

Transforming RE through research? Introducing and inviting engagement with Culham St Gabriel's Trust's research strategy

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I have a confession to make: the title of this piece is stolen, from one of the sessions scheduled for the 20:20 RE: Practice, Policy and Powerful Knowledge conference in October. However, I will be running that session, I did invent its title, and arguably it is impossible to steal something from yourself.

As I will say at 20:20, transforming is a big word (and RE is a big priority), so I must not use it lightly. I will come back to that at the end and in the meantime tell you something about our strategy for research at Culham St Gabriel's (henceforth CStG).

CStG's vision is to enable change and excellence in RE; our research strategy is to create opportunities for teachers and others to engage with and carry out research, to those ends. It has two strands, based on prior consultation within the RE community and active since 2017.

The first is the Research for RE website, which addresses well-known problems of teacher access to research, including lack of time, access and relevance. The site has 70 reports of RE-relevant research, freely available and formatted concisely with an emphasis on how teachers might use them. The number of reports will grow, as will that of registered site users, currently at 530. Anybody can register, post research reports, ideas or opportunities and leave feedback on others' posts. Please do so, alert your SACRE colleagues and contacts to the site and encourage them to do likewise.

The second is the Research 7 series of funded projects. Over 2018-2020, CStG is supporting research into RE curriculum development (led by Dr Richard Kueh of the Inspiration Trust), religious literacy (led by Professor Gert Biesta of Brunel University), the teaching of religious texts, RE and educational disadvantage, RE and Science, RE and emergent technology and RE teachers' engagement with research (proposals are under development and we will have further news soon). Our aims are to generate rigorous and applicable findings across these timely concerns, to involve teachers with the research and to push the results out as far as we can on the Research for RE website and elsewhere, helping to set the basis for RE's development over the next few years.

Transforming RE? We are experienced. Battle-hardened. Not naïve. But if any transformations are to happen, they will need informed teachers and a solid, progressive evidence base, not to mention a cohesive RE community; so, again, please publicise and support our efforts, post any SACRE research you are doing with us and invite me to brief your local groups and conferences. I would be very happy to be contacted at Kevin@cstg.org.uk . The Research for RE website is at <http://researchforre.reonline.org.uk>