



The Diocesan
Board of
Education

RE News

Welcome to the spring term edition of RE News. This edition reflects on recent legislative changes that have an impact on RE. It also shares the work of some of our incredible RE leaders and teachers across the region, along with ideas and resources to support your RE curriculum.

As ever, if you have anything to share in the next edition of RE News, please do get in touch. I look forward to hearing from you!

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Special points of interest

- Celebrating excellent practice in RE
- The latest news and views from around the country
- Exciting new resources to support you in the classroom

Freedom of Religion or Belief

Freedom of religion or belief is enshrined in international law (Article 18 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights). This legislation protects the right for each person to adopt a religion or belief and to practice it without hindrance, to share it and to change it. Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is not just the freedom to hold personal views and convictions, but also being able to express them individually or with others, publicly or in private. It includes the freedom to:

- subscribe to different schools of thought within a religion;
- change one's religion or beliefs, including to leave or abandon religions;
- hold non-religious beliefs.

FoRB-related legislation protects people from discrimination. It prohibits the use of coercion to make someone hold or change their religion or belief. It also protects a person from being required to state an affiliation with any particular religion or belief.

— [“Freedom of religion or belief is enshrined in international law ...”] —

As with all human rights, FoRB belongs to people, whether alone or as members of a group, and not to the religion or belief itself. This means that it does not protect religions, or religious figures, from criticism.

We can see FoRB enshrined in the parental right to withdraw their children either wholly or partially from the RE curriculum. A recent ruling by the UK Supreme Court reiterates the importance of this right. The ruling related to specific case in Northern Ireland and has more far-reaching consequences for the nature of RE in that country, but one aspect of the ruling has relevance for us in England. The Lord Justices ruled that one issue in this specific case was the undue burden of the processes required to withdraw the child from the RE curriculum. The ruling found that the expectation or requirement for parents to meet with

school leaders and discuss their request to withdraw their child placed an undue burden on them .

In response to this legal ruling, we have updated our sample RE policy, which you can find [here](#). We would encourage you to be proactive in communicating about your RE curriculum to families, and to be welcoming to those parents or carers who wish to speak with you about the content or delivery of the curriculum. You may share information via your website, through your RE policy, through newsletters, on your social media platforms, and so on. This will help families have a clear understanding of what you teach in RE and how you understand RE as an important part of the broad and balanced curriculum.

However, if a parent or carer wishes to withdraw their child from the RE curriculum, you must accommodate that wish without placing any further expectations or requirements on them. A parent may wish to discuss with you what they would like their child to be doing during the RE lesson from which they have been withdrawn, and you can invite them to share that information. However, you cannot require it of them.

It is likely that there will be further guidance and support on this issue, which may also extend to the legal right to withdraw from collective worship. We will, of course, share this with you as we receive it.



The 2025 Lincolnshire Locally Agreed Syllabus:

Working Together

Since the launch of the 2025 Lincolnshire locally agreed syllabus for RE, teachers across the region have been thinking about how to revise the RE curriculum in their schools and academies. The updated syllabus takes a [religion and worldviews approach to RE](#), which includes a focus on developing pupils' understanding of and ability to use the different 'ways of knowing' (disciplinary knowledge). It also seeks to engage pupils in asking questions about religion and belief by presenting them with tangible, lived examples. A religion and worldviews approach ultimately aims to support pupils to recognise that 'no-one stands nowhere' so that they become more aware of their own positionality.

It has been a real privilege to continue to spend some time this term working alongside primary and secondary RE leaders and teachers from across Lincolnshire. Together, we have been thinking about how to translate the syllabus into curriculums that reflect the context and meet the needs of pupils in our schools. A few weeks ago, a group of secondary Religious Studies leads were generously hosted by North Kesteven Academy. They explored how the syllabus could be used to develop the KS3 Religious Studies curriculum. During the course of the day, the

group worked on a case study and associated sequence of lessons for Year 7 students. The case study explores Pathway 3 in Year 7: Expression, Experience and the Sacred.

In this sequence of lessons, students explore diverse global worship through the case study of Candomblé, a Brazilian worship practice that draws from both indigenous West African (Yoruba, Bantu and Fon) religious traditions and Roman Catholic Christianity. Through the case study, they engage with questions about worship, diversity, power and authority, considering who gets to decide what counts as 'true' or 'authentic' worship and why. The case study and associated lesson sequence will be made available to all Lincolnshire schools towards the end of this academic year.

Our huge thanks go to all the teachers who have attended this term's planning workshops and contributed to building a bank of case studies that will be offered to all Lincolnshire schools. There will be one primary planning workshop and one secondary planning workshop in summer term and we hope to continue this collaborative working into the next academic year. Further details will be shared soon— all are welcome and we would love to see you there!



TAKING A RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS APPROACH

In the last edition of RE News, we found out more about how primary schools across the region are beginning to use a religion and worldviews approach to RE, including the use of tangible lived experiences of religion and belief.

Below is an account from **Nikki Salt**, RE lead at Nettleham Church of England Junior School, who has been trialling this approach with her Year 5 pupils:

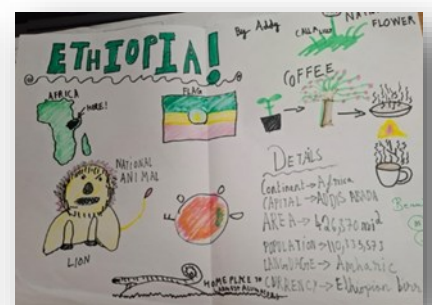
“When the new RE syllabus surfaced, the Year 5 team at Nettleham C of E Junior School decided the best way to master it was to dive straight in. Last term, our pupils spent a few weeks exploring Christianity through the eyes of nine-year-old Dawit, who lives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Teachers adapted a case study originally intended for younger children to challenge our Year 5s. They began by researching Ethiopia to create detailed country fact files, before comparing their own school lives to Dawit’s. It was an eye-opening exercise to see the contrast between city life in Addis Ababa, the experiences of children in rural Ethiopia and our own here in Nettleham.

This cultural exchange linked perfectly with our English unit, The Nativity News Project. While pupils were busy script-writing, acting, and filming their own news reports on the Christmas story based on the gospels of Matthew and Luke, they were also discovering how Ethiopian Christians celebrate Genna (Christmas). They learned that for Dawit and his family, the holiday is less about gift-giving and more about deep spirituality.

To truly immerse ourselves, we celebrated Genna on Wednesday, 7th January—the official festival date in Ethiopia. The afternoon began with a solemn, silent procession to our local church. Following Ethiopian tradition, the boys and girls separated and circled the interior three times in prayerful silence, some carrying lanterns and candles.

The mood shifted as we explored the lighter side of the holiday: Genna Hockey. The children were fascinated (and a bit horrified!) by the legend of the Three Wise Men who allegedly decapitated a rude man who denied Christ’s birth and played hockey with his head! Thankfully, our playground match was much more civilised, despite the freezing weather. Finally, we warmed up in the classroom by tasting Himbasha, a sweetened spiced Ethiopian flat bread traditionally enjoyed at Genna. It was a truly unforgettable way to bring a worldwide view of faith to Nettleham.”

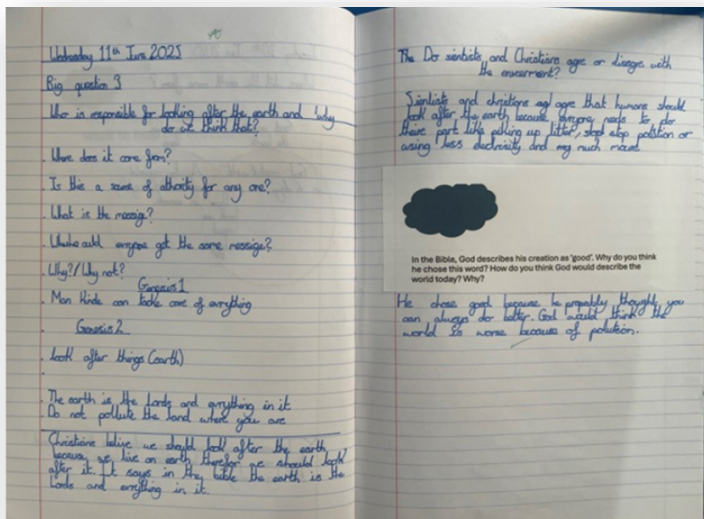


BIG QUESTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Canterbury Christ Church University has recently led a national research project exploring Big Questions in the Classroom. The project was established to embed a coherent, research-informed approach to curriculum design across Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), strengthening the relationship between science and RE. The Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT) was lucky enough to be one of the participating MATs. The school-based subject leaders were supported by researchers using evidence-based approaches to using questioning in both the science and RE classroom. Through the project, they were able to work towards the NPQLT. **Claire Hearth** (Spalding Parish Church of England Day School), **Ruth Pobjoy** (Coningsby St Michael's Church of England Primary School and Tattershall Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School) and **Megan Balderson** (Wrawby Church of England Primary School) took the lead within LAAT, exploring the big question, 'Why Should We Care for the Earth?'. The excerpts below are taken from their [project report](#).

"We decided to look at the idea of sustainability and climate change through the lenses of Science and RE. We wanted the staff, and pupils to consider how ideas around this were both similar and different for people with different worldviews. We also wanted to encourage staff and pupils to think about how they could use their learning from one curriculum area to develop their understanding in another. The challenges we faced were finding time in the curriculum to look at this, so we decided to have a special week where the focus every afternoon was on our big question – why should we care for the Earth? The week went well, and we had lots of positive feedback from staff and pupils. The responses we got across the school, from EYFS to Year 6, showed high levels of engagement from the children and demonstrated how their ideas developed over the course of the week. The week culminated in each class coming up with a social action project on a sustainability theme which they plan to carry out.

During the week we used the three disciplinary lenses of RE learning, Theology, Human / Social Science and Philosophy, to challenge the children. We emphasised the links between these and the skills we use in Science. For example, the scientific idea of researching using secondary sources linked well with the Human / Social scientist in RE who may look at several sources of evidence to draw a conclusion. We talked about how scientists observe changes over time, and how that links to a philosopher who may consider why these changes have occurred. The children noticed that people with all sorts of beliefs and worldviews did similar things to look after the planet, but not necessarily for the same reasons. The children's understanding of sustainability certainly increased and they are still referring back to the week's learning now, several months later."





LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
RE TRAINING AND SUPPORT
(PRIMARY)

SUMMER TERM 2026



Primary RE Leads and Teachers

29/4/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

RE network meeting (primary and secondary); book [here](#)

7/5/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

Assessing progress in RE; book [here](#)

9/6/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

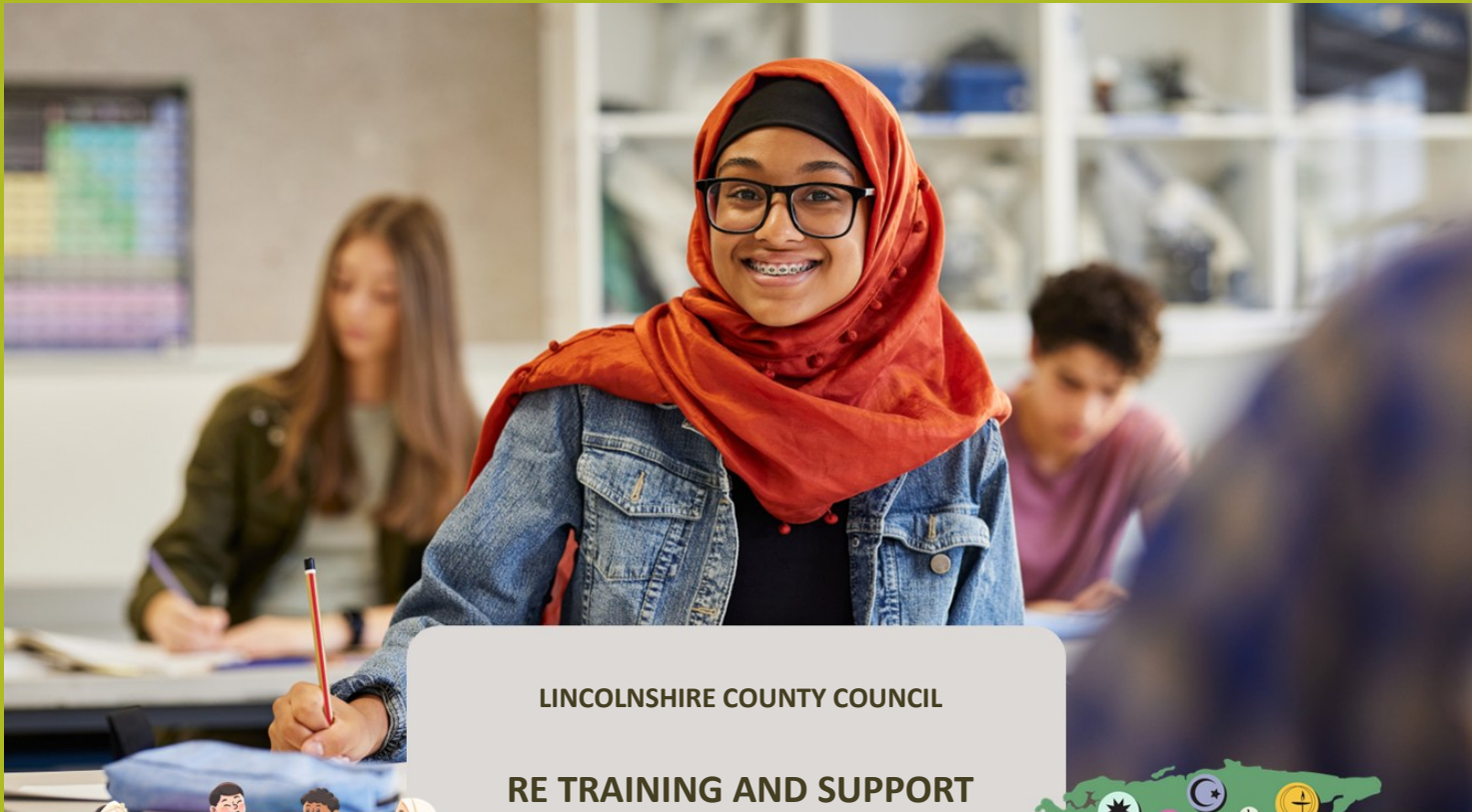
Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the RE curriculum; book [here](#)

23/6/26 1.30pm to 3pm via Zoom

RE network meeting (primary and secondary); book [here](#)

All sessions are open to all Lincolnshire-based RE leaders and teachers and are free to attend

Primary RE teachers and leaders are also invited to participate in an **RE planning workshop**. This will take place on **Friday 12th June 2026** between 10am and 2pm, venue to be confirmed. Further information will be sent out in due course.



LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RE TRAINING AND SUPPORT

(SECONDARY)

SUMMER TERM 2026



Secondary RE Leads and Teachers

29/4/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

RE network meeting (primary and secondary); book [here](#)

4/5/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

Developing core RE at KS5; book [here](#)

16/6/26 4pm to 6pm via Zoom

Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the RE curriculum; book [here](#)

23/6/26 1.30pm to 3pm via Zoom

RE network meeting (primary and secondary); book [here](#)

All sessions are open to all Lincolnshire-based RE leaders and teachers and are free to attend

Secondary RE teachers and leaders are also invited to participate in an **RE planning workshop**. This will take place on **Friday 19th June 2026** between 10am and 2pm, venue to be confirmed. Further information will be sent out in due course.

EXPLORING LIVED WORLDVIEWS AT FRANCES OLIVE ANDERSON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

It is very important to support children and young people to recognise that every person, no matter their background, has or occupies a worldview. Worldviews can be religious or non-religious; they can be formal and institutional or personal and individual. Our worldviews can be tapestries made of many different threads; they are our ways of being in the world and engaging with it. Making space to engage with a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews is an important part of an effective RE curriculum.

Pupils at Frances Olive Anderson Church of England Primary School in Lea have been learning more about non-religious worldviews as part of the RE curriculum. RE lead, **Rosanna McGlynn**, writes:

Bob Kiddle from Humanists UK visited our Year 6 class to support the RE topic 'Do you have to believe in God to be good?' He explained what it is like to be a Humanist and how he doesn't believe in supernatural beings like ghosts or unicorns, only in what has been proven. To show that you can't always trust your eyes and appearances can be deceptive, he asked the pupils to stare at a swirling black-and-white image for one minute and then look at their partner's face, noting, "You cannot always believe what you see." One pupil asked, "Do you celebrate Christmas?" Bob said, "I do celebrate Christmas because why not? It seems fun. I give gifts to my family and enjoy spending time with them, but I don't go to church." He also explained, "I don't believe in God or life after death," prompting a pupil to ask, "If you don't believe in the afterlife – are you afraid of dying?" Bob replied, "I am not afraid of dying, but I would be disappointed to not see my granddaughter fulfil her dream to become a professional ice skater."



[Humanists UK](#) provide a wide range of resources to support you to teach about Humanism as one example of a non-religious worldview:

[Understanding Humanism](#)—a great resource for both primary and secondary schools with age-specific materials

[Humanist Perspectives](#)—a collection of Humanist responses to key ethical issues, including Crime and Punishment, Animal Welfare and Prejudice and Discrimination

[Humanist Heritage](#)—a collection of case studies of Humanists and other non-religious people throughout global history

[School speakers](#)—links to regional Humanist speakers, like Bob Kiddle, who are happy to visit schools and talk about their non-religious worldview



[Sentientism](#) is a non-religious worldview that is rooted in evidence, reason and compassion for all sentient beings.

Sentientism resources for schools can be found [here](#), including an RE Today resource for KS3 on non-religious worldviews

A [YouTube playlist on Sentientism](#) can be found here; this includes videos that could be used in the classroom and videos that will develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of this worldview

Posters on key Sentientist themes can be found [here](#)

[This resource](#) shares examples of people from around the world who live a Sentientist worldview

Sentientism

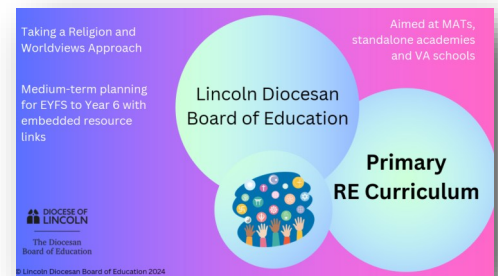


RE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The London School of Economic's Faith Centre has produced a series of helpful [films on religious imaginations](#); these films explore key concepts that underpin different religious worldviews.



The LDBE Primary RE Curriculum is now in use in more than 100 schools and academies across England. The curriculum take a religion and worldviews approach to RE and provides medium-term planning from Early Years to Year 6. You can find out more about these materials [here](#) or contact gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.



The Diocesan RE Adviser, Gillian Georgiou, has written a collection of Religious Studies case studies aimed at KS3. These case studies introduce students to historical and contemporary examples of lived religion and belief, supporting them to develop the 'ways of knowing' in RE and become more consciously aware of their own positionality. You can purchase these case studies [here](#).



The University of Cambridge has made available a series of [short lectures on RE-related topics](#), aimed at GCSE and A Level students. This includes themes such as Theology and Gender, Interpreting the New Testament and Christian Moral Action.



Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

Date	Time	Training
Wednesday 29th April 2026	1.30pm—3pm	<p>RE Cluster Meeting</p> <p>Virtual Session, Open to All</p> <p>Free to Attend</p> <p>Book here</p>
Wednesday 6th May 2026	1pm—3pm	<p>Assessment in RE</p> <p>Virtual Session, Open to All</p> <p>£70 (SLA); £150 (non-SLA)</p> <p>Book here</p>

For more information on the free RE training provided on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council for Lincolnshire schools, please see pp. 6 and 7; this includes links for those schools eligible to book.

The Diocesan RE Adviser is happy to carry out bespoke training on:

- ⇒ RE subject leadership
- ⇒ Types of knowledge in the RE curriculum
- ⇒ RE subject knowledge (religious and non-religious worldviews)
- ⇒ Developing disciplinary knowledge in RE
- ⇒ RE and assessment
- ⇒ A religion and worldviews approach to RE

She is also able to work alongside RE subject leaders to carry out RE reviews and provide RE curriculum support in schools, academies and MATs.

For more information, see our 2025/6 service level agreement [here](#) and our 2025/6 MAT partnership agreement [here](#).

For further details, please email the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.

To book, please see our [website](#).