



The Fruits of the Spirit?

I commend to you a report that is ‘hot off the press’ – it should re-focus us upon a question that often gets lost in the details of the everyday – planning that lesson, recording progress, coming to grips with life without levels and the rest. That question is, ‘What is education for?’ I invite you to read the executive summary of ‘The Fruits of the Spirit: A Church of England Discussion Paper on Character Education’ (the whole report is at https://churchofengland.org/medial23863071/fruits_of_the_spirit.pdf) and spend time wondering why we do what we do.....

There is no such thing as neutral education. As soon as we begin to teach something to someone else, we are inevitably making value judgements about what we are teaching, how we are teaching it and why we are teaching it. Any decision we make about what or how to teach contains within it an implicit understanding of the human condition, of what is important in life, of the relationships we want to foster, and of what is worth learning, knowing or questioning. For this reason, character education requires learning and development to be set into context against an understanding of what it means to be human and how the world works. While lists of virtues and values can be a helpful way of assisting people in understanding what character education may look like in the classroom, these are insufficient without a coherent and rigorous sense of purpose underpinning them. This sense of purpose will, inevitably, be culturally specific, rooted in particular communities and their beliefs and practices. We see the ultimate purpose of education as the promotion of “life in all its fullness.”

Education is about more than just producing increasingly efficient economic units: it is about developing people who can flourish in all areas of their lives. Character education is essential to this. Within this broad narrative of the ultimate purpose of education, character education must focus on the whole child. It must develop much more than simply the

“performance virtues” of grit, resilience, curiosity and creativity, essential though these may be. Rather, it should see the development of intellectual, spiritual, moral and physical attributes as equally essential to preparation for a full and flourishing life. Any discussion of ultimate purposes, including discussions about character education, inevitably draws out areas of disagreement.

Consequently, as educators, we must become open to disagreement. Indeed, one might argue that a legitimate purpose of character education is that of learning to disagree well – to listen deeply to others and recognise their worth, no matter how deep the disagreement. The debate around ‘British Values’ teaches that tolerance in a pluralist society must reflect the Archbishop of Canterbury’s encouragement to engage in reconciliation – honest, loving, faithful, committed disagreement.

In schools, character education is embedded both in explicit, formal teaching and in the implicit web of relationships that characterise schools, including relationships with children, parents and the wider community. We recommend that careful attention is brought to these relationships so that they enhance the school’s approach to character education. We also recognise good practice in developing whole-school approaches to character education, and in developing specific pedagogies that allow a wide range of curriculum subjects to become areas for deeper exploration of spiritual, ethical and cultural questions. In all of this, teachers are key role models, and their beliefs about the purpose of education will impact on their practice.

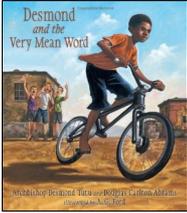


The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Gal. 5:22

There is therefore an opportunity to reshape both initial teacher education and continuing professional development to equip teachers for their role in developing the character of their students.

RESOURCES

Desmond and the very mean world



When a group of white boys hurl racial epithets at young Desmond, he turns to his mentor, Father Trevor. The priest's advice—forgiveness instead of retribution—isn't what Desmond wants to hear. "Let me tell you a secret, Desmond," Father Trevor

advises him. "When you forgive someone, you free yourself from what they have said or done. It's like magic." This is a morality tale by the Archbishop, Desmond Tutu and based on his own experiences. It is a great story for exploring the notions of forgiveness and reconciliation. Suitable for ages 6-10 A guide for teachers is available free from: http://candlewick.com/book_files/0763652296.btg.1.pdf



A reminder of some useful websites

RE Today: www.retoday.org.uk

NATRE: www.natre.org.uk

RE Quest: www.request.org.uk

RE Online: www.reonline.org.uk

BBC clips on line: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education>

REQM: www.reqm.org.uk

Heart of Hinduism: <http://hinduism.iskcon.org/>

Sikhiwiki: http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Main_Page

Islamkids: <http://www.islamkids.org/>

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Barnabas in Schools

<http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/about/>



resourcing your spiritual journey

Barnabas in Schools is part of BRF, a Christian charity. Barnabas

in Schools is a professional service provider to primary schools and works throughout England and Wales, offering quality creative arts-based Barnabas RE Days for pupils and specialist INSET sessions for teachers. Their overall aim is to enable schools to explore Christianity creatively. They do this by resourcing the teaching of Christianity and the Bible within RE and Collective Worship. The work of the Barnabas in Schools team can support personal development aims and objectives and the provision of RE, PSE and SMSC in primary schools. Barnabas in Schools is resourced, supported and enabled by BRF.

There are also a number of free downloads available which you might find useful.

<http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/downloadable-resources/>

CPD for Primary Teachers- world faiths (other than Christianity)

The training will be run by secondary RE specialists from Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School who have designed and run this training for our primary schools very successfully already, in 2015.

This training is designed to provide secure and detailed subject knowledge and give teachers the opportunity to think about how they help pupils to learn about and from religion in relation to these faiths.



Each session will run from 1.30 pm – 4 pm

Cost £150 for all 5 sessions **OR** £40 per session.

Venue: Diocesan Offices, Rochester ME1 1SL

Wednesday 27th January 2016: Hinduism

Wednesday 10th February: Islam

Wednesday 9th March: Judaism

Wednesday 16th March: Sikhism

Wednesday 23rd March: Asking & Answering the Big Questions



We will need a minimum of 10 bookings to run the course.



Springs Dance Company (Easter)

SPRINGS DANCE COMPANY specialises in RE through dance and helps young people learn about and learn from the Christian faith.

The Springs Easter Project leads pupils through a series of dance workshops that help them engage with the Easter story.

Children will learn and create movement in response to the story. They can explore their own spirituality as the workshops link Jesus' relationship with his disciples to Jesus' presence today. The workshops culminate in a performance of the Easter story by the pupils, which can be shown to school and parents alike.

The project is most often delivered over six workshop sessions followed by a performance day. The story is shared between the classes involved, divided into the following sections:

- Washing of the feet
- Garden of Gethsemane
- Crucifixion
- Mary weeping
- Last supper
- Trial
- Rolling away of the stone
- Resurrection

To book for a friendly chat about what we do, please call us on 07775 628 442 or email: touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk



Farmington Fellowships

- making a difference in RE

Each year many RE teachers apply for Farmington Fellowships. This allows teachers up to 30 days out of school to conduct some original research into an area of RE that interests them. This year's fellows are just beginning their research and the closing date for next year is likely to be in early January. If there is something you would like to research there is information on the website <http://www.farmington.ac.uk/> Let me know if you apply. We may be able to support your work.



TEACH:RE
TO ENTHUSE. TO EDUCATE. TO INSPIRE.

Teach RE

If you are already teaching RE, but would like to develop your understanding of the subject further or perhaps refresh your thinking, the Teach RE Course is for you. Maybe your local Agreed Syllabus requires you to teach about religions and worldviews that you are less familiar with or feel less confident about. Perhaps you are considering a Master's degree and would like to ease your way back into self-study and research. Or perhaps you would like to explore new ways of applying subject knowledge about world religions and beliefs to classroom practice. You may be a new co-coordinator for RE in a primary school and want to find out more about the subject.. I would thoroughly recommend the course to anyone wanting to increase their subject knowledge or confidence in RE. The support you get from Culham St Gabriel's and from the tutor you are linked to is excellent and I can assure you that the benefits will be immeasurable! Whatever your professional learning requirements, the Teach RE Course is tailored to your individual needs. It is suitable for primary and secondary colleagues, and is run as a distance learning programme. Support is provided by a tutor and a certificate of completion is provided which you can use as part of your CPD portfolio More information about the course can be found on the website: <http://www.teachre.co.uk/>

If you decide to sign up for this course please let us know so that we can support you and celebrate your achievements.

RE support meetings 2015/2016

Remember that these are free sessions if your school pays into the Service Level Agreement (SLA).
The time for the meeting is 1-30pm to 3-30pm.

The dates and themes for the meetings are as follows:

Wednesday 4 November 2015 – Bennett Memorial, Tunbridge Wells

Thursday 5 November 2015 – Diocesan offices, Rochester

The main focus will be upon how you can lead staff training on the theme of big ideas and concepts.

Wednesday 24 February 2016 – Bennett Memorial, Tunbridge Wells

Thursday 25 February 2016 – Diocesan offices, Rochester

The main focus will be upon making the most of visiting places of worship – sharing best practice

Wednesday 8 June 2016 – Bennett Memorial, Tunbridge Wells

Thursday 9 June 2016 – Diocesan offices, Rochester

The main focus will be upon the pilot units of work and spending time planning creative units based on your best practice.



Foundation Governors & Clerks Annual Briefing Event

This annual briefing takes place at the Corn Exchange in Rochester:

Tuesday 24th November.

5 pm—7 pm latest (tea & cake from 4.30pm)

The aims of the briefing include:

- Update on national education developments
- Information on the DBE's new strategy and academy policy
- Update on Governor training and support provided by the RDBE
- Networking and sharing best practice

This is a key event for all Foundation Governors and Clerks of Church schools.

Please contact Teresa Spearink on 01634 560025 or teresa.spearink@rochester.anglican.org to book a place.

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St Nicholas Church
Boley Hill
Rochester
ME1 1SL

Phone: 01634 560000
Fax: 01634 408942
Website: www.rochester-board-of-education.co.uk

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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES 2015

2015

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 4th November	RE Support Group—Bennett Memorial Tunbridge Wells TN4 9SH 1.30 pm—4 pm (<i>please park on the road as parking is limited in the school grounds</i>)
Thursday 5th November	RE Support Group—Rochester Diocesan Offices ME1 1SL. 1.30 pm—4 pm
Friday 6th November	RE Support Group—Crayford Community Hall (Bexley Schools) 1.30 pm to 4 pm
Monday 16th November	SIAMS briefing/update Focusing on Valuing All God's Children 1.30 pm—3.30 pm Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL
Tuesday 17th November	New to Leading Religious Education? 1.30 pm—4.30 pm Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL
Tuesday 24th November	Foundation Governor and Clerks Event— 5pm—7 pm latest (tea/cake from 4.30pm)
Wednesday 25th November	New to a Church School? 1.30pm—4 pm Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL



DECEMBER

Wednesday 9th December	Extremism Awareness Training— 9.30am Diocesan Offices Rochester ME1 1SL
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2016

******HEADS AND CHAIRS BRIEFINGS******

After consultation with schools there will now be 1 breakfast meeting and 1 afternoon meeting

Thursday 28th January	Breakfast meeting 8 am (coffee) —10.30 am The Holiday Inn Wrotham TN15 7RS
Friday 29th January	Diocesan Offices St. Nicholas Church, Boley Hill, Rochester ME1 1SL 1.30 pm– 4pm