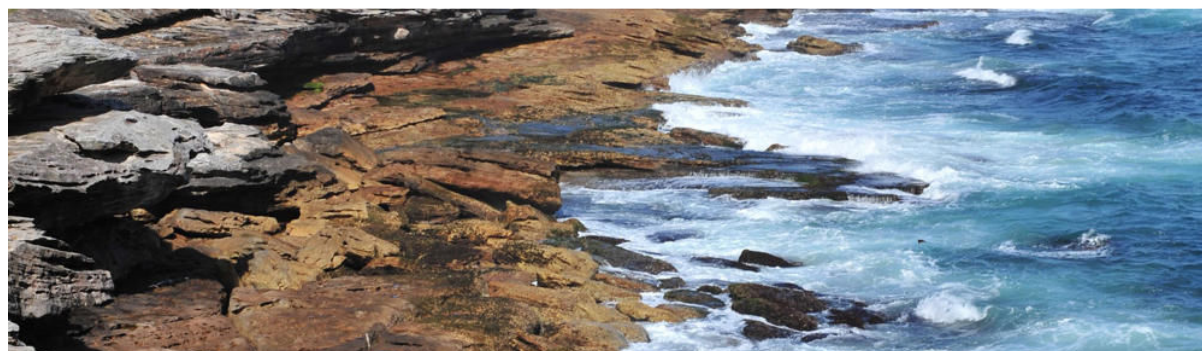


LEARN/TEACH/LEAD: Enhancing RE in the South-West

Briefing paper 15 –for SACREs and Steering Group members

From – Linda Rudge, Project Director, May 2015



This paper is the regular update for SACREs, PLREs, and for members of the steering group. Colleagues can find out more on the website www.ltlre.org. The project is also active on *Twitter* – have a look at [@ltlre](https://twitter.com/ltlre) for the most recent conversations and conference photos. Briefing papers like this one are intended to record the project’s history as well as to update members and participants. As there are always new people involved, the first two sections explain the background to the project and how it works.

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, secondary and special schools. This is the third full year of its programme and the final year in terms of the original grant from St Luke’s. An article outlining the impact of project and recording its development will appear in *Professional REflection*, the journal of the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) either in the autumn edition of *RE Today* or in the Spring 2016 edition.

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.

As a result of the positive evaluations received since the beginning of its work, the project has now received substantial funding from the Jerusalem (Sainsbury's) Trust to extend its work into three other south western areas centred round the Dioceses of Bristol, Bath and Wells and Salisbury. LTLRE has been selected by Culham St Gabriel's Trustees to receive shared funding in a project on assessment and progression in RE 'beyond levels.'

The internal evaluation for 2015 from Barbara Wintersgill contained the following **conclusions** for report to SACREs and other partners represented in the steering group. The full report will be discussed on June 4th at the next steering group meeting after which copies of the evaluation can be obtained from the project Director on lrudge@waitrose.com:

- *'One of the most impressive outcomes of the 2015 evaluation has been the substantial improvement in the quantity and quality of responses of teachers involved in LTLRE. Last year's responses indicated a successful project, which was already gaining a national reputation. The developments over this year have exceeded my expectations, especially compared with other projects past and present.'*
- *'The important question is "what next". Assessment is a key area for development and even PLREs will need considerable support with this'.*
- *'If the exceptional work of this project is to continue, then the PLREs are right in saying that the hubs and the annual conference which informs the work of the hubs over the year have to continue if the supply of confident, knowledgeable RE teachers is to be maintained....'.*
- *'Given the high profile of this project nationally, it might be worth considering the development of a training programme that would be offered nationally and would put the project on a sound commercial footing.'*

During the evaluation, PLREs were asked to identify key elements of the project whose retention was 'non-negotiable' for the continuing success of the project. Dr Wintersgill reported that 'they were unanimous that the three key elements to be retained were the annual conference, training and joint planning time for PLREs and regular hub meetings with the creation of new hubs. There was also a suggestion that the project should be supported by a fully interactive website with a resources sharing area'. A bid for further funding to St Luke's will be considered by Trustees in June 2015, and Teaching Schools are now involved at a strategic level in discussions about how they can help with these goals.

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, and the success of the project in achieving these aims has again been noted in this year's evaluation. 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.

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/> and the project has PLRE representatives on the NATRE executive committee.

PLREs have benefitted from their training and increased confidence in their subject leadership as well as sharing their own expertise locally, regionally and nationally. Amongst other PLRE successes this year, congratulations have been passed on by the project team to Corrine Price (South Devon and Torbay, Wolborough CE Primary School) for her publication in *RE Today* and to Ian Hartley for his leadership in an inspection by the *Challenge Partners Initiative*. This means that the RS department at Ridgeway Secondary School has now been officially recognised as an 'area of excellence' and has been entered into the *Challenge Partners* handbook online as a contact for other departments wanting advice / training etc. Nicola Bonell has also been promoted to Assistant Headteacher at St Mary's CE Primary School, Penzance and Giles Freathy is beginning a secondment with the Learning Institute in September 2015.

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. Most hubs now have electronic address books for their members, but we still rely on SACREs, LAs, university partners and Diocesan Boards to help us notify schools of meetings and conferences.

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 lrudge@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 lrudge@waitrose.com or Tatiana Wilson on tatiana.wilson@exeter.anglican.org for further details.

For the first time, in order to offset administrative costs and to establish a future training fund, we are asking for a registration fee from schools wishing to attend the annual conference – details below.

An ongoing 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. Ways of supporting the project are (for example) through the provision of adviser/teacher time for participation in training days, conferences and steering group meetings, or through the provision of venues or speaker costs.

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. Thank you.

We wish you a peaceful and fulfilling summer term, and hope to see you at the conference on 15th and 16th October 2015 (details attached below).

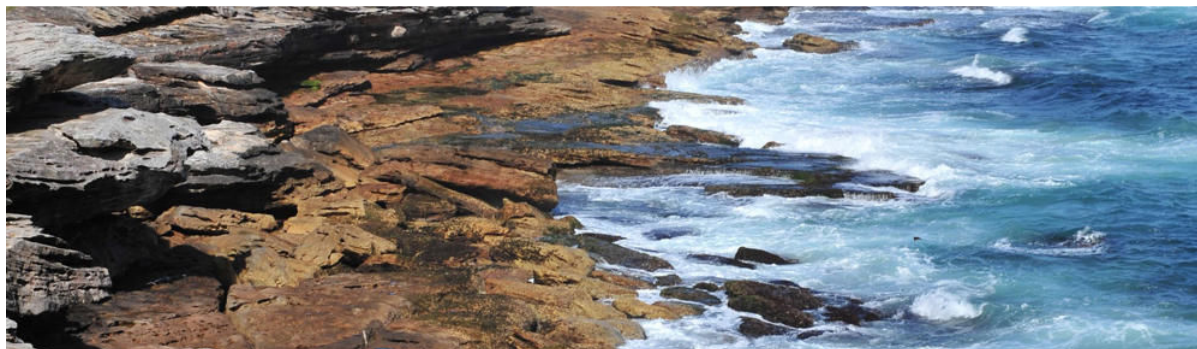
Those that know, do. Those that understand, teach. (Aristotle)

PLRE/hub contact details as of May 2015:

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



Fourth annual conference

Supported by the St Luke's College Education Foundation

4 pm 15th October to 4pm 16th October 2014

at

Dartington Hall, Totnes www.dartington.org

CREATIVE TEACHING, CREATIVE LEARNING: THE SPIRIT OF RE

Keynote addresses:

Mary Myatt, Project Manager for RE Quality Mark www.reqm.org

Derek Holloway, Salisbury Diocesan RE Adviser and SIAMS Manager

Verity Holloway, RE, Collective Worship and Spirituality Adviser, Salisbury Diocese

Plus WORKSHOPS focused on subject leadership and subject knowledge across religions and worldviews represented in the region's agreed syllabi

Deadline for residential bookings: 17th July 2015

Deadline for non-residential bookings: 30th September 2015

Please apply by e-mail to educationevents@exeter.anglican.org

for your priority booking form

Registration fee: £36 (inclusive of VAT) per individual delegate (non-refundable)

Apart from the registration fee, this event is FREE to all teachers of RE (including initial teacher education trainees, newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants) in Devon and Cornwall community and aided schools, and in academies. Delegates who have attended previous conferences are encouraged to apply, but there will be a waiting list to enable other teachers to access this CPD. If you can 'bring a friend' by enrolling another teacher you will have a priority place on the list. Places will also be allocated across the project's hubs. The conference and the project <http://www.tltre.org/> are funded by the St Luke's College Foundation <http://www.st-lukes-foundation.org.uk/>