

Dear Colleagues

Happy New Year to you all!

A reflection from our U18s Strategy Lead, Sarah Wattleby:



One of the things I love most about the Christmas season is the lights. I often take my children for an evening walk to look at the lights in our local area. We in turn have also put lights outside our house for others to enjoy. It's a simple act. But within it is an opportunity to stop, think, bless others and create opportunities for a moment of wonder. Life can be so busy, as a working mum of three kids, a medic husband and a significant commitment to voluntary roles life can often feel dictated by the doing with little time for being. I am sure many of you share this sentiment.

As we go into 2025 together, I encourage you to create moments of wonder. To intentionally stop and look in wonder at what is in front of you. Perhaps it's a classroom of children learning, connecting and developing, perhaps it's a team meeting where you just take a moment to appreciate the gift of colleagues and all they bring, or perhaps it's a moment looking at the beautiful splendour of the natural world around us.

*This January, let us carry the awe and wonder of the Christmas season into the new year and like Job, take a moment to "stand still and consider the wonders"
(Job 37:14)*

I will take this moment now to splendour at the amazing gift you all are to our communities and young people- thank you for all you do!

The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes. God is close to those who trust in him.

Nahum 1.7

Welcome to Term 3

We do hope you were able to enjoy a peaceful, joyful Christmas break in one way or another. As we start 2025 and term 3, our Director of Education Liz is sunning herself in Australia and will return from her travels at the end of the month. She leaves our work in the safe hands of the remaining Education team and if anyone needs anything, as always do contact us any time. Laura Harris, as deputy, will be taking Liz's place for a few weeks and will be happy to hear from anyone as needed. Laura.harris@bristoldiocese.org

We would also like to take this chance to introduce you to the newest member of the education team – Zoe Derham-Luckwell starts this week as our new team administrator. No doubt you will soon be receiving emails from her, we know you will make her welcome. We are glad you are here Zoe!

Upcoming training/events THIS term - Jan and Feb 2025:

Annual Religion & Worldviews Conference, 'Inspiring Curiosity'
Have you secured your place? [BOOK HERE!](#)

BRISTOL, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, WILTSHIRE & SWINDON SACRE
PRESENT

RELIGION
Inspiring Curiosity
WORLDVIEWS

ANNUAL RE CONFERENCE 2025
FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 9.30-3.00PM
ENGINEERS HOUSE, BRISTOL BS8 3NB
Cost: **FREE** for teachers in South Gloucestershire schools
£120 per delegate, £75 for second delegate* [BOOK HERE](#)
KEYNOTE: GILLIAN GEORGIU

Inspiring Curiosity...
Humans are naturally curious beings – we continually seek to understand ourselves, others, the world around us and intangible concepts like God, truth and justice. Worldviews – religious and non-religious – are just such ways of seeing, understanding and being in the world. Schools and academies across the country are beginning to investigate what it might look like to take a religion and worldviews approach to RE. In this keynote session, Gillian Georgiou will explore the ways in which our subject is developing and share practical examples of what this might look like in practice.

Gillian Georgiou has worked as a researcher and secondary teacher of RE and Philosophy. She is currently the Diocesan RE Adviser for the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education. She has written for various RE-related publications, and has a particular interest in curriculum design, types of knowledge in RE and assessment. She is a member of the RE Council of England and Wales, a trustee of Culture St Gabriel's and is involved in a number of projects nationwide that engage with the public perception of religious and non-religious worldviews.

**PLUS A RANGE OF
WORKSHOPS LED
BY PRACTITIONERS
FROM THE RE
WORLD**

Our complete training schedule for the 24/25 Academic year can be found [HERE](#)

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Celebrating SIAMS Successes in Term 1&2

Congratulations to those schools receiving a positive SIAMS outcome last term – St Peter's CE/Methodist Primary (Pilning), St Francis Primary, Westbury on Trym Primary, Ashton Keynes Primary, Lacock Primary, Oliver Tomkins Junior and St Michael's Stoke Gifford

Great to see some genuinely inspiring comments from these reports, reflecting impactful school vision and practice:

ASHTON KEYNES - *Pupils are encouraged by the vision words 'let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds'. They are empowered by the vision to make positive changes. One example is writing to members of parliament to highlight the fact that not everyone in the world has access to education.*

WESTBURY ON TRYM - *The 'Westbury Ways' promote a strong Christian vision which is clearly lived by staff and pupils alike. It is relevant to the community through promoting the biblical idea of 'living life in all its fullness.' Pupils know the vision well, and they are enthusiastic in putting it into practice in and out of school. As a result, their lives are enriched and there is personal and academic growth.*

WIRE Award

Congratulations to Iron Acton CE VC Primary School on achieving their recent WIRE Award (Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education).

Events conducted to achieve this award included an informative visit to a Hindu place of worship by Year 3/4 pupils and a school wide Spirited Arts Competition focusing on 'Green Faith, Green Future'

I'm sure you will join us in celebrating this fantastic achievement and excellent artwork produced by all involved. Well done team Iron Acton!



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St Michaels CE Primary School, Stoke Gifford



Parents and teachers have raised more than £2,600 after a fire left parts of a primary school "literally in pieces"

[Money raised for Stoke Gifford St Michael's Primary after fire - BBC News](#)

Teachers say it has been "quite an emotional" and "hard" time for the children" since the fire.



Do you have any recent successes or achievements that you would like to share?

Would you like to share some excellent practice or resources in these areas: Equalities, Racial Justice, Diversity, Mental Health, Wellbeing?

We are looking to celebrate the excellent practice we know is taking place in a number of Church Schools across the Diocese. We hope to write some case studies and begin a library of recommended resources on our website.

PLEASE do drop us an email or a call if you think you have something valuable to share – we know many of you definitely do!

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Save the Date - DBE Conference 2025

We are delighted to be able to share our plans for the annual Bristol DBE Conference 2025, which will be held on Friday, 21st November 2025 at the Holiday Inn, Filton. Please save the date in your diary.

We know how tight budgets are for everyone and would hate for this to be a barrier to schools attending the conference. **Therefore, the DBE have made the decision to fully cover the costs for the conference, making it completely free of charge for delegates to attend this year.**

Please save the date in your calendar and consider who from your school community may like to attend this free conference. We would be honoured to have you join us. More information to follow:

Leadership Training with Andy Spens

Have you considered joining our Reflective Leadership Training?

The session will be led by Andy Spens, Head of Professional Learning for the National Society of Education and a leader in this inspiring area of learning. Prior to his current role Andy was previously a Head and Executive Head at schools in the South West.

Session content will discuss how '**EDUCATING FOR LIFE IN ALL ITS FULNESS**' is the goal of our Church of England Vision for Education: 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good'.

At the heart of our vision is the search for a wisdom that rings true both with the Bible and Christian understanding and with experienced educational practice in the twenty-first century. As such, we want to inspire a set of leadership practices that both exemplify Wisdom, Knowledge & Skills, Hope & Aspiration, Community & Living Well Together, and Dignity & Respect, and that also goes to the heart of educational purpose:

Called - inspiring the vocation of the education Leader

Connected - enabling the flourishing of children, adults, teams and communities

Committed - sustaining long-term engagement in realising this vision for education.

Headteachers are warmly invited to attend this exciting opportunity to hear from Andy on **Thursday 27th March 2025 at 13:00 pm** at the Diocese Office. [BOOK YOUR PLACE HERE](#)

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New to RE in Church Schools Session



There has been a change in date and venue to this session. This will now be held on **Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 14:00pm** at the Diocesan Office. Click [Here](#) to secure your place via Eventbrite.

Training Packages Spotlight

Are you aware that we offer a number of training packages that are available to you and your staff?

These packages are designed to cover a wide range of learning areas and opportunities for you and your team, with the option to tailor these to your needs and interests. The best part is that a package can be shared between different staff members, so it doesn't need to be the same person to attend all sessions, and all at a discounted price!

Below is an example of our new RE Leader Package. If this package or another (eg. new headteacher, whole school or governor) are of interest to you please contact us to get involved!

Diocese of Bristol
TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TOGETHER

**RE
LEADER
package**

£250
Save £100

One place at the Annual RE conference
Friday 7th February 2025

RE Adviser visit to your school 1.5 hours
To be arranged with you

plus

Your choice from the following - one place at either one full
or two half days (full days include lunch)

Collective Worship: The heartbeat of your school
9.30-12.30pm Thurs 13th March '25

Exploring Spirituality
1-4pm Thurs 13th March '25

Leading great Primary RE
9.30-12.30pm Thurs 3rd Oct '24

Understanding Christianity refresher
1-4pm Thurs 3rd Oct '24

Help! I'm the new RE leader
2-4pm 8th July '25

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comes. God is close to those who trust in him.**

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A Prayer for this term

Heavenly Father

Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community so that everyone grows in the knowledge of Your truth, love, wisdom and peace.

We pray for all children - help them to explore what they can achieve and give them confidence to play their part in shaping our world.

We pray for all those who work in schools. Care for them as they care for our children.

We pray for all governors of schools. Grant them wisdom and sound judgement, and help them to keep children's well-being at the heart of everything they do.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

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