPT?	No
IS THE REPORT CONFIDENTIAL?	No

SUMMARY: The report provides an update on the developments and forthcoming events in Religious Education.

DISCUSSION: To complement the work of the Local Authority R.E. Adviser, the Diocesan Deputy Director of Education ensures that a range of developmental activities take place to improve the quality of Religious Education in community schools as well as Church schools throughout the Diocese of Lincoln.

RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted and any comments made be included as necessary.

APPENDICES – Appendix 1 - R.E. News.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following background papers, as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, were relied upon in writing this report.

PAPER TYPE	TITLE	DATE	ACCESSIBILITY
Religious Education Report – Diocese Update		February 2011	The Diocesan Education Centre, Lincoln

Religious Education Report – An update from the Diocese

18th February 2011

A number of initiatives and events have taken place during the autumn term of 2010.

R.E. Cluster meetings

In September, R.E. cluster meetings were held at Gainsborough St George's Church of England Primary School and Spalding Parish Church Day C.E. School. Similar to the six meetings in the summer, they proved to be a useful forum for R.E. subject leaders to share good practice and to learn what is new or different on the Religious Education horizon. In total, I have now met with about 90 R.E. subject leaders from church and community schools. Eight further cluster meetings across the Diocese are organised for this term with the first meeting on 11th January at Caistor Joint C.E./Methodist Primary School and the final meeting at Grantham Harrowby Church of England Infant School.

R.E. News

Building on the success of the first edition of R.E. News, I have worked closely with Will Harrison in our Diocesan Communications Department to produce a new 'revamped' spring edition of this termly newsletter. It provides lots of information about R.E including forthcoming courses and events. It has been distributed to all schools, Bishop's Visitors and a copy is enclosed for all members of SACRE.

Special Schools' R.E. day

On 29th September 2010, nine special schools from across the Diocese participated in a wonderful activity day in the Cathedral. The children were engaged in a variety of activities including signing, craft, singing and an animal safari. The activities were led by an army of volunteers, Mary Maguire (St Christopher's Special School) coordinated the event and Reverend Stephen Hoy led collective worship in the Chapter House. I am now working closely with Infant school headteachers to plan a similar event for their Year 2 children in the summer.

Continuous Professional Development

A range of training experiences took place during the autumn term:

- 8th October 2010 – I arranged a visit to the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre for a group of teachers and teaching assistants. The visit involved a guided tour around the interactive 'Journey' exhibition, listening to a real life survivor talk about his experiences of the period and exploring ideas of how the Holocaust can be taught in schools. I understand that a number of teachers who attended this training day have now organised school visits there.
- 15th October 2010 – In preparation for the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible this year, teachers were invited to an INSET day on 'How to use the bible creatively in the primary classroom'. The two half days were well attended by about 60 delegates and Martyn Payne from 'Barnabas in Schools' led very practical and dynamic sessions, bringing the bible to life in an imaginative way for children. The teachers were provided with a DVD of ideas that they can implement in class and they have the option to invite a member of the Barnabas team to lead an interactive R.E. day in school.

- 29th November 2010 – Lat Blaylock delivered an excellent course of ‘Community Cohesion and R.E.’. Despite the heavy snow falling, around 20 teachers were able to attend the course and all reported it to be very useful. Lat provided delegates with a wealth of information and ideas and they all received a CD of practical tasks that they can use with the children to develop community cohesion.
- I attended R.E. training for higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) organised by Local Authority R.E. Adviser, Wendy Harrison. The training sessions spanned over 6 weeks in the autumn term. I led a module on R.E. in Church Schools and we visited a synagogue in Leicester on 10th November to explore how they could get the most from visiting places of worship. The course proved to be very successful in terms of developing the subject knowledge and confidence of the HLTAs who are responsible for teaching R.E. in their schools.
- 15th December 2010 – At the Bishop Visitors’ Conference, I gave a presentation on how they could support their schools with the ‘Celebrating R.E.’ event in March 2011. The Bishop Visitors were given some practical examples of how they could become involved in R.E. and hopefully they will have the opportunity to implement some of the ideas we considered.

My professional development as R.E. adviser during the autumn term included:

- 17th September 2010 – I became a member of the Association of RE consultants and advisers in the Eastern region (AREIAC) and met with colleagues in Ely to share good practice with each other. This proved to be very useful as we could share ideas for ‘Celebrating RE’ and I was able to ask the Chair of the Religious Education Council, Dr Sarah Smalley to speak at our ‘Celebrating RE’ day on 31st March at Bishop Grosseteste University College.
- 19th October 2010 – I observed Sunita Patel teach aspects of Hinduism to the children of Holton le Clay Primary School. Not only did this experience develop my subject knowledge but it has enabled me to recommend Sunita to any school who wants a creative and artistic visitor to develop their children’s understanding in this religion.
- 21st October 2010 – ‘Making Sound Judgements in R.E.’ was very useful training as it helps me as a newly trained SIAS inspector and as I support schools develop the quality of R.E.
- 22nd – 24th November 2010 – National Conference for Diocesan School Advisers was a fantastic event where I could ‘network’ with colleagues in other Dioceses, learn about new initiatives and resources and reflect on some inspirational keynote speeches.

Forthcoming training events

In addition to the R.E. cluster meetings, the following events are planned for the coming months:

Friday 11 th March	Assessment for Learning in R.E (led by Lat Blaylock - Editor of R.E. Today)
Thursday 31 st March	Celebrating R.E. day (Guest speaker - Dr Sarah Smalley of R.E. Council)
1 st or 2 nd April	Godly Play Taster Day (led by Dr Rebecca Nye of Godly Play UK)
Thursday 19 th May	The Big Six in R.E. (led by Lizzie McWhirter, R.E. Adviser Coventry Diocese)
Monday 20 th June	Creative R.E. in the Whole Curriculum (Lat Blaylock – R.E. Today)
Tuesday 4 th October	The Lord's Prayer: an R.E. focus day (Helen Matter, R.E. Adviser for the Diocese of Edmundsbury and Ipswich)

Leading Teachers in R.E.

To support the development of R.E. in our schools, there are 20 'Leading Teachers of R.E.' who are keen to share their ideas and good practice with their colleagues. At our first meeting on 15th February, we agreed a strategy for supporting schools. An action plan was devised and four main targets were agreed as the main focus for Leading Teachers. The targets are:

1. To promote the Leading Teacher Support Network to schools
2. To be able to respond to individual CPD requests for support / advice / training in a timely manner.
3. To provide regional CPD opportunities for clusters of schools
4. To provide an electronic resource library

Godly Play

I am working closely with Dave Rose (Diocesan Youth and Children's Adviser) and Judith Dickin (Bishop's Visitor Co-ordinator and Godly Play trainer) to develop the profile of Godly Play in the Diocese. We are delighted that Dr Rebecca Nye will lead our taster days on 1st and 2nd April as she introduced the initiative to the UK. The course is open to teachers, support staff and voluntary group leaders who want to know more about Godly Play and the positive impact it can have on children.

I have also written to schools to see if they have experienced Godly Play practitioners on their staff. This will be useful to know as they may be willing to share their good practice with other schools and they may also wish to consider further training such as the 3 day accreditation course.

Judy Dickin and I are currently looking for a number of venues around the Diocese that could become Godly Play centres. Several venues have been recommended including the Wilderspin National School at Barton upon Humber, Lisle Marsden CE Primary School in Grimsby and Edenham Regional House. When venues have been approved, it is our intention to display Godly Play resources there and offer schools and voluntary groups the sacred space for local training and practice.

Celebrating RE

We are encouraging schools to participate in this event by asking them to celebrate the good work they do in religious education at a local, diocesan and national level. For example, I showed Bishop Visitors at their annual conference how they could engage in R.E. and celebrate the subject with their local community. At a diocesan level, David Clements, Wendy Harrison (LA R.E. adviser) and I have been invited into

some schools to see the good work they are doing in R.E. We intend to display photographs of these visits on our website. On 31st March, every school has been invited to a special day at Bishop Grosseteste University College to showcase their R.E. work. Guest speaker, Dr Sarah Smalley (Chair of the R.E. Council) will set the context for the day, emphasising the importance of flying the flag high for R.E. at a time when the Department for Education appears to be demoting the subject with their proposed changes to the curriculum.

400th anniversary of King James Bible

In addition to the INSET day on 'How to use the Bible creatively' and the interactive R.E. days in schools led by 'Barnabas in Schools', the Diocesan Education Team and in particular David Clements has been working very closely with the Cathedral on a very exciting Bible project. 96 schools and nearly 3000 children are involved in producing a handwritten and illustrated new version of the King James Bible. The bible will be on display at the Church Schools Festival, the special bi-centenary service in July and ultimately it will take pride of place in the Cathedral library for many years to come. It is envisaged that every school will receive their own copy of this bible and it is hoped that further copies will be able to purchase.

Bi-centenary anniversary of the National Society

R.E. coordinators have been encouraged to use their position and subject to engage their school community in this very special anniversary. The materials on the website www.natsoc200.org.uk will help them explore the history of church school education and provide ideas how their school community can celebrate this anniversary.

St Edith's Church

I am working closely with Pauline Organ, the church warden of St Edith's Church, Coates-by-Stow to develop links with the church and schools in the area. Pauline is very keen to lead activities for schools in the church and so promotional materials are currently being developed.

Updated electronic documents

A number of documents for R.E. teachers and subject leaders have been updated and they can be found on the Diocese website:

- Directory of visits and visitors
- Guidelines for visiting places of worship
- Frequently Asked Questions in R.E.
- R.E. News
- Useful websites for R.E.
- Calendar of religious festivals

Report by Paul Thompson
18th February 2011