

Welcoming back the Church Schools' Celebration



After a break of 3 years, we were able to welcome back more than 900 year six pupils to Rochester Cathedral to celebrate their time in their Church of England primary schools across the Diocese of Rochester in June 2017. The most often repeated word from the pupils is 'wow' as they enter the building and their eye catches a painting or statue and especially as they look upwards at the majesty of a building created to honour God and which has drawn pilgrims, like themselves, for 1400 years.



When we started to put together the ingredients for these 'new look' Church School Celebration days in partnership with the Cathedral Education team, we wondered if we would be able to prepare for a celebration of the Eucharist which involved up to

300 pupils in one morning. We were not sure but we decided to try!



Pupils were invited to join two workshop sessions over the course of the morning.

One of those was based on the importance of prayer.

Everybody was asked to join in a personal, reflective prayer thanking God for their learning, friendships and love in their primary schools creating a key-ring as they prayed so that they could take the prayer with

them. They were also asked to pray for their world and for those in need which resulted in the creation of many moving intercessions which were later brought to the altar during our Eucharist service.



They prayed for 'those who walk alone' and 'for all those caught up in acts of terrorism' as well as thanking God for all that is good in their lives. These young people knew exactly how to bring the needs of the world before God. Bishop James also led us in a moving minute of silence for the victims of the recent fire in London. In their other workshop, the pupils sang or put together a Gospel drama, or created a personal 'memory box'.



To help them to remember that God will be with them as they move on, Bishop James and Bishop Rod led joyful services with a message from the Gospel story of the paralysed man and his four friends to remind them that they have many existing friendships to treasure but that they are also about to make new friends and find opportunities to be good friends in their new secondary schools.

In 2018, the dates for the Church Schools' Celebration will be **12, 13, 14, and 15 June**. Although we are working a system to give priority to certain schools each year, there will be many places remaining for the other schools around the Diocese. Details will be coming into your schools during term 3 and, as long as you book promptly, you will get places for your year 6 pupils.

There is some feedback from Bishop James about the days and also about the wider work of our church schools at <https://youtu.be/yZVZkjKHibQ> We look forward to seeing you next June.

Building on the syllabus

‘Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.’ 1 John 3:18



In our teaching and learning for Understanding Christianity, it is clear that we need to make sure our pupils understand the impact and make connections with a Christian faith lived out in their world. Christian Aid is referenced in the UC materials and this might be a way of helping pupils to see how they can make a difference. Christian Aid is preparing to launch a brand new accreditation scheme for primary schools, in partnership with the Church of England Education Office. The aim is to help church schools to inspire their pupils to make their mark in a challenging world.

This scheme will:

- increase knowledge and understanding about why and how Christians want to change the world to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty
- increase understanding of the root causes of poverty and injustice

- engage and empower pupils as agents of change in the transformation of our world.

Many church schools are already deeply engaged with global learning, while others would like to do more. Wherever you are on the global learning journey, Christian Aid will help you to explore, strengthen and celebrate your school's potential to respond to global injustice in a distinctively Christian way. This accreditation scheme, launching in January 2018, will help you showcase the wonderful work you are doing to support pupils' development as courageous advocates.

Get in touch!

If you are a teacher or an education adviser and think this scheme might suit your school(s), let us know and we will add you to our mailing list. We would also love to hear from you if you have teaching experience and are interested in supporting this scheme through volunteering. For more information, email:

schools@christian-aid.org

RE support meetings 2017-18

These meetings will continue to support RE subject leaders in learning and teaching for Understanding Christianity and the new RE syllabus as these new initiatives continue to be developed.

The dates and venues for November are as follows:

Wednesday 1 November at Tunbridge Wells 1-30pm to 3-30pm

Thursday 2 November at Rochester 1-30pm to 3-30pm

At this meeting, we will be looking at the recording we have done in term 1 for the Understanding Christianity units that have been used. **Please bring a small selection of pupils' books from across the school and also any other examples of strategies for recording pupils' thinking.**

Resources for EYFS and Key Stage 1



For those schools using the Understanding Christianity Project, the Puddles and Freddie series of resources have been fully accredited to support the implementation of this project aimed at raising the standards of teaching and learning about the Christian faith.

A guide showing how each resource supports the different concepts addressed by the project is also available from

www.booksatpress.co.uk

For more details please see

<http://www.booksatpress.co.uk/Understandingchristianity.html>



Other resources and events

Taizé

The Archbishop of York is to lead a Church of England schools pilgrimage to Taizé.



Next year from 15-22 July 2018 the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely will be leading a pilgrimage to Taizé for Church of England secondary schools. The pilgrimage offers Church schools the opportunity to come together in an environment of prayer, song and community where all can grow spiritually and experience the fullness of life.

Further information about the pilgrimage will be posted on the Church of England Education webpages www.churchofengland.org/education/latest-education-news.

If you would like to go on the mailing list for the planning and booking information please email jemma.adams@churchofengland.org.

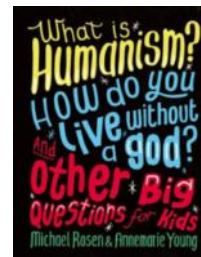
Please let Virginia know if you are planning to be involved in this initiative.



Resources for all churches and schools, based on the theme 'Gathered in my name' are now available on the Churches Together in England Website. The date suggested for Education Sunday is 10 September, which is very early in the school year in order that churches and parishes are able to pray for their schools as the new school year begins.

However there is no reason why you cannot mark Education Sunday on another occasion using the thoughtful and helpful resources available on this website to provide a focus on what is happening in our schools and colleges. However, I am sure that we would all like to feel that, if there is someone in

a church congregation who works in education, that there would always be a listening ear and prayerful support and encouragement on offer, no matter what the time of year. So please pray as schools and parishes together for all of the work in our local church and community schools.



In all of our RE syllabuses, it is recommended that the consideration of other worldviews is included as part of RE learning and teaching. You may have seen the BHA publication **What is Humanism? By Michael Rosen and Annemarie Young**. This is being supplied free to schools across the country. This is an accessible book for upper key 2 and key stage 3. It is a helpful guide to Humanism. It contains what, in any other context, would be called a series of testimonies from well-known Humanists. You may find them useful in looking for material to use in lessons to illustrate, explain and critique Humanist belief, practice, and world views. What has been written by the Humanists sometimes makes some over-generalizations that are critical of religion and dismissive of people of faith. This material therefore may be helpful for the classroom context and suitable as discussion starters but the usual care might be needed if it is placed in a school library.

Springs Dance Company Projects

Bethlehem Bound is an inspirational schools project, available in the run up to Christmas, in which pupils explore the anticipation of the first Christmas through dance workshops.

The Easter Project offers thought-provoking workshops which provide a fresh way to engage young people with the Easter Story.

To book for 2018 or for a chat about what we do, please call 07876 752 910 or email

touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk

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found on : www.rochester-board-of-education.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES 2017



OCTOBER

Monday 16th October

Governor Training for Understanding Christianity 4.30 pm to 6-30pm at the Diocesan Offices, St. Nicholas Church Boley Hill, Rochester ME1 1SL

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 1st November

RE Support Group—1.30 pm—4 pm Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9SH **1.30pm— 4pm**

(please park on the road as parking is limited in the school grounds)

Thursday 2nd November

RE Support Group—1.30 pm-4pm Diocesan Offices, Boley Hill Rochester ME1 1SL

Bromley schools should contact Lee Kings for details of their REConnect meetings.
Bexley church schools should attend the meeting on either 1st or 2nd November (see above)

Tuesday 21st November

Governor Training for Understanding Christianity. 4.30 pm to 6-30pm at the Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL

DECEMBER

Thursday 7th December

New to a Church School? This course is suitable for NQTs, and class teachers new to Church Schools. 1.30pm—4pm Diocesan Offices, Rochester ME1 1SL

Tuesday 12th December

New to Leading Religious Education? For new (or fairly new) subject leaders for RE. 1.30pm-4.30 pm Diocesan Offices, Rochester ME1 1SL

FEBRUARY 2018

Wednesday 21st February

RE Support Group—1.30 pm —4 pm Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9SH

Thursday 22nd February

RE Support Group —1 .30 pm —4 pm Diocesan Offices, ME1 1SL

JUNE 2018

Wednesday 6th June

RE Support Group—1.30 pm —4 pm Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9SH

Thursday 7th June

RE Support Group—1.30 pm —4 pm Diocesan Offices ME1 1SL

*****Heads & Chairs breakfast briefings*****

Thursday 12th October—8.30—11am (coffee/pastries from 8am) Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL
Friday 13th October—8.30-11am (coffee/pastries from 8am) Holiday Inn Wrotham