

## Parish News March 2022 – Making RVE (Religion, Values and Ethics) exciting and authentic by Sol Goremano

2022 has been a year of many changes. Schools from September 2022 will fully be implementing the new curriculum, with that in mind, recently welsh Government have released statutory guidance on Religious Education.

First of all, the guidance changed the name of religious education to Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE). This was a highly anticipated revamp on such an important area of learning. I was very fortunate to be a successful applicant who would be part of a team responsible for sifting through the guidance and legislation and create resources that would be used in schools in order to communicate the changes in a more palatable user-friendly format.

I have to say that at first glance I was really impressed by the fact that at the heart of the RVE guidance as well as the new curriculum is the learner. Teaching and learning of the learner are of paramount importance. The fact that values and ethics are an integral part of RVE is refreshing that it is not about following traditions but about looking at actions and responsibilities of all human beings from all walks of life and asking what they value and what are their morals, how they came to believe in these intrinsic truths and what can they do to change or become better human beings. What was also exciting was the fact that RVE encompasses 'pluralistic views'. That RVE is meant to be a platform to learn, discuss and deliberate different perspectives and points of views. That even if people do not believe in a deity or deities, they can express their 'non-religious philosophical convictions'. Meaning everyone has something to say, something they believe in and our actions are often a reflection of these internal convictions. In a nutshell pupils of all ages have something to say, and they are given a voice and an opportunity to do so, they are allowed to dream big, talk big and be 'ambitious life-long learners'.

At Llanrhidian we have been on a journey, and we have always put teaching and learning first and at the heart of all of that is the learner. As part of our daily worship learners take part in something called Big Questions. Where they are given a question commensurate to their age and these questions can address, current political situations or dilemmas as a stimulus for deep discussion. Again, this is an opportunity for the learners to express their opinion but to also respond to other points of views. This is important because it creates a culture and an ethos of equality and inclusion. It teaches them to value their opinion as well other people's opinion which is a great empowerment for learners.

In order to encourage critical thinking which is a huge part of being ethical. We use a critical thinking tool called HABER. It is an acronym that stands for Is it helpful, accurate, balanced, empathetic, or respectful. This has really helped our learners think critically and challenge their points of views on different topics and also teaching them to be empathetic.

As summer is around the corner and as the weather is changing, I can't but wonder what questions will come up in our discussions or where our learning is going to take us this year.

