

Witness to the Word - School Bulletin 09.12.20

Dear Colleague in Catholic Education,

The Education Service every Wednesday provides schools with a wide variety of materials, resources, advice and updates on all matters relating to our schools and colleges. The content of these Bulletins are for Headteachers, Senior Leaders, Teaching Staff, Governors, Clergy and anyone who you feel would benefit from them. Please feel free to share widely



Objectives of the Education Service during Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic from September 2020

- To provide support and training for Headteachers, Heads of RE, RE Coordinators, Chaplains, Teachers, Governors and the wider school community to cope at this time of unprecedented challenge;
- To provide resources and advice relating to the Teaching and Learning of Religious Education;
- To provide resources and advice relating to Spiritual support and renewal.
- To provide resources and advice relating to Mental Health issues;
- To provide the updates from the UK Government, DfE, CES and the Diocese of Westminster on all aspects of the Coronavirus Covid-19 relating to schools and colleges;

Subject Content Today

1. Religious Education and Catholic Life resources are [here](#)
2. CPD Programme Update is [here](#)
3. Racial Justice, Equality and Diversity Update is [here](#)
4. Inspection Update is [here](#)
5. Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources are [here](#)
6. Per Pupil Funding Agreement & Foundation Governor Applications are [here](#)

Thank you for all you are doing for your school community and for Catholic education

Religious Education and Catholic Life Resources

Relationships and Sex Education

The Education service has produced various documents to provide support with the planning and delivery of statutory RSE. These can be found on our website here [Education support documentation](#). The frequently asked questions booklet is to help you to address questions from students, parents and staff. It addresses some of the issues explored in our training and is based on topics from the model curriculum.

The mapping documents cross references the DfE guidance and the CES model curricular so that you can be assured of coverage of the DfE guidance when delivering the CES model curriculum. In the cross referencing document those parts that are in red font indicate where there is a link with the content of the curriculum and the DfE guidance but you will need to make sure you explicitly address the point from the DfE. Again, in the health curriculum cross mapping there are links rather than coverage as the CES model curriculum is an RSE not Health curriculum.

Please contact trishahedley@rcdow.org.uk or patrickmurphy@rcdow.org.uk if you have any queries.

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Each Local Authority must establish a permanent body called a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE) with representatives from various committees. Our Catholic school representatives fall into *Group A: Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.*

The following LAs currently have vacancies for a Catholic representative:

- Hackney
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Haringey
- Hillingdon
- Hounslow
- Kensington and Chelsea

If you or a suitably experienced member of staff is interested in representing the Catholic community on a SACRE, please contact Diana Roberts dianaroberts@rcdow.org.uk who can provide further information.

Prayer Intentions during Advent

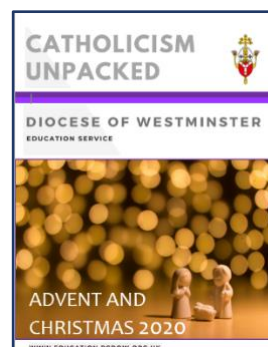
PRAYER INTENTIONS during Advent and Christmastide (Based on the Liturgical Year)	Liturgical Colour
Migrants and Refugees (Migrants' day - 3 rd December)	PURPLE
Openness to the Word of God (Bible Sunday – 2 nd Sunday in Advent – 8 th December)	
Expectant Mothers (especially on 4 th Sunday – 22 nd December)	

Pope Francis Prayer Intentions: December

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

Westminster Education Service Support document

For more information about Advent see our Catholicism Unpacked: Advent document [here](#). This interactive document has information to support the subject knowledge of staff. It also has cross curricular links to art and music as well as ideas for home-school learning. Links for prayer and liturgy during Advent are included as are links to CAFOD, Caritas Westminster, Missio and CCS.



Christmas Card Competition

Thank you to all the pupils who have entered our Christmas art competition. See [here](#) for the overall winner and the other pieces of artwork produced. I am sure you will agree that the work produced is of a very high quality.

CCS Online Advent Carol Service



This year the Catholic Children's Society (CCS) has produced a special online Advent Carol Service for schools in the Westminster Diocese. The service includes a special introduction from Cardinal Vincent Nichols and performances from children across the diocese. Clover the donkey also makes a guest appearance! *The service is available to watch on the CCS website throughout Advent:* www.cathchild.org.uk/advent

Wintershall Nativity Winter Walk

Join Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem at Wintershall this Advent from 18 - 21 Dec 2020. Click [here](#) for details



Evangelisation Newsletter and Bulletin

The Agency for Evangelisation has really useful information for families on the season of Advent which you could share with your community. For the bulletin see [here](#) . For the newsletter see [here](#)

Reinvigorating Classroom RE – 12th January

The Education Service will be running a course to support all members of staff in the primary school in reinvigorating the teaching and learning of RE in the primary classroom. It will share expectations of the teaching and learning of RE in the primary classroom, offer theory and practical ideas to enhance memory, retrieval and learning in RE and share resources and ideas to help engage and challenge pupils in RE this term. For information, see the CPD booklet or click [here](#) to book

ATCRE Conference October 2020

A virtual ACTRE conference took place this October where there were a number of speakers about topics of interest for RE teachers and leaders. Speakers and topics include:

- Philip Robinson – The new RECD
- Matthew Dell – The upcoming Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- Fr Dominic Howard – Christus Vivit
- Chris Devaney – Formation and Virtues: Educating the whole person
- Prof Anthony Towey – The paradoxes of RE in the Catholic perspective
- Other leading practitioners on a variety of topics



All PowerPoints and recordings of these free sessions are available [here](#)

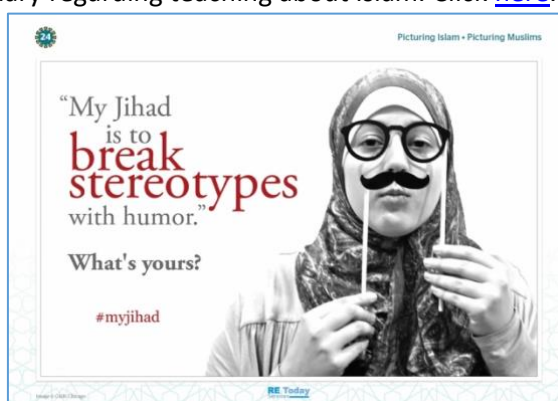
RExchange 2020 resources

This event brought together the concept of exchange with the Culham St Gabriel's and Templeton World Charity Foundation Research7 funded projects. There has been an increased desire within the RE professional community to root classroom practice in research. The RExChange Festival took place in Autumn 2020 and included pre-recorded films, a one-day virtual conference, #REchatUk event, virtual regional events and seminars. For the free resources see [here](#).



Teaching Islam

'Want to teach more confidently about Islam in RE? It's about much more than drawing and labelling pictures of mosques,' says Lat Blaylock. Take a look at the recent article by Lat Baylock, RE Today Adviser featured in Teach Primary regarding teaching about Islam. Click [here](#).



Also check out our Spring Term CPD booklet for our new five part course on the Five Pillars of Islam or click [here](#) to book.

RE:Quest

The Christmas Story explained for young children in this interactive PowerPoint by RE:Quest click [here](#)

FREE resources on NATRE: All available [here](#)

- Anti-racist RE resources
- Anti-bullying resources
- Spirited Arts
- Home Learning
- Social Distancing

CCRS.

The purpose of the CCRS is to give those teaching RE in the classroom a good, basic, theological knowledge to support their teaching. The collaborative benefits, when two or more from the same school are following the course together, are many, leading to deeper discussions around RE in the classroom and the expression of our Faith in our schools. Headteachers have used their promotion of CCRS as evidence in their SEF. Currently we are running the modules online so it is a wonderful opportunity for staff to undertake this certificated course. The lack of travel is a big bonus and yet the participants can still benefit from some really great tutors, who are experts in their area. We hope to begin a new course on 1st February 2021. If any of your staff are interested in joining that group, they can email Margaret Hanley, CCRS Coordinator, at ccrs@rcdow.org.uk for more detailed information and a registration form.

Fratelli Tutti

We are providing a summary of a section of Pope Francis' Social Encyclical each week taken from www.vaticannews.va. Click [here](#) to download the full document.

Week 7: The miracle of kindness

From the sixth chapter, *"Dialogue and friendship in society"*, further emerges the concept of life as the "art of encounter" with everyone, even with the world's peripheries and with original peoples, because "each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable" (215). True dialogue, indeed, is what allows one to respect the point of view of others, their legitimate interests and, above all, the truth of human dignity. Relativism is not a solution – we read in the Encyclical – because without universal principals and moral norms that prohibit intrinsic evil, laws become merely arbitrary impositions (206). From this perspective, a particular role falls to the media which, without exploiting human weaknesses or drawing out the worst in us, must be directed toward generous encounter and to closeness with the least, promoting proximity and the sense of human family (205). Then, of particular note, is the Pope's reference to the miracle of "kindness", an attitude to be recovered because it is a star "shining in the midst of darkness" and "frees us from the cruelty ... the anxiety ... the frantic flurry of activity" that prevail in the contemporary era. A kind person, writes Francis, creates a healthy coexistence and opens paths in places where exasperation burns bridges (222-224).

CPD Programme Update

Spring Term Courses now available for booking!

Please find attached the new CPD Programme for Spring Term 2021. The PDF document is an interactive one with booking links for all courses. You will also find below two links to both our Courses Booking site [here](#) and our Course Pages [here](#). which can also be accessed via our main Education Service Website. If you have any queries relating to our upcoming courses please contact Linette Blackmore, Events Coordinator at eduemc@rcdow.org.uk.

Racial Justice, Equality and Diversity

The Diocesan Racial Justice, Equality and Diversity Working Party (formerly known as the BAME Working Party) met for the third time on the 8th December. The Working Party's name, terms of reference, aims and action plan were discussed. CARJ (Catholic Association for Racial Justice) also shared their vision and how they could support schools across the Diocese.

If you would like to join this working party please do contact Nancy Conoboy at nancyconoboy@rcdow.org.uk

Inspection Update

Ofsted plan to resume inspections in the summer term. Full parity between s5 and s48 inspections is an important principle to which both the DfE and the CES are committed. Therefore, it is likely that denominational inspection in some form will recommence after Easter. At this time, it is not clear whether the resumption of denominational inspection in the summer term will be a requirement to inspect or a permission to inspect. This will depend very much on whether the DfE accept the CES' proposed regulatory changes that will allow dioceses to catch up on their outstanding inspections and even out the schedule without risking non-compliance. It is clear that one of their initial proposals of simply using this year as the catch-up year is now no longer possible, since this would require completing all the incomplete inspections from 2019-2020 in one term.

Now that we have a proposed start date, inspections can be scheduled for the summer term and the appropriate training can be arranged.

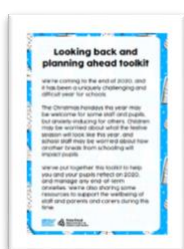
Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources

Mental Well-being and the Christmas Holidays

Young Minds - [Click Here](#) for handy hints, for young people, on looking after your mental health this Christmas.

Mentally Healthy Schools [Click Here](#) A useful toolkit to help you and your pupils reflect on 2020, and manage any end-of-term anxieties. *(Resources for pupils, school staff and parents/carers)*

Pupil Resources:



- 12 days of positivity - [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- Reflecting on lockdown activity – [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- Reflecting on lockdown activity – [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- Tracking feelings - [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- 'The Huge Bag of Worries' activity – [Oxford Health](#)
- Helping children reframe negative thoughts – [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

Resources for Staff:

- Mental health and wellbeing calendar: spring term 2021 – [Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- Sharing good practice and looking to the future – [Anna Freud Centre](#)
- Free supporting staff seminar – [Anna Freud Centre](#)
- Managing uncertainty in uncertain times – [Education Support](#)
- Headspace app

Resources for Parents and Carers:

- Six ways to support your children as lockdown eases - [BBC Bitesize](#)
- Mental wellbeing audio guides – [NHS](#)
- December wellbeing calendar – [Action for Happiness](#)

Mental Health Matters - [Click Here](#) – for useful tips on mental well-being during the Christmas period

Heads Together - [Click Here](#) for Tips for looking after your mental health this Christmas. A useful resource giving advice on a range of issues linked to the Christmas period:

- Coping with social anxiety
- Coping with loneliness
- Coping with bereavement
- Looking after your mental health

Please note that we also have a number of mental health and well-being related courses in our new Spring CPD programme.

Per Pupil Funding Agreement Update

I would like to begin by thanking the majority of schools who have already responded to the *Per Pupil Funding Arrangement* (PPFA) request issued by JP Morrison in September. In his communication to schools, JP wrote detailing the rationale behind the PPFA and details of both the essential and supplementary services these contributions enable the diocese to provide which support all schools to discharge their duty as a Catholic school and deliver the outstanding provision for the formation of the children and families we all serve. This was followed in November by a further prompt from Fr Michael Dunne, Chair of the Diocesan Education Commission, in which Fr Michael acknowledged, quite rightly, that whilst there have been many priorities needed to be addressed to keep schools open as a result of the coronavirus, administrative tasks can, for good reason, be placed to one side.

The Diocese are very aware of the additional financial burdens coronavirus has placed upon school budgets, although that is also true of the Education Service finances. Every contribution counts and there are still some schools who have not yet responded to the PPFA request. Therefore, before the end of this term, I would be grateful if you could turn your attention to one last task for and ensure your school has responded to the PPFA request. Please contact Linette Blackmore (linetteblackmore@rcdow.org.uk) should you wish to discuss this further. It is vital and only fair that despite the current challenging circumstances, every school plays their part to support the Education Service as you have done so magnificently in recent years.

Foundation Governor Applications Update

During the last round of Regional Hub and Chair of Governor Meetings it was announced that following a review of the application and renewal process for Foundation Governors that we intended to introduce a more streamlined online application process that will alleviate the delays many of you may well have experienced previously.

Please look out for a separate communication which will be issued later this week, detailing the new process. A key change is that instead of the diocese seeking to collect the supporting documentation from referees, we are asking that the school does this instead. We believe that there is more likelihood that this will be effective when it is done locally than when done centrally. In addition, we have redesigned the process so that it can take place completely electronically. **This new system will operate for all applications after the 1st January 2021.**