



January 2026 (Term 3)

Dear Colleagues,

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Welcome

Welcome back to Term 3. I hope you had a joyous break from school with time out for rest and refreshment.

Following on from my recent New Year message I pray that this term is one where you can celebrate with your staff and young people the gift of Jesus coming to transform lives and show us a way to live, reiterating strong values and a love for all, however hard that is.

Speaking of gifts...!

Release of DDE Discretionary fund 2026

I am delighted to let you know that the DBE have agreed to release funding of £25k total in amounts of up to a maximum of £2000 to the end of this academic year.

If you wish to try for what we anticipate will be a very popular fund, please complete the request form, taking note of the conditions for spend and examples of possible projects in the Appendix.

Note the severely restricted word limit as we do NOT want you to spend a long time on paperwork! Maybe 15 minutes work.

We know we can't provide funding to you all but we are doing all we can to release what we can make available to schools as we are well aware how tight your budgets are.

We anticipate that in the spring there will be further opportunities to bid for significant amounts of funding and we will release details at the same time to you all.

Please note that receiving a smaller discretionary fund grant will not compromise your opportunity to succeed in bidding for a larger grant later in the year as the processes are separate.



Liz Townend
Diocesan Director of Education

Application Form

Possible Project Appendix

Good News

FlourishED Conference



It was wonderful to see so many of you at FlourishED in November. What a wonderful day of inspiration, connection, and renewal.

We have had excellent feedback from delegates, one of whom commented:

'Thank you for today's conference. I think it was the best yet. So uplifting and inspiring. There was a real sense of community within the room and a rare feeling of togetherness between Trusts and maintained schools.'

Christ Church Clifton

Congratulations to Christ Church Clifton on their positive SIAMS inspection outcome in term 2. Some fabulous comments on this special community, well done to all the team.

The vision and its associated values ensure that positive relationships abound...Pupils and adults, for instance, are extremely kind to one another and gentle on themselves. Pupils are deeply nurtured and, consequently, feel safe, listened to and encouraged.



Church School Partnership Award



This updated award celebrates positive and mutually beneficial partnership between a school and parish. It provides an opportunity for discussion and support between key members of both communities: a 'stock take' of current practice and ideas to inspire and deepen this partnership further.

The award can be achieved at Bronze, Silver or Gold which reflects the extent to which the partnership is flourishing, valued and growing.

If you would like to apply (or even re-apply) please click on the link below for the application form.

All applications will be reviewed termly and the closing date for the next applications is **Monday 2 March 2026**

Schools and Parishes in Partnership - Diocese of Bristol

Upcoming Training & Events

Created To Lead - Day One

Wednesday 21st January 2026 at Cadbury Heath Primary

Looking forward to welcoming representatives from all trusts to our brand new initiative.



Join ONLINE for these FREE RE spotlights on worldviews



We will look at the core substantive knowledge through a disciplinary approach to teaching and learning and recommend some great resources and approaches to assessment.

These subject spotlights are great CPD for ECTs, new subject leaders and the more experienced RWV teacher. Join alone or with your colleague. There will be plenty of opportunity to interact and ask questions.

- Thursday 15th January 2026 - Hindu Dharmic worldviews
- Thursday 12th February 2026 - Non-religious worldviews
- Thursday 26th February 2026 - Jewish worldviews
- Thursday 12th March 2026 - Muslim worldviews

Book Here: spotlights are FREE and last about 70 minutes.

Prayer Spaces

Friday 27th February 2026 at Christ Church, Downend

This years Prayer Spaces in Schools regional gathering is being held in Bristol at a very reasonable cost of £10 per place

Whether you're thinking about your first prayer space, or you've been running them for years, this gathering is a place to learn, to be inspired by the stories and experience of others and to go deeper.



The poster features a light purple background decorated with various colored circles (red, green, blue, orange, purple). In the top left corner is the 'Prayer Spaces in Schools Great Britain' logo, which includes a blue speech bubble icon. On the left side, there is a rectangular inset photograph showing the interior of a church with people seated in pews, facing a stage where a person is speaking. To the right of the photo, the text 'Prayer Spaces in Schools Regional Day' is written in a bold, dark blue font. Below this, a large white circle contains the word 'Bristol' in dark blue. A thin blue arrow points from the text 'Regional Day' towards the 'Bristol' circle. At the bottom right, the text 'Christ Church, Downend' is written in a smaller, dark blue font.

[More Information can be found here](#)

SIAMS Training

Thursday 5th March 2026 at Kingfisher CE Academy, Swindon

Open to everyone. We would especially love to see **ALL schools** who we consider may be inspected within the next year and may not have attended a recent training event yet



Book Your SIAMS Training Place Here

Recommended Events This Term

****LAST CHANCE TO BOOK****

Annual SACRE Conference

Friday 6th February 2026 at Engineers House, Bristol

We are once again pleased to invite and welcome you to the Annual RE Conference for all subject leaders, school leaders or those teaching RE.

This is a full day event including a engaging keynote presentation from **Fiona Moss** exploring how a religion and worldviews approach to teaching RE - both content and pedagogy - supports understanding of the richness of communities

This event is provides a excellent opportunity to gain essential knowledge with the upcoming changes to the CofE Statement of Entitlement and DfE curriculum review, plus ALL South Glos Schools are entitled to 1 Free Place so make sure you don't miss out! .

BRISTOL, SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE, WILTSHIRE & SWINDON
SACRE PRESENT

ANNUAL RE CONFERENCE 2026

FRIDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 9.30-3.00PM

ENGINEERS HOUSE, BRISTOL BS8 3NB

Cost: **FREE** for teachers in South Gloucestershire

£120 per delegate, £75 for second delegate* [BOOK HERE](#)



Diversity Within...

including diverse representations of
religions and worldviews in the RE classroom



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: FIONA MOSS

Fiona is the Education and Programmes Manager for Culham St Gabriel's Trust. *Fiona will explore how a religion and worldviews approach to teaching RE - both content and pedagogy - supports understanding of the richness of communities.*

ALSO :

- Special Feature Pilgrimage and 'Lived Experience' panel discussion with people from diverse religion and belief traditions
- Workshops including: teaching Christianity as a diverse world faith, including diverse opinions in GCSE RS, religious perspectives on masculinity and femininity AND MORE for all key stages.

Book Your SACRE Conference Place Now



NATRE's Strictly RE still has places if you are able to attend this amazing day in Birmingham on Saturday 31st Jan.

Why not carshare with someone near you?! More info on the NATRE website [here](#).

National Updates

National Church guidance received for dissemination

The Employment Rights Act received Royal Assent on 18 December and is summarised below in terms of its relevance to you and the way you might work with unions.

We are sharing some suggested lines that you can use with your members as needed. We have also included a paragraph at the bottom of the guidance which tries to explain simply what the Bill becoming an Act means for the SSSNB, in case this is helpful.

- *The Employment Rights Act provides for the establishment of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) as a statutory body specifically for school support staff, with a remit to negotiate pay and conditions, and to advise on training and career progression.*
- *The body will give a sector specific voice to support staff, who make up roughly half of the school workforce, by bringing together employer and employee representatives.*
- *The body will recognise the varied and vital roles support staff undertake, and in turn support work to drive high and rising standards in schools and ensure we give children the best possible life chances.*
- *Agreements ratified by the Secretary of State on pay and conditions will be incorporated into individual employee contracts, where they are currently on terms below the new statutory minimums agreed by the SSSNB.*
- *This means there will be a consistent national 'floor' for pay and conditions that all school support staff can expect, whilst protecting individual employee entitlements beyond this, and allowing room for employers to innovate.*
- *Secondary legislation will be required to commence and constitute the body in 2026.*
- *We therefore anticipate that school support staff will continue to be covered by their existing arrangements in 2026-27, with the first outcomes arising from the SSSNB from the 2027-28 financial year at the earliest*

- *Findings from the public consultation held in June and July 2025 will be published in early 2026.*

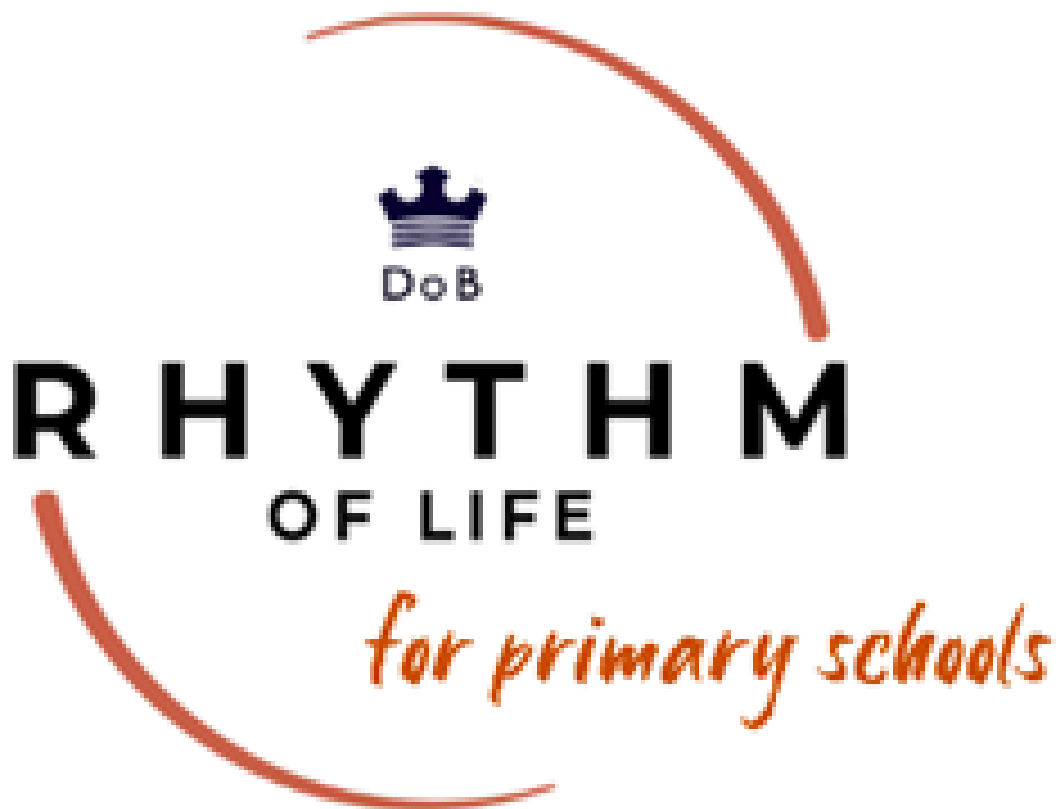
We are planning to launch a holding page for the SSSNB on GOV.UK (we will share a link once live). The page will host existing publications and information until the SSSNB is operational, at which point a new page will be developed.

As previously mentioned, we are also developing FAQs and will provide more detail in the new year.

Explanatory paragraph

- *The Employment Rights Bill receiving Royal Assent on 18 December means it has become law and is now the Employment Rights Act.*
- *As with all acts, it may not have practical effect until later on, within a set period after Royal Assent, or at a time fixed by government.*
- *For the SSSNB, the Employment Rights Act sets out that the School Support Staff Negotiating Body will be established and confirms the legal basis for how it will work.*
- *The government will need to use powers from the Act to confirm which staff are in scope of the SSSNB and which organisations will represent them and their employers in secondary legislation. We consulted on the former over the summer and will publish the findings and the government response in early 2026.*
- *This means the government will choose a date in 2026 to establish the SSSNB and for it to start operating. The date will be chosen to give staff and employers time to understand how the law relating to the SSSNB applies to them and ensure a smooth transition from the current National Joint Council (NJC) process, the terms of which most school support staff are currently employed on.*

Resources



NEW *FREE* Rhythm of Life for Primary Schools

Help your pupils flourish with simple, life-giving practices rooted in Christian tradition. The Rhythm of Life for Schools programme offers ready-to-use resources designed to support spiritual development and wellbeing across the school year.

A healthy rhythm of life can help our young people thrive. Together, teachers and clergy can create pathways to faith and wellbeing, equipping a generation with a deep sense of belonging and hope.

What is a rhythm of life?

A rhythm of life is a framework of daily and weekly practices that encourage balance, reflection, and spiritual growth. These rhythms, such as prayer, gratitude, rest, and acts of kindness, can help children develop healthy habits that support their emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. By embedding these patterns into school life, we give pupils firm foundations for flourishing both now and in the future.

More information and downloadable resources on our website

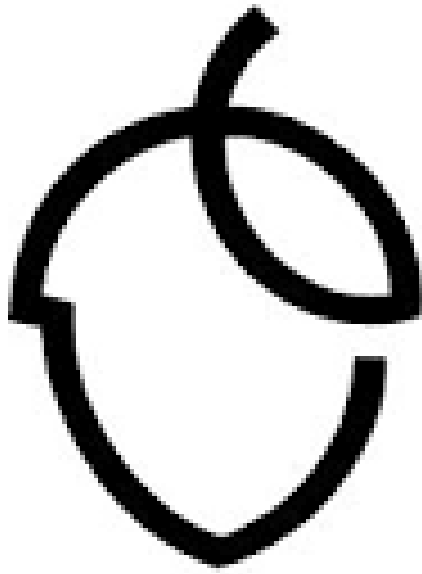
FREE RE hub session on 'Understanding Islamic Worldviews'

Tuesday 10th February 4-5pm (Online)

Thank you to hub leader Katy Thomas for the open invitation to her North Wilts RE Hub to hear from the exciting guest speaker **Is'Haaq Jasat**

Do join us on **Zoom**





Oak National Academy

Oak Academy Resources

New free curriculum resources now available for both Primary and Secondary schools.

These excellent knowledge rich and diverse RE materials have been supported and developed by Adam Robertson and team, who some of you will know from his time here at Diocese of Bristol.

The materials are designed to be complementary and enriching for all agreed syllabus and schemes of work currently being used and reflect a strong Religion and Worldviews approach. Do take a look.

Free curriculum plans aligned with National Curriculum | Oak National Academy



Did you know that there is a **Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE)** Teacher hub in every area of the Diocese of Bristol and it is entirely **FREE**?

Every term (3x per year) expert local leaders and teachers of RE facilitate these network meetings to share excellent practice, new resources and ideas for the RE classroom. Primary and Secondary colleagues are welcome and as many representatives from each Trust and schools as you would like. Some are in person, and some online. Find details of your local hub for this term on the 'RE Hubs' website calendar [HERE](#)

Swindon - Tuesday 10th Feb - Introducing Islam as a worldview: Is'Haaq Jasat (guest speaker, online, all hubs welcome)

Somerset - Wednesday 21st January - Enquiry Questions

Bath - Tuesday 20th January - Sharing best practice

Easyfundraising:

The Diocese of Bristol is encouraging all our schools to sign up to **easyfundraising** - the **easiest** way to raise extra money for your school, simply through everyday online shopping!

When families, teachers and governors shop via easyfundraising, 8000 well known retailers such as **Tesco, John Lewis, Argos, eBay, Clarks, M&S and Booking.com** donate a proportion of what they spend to your school, at no extra cost to the shopper. Every donation goes straight to your school and can be spent on **whatever you need most**, from resources and books to trips, clubs and equipment.



It's completely free to register and use, and simple to set up and run so to get started, register your school below.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with Naomi by emailing naomi.jervis@bristoldiocese.org.

Easy Fundraising Registration

Sustainable Schools



Do you have a thriving pupil-led Eco Committee in your school?

Does your school have a heart for God's creation and sustaining your local environment? Please get in touch with Julia.watts@bristoldiocese.org if your school would like to share what you do in terms of sustainability and environmental care, or you would like your pupil-led Eco committee to be inspired and hear stories and simple tips and tricks from other schools' approach to environmental care.

We will host an online webinar for all Pupils in Eco / Sustainability Committees online during the school day in February – **please note we are postponing the webinar advertised for January until Wednesday 4th February at 2pm for an hour.**



Orchards for Schools is now open for applications!

Orchards for Schools is our popular grant programme for UK schools that provides a free pack of fruit-bearing, wildlife-enhancing, carbon-storing orchard or fruiting hedgerow for your school!

Schools that are successful in their application will receive their orchard and/or hedgerow pack, an engaging set of supporting resources and training, designed by experts and teachers, that are linked to the national curriculum. 🌳

Head over to our website to find out how to apply!

A Prayer for this term

Heavenly Father

Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community so that everyone grows in the knowledge of Your truth, love, wisdom and peace.

We pray for all children - help them to explore what they can achieve and give them confidence to play their part in shaping our world.

We pray for all those who work in schools. Care for them as they care for our children.
We pray for all governors of schools. Grant them wisdom and sound judgement, and help them to keep children's well-being at the heart of everything they do.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen

Get in touch with the Education team here

I have come that they may have life - life in all its fullness
John 10:10



[Visit our website](#)  

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