



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S

WORKING WITH ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS & TEACHERS ON RELIGION & WORLDVIEWS PROJECTS

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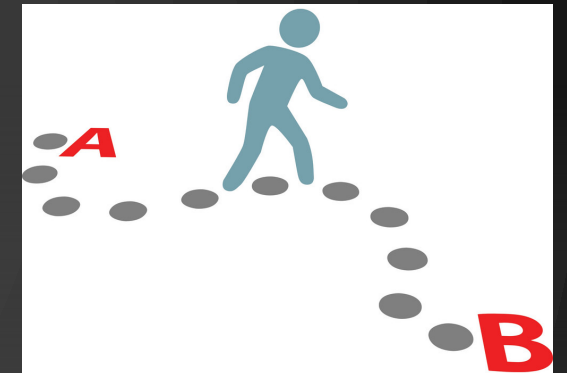
DIOCESE^{OF}
COVENTRY

BOARD OF EDUCATION

OUR PROJECT: CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEWS AND ADVOCACY

- Three reasons for submitting a grant application:
 - 1) Christian worldviews not well explored and often presented as monolithic, homogenous and static. How could we change that?
 - 2) CE schools must demonstrate how they support pupils' 'courageous advocacy' as part of the SIAMS Inspection CE schools and Methodist schools receive, but pupils must understand issues and advocacy before advocating themselves. CE schools spend a lot of time studying Christianity but how much time do they spend considering a range of Christian worldviews and the impact this has on advocacy, action and agency across a wide range of social justice issues?
 - 3) Human and social sciences seemed to be the least developed discipline for us locally in terms of teacher understanding and effective exploration of this discipline in RE curriculums. How could we incorporate more sociology of religion topics and methodology into an RE curriculum?

Awareness of a range of Christian worldviews and positions on social issues



Action, agency and advocacy

KEY OUTCOMES

- Teachers and pupils have a better understanding of the plurality of Christian worldviews
- They are able to connect these with social action, service and 'courageous advocacy' undertaken by Christians through viewing Christian worldviews through a human and social sciences lens
- Pupils can evaluate their own worldviews and the impact of Christian worldviews on their own social action, service and 'courageous advocacy', in terms of Christian worldviews encountered in institutional religious communities, the media, their own CE school Christian framework and the Christianity lived out by their families
- Pupils better understand their own motivations for social action, service and 'courageous advocacy' and teachers are better able to help them in connecting this with their learning about and from religion (specifically Christianity)

KEY OUTPUTS

- Accessible resources for teachers and pupils, widely available, connecting Christian worldviews with the impact belief has on practices, action and social engagement so that advocacy across a range of social issues is better understood by teachers and pupils within the context of Christian worldview(s)

Project Resources	Resource Creators
Access to recordings of contributor sessions by leading academics	Range of academics from higher education (sociologists or religion and theologians)
Access to presentations from contributor sessions by leading academics	Range of academics from higher education (sociologists or religion and theologians)
Project introduction and overview documents for each topic	Jen Jenkins (Project Manager)
Teaching and learning resources for each topic	Teacher Group (KS2 & KS3)

KEY CONTRIBUTORS TO OUR PROJECT: PROJECT ADVISERS

- Our project is supported by two project advisers who are sociologists of religion: Celine Benoit (Senior Teaching Fellow in Sociology and Policy at Aston University) and Tim Hutchings (Assistant Professor of Religious Ethics at the University of Nottingham).
- Tim and Celine are also part of the REC team who undertook a multidisciplinary, academic literature review on the concept of worldview in Religious Education for the REC.
- Tim and Celine are also School Liaison Officers for TRS-UK and work to support collaborative work between higher education and teachers working in primary and secondary schools in RE.
- They advise on keeping the sociological lens at the forefront, suggest academics who might contribute to the project and support the teacher group in applying the methodology of sociology of religion in primary and secondary classrooms.



ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS AS KEY CONTRIBUTORS TO OUR PROJECT


- Subject knowledge of teachers was a key consideration so, with suggestions from Celine and Tim, we approached key researchers in each of our identified fields. Our proposal was an hour's input with recordings and slides made available for teachers following this (first the teacher group and then a wider audience). Honorariums of £200 each were factored into our grant proposal.
- As well as these, Tim and Celine contributed sessions on an overview of Sociology of Religion and a session on using methodology from sociology in the classroom. Katie Freeman also shared her worldviews approach to teaching at primary level.

Topics	Contributor
Climate Change	Dr Maria Nita (UK) Dr. Cybelle Shattuck (USA)
Race	Anthony Reddie
Politics	Robert Beckford
Golden Rule Christians	Abby Day
The Body: Abortion	Sarah-Jane Page
The Body: LGBTQ+	Sarah-Jane Page
Motherhood and Family	Dawn Llewelyn
Human Rights & Sexuality	Adriaan van Klinken
Digital Religion	Tim Hutchings

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

The recordings of these sessions, plus presentation slides, will be made available as part of dissemination of the project

MOTHERHOOD AND THE FAMILY IN CHRISTIANITY



The Holy Family Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1670-1973) Wikimedia Commons

0:08 / 11:00 @DownLlewellyn @TRSChester d.llewellyn@chester.ac.uk

Christianity, Human Rights and LGBT Communities: perspectives from East Africa

Prof. Adriaan van Klinken
University of Leeds
A.vanklinken@leeds.ac.uk

0:00 / 40:39

Christians and Politics

1:03 / 40:55

Christian Worldviews and the Body: Queer Sexuality and Abortion

DR SARAH-JANE PAGE
SENIOR LECTURER IN SOCIOLOGY, ASTON UNIVERSITY

0:25 / 39:08

Christian Worldviews: Green Christianity as a political and cultural spectrum

1. Situate the development of Green Christian theology and Green Christian movements within the wider eco-critical tradition that began in the 1960s
2. Discuss examples Green Christian beliefs, values and practices in the United Kingdom: New rituals and prayers

0:46 / 38:10

- Two (very) old visions of a technological worldview
 - Is there a digital worldview?
- If so, what does that mean for Christianity?

THE TEACHER GROUP

- The teacher group are using the inputs from the academics on Christian worldviews and advocacy across a range of issues in order to create teaching and learning resources for KS2 and KS3.
- We wanted to make this a cross-phase project as the CE Statement of Entitlement for RE states: *Pupils in Church schools are entitled to be taught by teachers who have a secure subject knowledge and are confident in helping them navigate and challenge cultural and religious stereotypes, prejudice and extremism.* Acknowledging the messiness of religion and challenging stereotypes is important for teachers of RE in all phases and with media and social media, pupils become aware of social issues at a younger age but often have no forum for discussing it in safe and well-managed spaces. RE classrooms in both primary and secondary can provide that space.
- RE curriculums that take account of both primary and secondary lead to sequenced, academically-robust learning. Our primary and secondary colleagues in the teacher group learn from and support each other.

THE TEACHER GROUP

<u>School name</u>	<u>Type of school</u>	<u>Total number of pupils on roll (all ages)</u>
Secondary School 1 (urban)- VA	Academy	1670
Secondary School 2 (urban)- VA	Academy	797
Primary 1 (semi-rural)- VC	Maintained school	298
Primary 2 (urban) -VC	Academy	190
Primary 3 (semi-rural)- VA	Maintained school	188
Primary 4 (rural) - VC	Maintained school	115

AN EXAMPLE: CLIMATE CHANGE



Christianity and
Climate Change in
USA

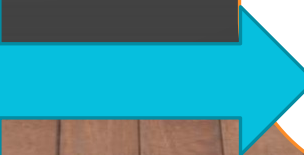


Christianity and
Climate Change in
UK



Methodology of Sociology
of Religion:

- Ethnographic studies
- Surveys
- Interviews (panel)
- Analysing data



KS2 Learning:

- Genesis narratives & concepts of stewardship, responsibility etc and impact on action
- Key thinkers: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Dr James Speth
- Green movement in Christianity
- Christian Green charities and alternative expressions e.g. Eco Church
- Opinions of young Christians on Church's response to climate change

KS3 Learning:

- Hermeneutics and Nahum Sarna's interpretation of Genesis narratives
- Ethnographics studies of Christian responses to climate change (UK and US)
- Green justice ministries
- Intersectionality e.g. climate change and the Global South (politics, race etc)
- Christian charities working for ecological justice

PROJECT MANAGER: BRIDGING THE GAP

- Project Manager Role:

- Writing grant application
- Managing grant budget
- Recruiting contributors
- Recruiting teacher group
- Liaising with Project Advisors and acting on suggestions
- Launching project with introductory session
- Creating additional materials e.g. pupil worldviews booklet, pupil voice activities
- Facilitating communication between project manager, advisors and teacher group
- Conducting mid-point evaluations through Google Forms and analysing data
- Writing introduction and overview documents
- Pulling together attitudes, dispositions and skills noted across contributor sessions
- Suggesting content for KS2 and KS3
- Bringing content down into KS2 in an appropriate manner, either using material directly from contributions made by academics or considering appropriate foundational learning ready for KS3
- Matching teachers to topics, setting up buddy system, editing teaching and learning resources
- Liaising with graphic designers
- Sharing project with wider audience



POSITIVES

- Access to academics for research and knowledge relevant to RE
- Development of understanding regarding sociology of religion as a discipline of RE
- Support of Celine and Tim in accessing researchers and research in higher education
- Generosity of researchers in sharing their research and being willing to work with teachers
- Working with teachers from primary and secondary together alongside researchers from higher education, so that all these phases of education were connected
- Collaborative working and problem-solving by teacher group, particularly in how to bring controversial topics into KS2 in age-appropriate ways e.g. through foundation learning
- Identifying attitudes, dispositions and skills relevant to the whole project so that personal development became another driver for the project

CHALLENGES!

- Teacher availability due to pressures of the pandemic (illness and inability to be released from the classroom)
- Making higher education level academic research accessible to teachers when time constraints and prior-learning are an issue
- Making controversial topics accessible to younger pupils in age-appropriate ways
- Considering how the project materials work together cohesively to create a well-thought-out set of resources on a common theme
- Finding a format that offers enough structure and support to teachers but is also flexible enough in its approach to allow for teachers to use the materials in ways that fit their own needs and context