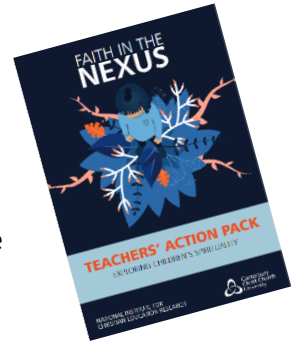




Welcome to the March addition of the Nexus newsletter. The Nexus team have been very busy during the extension phase of this project, and in this issue, we are delighted to share with you some of the Nexus success.

The aim of the extension phase is to raise awareness of the importance of opportunities for children to encounter the spiritual and faith dimension of life in the Nexus and to support individuals, institutions and organisations that facilitated these opportunities.

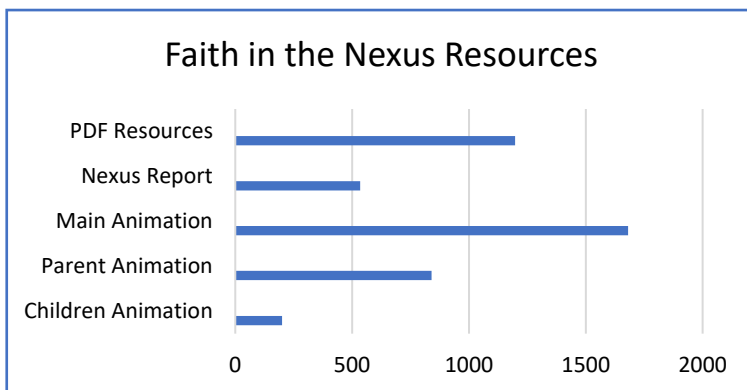


We have:

- Produced resources that amplified the research findings in an engaging and accessible format.
- Disseminated these into schools, churches, and the home.
- Developed a network of interested individuals who are building and facilitating opportunities for children to encounter the spiritual and faith dimension of life in the Nexus.



FAITH IN THE NEXUS RESOURCES CONTINUE TO BE DOWNLOADED AND VIEWED



We are extremely pleased with the response we have regarding our collection of resources. It is clear from download data and feedback that they are having an impact to a wide audience as far reaching as Melbourne, Australia.

KEY LAUNCH DATES FOR NEXUS RESOURCES	
Main Animation and Nexus Report	November 2020
Parent Animation	July 2021
PDF Resources	Scheduled from July 2021
Children Animation	January 2022

I just wanted to say how useful the resources associated with the NEXUS report are. The pdf topics are spot on in relation to issues of concern for families here in Melbourne Australia. The animations are all very accessible for all levels of parish and school.

I watched the Faith in the Nexus Animation with Year 6. It was fantastic as a prompt to inspire them and give them confidence to ask some really challenging questions.

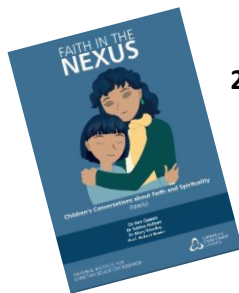
WOW!!!! Just watched the reworking of the Parents animation – it's fantastic!!!! I can see SO MANY possibilities for its use. And the PDFs are also brilliantly useful. Thank you all so much.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE MOST POPULAR?

These are our 3 most popular pdfs



1. How are we providing reflection time and space?



2. Children's Conversations about Faith and Spirituality



3. Children's Encounters with the Bible

All our pdfs can be downloaded via our website <https://nicer.org.uk/faith-in-the-nexus/the-nexus-toolkit>

Should you wish to have hard copies of these resources and/or ppts to accompany them, then please contact us at nexus@canterbury.ac.uk


OUR LATEST RESOURCE HAS BEEN WELL RECEIVED

Our most recent resource the *Teachers' Action Pack* that launched in January 2022 is already making an impact. The pack includes a fully resourced assembly and signposts the reader to our growing collection of Faith in the Nexus resources.

The Action Pack, in one month, has had 24 downloads and the animation to accompany it has had 449 views. To view the official launch see <https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/.../nexus-teachers-action.../>

Connecting Schools through the Teachers' Action Pack Assembly

Two Kent church primary schools have made connections and are now working with each other following an introduction to the Teachers' Action Pack. They are planning to share some questions their pupils raise following the assembly, and the children are going to respond to each other's questions.




We have shared the animation in every class, and it was very successful... Year 6 suddenly had a huge amount of confidence to ask questions. I hear that your children would like to work with us on our joint spiritual development through asking questions and pondering on some of the Big Ideas.

Headteacher, Sittingbourne, Kent

We would be really interested to work with you on the spiritual development through asking questions and pondering some of the Big Ideas. I will show the Nexus animation before we break up for half term next week and then we would like to be involved in weekly questions, and happy to share questions that we have too... I think starting with Year 6 is a good idea and then perhaps we can try with Year 5 or even one of the younger classes?

Headteacher, Wadhurst, Kent

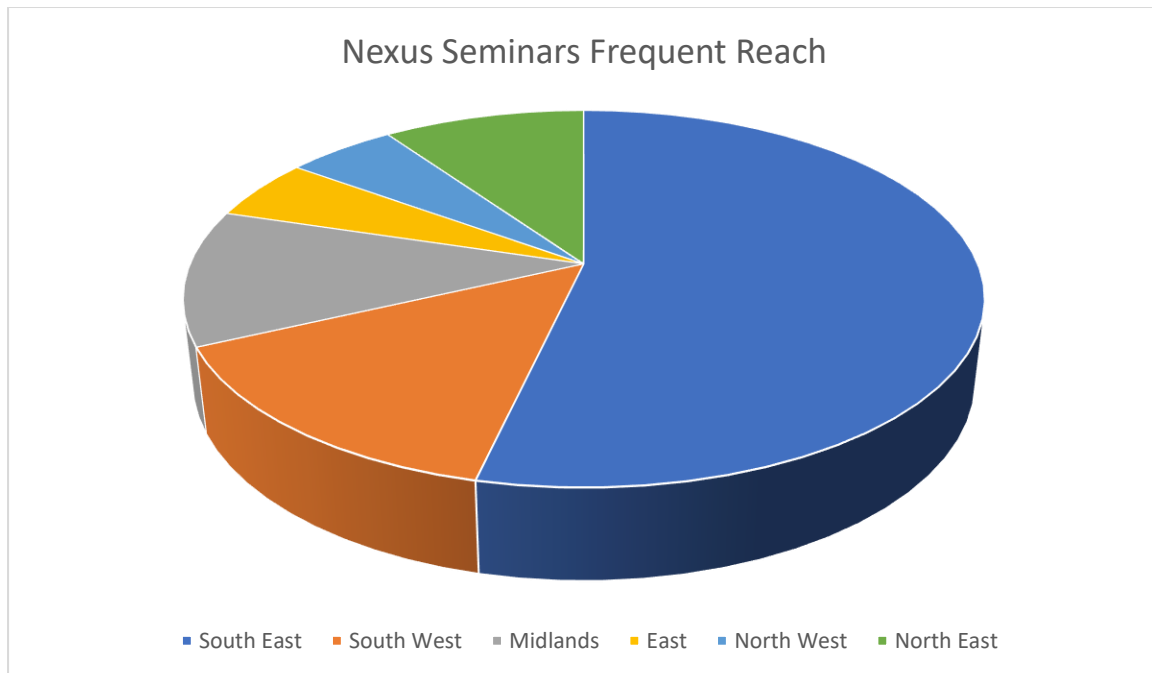


NEW CPD TOOLKIT FOR CHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

We have now prepared a CPD toolkit for church primary schools. The focus is to help all staff feel confident in supporting children and parents with faith conversations either in the home or in the school.

Should you wish to have these resources sent to you, please contact us via nexus@canterbury.ac.uk.

OUR NEXUS SEMINARS ARE FAR REACHING AND WELL RECEIVED



Above is a chart showing all the regions in the UK where we have areas of frequent engagement with the Nexus seminars. We also have an international reach in the USA and Australia.

Recent Seminars

Nexus Seminar: How do church communities build relationships with the local school?

The focus of this seminar, led by Dr Ann Casson, was on how the Parish/local church can foster relationships and connections with their church primary schools and families to support and encourage the spiritual flourishing of the child. Although, the Nexus team have spent much time looking at the school as the bridgebuilder and what schools are doing, in this seminar the focus shifted towards the parish/local church as bridgebuilder. Supporting Ann in the delivery of this seminar was contributions from Father Paul Jenkins, Parish Priest in the Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, Martha Flavell, Open the Book Training and Development Officer and Phil Preston, Former Education Planning and Governance Specialist.

Nexus Seminar: How do we nurture spiritual capital in a church school?

Dr Ann Casson and Ms Ann Pittaway recently led a seminar considering the meaning of spiritual capital in church schools and how to ensure it is nurtured and embedded within the school's distinctively Christian vision or Mission. As part of this seminar, we also had the opportunity to share our new CPD toolkit that offers some practical ideas for nurturing spiritual capital in practice.

We intend to have links available for the recordings of both seminars very soon. If you wish to have either or both links, please contact Gill Harrison via gill.harrison@canterbury.ac.uk.

Upcoming Seminar

Title: Spiritual Flourishing of the Youngest Children

Date: 4th May 2022

Time: 2pm -3pm

This seminar will present the findings of our recent study (Sept- Dec. 2021) which investigated the urgent need for and feasibility of a research study into the spiritual flourishing of the youngest children (2–4-year-old) in Church Toddler group settings in England. All humans have an innate spirituality, including the youngest children. Their spiritual core kindles their sense of awe and wonder, curiosity, and imagination. This seminar explores how we define of spiritual flourishing, why it is important for the youngest children, and considers how research in Church toddler groups could illuminate ways to nurture the spiritual flourishing of the youngest children.

If you would like to attend this seminar, please [REGISTER HERE](#)

Past seminars can be viewed via these links:

Let's Talk about Death (Led by Dr Sabina Hulbert)

<https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer/lets-talk-about-death-a-faith-in-the-nexus-seminar/>

Who are the Occasional Belongers? (Led by Dr Ann Casson)

<https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer/who-are-the-occasional-belongers/>

Encouraging Faith-talk in the Home (Led by Ms Ann Pittaway)

<https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/nicer/encouraging-faith-talk-in-the-home-meeting-recording/>

Making Spiritual Spaces in School (Led by Dr Ann Casson, Ronni Lamont & Ann Pittaway)

<https://youtu.be/UryxVjZWBnA>

Storytelling and Spirituality (Led by Kieran O'Brien, director of storytelling agency Ministry)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saOKkaUHdeE>

Spiritual Leadership by Children in Church Primary Schools (Led by Dr Ann Casson and Dr Anne Lumb)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWKHTjigPqA>

Upcoming Events.

Seminar: Spiritual Flourishing of the Youngest Children

Date: 4th May 2022

Time: 2pm-3pm

[Register here](#)

Seminar: TBC

Date: 15th June

Time: 2pm-3pm.


Further details will be issued nearer the time.

Join us for the NICER Jubilee Celebration!

NICER

Jubilee Celebration.

A one day in-person event



Monday 4 July 2022 at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge, Canterbury, UK, CT1 2HG
with Professor Bob Bowie, Professor Emeritus Trevor Cooling, Dr Ann Casson and others.

This one day in-person event is for all those working in schools and education (teaching and/or researching) and in particular those with an interest in:

- The education and development of RE teachers and the aims and purposes of RE
- Science religion encounters and the place and nature of RE within the broader school curriculum Educating RE teachers
- Supporting schools for children's spiritual flourishing and the role of chaplains, Church communities and parents
- Research Schools and collaborating with research networks.

There will also be an opportunity for Researchers (including those who are school-based, doctoral students, early career researchers and those with more experience) to present a paper (15-20 minutes) on topics related to:

- religion, education and the common good
- worldviews education
- spiritual flourishing.

If you would like to present a paper for the Research component, please submit your title and abstract of no more than 350 words (including references) by scanning the QR code opposite or use the link below.
Deadline: 10th April 2022


Click/tap to submit your abstract

<https://bit.ly/3CficgT>

To find out more, download information about our projects and watch our YouTube videos for schools and researchers visit www.nicer.org.uk

Contact: gill.harrison@canterbury.ac.uk

Scan, click or tap the QR code to submit your abstract



www.nicer.org.uk

National Institute for
Christian Education Research

