



Autumn 2008
Secondary

RE NEWSLETTER

Special points of interest:

- Launch of the new KS3 National Curriculum
- Course to support the new KS3 curriculum

Cambridgeshire Advisory Service

To: RE Subject Leaders

Launch of The New Secondary KS3 National Curriculum

This September sees phase 1 of the new KS3 National Curriculum being introduced to pupils in year 7. The introduction of the New KS3 National Curriculum is variable across the country. I do hope that Religious Education has been included in the revisions within your school. At a recent national conference I attended for advisers and inspectors of Religious Education, it was confirmed that some head teachers have been using this review to marginalize Religious Education on the timetable. Less time on the timetable, less qualified teachers teaching the subject and less money being given to the subject were some of the results. The leading inspector of Religious Education, Alan Byrne and Mark Chater, the subject officer for Religious Education at QCA, both affirmed the place of RE as a statutory requirement for all pupils aged 5-19 years of age. We were asked

to bring to their notice any schools in which the statutory requirements were being abused. Our survey from Cambridgeshire SACRE last academic year revealed some of our schools were not meeting the statutory requirement at KS4. However, it is imperative that Religious Education is on the timetable and is incorporated in any cross curricular approaches to the KS3 curriculum. If you feel that RE is being marginalized in any way in your school, please do not hesitate to contact me. (susan.ward@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Course to support the new KS3 Curriculum

On 23rd September 2008 there is a day course at Godmanchester PDC for all KS3 teachers of RE to explore how they introduce/plan for RE the new KS3 Curriculum. This will be an opportunity to look at examples and models of schemes of work and actively plan for future schemes of work,

Inside this issue:

Launch of KS3 National Curriculum	1
PHSE/Community Cohesion/RE/Interfaith	2
Assessment For and Of Learning	3
New GSCE Religious Studies	3
SACRE KS3 Request	3
NASACRE	3
Network Meetings	4

using concepts, skills and processes common to RE and other subjects, matching also to the requirements with the local Agreed Syllabus. This training is the first formal course offered to support teachers with the new curriculum and provides an opportunity to address concerns. Please book onto this course early.

For further details, please refer to the last page of this newsletter.

Projects PHSE/Community Cohesion/ RE/ Interfaith

The PSHE Service and the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) are leading a three-year developmental project on behalf of the Learning Directorate to support schools in addressing Community Cohesion.

There are many common concepts which relate to the teaching of RE, Citizenship and PHSE. Some schools are being invited to bid for a place to lead on this development.

What is pleasing is that the importance of Religious Education to this project has been recognised. With the change in the law very recently to include religion in the list of areas that one cannot discriminate against, it means that schools must make sure that they address religious ignorance and prejudice. There has been a noticeable rise in Islamophobia in recent times. It has succeeded in becoming more prevalent that Anti-Semitism. This is a new phenomenon in this country and part of the objectives of the Community Cohesion Agenda is to address these issues through education. This is also related to the new KS3 curriculum and another reason why Religious Education should be very firmly on the timetable. However, some RE teachers may feel that the subject is being squeezed out and hijacked by Citizenship and PHSE. It is a matter of working together with colleagues to ensure that the integrity of the subjects is maintained but that learning experiences for the pupils are integrated and relevant. These are good opportunities to link subjects

together and review the content of subjects.

The duty to promote Community Cohesion is a statutory requirement as from Sept 2008 and OFSTED will be required to report on this in future inspections. Sir Keith Ajegbo in his report earlier this year reinforced the need to have high quality RE in our schools in order to support Community Cohesion. It is very important that all Heads of Departments pursue with rigour the statutory entitlement for all pupils to receive RE on their timetable. If you feel this is an issue, please contact me.

Network Meetings

At a recent meeting between the Religious Studies teachers at the two sixth form colleges in Cambridge it came to my notice that they have not been included in the network meetings. They are very keen to be included. Consequently we are in the process of revising our programme of network meetings for secondary school teachers in the City of Cambridge and south of the county. There will be a network meeting for teachers at either **Chesterton or Netherhall** school as stated in the course programme for 2008/9, but future meetings will be at Long Road Sixth Form College and Hills Road Sixth Form College. Dates and times will be confirmed once the term resumes.

Please note that there are **three** secondary network meetings per term. The HSEP (Huntingdon Secondary Educational Partnership) group will continue to meet, with Cathy Peacock from St Peter's School, Huntingdon coordinating these meetings. Other network meeting will be for those schools in the Fens and the eastern parts of the county and then one will be for the City and south Cambridgeshire schools. However, do feel free to attend whichever network meeting most suits you. Please do book on these and do not assume they will happen. As long as I know that 2 people will be attending I will not cancel the network meetings. Those who have been attending the network meetings last year have reported benefiting greatly from sharing ideas and resources together and that they are valuable. We have a number of new heads of

department and new RE teachers starting in September. It is important that they feel supported by others in the county. If you have not come to any network meetings perhaps you could make this a priority this year. Look at the list of network meetings for next year, along with courses for RE teachers and book now!

Assessment For and Of Learning

The National Strategy programme are re-visiting Assessment For and Of Learning in the forthcoming year. This strategy was introduced to schools 5 years ago but it is being re-purposed to encourage further development of using assessment in the light of the many new qualifications on offer next year. It impacts upon teaching and learning. Look out for courses this year specifically for RE teachers on this subject.

New GCSE Religious Studies

In September 2009 the new GCSE courses will be taught and be examined the following year. In Religious Studies QCA have insisted that there are two assessment objectives that are common to all GCSE Religious Studies Courses. It is important that teachers attend the free training courses offered by the exam boards in the forthcoming year. The changes in the assessment objectives will mean changes in the weighting and marking of questions, as well as changes in the specific subject content to be examined.

SACRE KS3 Request

You may recall that in the latest review of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2007-2012 that SACRE stated that they would be requesting schools to submit their levels of attainment at the end of KS3. Some schools have sent this information to me. There should be following shortly a letter to all schools requesting this information. No school will be identified in the annual report to QCA but it will provide information for all about the standards of RE and comparison with other KS3 Foundation subjects will be

possible. In the OFSTED report 'Making Sense of Religion' (2007) it criticised the poor standards in RE at KS3. There is a real push for schools to use the QCA level descriptors in their planning and teaching to raise standards.

Resources

Through the school post, all schools will be receiving another excellent free resource that we have been able to secure for all schools. The DVD "The Jewish Way of Life" has been produced for largely Key Stage 2 pupils but it is also useful for Key Stage 1 and 3. It has been reviewed by a Jewish representative from Peterborough SACRE and has been deemed to be very worthwhile. This is the second DVD we have been able to provide for all schools. I do hope that you find them useful.

NASACRE (See www.nasacre.org.uk)

At the annual general meeting in May there was considerable disappointment expressed at the decision to put on hold the possibility of a National Strategy for Religious Education by the Government. In its place the Government have offered extra funds to train new SACRE members from faith groups in the country over the next two years. This strengthens the role and work of the Local Authority SACREs. The Government is not ruling out the possibility of a National Strategy for RE but until all Local Authorities revise their Agreed Syllabuses, using the non-statutory Framework for RE, it is less likely to happen in the near future. However, the wish for this to happen was expressed very clearly.

Another development that has been agreed by the Government is to review and revise the Circular 1/94 on Religious Education. This has been the statutory document that has guided all authorities in the teaching of RE for the last 15 years. The second part of the document on Collective Worship is to be revised at a later date.

For further details about the conference and the superb keynote speaker, Karen Armstrong, talking about why it was so important to have quality Religious Education in all schools, look at the web site www.nasacre.org.uk or www.re.ccceducation.net/sacre

RE Network Meetings Autumn Term

18/11/08 - Netherhall School or Chesterton Community College 4.15 pm—5.45 pm Code 18506

19/11/08 HSEP RE Network meeting at St Peter's School 2.00pm –4.00pm (Book through Cathy Peacock at St Peter's School)

20/11/08 - Neale-Wade Community College, March 2.00 pm—3.30 pm Code 18507

Courses available this term:-

23/09/08 **The New curriculum for KS3** - Godmanchester PDC, 9.30 am - 3.30 pm Code 18304

7/10/08 - **Learning Skills in RE across phases KS3/4**
Over Community Centre, 9.30 am - 4.00 pm Code 18316

15/10/08 - **AfL in RE - a whole department approach**
Godmanchester PDC, 9.30 am - 12.30 pm Code 18313

21/10/08 - Assessment of AT2: Moving Forward

Godmanchester PDC, 9.30 am - 12.30 pm Code 18433

2/12/08 - Philosophy for Children KS2/3

Hemingford Grey Pavilion, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm Code 18306

3/12/09 - Leading and Managing Secondary RE

Hinchingbrooke Country Park, 9.30 am - 3.30 pm Code 18434

To book a place on the above or request further details, please phone 01480 375634 or e-mail CAS@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

To find out about the objectives for the courses above look at the details on www.cas.ccceducation.net

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