

# Federation of RE Centres

[www.recentres.org.uk](http://www.recentres.org.uk)

Newsletter no. 23 Autumn 2008

**Chair: Lydia Revett**  
Hampshire County RE Centre  
Falcon House, Romsey Road, Winchester  
SO23 5PL Tel: 01962 863134  
[lydia.revett@hants.gov.uk](mailto:lydia.revett@hants.gov.uk)

**Newsletter Editor: Ian Knight**  
Winchester Diocesan Resource Centre  
Diocesan Office, Old Alresford Place,  
Alresford SO24 9DH Tel: 01962 737349  
[ian.knight@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:ian.knight@winchester.anglican.org)

## Letter from the Chair

Having just returned from London Colney from an excellent summer conference, I am hurriedly trying to catch up on work before the summer holidays ... and six weeks' off!



Thank you to all those who managed to squeeze two days out of their hectic work schedules to attend the conference: it was good to meet new members as well as see familiar faces and hear the news of your centres. I hope that the networking opportunities and the 'recharge of batteries' potential meant that we all felt we gained from the experience. Personally I was fascinated by the visits to the Reform Synagogue in Radlett and the Watford Jamia Mosque, and always learn something new from such encounters. Our thanks to Ron Upton who kindly organised the conference, but unfortunately was unable to join us because of staff illness.

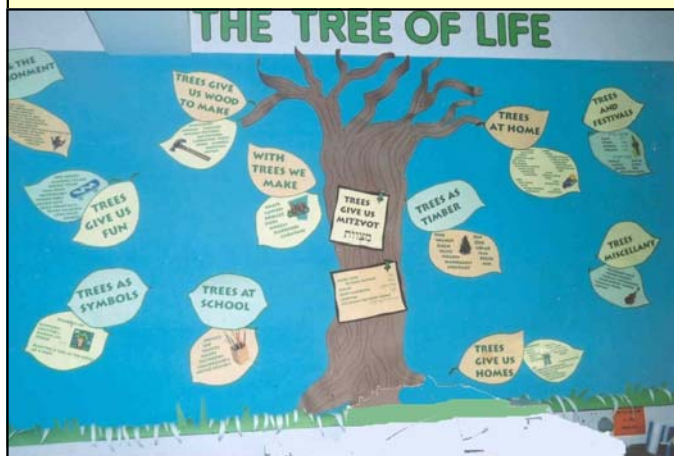
We are proposing to change our name to the Federation of RE Centres so that it reflects more accurately our membership. This will necessitate various changes – the logo and website being only two. Mindful of the geographical diversity of our membership, we will be arranging future meetings and conferences in places which we hope will be accessible to the majority. With 22 paid up members, I am very glad to report that we are a growing organisation and I would like to welcome formally those members new to us in the past few months. As ever, we are looking to consolidate our position as a national body by contacting RE Centres further afield. If anyone has any suggestions for potential new members, please contact me or Chris Boxley by email on [boxley@talktalk.net](mailto:boxley@talktalk.net)

Many thanks too to those who continue as officers in their work to support the group.

I look forward to seeing you in November at the meeting at the Leo Baeck College. It sounds as if it will be a full and interesting day.

With best wishes  
Lydia

**Autumn Meeting**  
**Wednesday 5 November**  
**10.30—3.30**  
**Leo Baeck College**  
**Finchley, North London**



**Visit the prayer room, synagogue, resource centre, library and Akiva School.**

**Browse and buy children's and teachers' books on Judaism.**

**Visit Manor House Books which sells a wide range of Jewish books, cards, artefacts etc.**

**See a video conference lesson.**

**All on site.**

**Coffee and lunch provided.**

**Please let Pamela Hartog, our host, know by Friday 31 October if you would like to come.**  
[pamela.hartog@lbc.ac.uk](mailto:pamela.hartog@lbc.ac.uk)  
**020 8349 5622**

**Travel directions and a map are available by going to [www.lbc.ac.uk](http://www.lbc.ac.uk) and clicking the *Visit and Contact* tab (top right).**

## RE Council Meeting - 6 May 2008



- 1 Jim Knight, Minister of Schools and Learners, was unable to come to the meeting due to pressing government business, so Helen Williams, Director Curriculum and Pupil Wellbeing, Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) attended in his stead and read his speech. Excellent probing questions from the floor about relativities of funding for RE as compared to PE, Music and Art.
- 2 Following the agreement of partnership between the RE Council & DCSF to the tune of £960,000 over three years against an agreed action plan (see below), John Keast has been appointed partnership advisor, and this necessitates him stepping down as deputy chair of RE Council. Further information will be made available on REC website [www.religioueducationcouncil.org](http://www.religioueducationcouncil.org)
- 3 RE action plan responds in part to RE Council National Strategy document (available from the website above) and includes:
  - a. Revision of guidance on RE in terms of updating Circular 1/94 (RE and SACRE sections, not collective worship at this stage) to take into account changes in the law, policy and practice as well as the non-statutory National Framework for RE.
  - b. NATRE support for RE teachers – outlined by Deborah Weston, based on four areas of expenditure, namely promotion of RE through online digital video for teachers including non-specialists, students choosing options and head teachers to show parents, promotion of membership of NATRE through local groups, NATRE website development, finance to support and extend NATRE executive.
  - c. SACRE recruitment and training – Julie Grove outlined the plans to roll-out pilot training to all regions.
  - d. CPD handbook – Joyce Miller outlined plans to set up small steering group to write material closely modelled on Citizenship handbook Making sense of citizenship (2006). Publication date February 2010.
  - e. Review of RE resources commonly used in schools.
- 4 QCA update – as Mark Chater was unable to attend a paper was circulated on Rose review of primary curriculum, RE and diplomas, new QCA documents, pedagogy in RE
- 5 Share time:
  - a. CD-ROM coming out from the Council of Christians and Jews [www.ccj.org.uk](http://www.ccj.org.uk)
  - b. Free CD-ROM launching on the teaching of Judaism from the Board of Deputies [www.boardofdeputies.org.uk](http://www.boardofdeputies.org.uk) with dedicated website [www.jwol.org.uk](http://www.jwol.org.uk)
  - c. Diana awards [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk) wish to increase their inclusivity
  - d. New teaching resources available on Humanism from the BHA website [www.humanismforschools.org.uk](http://www.humanismforschools.org.uk)
  - e. NASACRE has updated its information booklet [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk)
  - f. National RE Centre at St Nicholas Cole Abbey – John Gay reported that it now had received plan-

- ning permission, £7M to be raised.
- 6 Learning outside the classroom – [www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com](http://www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com) and linked site [www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com](http://www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com)
- 7 Publicity leaflet on RE and the REC circulated – now available for general use.
- 8 Next meetings 6 November 2008 and 5 May 2009.

### New Hinduism Resources at Banbury



Banbury Area RE Centre (BAREC) relies on grants and subscriptions from schools in north Oxfordshire and surrounding counties. Member schools can visit the centre during opening hours, to borrow resources for a (half) term.

We see the introduction of a new requirement to teach Hinduism at key stage 2 in Oxfordshire as an opportunity to promote ourselves to local primary schools.

At the moment volunteers are finalising boxes of resources ready for a launch to schools in September. Other plans include a visit to a Mandir and Inset. The new syllabus details nine themes with suggested content. We decided to produce tailor-made boxes to back these, by packaging and adding to our existing resources. We have made extra boxes for the more popular themes e.g. Beliefs and Questions, which must be taught by all schools.

A typical box will contain books, artefacts, laminated posters, photographs and suggested activities. These help to meet the attainment targets, learning “about” and “from” religion. There is also a basic overview designed to help the non-specialist teacher, together with suggested web sites and cross-curricular ideas. We were keen to make the content appealing and visited the Gohil Emporium in Birmingham to purchase additional artefacts and music CD’s. We bought boxed murtis so they would withstand being transported. In fact we intend to deliver boxes to local schools where we can.

This has been a rewarding exercise for BAREC, backing our Centre Manager, Jo White, in meeting the needs of local schools. Thank you too, to other centres for your support. It was sharing ideas with others that gave us confidence to embark on this project.

Alison Smith  
Banbury Area RE Centre

## Summer Conference



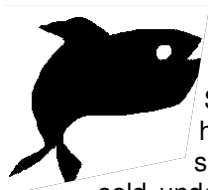
Above & right: Watford Jamia Mosque, a very active Muslim community, where we were shown round and then kindly provided with refreshments.



Above & right: Members of the group at London Colney.



Left: Rabbi Paul Freedman at Radlett and Bushey Reform Synagogue who spent some time showing us around, and talking about the synagogue in the context of the local Jewish community.



## Jumping Fish

Since 2004 the Diocese of Gloucester has produced a number of resources for schools and churches, which are now sold under the *Jumping Fish* brand name. The first publication, *Pause for Reflection*, written by Diocesan Primary Advisers in the South West region, offers easy starting points for spiritual development in primary schools and gives detailed instructions for creating interactive and reflective displays that will engage children.

This was followed by *Values for Life*, a programme for teaching Christian values through collective worship and across the wider curriculum. This is a three year rolling programme.

Amongst other publications, *Experience Easter* and *Experience Christmas* have proved very popular. *Experience Harvest* is due to appear in November this year, and *Experience Pentecost* next January.



Numerous churches throughout the Gloucester Diocese and further afield have shared the Easter story with children from local primary schools. *Experience Easter*, produced by Shahne Vickery, the Diocesan Primary Schools Adviser, is an imaginative approach to help children experience the Easter story through six easy to assemble, interactive stations set up in different parts of the church. Classes from the local primary school are invited to visit the church where in small groups they are guided by a leader from the school around each station. The pack gives detailed instructions to church members to enable them to create the stations. Also included are instructions to help the school group leaders introduce and reflect on each part of the story.

For use in conjunction with the *Experience Easter* and *Experience Christmas* packs, the Diocesan Children's Officer, Sandra Millar, has written all-age worship and activities materials *Resourcing Easter* and *Resourcing Christmas*. These will eventually become part of a publication on resourcing all age worship and activities for festivals and other key periods in the church year.

Details of all the *Jumping Fish* resources can be found on our website:  
[www.gloucester.anglican.org/education/resources//](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/education/resources//)

Carolyn Wright  
Diocese of Gloucester REsource Centre

## Video conferencing at Leo Baeck College

Recently I taught a lesson on the Jewish festival of Chanukah to children in a school in London. I then taught the same lesson four times that week, to schools in Yorkshire, Cheshire and Lancashire. Exhausting, all that travelling...

Except I did not travel anywhere. It was all done from our video conferencing room here at Leo Baeck College. Through the wonders of technology, I was able to see and talk to the children and they could see and respond to me. I could also show them artefacts and tell the Chanukah story using pictures on a Powerpoint presentation.

All this is possible through a company called Global Leap. They have a website that schools can log on to and join which gives them access to all sorts of lesson providers including ourselves. They then book a half hour lesson with us and state what aspect of Judaism they would like to learn about. Global Leap have provided us with the equipment and make the link between the schools and us.

It was somewhat daunting to teach and manage the technical side at the same time when I first started, but I have gained in proficiency the more I do. There are still occasional hitches but, as in any classroom, I improvise if necessary. The only disadvantage is that the pupils cannot touch or taste the artefacts and food that I show. I often send worksheets to the schools so that the pupils can follow up the lessons.

This is an exciting way to use the modern technology and for me it is a way of communicating Judaism to pupils who otherwise would not necessarily have the chance to meet someone Jewish.

For more information about Leo Baeck College, our website is [www.lbc.ac.uk](http://www.lbc.ac.uk) and our Keshet (outreach) project is detailed under educational services. Global Leap's website is [www.global-leap.com](http://www.global-leap.com)

Pamela Hartog  
Leo Baeck College

