

## Dear Colleagues and Friends,

As I was driving home from visiting a school in Grantham last week, I heard Tim Farron, the former leader of the Liberal Democrats, being interviewed on the radio. He was asked to comment on the religious views of Kate Forbes, one of the candidates for the leadership of the Scottish National Party. Kate Forbes is a member of the Free Church of Scotland, which holds socially conservative positions on certain issues based on interpretations of Christian sources of authority. Tim Farron is also a Christian and was similarly challenged about the ways in which his faith influenced his politics in 2017.

During the interview, the interviewer casually stated that Tim Farron “must agree” with Kate Forbes’ views on sexuality and gender. When challenged by Tim Farron, the interviewer responded that this must be the case because this is what “all Christians believe”. “Every single human being has a worldview,” Tim Farron replied, “none of us is neutral; there is no neutral space in the public square.” We each of us bring ourselves and our beliefs and values to our interactions with each other, and religion may be one thread in the tapestry of a person’s worldview. He went on to remind his interviewer that ‘Christians’ cannot be lumped into a homogenous lump and described in these general terms – it is very difficult to talk about ‘all Christians’ in the same way that it is difficult to talk about ‘all children’ or ‘all old people’.

Our [Empowering Voices resource](#) launched this week. This is an ongoing project that works with children and young people across the country to give voice to specific experiences of religious and non-religious worldviews. We have just released the first two of a series of eight podcasts; the first looks at the experience of white reverts (converts) to Islam in Scunthorpe and the second explores the experience of black Evangelical Christians in Bristol. Each podcast comprises an audio play co-written with pupils, an ‘in conversation’ that picks up on themes from the audio play and an immersive soundscape connected to the worldview in focus. We have also produced education materials to support you to use these podcasts in the classroom. Our hope is that by introducing particular lived examples of religious and non-religious worldviews, the pupils in our schools will have a more nuanced understanding of what things look like in reality and therefore will be less likely to make generalisations.





Thinking carefully about how we support our pupils to engage with a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews is a key priority in preparing our children and young people for life in modern Britain. We have noted that a significant number of recent Ofsted reports in the region have cited concerns about pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and beliefs. It is important to think carefully about what opportunities we are providing within *and* beyond the RE curriculum to help pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of those with different faiths and beliefs and those of no faith (to use the language of British Values!). It is also important to think about how we can support our pupils to communicate what they have learned to others, so that we can show how our Christian vision-rooted work empowers them to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

As ever, we are here to help you with this. If you would like to find out more about the *Empowering Voices* materials, please do get in touch – we'd love to hear what you think of them! If you have recently experienced an Ofsted inspection that has raised concerns about pupils' understanding of religion and belief, let us know – we are very interested in better understanding the evidence that leads to this judgement, as well as being here to support you to move things forward in your particular context. As the earliest Christians knew and as is expressed in various African theologies as the concept of *ubuntu*, I am because we are – we will always be stronger when we work together.

*“A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed.”*

Desmond Tutu

*from* Gillian Georgiou, RE & SIAMS Advisor

**Have you booked for our Leadership Conference?  
Don't miss out and click here to book today!**



**ALL ONE -  
RADICALLY INCLUSIVE**

**29  
March,  
2023  
10am**

The Showroom,  
Tritton Rd,  
Lincoln,  
LN6 7QY

*'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are  
all one in Christ Jesus.'* Galatians 3:28

## All One: Radically Inclusive

We are delighted to invite you to our Annual Headteacher, Senior Leaders, Chair of Governors and Clergy Conference – All One: Radically Inclusive.

We can announce our keynote speakers, that will each look at the theme from their own specialism on the day. The **Rt Rev Stephen Conway**, Acting Bishop of Lincoln, having first trained as a teacher as well as previously chairing the Council of the National Society Council which supports the church's work in schools and further and higher education, brings a wealth of experience to our conference. He will be inspiring and challenging us at the start of our day.

**Lorraine Prince** is the Head of Networks for The Church of England Education Office. She facilitates CPD and networks focusing on EDI, SEND, Trauma and Teaching and Learning. She previously was a teacher for twenty-five years in UK and US; having studied in London and New York. She co-leads the BAMEed Eastern region network, a grassroots network that ensures our diverse communities are represented as a substantive part of the education workforce for teachers and educational leaders

**Alan Watkinson** former teacher of **Mo Farrah** will also be joining us. Alan taught PE and History for 17 years in secondary schools. During this time, he was also a Head of Year and a Gifted and Talented Coordinator. He became Partnership Development Manager of Isleworth and Syon's School Sport Partnership (I and S SSP) in 2007. I and S SSP evolved into Sport Impact in 2011 and he has led the organisation throughout. You may know Alan as the teacher from the Mo Farrah documentary as he was the teacher that mentored Mo Farah through some very difficult times. If you have not seen the documentary we would highly recommend it. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001977f>

**Prof. Trevor Cooling** will be joining us for our afternoon session. Trevor is an Emeritus Professor of Canterbury Christ Church University. His role is to lead on research and knowledge exchange in Christian Education. His background is in secondary teaching, where he started his career as a biology teacher and then moved into RE teaching having taken two years out to study for a theology qualification. On the day Trevor will spend time exploring what it means in practice to develop a theologically grounded vision which is both deeply Christian and serves the common good.

### Details

Date: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Time: 10:00am – 3:30pm (refreshments from 9:30am)

Venue: The Showroom, Tritton Rd, Lincoln, LN6 7PQ

Cost: Staff £180 (non SLA £285)

Governors £140 (non SLA £220)

Clergy £75

To book please use the following link <https://www.lincolndioCESaneducation.com/calendar/?calid=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10&pid=9&viewid=1&event=301>



## Upcoming LDBE Courses—

For more information—click the links below!

08-03-23	16.00-18.00	Developing a Distinctive and Effective Church School - Dignity	<a href="#">Online—click here for more information</a>
10-03-23	10.30-15.00	Bishop's Visitors Conference	<a href="#">Face to face—click here for more information</a>
14-03-23	17.30-19.00	Clerk to Governors Briefing	<a href="#">Online—click here for more information</a>
15-03-23	13.00-15.00	SIAMS: Living up to your Foundation From Sept 2023 and beyond	<a href="#">Online—click here for more information</a>
21-02-23	16.00-18.00	Collective Worship Going Deeper: Inspirational	<a href="#">Online—click here for more information</a>

## Understanding Christianity - Interest

Please let us know if you would like to be trained in the use of the [Understanding Christianity](#) resource—please use the form linked below:

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/interest-form>

