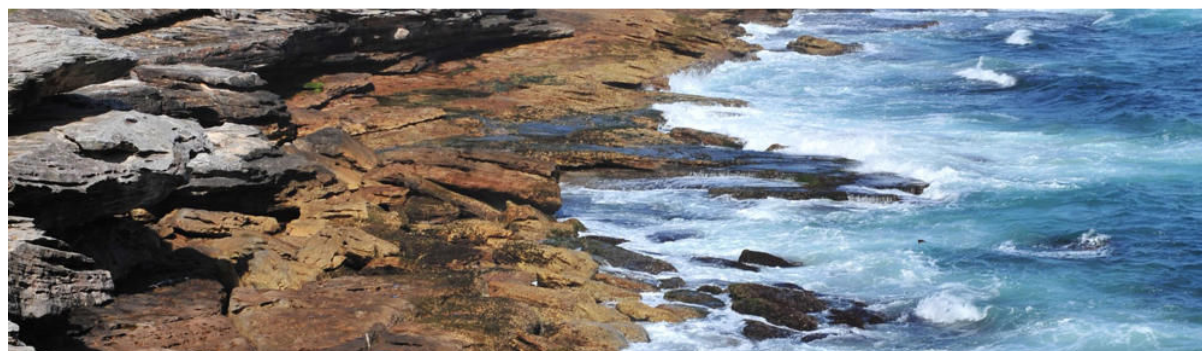


# LEARN/TEACH/LEAD: Enhancing RE in the South-West

## Briefing paper 14 –for SACREs and Steering Group members

October 2014

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**This paper is the regular update for SACREs and for members of the steering group.**

Colleagues can find out more on the website [www.ltlre.org](http://www.ltlre.org) . The project is also very active on *Twitter* – have a look at [@ltlre](https://twitter.com/ltlre) for the most recent conversations and conference photos. This paper is based on a recent Newsletter to schools across the region. It also contains specific information for project partners and a request for support (see page 4).

### **What is ‘Learn/Teach/Lead RE’?**

The project is a learning partnership project for Religious Education with a focus on creating a community of enquiry and professional development across the southwest peninsula. *LTLRE* was launched in October 2012 through funding in excess of £100,000, for a three year period, from the St Luke’s College Foundation <http://www.st-lukes-foundation.org.uk/> The funding means that the CPD enjoyed by increasing numbers of teachers is FREE to teachers of RE in state funded primary and secondary schools. This is the third full year of its programme.

### **Quality Assurance**

The project is being externally evaluated by Dr John Gay of Oxford University. Dr Barbara Wintersgill, formerly HMI and national adviser on RE, is leading the internal evaluation. The project’s steering group is chaired by Tatiana Wilson (Exeter Diocesan Board of Education, which is also the administrative centre) and the Project Director is Linda Rudge (freelance education consultant). Project partners include PLREs’ schools, and the local education authorities and Standing Advisory Councils for RE in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. Exeter and Truro Church of England Dioceses support the project

through their Boards of Education. Higher Education partners are the University of St Mark and St John Plymouth, and the University of Exeter.

### **DATE for your DIARY - 2015**

**We are pleased to announce that St Luke's Trustees have agreed to fund a fourth annual conference in October 2015. The venue and date are to be confirmed, but we are aiming for the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October at Dartington Hall, near Totnes. Please watch out for further details on the website and through school mailings. Enrolment usually begins after Easter, and we are usually oversubscribed.**

### **Hub Leaders (PLREs)**

The main aim of the project is to identify and address unmet needs of RE teachers in Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay. It also aims to improve the quality of teaching & learning outcomes, and subject leadership. The aims are achieved through the leadership of local teachers (Project Leaders of RE – PLREs) in hubs across the region. These teachers are working closely with established advisory staff in local authorities, in diocesan boards of education and in universities. There is an emphasis in the project on the needs of newly-qualified or early RE career teachers, and on the needs of teachers and teaching assistants with other specialisms and responsibilities.

**We have now appointed fifteen out of sixteen project leaders for RE (PLREs) who are all teachers of RE in primary and secondary schools across the region. New hubs have been created in mid/north Cornwall and in south Devon this year.**

Supported by steering group members, and by the equivalent of two days training each year, PLREs lead the hub groups in developing quality RE across the south-west region. We have referred in our training to the 'RE Quality Mark' standards and have encouraged schools to participate in this scheme where appropriate and feasible <http://www.reqm.org/> Hubs are also formally linked to the National Association of RE Teachers (NATRE) <http://www.natre.org.uk/> PLREs have benefitted from their training and increased confidence in their subject leadership as well as sharing their own expertise locally, regionally and nationally. Congratulations have been passed on by the project team to Gill Tewkesbury for winning a Hockerill prize (see link below) and for receiving a Farmington Fellowship, and to Katie Freeman for her recent article in *RE Today*.

**For further information about awards and prizes that might be of interest to your school or organisation please have a look at <http://www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk/natre-prize-2014.aspx> and [http://www.farmington.ac.uk/fellowships\\_and\\_awards/fellowships.html](http://www.farmington.ac.uk/fellowships_and_awards/fellowships.html)**

## **Hub Meetings**

Details about dates of termly hub meetings and venues are posted on the website and they are sent round to schools through partnership networks and by PLREs. Meetings are usually in twilight sessions and the venues change in order to involve as many schools as possible within each area. Some hubs use a Newsletter compiled by the PLREs to keep people in touch between meetings. Reports of the meetings are added to the website by PLREs through the website leader, Ian Hartley.

## **Project Developments**

We are still looking for a primary colleague to fill the role of PLRE in Torbay now that the South Devon hub is established – Corrine is currently primary PLRE in both hubs. Please contact Linda on [ludge@waitrose.com](mailto:ludge@waitrose.com) for further details. In the next phase of the project (2015-17) we will be looking for other funding partners to support the costs of the hub meetings. If you are in a teaching school or an education alliance looking to create RE networks, we would be really pleased to hear from you – contact Linda Rudge on [ludge@waitrose.com](mailto:ludge@waitrose.com) or Tatiana Wilson on [tatiana.wilson@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:tatiana.wilson@exeter.anglican.org) for further details.

The steering group will be planning the 2015 conference with the help of PLREs. Suggestions for a theme and speakers from SACRE members would be welcomed as we consider the plans during the year.

## **Annual Conference 2014**

In response to suggestions from last year's evaluation, and to events during the year, we chose our theme '*The Learning Journey in RE: Leading the Way through Religious Understanding*' to reflect the important contribution Religious Education makes to good community relations <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2014-03-17/re-and-good-community-relations> Conference delegates in 2013 requested further opportunities to boost their own subject knowledge and understanding through meeting members of faith communities. We organised this for the 2014 event, mainly through the support of the Centre for Faiths and Diversity in Plymouth <http://www.pcfcd.co.uk/>

Our outstanding keynote speakers were Lat Blaylock from *RE Today*, <http://www.retoday.org.uk/>, and Dr Geoff Teece and Dr Karen Walshe, both from the University of Exeter <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/>. Dr Rob Freathy and Giles Freathy led the thought-provoking plenary session using the materials from their highly successful 'RE-Searchers' project which has attracted the Humanities prize this year from the Times Educational Supplement <http://www.tesawards.co.uk/tessa2014/winners> We were also entertained and educated by John Keast, OBE, formerly Chair of the RE Council of England

and Wales, and RE adviser for Cornwall, at the conference dinner. Materials from the conference, and a programme, are available on the website, under the 'Learning' heading. Evaluations from the conference showed that for the majority of delegates the conference aims were met or exceeded, and we are grateful to everyone who made this third conference as successful as the previous two events.

### **Funding arrangements**

A bid to support the continuation of the project with revised funding levels will be presented to the St Luke's Foundation in the Spring term of 2015. This bid will be based on a formative proposal made last year in which the main aim is to seek other forms of funding for some areas and to move to self-sustaining elements of the programme. The project currently revolves around a) hubs, b) the leaders (PLREs), c) the annual conference (currently free to delegates) and d) a training programme for PLREs. The termly steering group meetings also attract a cost.

**The steering group will be considering which areas should be seen as the priority at their meetings in November and February, and how these can be made sustainable beyond the proposed two-year extension.**

In the feedback on the formative proposal from St Luke's to the project's team it was noted that the Trustees 'welcome and celebrate the success of the project to date'. The project is widely seen as successful and this model of CPD is being used as an exemplar by others around the country. Comments from internal and external assessors are also very positive. The Trustees are keen to see a sustainable model for the long term emerge from their initial substantial investment.

### **An item for SACRE and other organisational agendas?**

The project's team firmly believes that confident and reflective teachers are the key to successful RE. The role of SACREs and of our other partners in securing this innovative and successful model of RE training across the south-west is also vital to its continuation.

**We would appreciate it if all our partners could raise the issue of future funding and partnership activity through the appropriate channels in your organisations. Please contact the Project Director, Linda Rudge, on [lrudge@ewaitrose.com](mailto:lrudge@ewaitrose.com) if you require further details about the current funding levels and partnership arrangements. Thank you.**

We wish you a peaceful and fulfilling year for staff and pupils in all our schools.

'Schools and colleges are a safe and trusted place to explore religions, conflict and world views in a constructive and positive way... This prepares children for the challenges and opportunities of multi-cultural life, and helps them live harmoniously with others'. Stephen Lloyd, MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE

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