



Understanding Christianity – sweeping the Diocese!

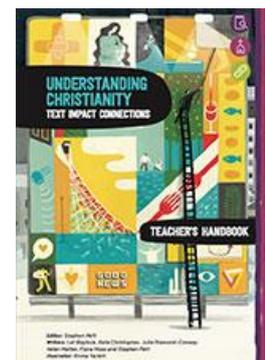
Thank you to all of our schools for their engagement with the training offered for Understanding Christianity. We are grateful for your willingness and indeed your enthusiasm to embrace something new and challenging, recognising its potential to improve teaching and learning. All of our church schools, some of them with their parish clergy, have attended training thus ensuring that they are ready to implement the new Diocesan syllabus and materials from September 2017. We recognise that the year from September 2017 to July 2018 needs to be viewed as a 'pilot' period as there is a considerable adjustment to be made from the previous syllabus materials. Please look out for details of how we will seek to monitor and review the introduction of Understanding Christianity in a constructively critical yet supportive way over the coming months.

Although we have covered this in training, please remember that

- * In Voluntary Aided schools, the Governors agree what will be taught in RE so they should adopt a Diocesan syllabus and that is what we would recommend as a Diocese
- * In Voluntary Controlled and Foundation schools, the Bromley/Bexley/Medway/Kent locally agreed syllabus must be followed depending on the location of the school – and this will be supported by the Understanding Christianity resources
- * For all academies, there is an 'as is' principle – so follow the guidance according to whether you were a VA or VC school before conversion

We have provided you with or will provide you with a series of resources to support your implementation of the new syllabus materials including:

- * Syllabus overviews
- * Additional guidance where needed
- * Updated resources for teaching faiths other than Christianity
- * Additional resources for teaching in mixed age settings
- * Power Point presentations for staff meetings
- * Planning formats
- * Assessment suggestions



Some of these will be available on the Rochester Diocesan Board of Education (RDBE) website <http://www.rdbe.org.uk/>. Other materials will be sent into schools directly as they are written so please look out for these.

Please check the Diary page of this publication to find the details of the final training session in June which forms part of the training package.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE FOR ALL RE SUBJECT LEADERS

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As you will know, there is a General Election on Thursday 8 June 2017. This is a clash with our training date at St Justus Church, Rochester. We will therefore have to cancel this meeting as the church is being used as a polling station and I know that many of your schools are also used in this way which will disrupt arrangements for that day for quite a number of you.

Therefore, please note that we have cancelled the meeting on Thursday 8 June and we will only be able to offer one RE support group meeting in June. Please do your best to attend as we have external providers supporting us for this training.

The training will be on

**Wednesday 7th June 1.30 pm-4 pm
Bore Place Chiddingstone, Edenbridge TN8 7AR**

We offer our apologies for any inconvenience caused by this change of arrangements especially for those who may find it difficult to attend. I am sure that you appreciate that this is beyond our control. We will, of course, be providing any resources from that session to all of you.

Thank you for your understanding,
Virginia

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RESOURCES AROUND THE DIOCESE

As we move forward in delivering the new RE syllabus and the creative RE curriculum provided by Understanding Christianity, I would like to remind you that we have sets of resources (artefacts, information etc) housed in schools around the Diocese. If you would like to borrow these, please contact the school office and arrange to collect and return the boxes at convenient times. You can see what is available at each location to help to support learning and teaching in RE. These are the resources previously housed in the RE centre in Bromley which had to be closed a few years ago.

**St George's Wrotham
01732 882401**

- Islam 1 & 2
- Judaism
- Buddhism
- Shabbat
- Divali
- Christianity x2
- Bible Box
- Harvest
- Christmas
- Baptism
- Learning from religion
- Purim
- Easter 1,2 & 3



**St Paul's Cray
01689 821993**

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Islam
- Judaism



**Southborough
01892 529682**

- Sikhism
- Judaism (focus on Purim and Hannukah)
- Islam
- The Orthodox Church
- Christianity (focus on Baptism and Denominations)
- Christmas
- Easter
- Weddings
- Chinese New Year



**Rochester
01634 560025**

- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Christmas



ACTIVE AND INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES

Pilgrim Paths

I visited this experience at Lamberhurst primary school – the pupils and staff found that it supported them spiritually and gave them time and space for personal reflection. Other schools in the Diocese have also made use of this resource.

Labyrinths are being used to support prayer and reflection in countless communities up and down the UK and beyond.



Pilgrim Paths is dedicated to providing high quality finger labyrinths and creative labyrinth

resources in many settings, including in churches and in schools.

In addition to the resources on the website, there are 4 beautiful canvas labyrinths which are used to lead prayer days and workshops. A flavour of this labyrinth work can be found at

<http://www.pilgrimpaths.co.uk/page38.html>

EXPLORING VALUES WORKSHOPS

Growing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through dance.

Springs Dance Company is offering to schools an engaging programme of workshops which explore the current British Values focus for schools. The workshops will examine these values



through fun, creative, dynamic sessions based on one of three themes; Get Fit Go Green, The Magic Paintbrush or The Wemmick Story.

This will help to give young people a voice, stand up against injustice and encourage acceptance, respect and tolerance. Springs workshops will challenge young people and will help to guide the next generation.

To book and for more information please contact Springs Dance Company on touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or call 07876 752 910 www.springsdancecompany.org.uk

NARNIA – helping you to think about character education

The Narnian Virtues curriculum utilises three novels from the Chronicles of Narnia: *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Designed to be delivered in concurrent years, each stage of the curriculum is 12 weeks



long, based on two hours per week class time.

Students are asked to read a passage from the book where a character displays a particular virtue (or lack thereof), they reflect on the extract while highlighting, and then apply what they have learnt about the virtue to themselves. Students are also provided with homework activities aimed at reinforcing their reflections on character.

Participating schools will receive PDF documents containing the teacher handbooks, student curriculum materials, and the homework tasks, as well as updates and ideas via email and social media. This is an opportunity for schools to work with the University of Leeds and SUNY Cortland on an exciting research project.

With a new Narnia movie due to be released in 2018, it's a great time to get C.S. Lewis into the classroom!

Full material will be available in 2019. Or begin from 2017 as part of our international research trial. Contact us at narnianvirtues@leeds.ac.uk

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Further information can be found on : www.rochester-board-of-education.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES 2017



JUNE

RE support groups—June 2017 please see page 2 for important details about this training

Please note that all RE subject leaders in Church schools need to do their best to attend this session to complete their Understanding Christianity training package.

It will be led by external trainers—and may be creative and messy!

Wednesday 7th June 1.30 pm-4 pm

Bore Place Chiddingstone, Edenbridge TN8 7AR

We have had to cancel the training on Thursday 8 June because of the General Election.

Reconnect for Bromley schools

Bromley RE support group runs a programme led by Lee Kings and Jo Thackray. Please contact Lee for details : Lee.Kings@bishopjustus.bromley.sch.uk

Tuesday 13th—Friday 16th Church Schools Celebrations - Rochester Cathedral. 9.30 am - 2.15 pm
We have some spaces available please let me know if you would like to come.

JULY

Thursday 13th July FINAL DAY 2 of Understanding Christianity. 9.30 am—4 pm Rochester Diocesan Offices, St. Nicholas Church, Boley Hill, Rochester ME1 1SL.
(This course is for those who have already attended day 1 of the training.)

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

Tuesday 21st November Governor Training for Understanding Christianity. 4.30 pm to 6-30pm
at the Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL