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## Happy 'New Year'!

Welcome back to you all and to the start of the new academic year. I hope that you enjoyed the summer break and feel rested and revived, ready for the new term.

This newsletter, which is sent out to all our local groups leaders, contains both challenges and joys! Our aim is to equip you with plenty of ideas and support for running your local group. We have included details of courses, news of recently published resources, national news, and also news from some local groups.

I hope you will find something here to inspire you, something to challenge you in your teaching or leadership of a group, and something to make you smile!

NATRE is, as ever, at the end of an e-mail or telephone should you wish to contact us. We hope you will.

Finally, I wish you a successful and happy term.

Juliet Lyal, NATRE Local Groups Officer, and Primary Vice-Chair

E: [exec@natre.org.uk](mailto:exec@natre.org.uk)

## Hockerill/NATRE Award for Innovation in RE teaching

NATRE is pleased to announce the launch of the **2013 Hockerill/NATRE Award for Innovation in RE Teaching**.

Details of the Award and how to apply are found on the website of the Hockerill Educational Foundation (see below).

The Award is in two parts:

- £700 for the school to enable it to purchase new RE materials
- £400 as a bursary to the teacher to part-fund attendance at a specialist educational course for RE.

There are two categories for entry:

- schools teaching primary age pupils (i.e. 4 - 11 years)
- schools teaching secondary age pupils (i.e. 11 - 19 years).

The closing date for the receipt of entries is **31 January 2013**. Judging will take place in the following two months, with the successful prize winners being notified by Easter.

The prizes will be presented in the late spring/early summer of 2013.

We welcome enquiries from schools who want to talk over their ideas for entry to see if they meet the criteria for the award. Please contact Rosemary Rivett (NATRE) or Derek Humphries (Hockerill).

E: [rosemary@retoday.org.uk](mailto:rosemary@retoday.org.uk) (0121 430 2959)

E: [info@hockerillfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@hockerillfoundation.org.uk) (01279 420 855)

To download details:

W: [www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk](http://www.hockerillfoundation.org.uk)



## Update - the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG)



*Deborah Weston included one of NATRE's films in her presentation.*

*Daniel Hugill and Douglas Rice-Bowen (NATRE Executive) networking.*



June 11<sup>th</sup> was a good day for RE. Thanks to Stephen Lloyd MP, the launch and AGM of the APPG for RE took place at Westminster.

The launch included a good number of MPs from all major parties; most were there because they understood the value of RE and want to ensure that young people receive an 'academically rigorous education in religions and non-religious worldviews'.

Others admitted to me that they were there for a cup of tea and some cake, however were more than impressed by the words spoken by Deborah Weston (NATRE, Assistant to the Executive, and former Chair), John Keast (REC Chair) and Claire Dempsey (a year 12 RS student).

There was no lack of passion from any

of these three RE specialists, or from the group of year 8 and year 9 students who patiently explained, over their refreshments, what it was that made them excited about RE, or from the teachers, headteachers, and other RE ambassadors who mingled and networked.

The room buzzed and we had to be asked to leave at 6pm by a rather tired-looking head waiter.

Regular updates will be posted on the APPG section of the RE Council's website. There are currently 39 MPs who have joined the APPG. A list is available on the REC's website, as well as a sample letter to send to your MP encouraging them to join.

Juliet Lyal, NATRE Executive

W: [www.religiouseducationcouncil.org](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org)



## Ofsted update - HMI for RE meets 50 primary teachers

A highlight for me last term was joining an extremely well-attended and lively meeting of the St Albans NATRE local group - SARETT. They are a fantastic example of what can be achieved at local level.

Given the paucity of RE support generally around the country, NATRE's role is increasingly important in ensuring RE teachers feel they are part of a wider subject community.

A focus at the meeting was the way in which Ofsted's renewed focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can provide a spur for promoting RE within our schools.

There are many changes in Ofsted at the moment, some of which may well affect the way RE is inspected but the picture is not yet clear. The intention is to publish the next long report on RE in late 2012 or early 2013. Look out for that - it will be a key document reporting on our findings and setting out recommendations for the future.

Alan Brine HMI  
National Adviser for RE

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W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/our-expert-knowledge/religious-education](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/our-expert-knowledge/religious-education)



*Alan Brine talking to RE teachers at SARETT - the St Albans NATRE Local Group*

## 2-year NATRE subscriptions are increasingly popular

Did you know ... ?

If you take out a two-year subscription package, you save 10% on the cost of your subscription - and avoid any price increases.

If this form of subscription would be helpful to you, or you have any questions - please contact us. If you are already a member, you can let us know when you renew your membership. If you are a new member you can choose the 2-year option when you place your order.

E: [membership@retoday.org.uk](mailto:membership@retoday.org.uk) T: 0121 472 4242

W: [www.retoday.org.uk/subscriptions](http://www.retoday.org.uk/subscriptions)



*REtoday magazine  
Autumn 2012*

## RE Review 2012

The Religious Education Council's initiative to review RE is well underway and a substantial amount of work will be undertaken during August and September. The REC has appointed **Dr Janet Orchard** as Project Manager.

A four-person 'expert panel' has been appointed to consider the current strengths and weaknesses of RE, following a Scoping Report which identified four foci of concern: aims; curriculum; exemplification of good practice; assessment and qualifications. The panel will produce a report by the end of October 2012.

During August the panel met with a series of 'expert witnesses', including primary and secondary teachers of RE.

The members of the expert panel are:  
**Dr Bill Gent**, Chair (editor of REsource, NATRE's termly professional journal; former RE Adviser in Redbridge)  
**Lat Blaylock** (RE Today senior adviser, editor of REtoday magazine)  
**Dr Karen Walshe** (Secondary PGCE Programme Director; RE Course Leader, University of Exeter)  
**Prof Julian Stern** (Dean Faculty of Education and Theology, University of York St John)

There will be many opportunities for teachers to feed their ideas into the RE Review, and NATRE hopes that you will have your say.

For latest information see the link below:

W: [www.religiouseducationcouncil.org](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org)



*Dr Janet Orchard*  
[www.bristol.ac.uk/education/people/janet-l-orchard/index.html](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/education/people/janet-l-orchard/index.html)

## Results of NATRE's 2012 survey and GCSE results

The results of NATRE's fourth survey of schools on the impact of the EBacc on RE will be **published on Friday 28 September** on NATRE's website, and it is hoped that this will provide a useful stimulus to debate on the position of RE in schools and academies.

There were **625 respondents** to the survey from a **range of types of school**. The questions asked were more detailed than in the previous three surveys and included some new questions e.g. about the amount of CPD teachers had undertaken during the academic year.

Once the survey results are published, NATRE encourages teachers to:

- make sure that their **local MP receives a copy** (e.g. email it to them; visit them at their surgery)
- be alert to any discussion about it in the media and consider writing a **letter to the editor** in response to any article/coverage
- **check the curriculum provision of secondary schools local to you** - from September they have to publish on their website details of

their curriculum year by year. Where you see there is **appropriate provision** of RE for all year groups, consider **writing to the head of subject/head teacher** to express interest and support. Likewise where the website suggests **inadequate provision**, write to the **head teacher asking them to provide further details** of the curriculum provision.

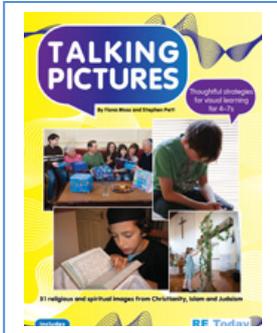
- **contact NATRE** to let us know of schools where there is good provision, where you are concerned about inadequate provision, or have any other questions or concerns.

Added as an Appendix to the report on the survey you will find graphical information and comment on GCSE results (1999 - 2012) for RS, History and Geography. There is much food for thought here!

E: [exec@natre.org.uk](mailto:exec@natre.org.uk)

W: [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk)





By Fiona Moss and  
Stephen Pett, *RE Today*  
<http://shop.retoday.org.uk>

## Talking Pictures - RE for 4 - 7s - NEW!

*Talking Pictures* is a visually rich picture pack to support 4 - 7s in learning from religion by talking. The pack provides 31 full-colour images related to Christianity, Islam, Judaism and a wider view of spirituality.

Each of the 16 Talking Pictures cards provides a series of questions, from simple initial questions to get children to look closely, to questions that build on their knowledge of the religions pictured, and then extending to more open-ended reflective questions.

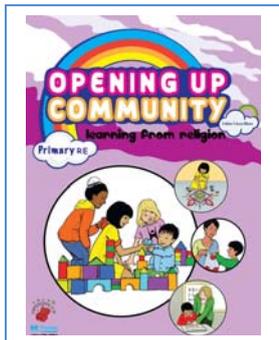
Information for teachers provides a clear, simple introduction to some of

the key beliefs and practices shown in the images.

The accompanying 24-page teacher's book includes 24 generic strategies for using pictures with 4 - 7s, linked to the pictures in the pack. There are 13 photocopiable pages for use with the pictures. All the images are on the accompanying disc to support use of the resource with an interactive whiteboard.

Price: £30 (10% discount available for NATRE members)

W: <http://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893584>



*Opening Up: Community*  
<http://shop.retoday.org.uk>

## Opening up Primary RE: Community - NEW!

*Opening Up: Community*, edited by Fiona Moss, explores three religion and belief systems that are represented in the primary schools of our country: Buddhism, Humanism and Sikhism.

The activities focus on what it is to be part of a community of shared beliefs and ideas and how that affects the way people within these communities choose to live their lives.

For younger children there are activities using some simple teaching from Buddhism embracing images, story and active learning. They also explore the

Sikh community through the key belief of sewa (service). For older children, two interviews support an enquiry about what it means to be part of a Buddhist community, and a mystery based around the celebration of Baisakhi. The unit on Humanism looks at marriage and ethics.

Price: £8.50 (10% discount available for NATRE members)

Available from: 0121 472 4242 and RE Today's webshop.

W: <http://shop.retoday.org.uk/97819058936321>



*Questions: Buddhists*  
<http://shop.retoday.org.uk>

## Questions in Secondary RE: Buddhists - NEW!

*Questions: Buddhists*, edited by Stephen Pett, is designed to cover some of the fundamental Buddhist tenets (e.g. Three Marks of Existence, Four Noble Truths), while seeing that Buddhism is a path rather than a set of beliefs, and that there is real diversity of paths to follow within Buddhism.

It includes the words of Buddhists from the Theravada and Mahayana traditions, including Tibetan Buddhism, the Thai Forest Sangha, Soto Zen and the Triratna Buddhist Order.

*Questions: Buddhists* offers students the chance to begin to understand how Buddhism says that the knot of existence is tied, as well as how it may be untied. It points students towards the kind of Engaged Buddhism espoused by Thich Nhat Hanh and others. It also takes the example of Aung San Suu Kyi's fight for freedom and justice in Burma.

Price: £9.50

Available from: 0121 472 4242 and RE Today's webshop.

W: <http://shop.retoday.org.uk/9781905893638>

## Professional Development Opportunities from RE Today



RE Today offers a range of professional development opportunities during the year, all delivered by one or more of **their team of specialist RE Advisers**. A summary of currently available opportunities is given below, with full details available on their website.

W: [www.retoday.org.uk/courses](http://www.retoday.org.uk/courses)

### PRIMARY

**Assessing Primary RE: Beyond the tick box**

Manchester, 6 November 2012

London, 28 February 2013

**Help! I'm the RE Co-ordinator**

Manchester, 25 February 2013

London, 12 March 2013

**Teaching three religions (Christianity, Islam, Judaism)**

Bristol, 13 November 2012

Manchester, 17 April 2013

### SECONDARY

**Assessing Pupil Progress in RE**

Birmingham, 4 February 2013

London, 15 February 2013

**Better learning from Christianity: increasing challenge and impact (KS3)**

Birmingham, 9 October 2012

Bristol, 12 June 2013

**New to RE**

London, 6 November 2012

Manchester, 8 November 2012

### Booking and prices

Prices are £160 for RE Today subscribers & NATRE members (including **10% discount**) and £190 for non-subscribers. Booking your place can be done online, or by completing the booking form (pdf) which is downloadable as from the website. Please contact us if you have any questions.

T: 0121 472 4242 E: [courses@retoday.org.uk](mailto:courses@retoday.org.uk)

### Bespoke PD opportunities

We are often asked by schools, academies, local authorities and dioceses to deliver **bespoke professional development opportunities** for their teachers. If this is of interest to you, please contact Rosemary Rivett in the first instance to talk over your needs.

T: 0121 430 2959 E: [rosemary@retoday.org.uk](mailto:rosemary@retoday.org.uk)

*I very much appreciated the practical focus of the day - I feel very well-equipped, with resources to take back to school.*



*The whole day has been excellent. Planning, organization and delivery have been brilliant. Very inspirational sessions!*



*The day was packed with excellent ideas to use in school, reassurance that I am on the right track and lots of ideas about what to do next.*

## Art in Heaven Competition 2012 and 2013

Lat Blaylock writes ...

We had another great competition this year, a taste of which you see here from Eleanor McGuinness, age 7, who chose 'Turning Points' and called her painting *The basket in the river*.

Eleanor, from Crigglestone St James Primary Academy, Wakefield, wrote:

The turning point of the story was when Moses' mum put him in the basket in the river and trusted God to look after him.

Check out the amazing Spirited Arts web gallery on the link below to view more winning entries from the 2012 competition, and to and read about NATRE's 10<sup>th</sup> Art in Heaven competition for 2013. If your school hasn't entered this year - why not in 2013?

W: [www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts](http://www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts)



*The basket in the river.*

## Spirited Poetry online

Winners from our third Spirited Poetry competition are all now available free on the NATRE website. There are many amazingly fine entries.

We are grateful to our sponsors, the Maurice and Hilda Laing Charitable Trust, because we had sufficient resources to get **sound files of the winning poems** recorded by a group of pupils. These are now available on the website.

Please use the poems - one good way to do this is to ask pupils, maybe for homework, to listen to some of the poems, choose three favourites and write about why they liked them. This is a great preliminary activity for the pupils' own poetry writing in a following lesson.

W: [www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts/index.php](http://www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts/index.php)

## Science & Belief - Essay Competition

Your students could win £300! RE Today is working with Professor Russell Stannard to evaluate the impact of his 12 recent films for RE - *Science & Belief: The Big Issues* - and we want your help.

Students of topics in science and belief are asked to **write an essay that evaluates the film series and responds to an issue raised in the series**. The essays, in two parts, will be a maximum of 1200 words in length and there will be **three prizes of £300 for the winners, with ten second prizes of £100 each**.

Schools are invited to send between 6 and 12 essays from their students (though smaller numbers of entries are also welcomed). To enter the competition, register an interest with the editor of REtoday magazine and/or download the details from the RE Today website.

The 12 films are freely available on You Tube - and there is a teacher's booklet of classroom activities to support. Films and booklet can be accessed on the link below.

**Topics included in the films:**

Creationism; Intelligent design; the Galileo trial; Miracles; the Anthropic Principle; Freud and Jung; Memes; Extra-terrestrial intelligence

**Deadline:** 14 March 2013

**Results announced:** late April 2013

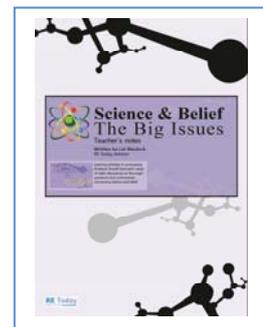
E: [lat@retoday.org.uk](mailto:lat@retoday.org.uk)

W: [www.retoday.org.uk/resources/23/read/160](http://www.retoday.org.uk/resources/23/read/160)

### Imago Dei

Here I stand,  
Looking at the cold sheet of glass,  
Watching a stranger mimic my every  
move  
I think of all the time spent  
Trying to create the perfect face of  
beauty,  
To no avail.  
What was the point?  
Why the waste of time?  
Why the waste of effort  
I realise now that I am perfect in my  
imperfection,  
I am - we all are - what God  
intended.  
We are his creation,  
Through his spirit we live,  
We are him and he is us,  
Imago Dei

Ciara Regan, age 13



[www.retoday.org.uk/resources/23/read/160](http://www.retoday.org.uk/resources/23/read/160)