



# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 63—November 2024

## Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

I am delighted to welcome Cathryn to the staff team at the Centre. She brings a wealth of experience in interfaith engagement and will be a real asset to the team. Thanks also to the Northampton District of the Methodist Church for funding her role.

As you'll see in this month's newsletter, the education team have been exceptionally busy – I want to thank them all for all their hard work in helping school students learn how to live well together. We couldn't do our work without all our volunteer faith practitioners, and I'm very grateful to them.

This month we also hosted a delegation from the Royal College of Defence Studies and continued our work in safeguarding. Finally, we're holding our annual thank you evening in December – do be in touch if you would like to join us.

*Revd Dr Tom Wilson, Director of St Philip's Centre*

## Staff News

In October, we were delighted to welcome a new member of staff to our team. Cathryn Parsons has been appointed to the role of Churches Training Officer. Cathryn has worked at St Peter's Church in Highfields for the last 18 years in various roles, all of which have involved bringing people of different faiths and cultures together for activities and learning.

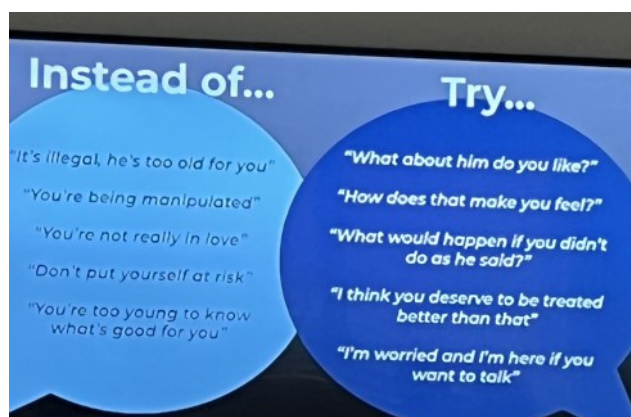
Cathryn says, 'I am looking forward to continuing this work and sharing my experience of Interfaith on a wider scale in my new role at St Philip's Centre.'

Please contact Cathryn if you would like to put on an interfaith course or training event at your church. You can contact her by emailing [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk).



## Safeguarding Project

The St Philip's Centre hosted another training session run by the REIGN collective on 1<sup>st</sup> October. It was on understanding how children are groomed for child sexual exploitation. As ever, it was a professionally delivered, highly engaging and challenging session. As well as the personal testimonies, what I found particularly useful were the suggestions for how to respond if you think someone had been groomed and is being exploited. Do not seek to correct or control or condemn. Seek to understand and explore. The picture here gives some suggested questions. They resonated with taking a coaching approach to any complex problem. I'd thoroughly recommend this training.



*Tom Wilson*

# Education

Last month we reported on our Religion & Belief Roadshow for Belton Church of England Primary School in collaboration with three other smaller schools. Since then, we have received this wonderful testimonial from the staff:

*"Engaging, enlightening, and empowering—our day with the St Philips Centre was nothing short of transformative! Ours was a gathering of eager young minds from schools that often find the door to interfaith exploration firmly shut, primarily due to cost barriers. However, thanks to the St Philips Centre, we were invited into a world infused with diverse beliefs and vibrant narratives.*

*The sessions brought forth a kaleidoscope of faith traditions, each facilitated by knowledgeable and compassionate individuals who seamlessly connected with our children. It was a joy to witness the students not just listening, but truly engaging, asking questions, and embracing new perspectives.*

*A heartfelt thanks to St Philips Centre for not just making this enlightening adventure possible, but for orchestrating it so beautifully. This experience has sown seeds of curiosity and understanding in our children—seeds that will undoubtedly blossom into empathy and acceptance as they grow. We will remember this day with great fondness, all thanks to the kindness and commitment of the St Philips Centre!"*

In October, we were delighted to host Barrowby Church of England Primary School from Lincolnshire for our Incredible Indian Experience programme. The children had the chance to visit a Mandir, enjoy lunch at a church, and embark on a guided tour of the Golden Mile in Leicester, where they experienced Indian culture firsthand. The visit included stops at saree shops, utensil stores, Indian vegetable markets, and a taste of traditional Indian sweets.

We also delivered Religion and Belief Roadshows at Burton-on-the-Wolds Primary School and Ibstock Primary School and this is what the teachers had to say,

*"I want to say what a wonderful event the RE Roadshow was today! The children and staff had a wonderful time, and it was such a memorable and impactful experience.*

*We thoroughly enjoyed hosting all the religious speakers and it was wonderful to have such a warm, friendly, and welcoming group of people in school.*

*Please do pass on my thanks once again to each and every one of them and thank you for organising this event on our behalf.*

*We cannot wait to come on our Places of Peace visit in the spring term."*

*Claire Wilson, Headteacher  
Burton-On-The-Wolds*

*"Our children and staff had a fantastic, informed day and learnt about a range of faiths in a fun and vibrant manner. Each representative was knowledgeable and met children at their level, helping them to be enthused and interested. Many pupils described it as 'their best day in school ever'.*

*We are located in an area with low diversity, so we are particularly keen to give children experiences of different faith and belief communities. The pledge children signed at the end of the session summed up what we were hoping to achieve and certainly did."*

*Alex Whitehouse, Assistant Headteacher  
Ibstock Primary School*

This positive feedback is a testament to the dedication of our faith practitioners, who put in long hours and manage the repetitive nature of delivering the Roadshows.



Ramila Chauhan



# Corporate Work

This month has been a busy one for training courses again, with training for another cohort of Leicestershire Police Recruits as well as a 'Confidently Addressing Radicalisation and Extremism' (C.A.R.E.) course for a mixed group of council and school employees.



Police Recruits

A few months ago we ran some focus groups with young people as part of the 'Young Voices on Healthcare' consultation. The report on that consultation is now available—[Young-Voices-on-Healthcare-Report-of-Findings\\_27.09.24.docx](#)

At the end of October we were invited to host the Royal College of Defence Studies again, after a break following the pandemic. The group consisted of senior armed forces personnel from all over the world. We have since received a letter from them thanking 'the dedicated team at St Philip's Centre for the exceptional experience provided during the visit'. They said they were 'impressed by the vibrant religious diversity in Leicester and the way different faith communities work together in a spirit of co-operation'.

Our sincere thanks go to St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church for hosting the visit.



## INVITATION TO OUR CELEBRATION EVENING

You are cordially invited to join the staff and Trustees of St Philip's Centre on

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 5.30 pm**

at **The Holiday Inn Leicester (Wigston),  
299 Leicester Road, Wigston, Leicester, LE18 1JW**  
(Wigston 1 Room).

Parking will be available at the hotel.

We will be celebrating our safeguarding project,  
"Safer Faith, Safer Followers."  
Vegetarian food will be provided.

Please **RSVP by 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024**  
to [maureen@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:maureen@stphilipscentre.co.uk) to reserve your place.  
Please advise us of any special dietary requirements.

### Funding Support

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*The Anglican Diocese of Leicester;*

*The Garfield Weston Foundation;*

*The Home Office;*

*The J R Corah Foundation Fund;*

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*The N C Bellefontaine Trust;*

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*The Northampton District of the Methodist  
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