

Crossing the Bridges Project

March 2017



The Spring Term 2017 sees the final phase of the 'Crossing the Bridges' Project come to fruition.

Thanks to the Westhill/NASACRE Award, the pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub has, this term, been able to deliver:

- **A second training session** (23rd February at the Wokingham Baptist Church) for hosts at places of worship. A further 15 people attended, meaning that 30+ people have attended over the course of the project. This training explored the nature and aims of Religious Education, the pan-Berkshire agreed syllabus and the role of places of worship visits in enhancing RE learning for children and young people. Whilst there, delegates were given the opportunity to explore the Baptist Church using the new enquiry materials to give insight into using these with pupils in their own places of worship.
- **An 'on location' training day** for 30 teachers at 4 places of worship in Maidenhead and Slough: the Slough Gurdwara, the Stoke Poges Mosque, the Slough Baptist Church and the Maidenhead Synagogue. Several such trips have been run over the past few years but this was the first one for which the 'Crossing the Bridges' teaching booklets have been available. Teachers were able to use these to enhance their understanding of how to use an enquiry approach to deepen children's learning experiences, at places of worship, focussing on beliefs not simply on the artefacts and symbolism seen.

A separate report with photographs is attached to this report.

- **A set of 4 powerpoint presentations** to use as visual aids for RE lessons, one on each of the places of worship visited on the 'on location' day, has been produced, and will be disseminated to all schools in the 6 Berkshire LA areas through the SACRE web pages as well as made available as free downloads through the Diocese of Oxford and Discovery RE websites:

www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/religious-education-new/religious-education-resources/teaching-resources/crossing-the-bridges/

www.discoveryschemeofwork.com

Using these websites means we are able to share these resources with schools across the UK at no charge.

- **A Directory of visits and visitors.** Teachers have long been requesting a list of places of worship to take pupils to for RE learning. This is more complicated than simply providing a list as teachers need contact details, details of availability and also reassurance that if they make all the effort necessary to take pupils out of school, the visits will be valuable and worthwhile; hence needing to provide training for hosts at these places of worship to enhance what they offer when pupils visit.

To date we have 35 entries in the Directory which means teachers have 35 places of worship to choose from that they know have willingly engaged in the 'Crossing the Bridges' Project, and are keen to host visits.

The Directory is scheduled to be uploaded and be available to schools during the Summer term 2017 and be publicised through the Oxford Diocese, SACREs and teacher network and Local Authority communication channels.

We have also produced common booking forms which help to focus the learning of the visit beforehand as well as dealing with practicalities; common evaluation forms for both hosts and schools; and the interactive teaching booklets that can easily be adapted for visiting any place of worship with any age group.

(all available through SACRE, LA, Oxford Diocese and Discovery RE websites).

The project will continue to be disseminated through the SACRE Hub and the teacher network meetings and events.

Celebration Conference

The SACRE Hub is planning a second 'Crossing the Bridges' Conference, 28th September 2017, to share and celebrate this work and report on progress once schools have started using the Directory and teaching materials.

This project has truly enabled people to cross the bridges from school to religion, religion to school, and the pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub has itself been the bridge that has made this happen. We hope this work will support teachers to offer ever richer learning experiences for their pupils in RE, and also hope this model is shared more widely than the Berkshire area where it has originated.

The pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub would like to thank all the places of worship, schools, advisers and especially Westhill/NASACRE for making this project so productive.

Jan Lever

SACRE Hub manager, on behalf of the 6 Berkshire SACREs

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