

Session Outline

Session leader: David Lundie
Co-presenter / accompanying teacher: Kate McDowell & Sue Billingsley
Session title: Inside Faith/Outside the Classroom: A dialogical model for field visits and visiting speakers in Religious Education
Key questions addressed: When seeking to enhance Religious Education in primary schools, visiting speakers and field trips have the unique potential to help students, particularly those from disadvantaged and fragmented communities, to encounter living faith. This brings challenges as well as opportunities. This presentation emerged from a Practitioner Action Research community of practice held as part of the <i>Religious Education and Social Disadvantage</i> project, funded as part of Culham St Gabriel's Trust's <i>Research 7</i> initiative. The teachers and faith representatives in the study worked together to arrive at a series of key questions to help teachers and field sites to make the best use of these opportunities. This presentation will help teachers to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How best to identify and make contact with visitors and field trip opportunities in their own area; - How best to prepare children for visiting speakers and trips, planning time, curriculum resources and follow-up lessons; - How best to share learning objectives with visiting speakers and education officers at places of worship. -
Main content and activities of session: In the first part, we will present the evidence from our surveys of pupils, teachers and places of worship. In the second part, small groups will consider the most important questions to help clarify the values and purposes of field trips and visiting speakers. In the final part, we want to use this discussion to further develop a model of successful learning outside the classroom, centred on the importance of spaces for encountering the lived experience of religion, asking challenging questions, and sharing learning objectives.
Links to resources, publications, etc : Ali, Ashton, Billingsley et al. (2021) A practitioner action research approach to learning outside the classroom in Religious Education: Developing a dialogical model through reflection by teachers and faith field visitors, <i>British Journal of Religious Education</i> (in development)