

A toolkit for teachers

Generating positive local media coverage for Religious Education



Produced by the RE Policy Unit

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Why generate media coverage?



Deborah Weston OBE,
RE Policy Unit Chair

An introduction and welcome from the Religious Education Policy Unit.

Religion and worldviews are a vital part of the world around us, at the heart of social and cultural change. They are frequently explored in the media and teachers of Religious Education have a vital part to play in aiding understanding and bringing the important voice of the next generation to the conversation.

The latest census, and corresponding research run by Theos, show that although 'non-religion' is on the increase, people are still exploring the big questions of life and death, issues of morality and spirituality. So it is not surprising that a majority of adults in Britain continue to see the importance of Religious Education in schools (Source: **Savanta**).

Teachers and their students can help the public understand that central to a child's education in modern Britain is knowing how to navigate this landscape of religion and worldviews, which places the big questions in life at its heart.

Some schools and colleges already work with their local media, engaging with journalists and helping to get stories out to the public about the way young people are discussing the way people with different religious and non-religious worldviews live their lives and the variety of beliefs now found in society.

This toolkit is designed to help you do precisely that, offering practical guidance on how to get your story told. You should always discuss any potential activity with your headteacher and check what your school, trust or local authority policy is regarding the media. We are also here to help you too, and if at any time the media wants more detailed information or a follow up please feel free to refer them to us.

The Religious Education Policy Unit
Email: info@religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk

What makes a good story?



Journalists and teachers of RE have a lot in common. RE teachers help students understand faith and belief, hoping that it builds a better society. The media helps the public by trying to understand and explain what religion does and how people think, reflecting society back to itself. Journalists can only work with the stories they receive, so it's up to us to find great stories and help the media do its job.

Getting started

Get to know your local journalists. Good media coverage starts with great relationships. Regions in England and Wales have multiple local media outlets which are always looking for a steady flow of good local stories:

- Media platforms across print, online and social media
- Local organisations and influencers – websites, blogs and social media
- Broadcast media with news and feature bulletins on regional radio and television
- Specialist media, for example newsletters for teachers, faith groups and community groups carrying features and 'what's on' magazines, listing events in the area

Find out more about the **Religion Media Centre's Creating Connections initiative.**

Planning your story

Although engaging with the media can appear daunting, remember journalists are working hard, under pressure and against the clock. Grabbing their attention at the right time is key – and remember, they need your stories. Here are some ideas on what can make a good story.

- 1. People** – if you look at most media, people are in the majority of stories. So, always try to have a human interest at the heart of your story. Local press love names and faces so always try to have people involved.
- 2. Timing** – different religious festivals in the UK form a natural news hook. The media is driven by events so try to link to some of these or other topical issues.
- 3. A community story** – work with your leadership team to make sure different interest groups are involved as these can really help give your story the broader perspective the media often look for.

Some story ideas



Stories can include;

- promoting celebration days
- school visits to places of worship
- showcasing artwork generated around religious festival themes e.g. Diwali
- school wide involvement in national events and competitions e.g. promoting Christian Aid week
- community work and engagement
- shows, exhibitions and performances
- promoting interest and visits from MPs and other community leaders
- school and student achievements and results in Religious Education.
- National competitions such as NATRE Spirited Arts or competitions run by the Culham St Gabriel's Trust

Backing up your story with useful facts about RE will help set it in a broader context.

Cultural sensitivities

Culture comes in many different shapes and sizes and includes religious and non-religious beliefs and values, history, thought and lifestyle. It is naturally part of teaching Religious Education. We don't want to teach you to suck eggs when it comes to religious observances, traditions and manners, but the following examples are useful as reminder that even an innocent lack of sensitivity can lead to significant problems.

- A local councillor in one of the London boroughs spoke against litter on an inner city estate commenting that it "might be acceptable in their own country but it's not acceptable here". The story was picked up by a local paper and coverage soon escalated to include the London Evening Standard and the Times of India.

- When PepsiCo launched in China with the slogan "Come alive with Pepsi", it hadn't anticipated the Chinese translation, "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the dead."

As with anything in the public domain, ask someone else – a trusted colleague for example – for their opinion and double check any cultural or religious sensitivity that could be misinterpreted. It's worth thinking in advance of the ways your story could be interpreted and making sure you avoid any pitfalls.

- Check your language, for example if you are learning about worship and decide to recreate a shrine in the classroom it should be described as a 'replica'; be careful not to use the term 'priest' as a general term for spiritual leader.
- Be aware of the possible reactions to pupils dressed in clothing associated with faiths other than their own.
- Avoid sex and gender stereotypes.

How to write a powerful media release



There are many ways to grab the attention of a journalist. The quickest way is to pick up the phone. Journalists scour social media make sure they know your platforms, campaign tags and Twitter handles so they pick up your stories when you post them.

A really good place to start is to write a media release. This will help you think about the story, express it concisely and will make all your social media posts easier to write.

A media release, sometimes called a news release or a press release, is the accepted way of communicating with the print and broadcast media.

- The media release should always contain news (as opposed to opinions) and clearly state something that is taking place.
- Have a look at how publications are covering similar stories. If you replicate a style well, your release may be used with few changes.

Five steps to follow:

- 1.** Be factual. The first paragraph should always include who, what, where, when, why and how;
Twenty Year 9 pupils from Hockstead School visited the Greenwich Hindu Temple on July 10. The trip was part of a programme of events designed to broaden the students' knowledge and understanding of places of worship.
- 2.** The headline can be snappy to capture attention but needs to be relevant; don't be afraid of just stating what's happening;
Hockstead pupils visit London temple.

3. The rest of the media release can include more detail and ideally a quote in the third or fourth paragraph to inject some emotion into the release.

- If you are using people as part of your story be sure to give their names (but check your institution's policy on this)
 - Try to keep it short around six – eight paragraphs and try not to go over one page. Keep the sentences short and to the point, you want to give a reason for the media to call you and then you can talk more about the story.
 - An editor will cut from the bottom, so make sure you have put all the important information in the first paragraph.
- 4.** After the media release type 'Ends' and then include a section called 'Notes to editors' where you can give background to your school or college, draw attention to any images and give further contact details.
 - 5.** Use 1.5 line spaces and a traditional font such as Arial 11pt. Avoid the use of styles such as bold or italics.

Having a clear and consistent message



As well as announcing an immediate initiative, your media release is a chance to communicate broader messages that support the value of Religious Education in schools. It is important to be clear and consistent in what you are saying and keep it simple and jargon free. A story to promote Religious Education teaching should cover the benefits it brings to society at large so you could select two or three themes from these messages to support your story:

RE/an education in religion and worldviews:

- is relevant for all children, regardless their religious or non-religious worldview
- teaches that every child has a worldview – their way of experiencing and understanding the world – and this can be composed of both religious and/or non-religious beliefs
- shows how religious and non-religious worldviews influence individuals, families, communities and cultures through the lived experience of religion

- explores the political and social impact of religious and non-religious worldviews and places them in their historical context
- encourages reflection on big questions in life by relating to some of the sources of our worldviews, such as on the origins of the universe and what happens to us after we die
- provokes questions about the meaning of life and offers opportunities for personal reflection
- develops and affirms personal identity and responsible citizenship
- prepares children for adult life in multi-religious and multi-secular Britain
- is not about making children religious but allowing them to explore their own and others' worldviews

RE/an education in religion and worldviews can help:

- develop personal well-being, happiness and a deeper appreciation of life's challenges
- prepare young people for life in modern society
- prepare young people for an increasingly diverse and global work environment
- contribute to an understanding of history, culture and literature
- promote respect for self and others and generate social and community cohesion
- tackle some of the sources of extremism and religious discrimination by countering stereotypes and misunderstandings

Religious Education in our schools is:

- regarded by teachers, students and employers as intellectually rigorous, relevant and applicable to a number of professional careers such as journalism, law, medicine and politics
- popular with students, being one of the fastest growing A Levels since 2003
- regarded by parents and British adults as an important part of a child's education that allows them to take their place in modern Britain

Sample media release – results and academic achievement



HIGHCLERE SCHOOL

18 August 2015

MEDIA RELEASE

Top marks for local Religious Studies student

Teachers, students and parents at Nottingham's Highclere School are this week celebrating a top achievement by one of its students. Sixteen year old Annie May Jones scored the highest marks in the country for her GCSE Religious Studies exam, gaining her an award from exam board Edexcel and placing her among the top students in the country.

Proud head teacher Dr Lucy Vosper said, "This is a terrific achievement for Annie May and a tribute to both our Religious Education (RE) and the hard work that Annie May has put into preparing for her exams. It's particularly pleasing that this achievement is in RE as it's a subject that gives its students a real chance to express their individuality and explore different beliefs and values. We use RE to help stretch our students intellectually and give them a chance to learn about different religions and beliefs."

Student Annie May Jones added, "I couldn't believe it when the exam board got in touch. I'd worked hard and always enjoyed RE but didn't expect this. I'm really pleased with all my results and especially gaining this award." Annie May now plans to continue studies with A levels at a local college.

All 1,234 pupils at Highclere study RE as part of their Personal and Social and Health education (PSHE) and around 20 choose to take their studies further at GCSE. It is an increasingly popular subject and RE offers students time for personal and moral reflection. A particular focus is promoting understanding of world religions and beliefs and supporting responsible citizenship.

Notes to editor:

1. Statistics from exam awarding body Edexcel show that out of a total of 94,361 GCSE entries Annie May was among the top ten, achieving the highest overall marks in its Religious Studies paper.
2. Highclere School is a science college with 1,234 students aged 11 to 16. It is an open and welcoming school that aims to create a caring community. It is rated Outstanding by Ofsted.

For media enquiries and high resolution images contact:

Jane Whitehead, press officer, Highclere School
Telephone: 0123 333 4444
Mobile: 07987 654321
Email: whiteheadjane@highclere.sch.uk
www.highclereschool.sch.uk

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SW5 2HP
33 4444
highclere.sch.uk

Sample media release – celebrating events



SIR JOHN ALLEN PRIMARY

8 November 2015

MEDIA RELEASE

Sir John Allen primary school prepares for Diwali

A group of 32 year three students from Sir John Allen community primary school in Clifton, Bristol visited the city's Hindu Temple during Diwali to find out more about Hinduism. The visit, on Wednesday 7 November, was part of the school's programme to give pupils first hand experience of different faiths, beliefs and cultures. Students took part in activities such as drawing their own rangoli, the traditional pattern based Indian drawing, and learning to greet each other in the Hindu style. They also found out about the different deities that Hindus worship in the temple, as well as why it is important to look after the earth and each other.

Chris Duncan, deputy head teacher and curriculum manager responsible for Religious Education at the school said, "The Pandit showed us around the temple, which was beautifully decorated with dressed images of gods, lights and garlands. The children were fascinated by all the different deities and their meanings." He added, "Our students come from a variety of different faiths and none. Getting to know other religions and cultures first hand really does help promote good understanding and awareness of each other's backgrounds."

Some of the themes have been brought back to the school as this week's art project includes modeling clay tea light holders, to represent the clay lanterns of Diwali. Additionally, one of the class mums is Hindu so she will be making extra traditional sweet Diwali treats for everyone to enjoy!

Notes to editor:

1. Sir John Allen is a caring community school committed to providing a broad and balanced education for all its students. All staff work together as a team and this has been recognised through our Investors in People award in June 2018. Parents, governors and staff work in partnership to provide the appropriate environment for students to learn and develop in an atmosphere of respect and understanding.
www.sirjohnallen.sch.uk
2. The Bristol Hindu temple is open for schools to visit Monday – Friday between 10am and 5pm. Telephone: 0123 4567 789
3. Diwali (the festival of lights), is a five day Hindu festival now celebrated worldwide by many Indian / Asian cultures. This New Year celebration takes its name (also called Divali or Deepavali) from a Sanskrit word meaning "a row or cluster of light". Diwali marks the new moon in the Hindu month of Kartika (October / November).

For media enquiries and high resolution images contact:

Chris Duncan, deputy head teacher, Sir John Allen Primary
Telephone: 0123 444 5555
Mobile: 07123 456789
Email: duncanc@sirjohnallen.sch.uk

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SW5 2HP
33 4444
sirjohnallempriary.sch.uk

Sample media release – promoting a visit from an MP

Often the MP's office will write its own version to go on the constituency newsletter and website; but it is always powerful to have a school led communication.



MANORSIDE PRIMARY

8 September 2015

MEDIA RELEASE

Local MP visits the Manorside Primary School to see teaching of Religious Education

On Monday, 1st July Mike Freer MP visited the Manorside Primary School in Finchley, where he met with staff and pupils in the RE department which has as an excellent reputation for good quality RE. The visit comes after MPs published a report on the supply of and support for religious education teachers.

Mike's visit to the Manorside School found that the school was continuing to teach good quality RE, but was finding it hard to cope with uncertainty surrounding the future of the subject. Teachers at the Manorside and across Finchley are doing an excellent job in ensuring our young people grow up with a thorough understanding of the different faiths and beliefs around us – knowledge and skills that will equip them to tackle many of the challenges that life presents.

Commenting on the visit, Mike Freer MP said:
"RE teachers at the Manorside are not short changed and are given the best possible chance to get on with their job. We must ensure that students are not short changed and are given the best possible chance to get on with their job. We must ensure that students are not short changed and are given the best possible chance to get on with their job."

The inquiry found that the situation has been compounded by insufficient professional development opportunities for subject leaders, specialist teachers and those who take on the responsibility for teaching RE. Evidence also revealed a wide variation in the amount and quality of initial teacher training for RE with many trainee teachers stating they had little effective preparation to teach the subject.

The report was delivered to the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove on March 18th, 2013. It includes clear recommendations for primary and secondary schools, teacher training providers, local authorities, Ofsted, those providing professional development for teachers, and the Department for Education.

Mr Mews
SW5 2HP
020 33 4444
manorsideprimary.sch.uk

Using images



In local newspapers photography can have a significant impact on whether your story is used.

When developing a media release think carefully about whether a supporting image would improve the story.

Digital photographs of people, particularly ones which show activity or movement, are always popular with local press.

Here are some guidelines;

1. If possible, use a professional photographer. If your local newspaper cannot send their own staff photographer, they may be able to put you in touch with one; alternatively find out if there is a skilled amateur photographer at the school.
2. Always provide a caption for your picture, and include any names of people shown (ensuring correct spelling).
3. Although the cost may seem extravagant, once you have a selection of stock shots, you will be able to use them again and again.

4. Work with photographers to make sure the resulting image reflects the diverse mix of pupils both from the point of view of ethnicity and gender. Also remember to think about possible cultural sensitivities (for example, Muslim individuals of different genders shaking hands could be considered inappropriate in some communities).

5. Remember that when using photographs of children you need to ensure you have written parental or guardian permission (within the last three months) before they can be reproduced (see *sample consent form on page 13*).

6. For local newspapers images should generally be high resolution (300 dpi) and in JPEG format (.jpg, .jpeg). These are not too large to be sent by email.

RE Today Services and the Religious Education Council have a number of approved high-resolutions images that can be suggested for media use, including children in classroom settings. To access these for media use please contact:

PR and Digital Communications Manager

RE Today Services

40 Imperial Court

Kings Norton Business Centre

Pershore Road South

Birmingham B30 3ES

T: 0121 458 3313 | F: 0121 285 1816

www.retoday.org.uk

Sample images available for media use



Consent form

Always check your school or Local Education Authority policy on students and the media. Many require a consent form (like the one below) to be signed by a parent or guardian.

A PDF of this consent form can be downloaded from the [REC website](#)



5-6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH

Use of Images & Details: Participants Release Form – Student

I, the undersigned, consent to photographs and video images of the child named below, being used Today / NATRE / REC for educational and promotional purposes in printed material/website in the following formats:

- On our websites
- In printed materials
- In the media
- Social Media

I acknowledge that the images may also be used in and distributed by media other than those specified above, such as on CD-ROM or other websites pertaining to RE Today's / NATRE's / the REC's activities, and that they may be stored in digital form for future use in RE Today / NATRE / REC publications and training courses.

I understand that the images will be used for educational purposes only and that the only information revealed concerning the child's identity may be their name, age and the school attended where relevant. I agree that the copyright in the photographs or video images or in any material that is generated as a result of a photographic/filming session shall be assigned and shall be the property of RE Today / NATRE / REC.

I agree to RE Today / NATRE / REC:

- Storing copies of the photographs/footage and my contact details to a destination outside the European Economic Area ("EEA") or storing them at a destination outside the EEA for the purposes set above.

Please complete and return to the person who gave you this form.

Name of child:
Name of parent or guardian:
School / college name:
Address:

Signature:
Date:

Note: if this permission relates to a specific picture or image please specify clearly here:
Image Ref:
Office use only)

For your consent for future use please contact us: DataProtection@retoday.org.uk or RE Today, 5-6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH, our privacy policy can also be found on our website.

When to contact the media



All journalists, especially on live sites, are working to multiple deadlines. There are no rules about best time to call – check with them once you know them. However, it's worth being aware of the following:

Knowing your title

- Research the names and contact details of the key journalists you want to send the media release to and always send it to a named contact. You can always ring the title and check who you should send it to.

Pitching your story

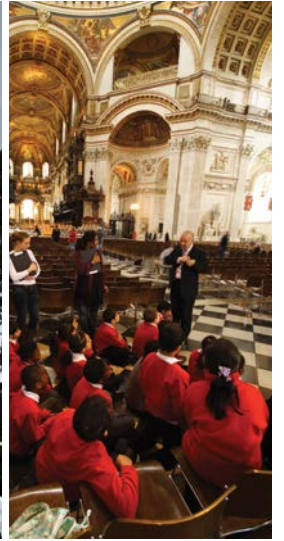
- Spend some time thinking about the key points in your release before you speak to journalists. Think carefully about the way you phrase your explanation to reduce the risk of misunderstanding.
Don't be afraid to pitch your story to journalists but equally don't pester them – no tends to mean no!

When to contact the media

All media work to deadlines so it is worth being aware of the following:

- Aim to call journalists at a time when they are less likely to be busy. For instance, avoid calling daily titles between 4 and 6pm, as they are filing copy for the next edition (earlier for evening titles).
- Weekly titles will have a 'press day'. Again, try to avoid calling on that day. A local paper that comes out on Friday might well have its press day on Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Monthly magazines work weeks in advance so it is worth approaching them early.
- It is best to contact broadcasters a few days in advance of your story and try to avoid calling close to the hour as they could be distracted by news bulletins.
- Be aware that a picture desk might work to different deadlines to the news desk.
- Always meet a journalist's deadline.

Doing media interviews



Having a good spokesperson and then spending time preparing and planning their script are at the heart of a successful interview.

1. Do some research beforehand and try to identify who the journalist is. What have they written before, what types of questions do they want answered and what line of questioning could they take?
2. Spend time identifying your key message and short, brief ways of getting this across.
3. Try and keep phrases as positive as possible.
4. Don't be tempted to speak 'off the record' – there is no such thing!
5. Likewise, don't be tempted to fill silences and don't be frightened to pause and collect your thoughts.
6. Never make up an answer if you aren't sure. It is acceptable to clarify the question and call back – as long as you do.
7. Don't assume the journalist is an expert, for example if you're talking about different religions and beliefs they may not be familiar with them. It's a chance for you to work with them to make sure they are clear on all the detail.
8. Do thank the journalist for the interview and their interest.

TV and radio



TV and radio interviews are sometimes done over Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Facetime. The background to the picture is important, make sure it is clean and clear of distractions and that your camera is positioned so you are well in the frame. Radio interviews can be done on these platforms on your phone too, but find a quiet room.

TV

1. When considering what to wear, avoid extreme colours, checks and stripes.
2. Accept make-up if recommended.
3. Don't look at the camera!
4. But do look at your interviewer!
5. End by thanking the interviewer and don't talk again until you are sure the camera is no longer rolling.
6. Always ask what the first question is going to be.

Radio

1. Don't move backwards and forwards or your voice will too.
2. Avoid creating distracting sounds like rustling papers, jingling coins in your pocket etc.
3. Speak at your normal volume – the sound engineers will take care of the rest.
4. Don't worry if you want to change what you've just said – simply leave a short pause and begin your statement again.
5. Always ask what the first question is going to be.

If the broadcaster wants to visit your school or college and you don't have a press officer you need to assign someone with clear responsibility for guiding them through their time with you. This could be a deputy head or head of year.

By all means involve students in the radio or television piece, the reporter will probably want to work with them, but make sure you are confident in their abilities.

If at any stage you feel the logistics are too much you can decline the opportunity but make sure you do this in plenty of time.

Avoiding pitfalls



There are many tips and techniques when it comes to dealing with the media.

This toolkit is written with local media in mind but it's worth always being aware that like all media, they will want a good story and some common sense principles apply.

1. Check what a journalist wants beforehand and if it isn't what you expect, put them in touch with someone who can help.
2. Be aware of cultural sensitivities (see page 5).
3. Be aware of examples that have backfired.
4. Think carefully about your response to questions – if you feel you are being asked a 'leading' question, think back to your key messages.

5. If something significant has happened at your school or college that may be likely to generate the wrong type of media interest, take professional advice on how best to generate a positive story. Be aware of the implications of social media, and the immediacy of content that is on these channels; journalists will often check Facebook or Twitter feeds as part of their background research to a story.
6. Always involve your press officer or senior leadership team before, during, and after media activity.

If a situation does become too difficult or hostile you should seek specialist, professional help from a PR consultant or agency with your response. A good place to start is the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (www.cipr.co.uk).

Tracking the coverage



You may well have a media monitoring service in place. If not it is worth asking the journalist or reporter when they plan to write a story and using the internet to search for it. There are professional press cuttings agencies who will charge to provide you with a cuttings service.

If you plan to circulate copies of the resulting coverage, check your school or college has a licence from the Newspaper Licensing Agency (www.nla.co.uk) to duplicate newspaper coverage.

What to do if the coverage isn't what you expected

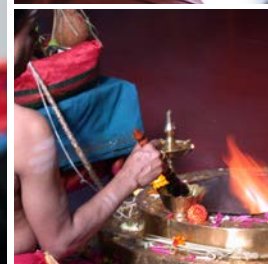
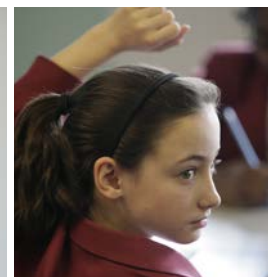
The media do sometimes get things wrong and if this happens to you it is important to take a step back and consider how bad the mistake is.

If you feel it is significant enough to request a change, you can work with your press office or senior leadership team to gain a correction:

- For a substantial mistake, such as one that does damage to the reputation of individuals or organisations through incorrect reporting, you can ask for an apology or correction to be printed as soon as possible.
- For smaller mistakes you can write a letter to be published correcting the perception. You need to send this to the editor with a covering note indicating why you are writing it and indicating you expect it to be printed for good reason.
- Alternatively, you can follow up with the reporter and suggest a follow up interview to gain a greater and clearer understanding – which might result in a rebalanced piece of coverage.

Overall, the rules here are to take a step back and look at the situation, as you cannot expect 100% accuracy all of the time.

Social media



Social media

With local news rooms tasked with doing more with less, social media channels can be a great way to get your story heard. Religious education stories are a great way to showcase the subject's positive impact on societal cohesion and the local community.

Research shows that a majority of parents value RE lessons, but they also want greater communication from the school about what their child is learning. Using social media to communicate the vital role RE plays in the education of young people can reinforce the valuable work RE teachers do in the classroom.

School social media channels can also have a wider impact on local, sometimes even national media. Journalists sometimes follow up or source stories from social media. It is also a good way to engage with local community groups, leaders and politicians.

Advice:

Do's

- Keep the message short and clear. Try and focus on one or two key messages relating to the study of RE
- Keep it student focused and relevant to the curriculum or extra-curricular activities
- Use images, social media cards, and video as they get more engagement
- Consult with your headteacher and check your school's social media policy

Don'ts

- Avoid commenting on controversial local or national issues relating to religion and belief. These can usually be dealt with by formal press comment via your school's leadership team.
- See it as a substitute for a strong media story. You can still use a press release to interest local journalists and get your story picked up.

Stories good for social media:

- School trips to places of worship
- Competitions/student work
- A lesson relating to a local religion or belief
- A lesson relating to something timely or topical

Your questions answered



Q. *How do I find out what my school's policy is towards dealing with the media?*

A. Ask your head teacher or a member of the senior leadership team and find out if there is a nominated press officer.

Q. *How do I reflect media communications through social media?*

A. Social media is another means of getting a message across. If your school uses Twitter and Facebook to keep parents up to date with activity it is often tempting to announce a story through these channels. However if you are trying to secure print, online or broadcast coverage it is often far better to do this first, and then use social media to report back on the coverage. You can of course use Twitter to reach journalists, many will respond quickly in this way.

Q. *What do I do if I have problem with a potentially negative media story?*

A. Discuss the issue with your senior leadership team. If necessary seek professional advice from a specialist public relations consultant (the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) has an online directory of members – www.cipr.org.uk).

Q. *I am planning a trip and a photographer wants to take photos for our local paper. What do I do?*

A. Check with the venue what restrictions there are on photography. Always make sure the photographer is aware of cultural sensitivities, give guidance during the photoshoot and offer to check the images before publication.

Q. *A picture has appeared in the paper and it did not have my correct name. What do I do?*

A. Mistakes do sometimes occur. Politely point out the error to the journalist; if it is a serious error, the paper may print a correction.

Q. *What if the media doesn't run my story?*

A. There may be a number of reasons. It is worth asking the journalist why it did not run so you can pick up tips for next time. Try asking an experienced colleague for advice as well.

Q. *I've been asked to pay colour separation charges by a regional magazine – what is this?*

A. Most media run stories as editorial, however a few, usually magazines, have a policy of asking you to pay a charge to run your story.

Q. *Where can I find out more about training in media relations?*

A. The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) runs courses on all aspects of public relations (www.cipr.co.uk).

Q. *Where can I get media relations support?*

A. For media relations support, 3:nine Communications are experts in working with the media to place stories and in handling sensitive issues. Contact info@3nine.co.uk

The Religion Media Centre offers media training, including understanding what makes a news story, interview technique, and social media skills
info@religionmediacentre.org.uk

Resources



We hope you have found this toolkit useful, and you have great success working with your senior leadership teams to build relationships with the local media and community to generate positive coverage that supports your work and enhances the perception of Religious Education. We look forward to seeing how you get on!

There are numerous resources that may help you in your day to day work. In the first instance, we recommend you take a look at the REC website:

www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk

The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education has a dedicated website full of useful advice

www.natre.org.uk

Culham St Gabriel Trust has useful resources including information about its campaigning activities:

www.cstg.org.uk

Other useful information:

- Your Academy trust, local authority, or where appropriate, Diocesan Education Team will be able to provide advice and permission forms to use to secure consent for pupils to appear in the media.
- To get further style guidance, recent media releases can be viewed at www.prnewswire.co.uk
- The BBC website www.bbc.co.uk religion contains useful facts, news and discussion boards.
- REONLINE contains information about planning visits to places of worship and important cultural sensitivities: www.reonline.org.uk
- The Religion Media Centre website provides information about religion in the news, factsheets, and events www.religionmediacentre.org.uk

About the Religious Education Policy Unit

The Religious Education Policy Unit is a strategic partnership between the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE), the Religious Education Council (REC) and RE Today as three key stakeholders with a shared interest in public relations activity in support of in Religious Education (RE) in schools. www.rethinkre.org