

difference.

**for Primary
Schools**



Host Guide

Key Stage 1
5-7 years old

RLN DIFFERENCE IS A PART OF THE
RECONCILING LEADERS NETWORK



Stay connected

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with us at the email address below. You can also sign up to our mailing list or follow us on social media to hear our latest news and how you can get involved.

✉ **hello@rln.global**

🖱 **difference.rln.global**

📷 **difference.rln**

📘 **difference.rln**

**Sign up to our
mailing list**



Contents



- 4** **Overview**
- 14** **Using the session guides**
- 18** **Including everyone**
- 25** **Key Stage 1 overview**

- 32** **Session 1**
Introduction
- 38** **Session 2**
Crossing Divides
- 42** **Session 3**
Navigating Disagreement
- 48** **Session 4**
Pursuing Justice
- 54** **Session 5**
Practising Forgiveness
- 60** **Session 6**
Belonging Together

Let's get started... ↘

Overview

Before you begin

We're so excited you've chosen to run the *Difference* course with your primary school!

If you haven't already, you'll need to create an online account so you can access everything you need, including films and slides provided for every session. This is free and simple to do – just follow the steps below:

- ☐ **Register for training** – sign up for a training session at difference.rln.global/training.
- ☐ **Head to difference.rln.global/sign-up and create an account** – this gives you access to the resources hub after completing training.
- ☐ **Explore the dashboard** – this is where you'll find articles and introductory videos about the *Difference* course.
- ☐ **Set up your *Difference* course** – we'd love to know when you're running the course and for how many people so we can best support you along the way. Please register a course per class/group.
- ☐ **Download the course materials** – visit the training and resources hub to find the films and slides that accompany each session.

Scan here to
get started!





About

We live in a messy, hurting, and divided world. For children growing up and working out who they are, it can be especially hard to know how to handle conflict, difference, fear of saying the wrong thing, and the ups and downs of friendships.

Children and young people need the opportunity and support to build good relationships with themselves, their peers, and the world around them. Through *Difference*, pupils will develop formational habits to encounter others well and navigate difficult situations. By participating in this programme, they will gain the tools and skills to engage constructively and respectfully to build a flourishing and welcoming school community.

Key stages

Difference for Primary Schools has five sets of resources – one for each key stage. These course materials have been developed with education experts and school practitioners.

We are delighted that schools around the world are using these resources – please use the age ranges below as guidance for your context.



Early Years Foundation Stage

3-5 years old (Nursery and Reception)

Key Stage 1

5-7 years old

Lower Key Stage 2

7-9 years old

Upper Key Stage 2

9-11 years old

Transition

10-12 years old

In our diverse classroom contexts, it is important to recognise how worldviews can impact how pupils think, believe, feel, and act. The *Difference* course is rooted in Christian principles and is thoughtfully designed to speak to universal values, such as compassion, empathy, interconnectedness, forgiveness, belonging, and hospitality.

These values ensure that the content is inclusive and relevant to all pupils. Recognising the influence of different worldviews helps us create a more empathetic and supportive learning environment. The resources include optional prayers along with alternative reflections for the diversity of needs and beliefs of your pupils.

Sessions

With the exception of the Nursery materials, the *Difference* course for primary schools has six sessions:

1 Introduction

In complex and divided times, we can develop habits that help us to relate better to others and work towards building just and flourishing communities.

2 Crossing Divides

Sometimes our own assumptions or prejudices divide us from others. We can challenge these assumptions by being curious about the lives of those we don't know.

3 Navigating Disagreement

It is possible to have good relationships even when we disagree. Instead of being afraid of disagreement, we can develop empathy for those we disagree with, learning to see things from the other's point of view.

4 Pursuing Justice

Justice is an important part of peacemaking. We are invited to recognise that the world is not as it should be and to join with others to pursue just and flourishing communities to change the world around us.

5 Practising Forgiveness

Taking steps towards forgiveness can be complex but transformative. Having recognised a hurt, we can begin to see if a better relationship is possible in the future.

6 Belonging Together

We flourish when we recognise our interconnectedness and the unique value we each have.

***Difference* teaches three habits**

Difference introduces three formational habits that can shape how we navigate everyday relationships. Rooted in the wisdom of experienced peacemakers and inspired by Jesus' encounters in the New Testament, these habits equip and encourage children in a fractured and fragile world.

Our habits matter. Research estimates that 45% of our daily actions are habitual¹ and neuroscientists have estimated that up to 95% of our behaviours are controlled – at least in part – by the subconscious mind.² This suggests a close connection between what we believe and what we do. If we can shape our habits, we will develop practices that have a deep and lasting impact on our actions, our thoughts and our character.

The three habits are:



Be Curious



Be Present



Reimagine

These habits are deeply interconnected and can be used flexibly, there is no correct order - they strengthen and support each other.

Let's take a closer look at the three habits →

¹ David T. Neal, Wendy Wood, and Jeffrey M. Quinn, 'Habits – A Repeat Performance', Duke University, 2006

² e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1999, in Martin 2008



Be Curious Community

Listen well

Take an interest

Find out more

Ask respectful questions

"God created human beings, making them to be like himself." Genesis 1:27a (GNB)

Listen to others' stories and see the world through their eyes.

In Genesis 1, we read that every person is made in the image of God, with value and a unique story of deep worth. When we are curious enough to discover a person's story, we affirm their innate value.

When a person feels seen, heard, and respected, it enables trust to grow and deeper conversations to become possible. Demonstrating a genuine interest in who another person is and how they experience the world can open a door to navigating more challenging territory together.

Curiosity about the other also invites us to stretch beyond the borders of our own experiences. Adopting a posture of enquiry and wonder cultivates humility, where we acknowledge that we don't have all the answers, while still valuing the experience and insights we do offer.

Being curious enables pupils to build community. The word community comes from ideas of shared belonging and unity. This concept will be explored through specific examples to help pupils better understand how context – geographic, historical, cultural, etc. – impacts what it means to live, believe, and think as a member of a global community.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)

We are all different, but together we are stronger

We are all different and we are all connected – we need to honour each other

We are stronger when we celebrate and value our differences

It takes time, commitment, and patience to get to know each other better

Umunthu – I belong, therefore I am

Transition
(10-12 years old)



Be Present Embrace

Show up

Stick around

Listen well

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." John 1:14a (NIV)

Encounter others with authenticity and confidence.

It is often in our encounters with others that we notice complexity, divisions, and differences in human relationships. Such encounters are at the heart of many of Jesus' teachings.

Being present with others means more than just being there physically. It means being fully present – showing up and sticking around, making time for the other, giving them our full attention, and meeting them as they truly are.

The Christian faith teaches that God became human and chose to be part of a hurting world. God's response to injustice and hurt was to step into the reality of the human experience through the person of Jesus Christ.

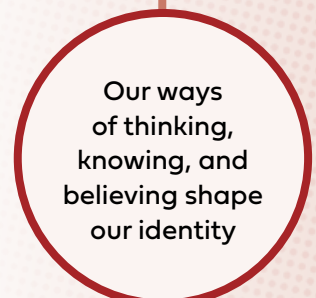
Being present involves having the courage to bring our unique selves into our encounters – not just the filtered version of ourselves we want others to see. When we show up with our experiences, backgrounds, strengths, hopes, and fears, it can make way for deeper, more meaningful relationships.

When we choose to be present, we move towards embrace. Embrace is not just about welcoming others – it's about taking the opportunity to broaden our perspectives. Through the lens of Ubuntu, this relational concept invites pupils to expand their understanding and gain insight into how their own environment has influenced their understanding of the world.

difference.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)



Transition
(10-12 years old)



Reimagine Power

Seek hope

See beyond

Find a new way

"I am making everything new!"

Revelation 21:5 (NIV)

Find hope and opportunity in the places where we long to see change.

Our perceptions of the world are shaped by our imaginations. When divisions and conflict seem intractable and we face repeated disappointment, it can sometimes be difficult to find hope or to envision a future where healing, restoration, and thriving relationships are possible.

Yet we read in Revelation 21 that 'God is making all things new.' The habit of reimagining encourages us through being renewed by the Holy Spirit to seek for God to expand our understanding of what is possible. Reimagining is rarely a solo activity; it often happens in community. For relationships to be restored, the systems and structures we live by may need to be reimagined and reshaped in ways we have not yet considered.

The habit of reimagining helps pupils reflect on the dynamics of power. Power cannot be divorced from context; it is undeniably the case that some people have more power than others and that this power can be used for both good and ill. This concept asks pupils to critically analyse ways in which power has shaped lived experience – positively and negatively – in a global context.

Habits progression

EYFS
(3-5 years old)



Everyone
can make a
difference

There are
important stories
and experiences;
we can listen,
care, and
understand

Lived
experiences
shape and
deepen how we
understand our
worldview

People in a
worldview may
follow different
sources of
authority

Power and
influence shift
with time,
place, and
shared hope

Transition
(10-12 years old)

Overview

Using the habits with your pupils

Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce is a simple but powerful strategy to create meaningful dialogue in the classroom. It encourages deeper thinking, active listening, and respectful discussion – all essential for nurturing the three habits:

Be Curious

Take a genuine interest in others' thoughts and experiences

Pose

Ask a thoughtful question linked to your learning but let pupils know you don't want an answer yet. This invites curiosity and builds anticipation.

Be Present

Give your full attention, really listening to what others say

Pause

Give pupils silent thinking time. This models being present – allowing everyone space to reflect, especially those who may need longer to process their thoughts.

Pounce

Gently invite one pupil to share their answer. This encourages full engagement and shows that every voice matters. If they're unsure, reassure them and invite another to try – it's all part of the learning.

Reimagine

Explore how your thoughts may adapt and change after hearing other people's responses

Bounce

Ask another pupil what they think about the first answer. Do they agree, disagree, or have something to add? This helps pupils reimagine – exploring how their own thinking might shift or grow after hearing someone else's perspective.

By combining this method with the *Difference* habits, you're not just asking questions – you're building a classroom culture of curiosity, empathy, and collaborative thinking.

The *Difference* Song

In partnership with iSingPop, we're excited to share This is the Day (The *Difference* Song) for use in classrooms, collective worship and assemblies. The song highlights the three habits and the themes of the *Difference* programme. It also includes fun, easy-to-follow actions to help pupils join in and bring the message to life.

Scan here! →



Feedback

As part of our commitment to keep improving, we would love to hear how *Difference* is going for you and your pupils. As you begin using the materials, please share any reflections, stories, and feedback, which will greatly help us understand the impact these resources are having in classrooms – and how we can make them even better.

At the end of your course, please remember to complete a feedback form in your final session by visiting difference.rln.global/feedback or by scanning this QR code.

Scan here! →



Using the session guides

Session structure

The sessions are designed to be flexible and adaptable to suit your school's context. You can choose how and when to deliver the materials, depending on what works best for your pupils and timetable.

As a guide, some schools have delivered the sessions over six weeks – spending around an hour per session through subjects like RE, PSHE, English, History, or whole school learning such as collective worship or assemblies. Others have run the sessions daily over a single week. There's no fixed approach – you're encouraged to deliver the course in a way that complements your pupils' engagement and learning.

Each session of the course follows the structure below:

Story (Be Curious)

Stories matter, so we start with a section called **Story**. Each key stage embeds learning in children's literature with a story book chosen for each stage and we've produced a short film introducing pupils to the three habits. Every session highlights a story or Bible reference to reflect on relevant themes. Questions are provided to guide your discussion with pupils.

During this part of the session, pupils are encouraged to explore, ask questions and engage with the world around them, nurturing their natural sense of wonder and deepening their appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.



Space (Be Present)

The middle section of each session is called **Space**. The spaces we create can have a powerful impact on the relationships we build. This part of the session helps embed the habits through a variety of facilitated activities. Pupils will learn to broaden their horizons by welcoming and understanding others' experiences, while also recognising that their own hopes, beliefs, and values are just as important as those of others.



Sanctuary (Reimagine)

Each session ends with a moment of **Sanctuary**. This is a time for pupils to reflect on what they've learned and how they could apply it in practice. This part of the session embraces the habit of reimagining, encouraging pupils to think creatively about how they can shape a hope-filled future, considering the impact of power, influence, and their role in it. This helps them develop problem-solving skills and a positive, forward-thinking mindset. If appropriate for your setting, this section is also an opportunity to pray.

◀ Before the session

Ahead of each session, the following steps will help you prepare.

Read

Read the guide for the session, paying close attention to the instructions and the session theme. Familiarise yourself with the provided slide deck, making any edits ahead of the session.

Set up

Prepare your room and ensure you have the materials you need for the activities. Make the space feel welcoming.

► During the session

Each session has a set of notes to help you host it, giving guidance on what to say, questions to ask, and activities to run.

Sessions contain the following elements:



Film

Suggested videos to explore with pupils, encouraging meaningful discussions around key themes and habits.



Song

Songs are included to help pupils connect with the themes, remember key messages, and express their learning in creative and joyful ways - including the *Difference* song.



Children's literature

Stories that connect to the session theme to aid exploration and discussion.



Slides

A slide deck for every session, with images, videos, and discussion questions included.



Activity

Guidance for activities is provided, along with key discussion questions to link activities to the learning.



Bible

Biblical passages and stories are offered for those who wish to explore the session themes from a Christian perspective.



Prayer and reflection

Prayers and reflections to read with your pupils, or to put into your own words.

►► Beyond the session

To help embed the *Difference* habits – **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine** – beyond each session, schools are encouraged to create reflective, empowering, and inclusive spaces that allow pupils to continue practising these habits in meaningful ways throughout the school day. These spaces should go beyond one-off lessons, integrating the habits into the rhythms and culture of classroom life, contributing towards pupils' continuous learning.

By creating opportunities for ongoing reflection, dialogue, and creativity, pupils are supported in exploring their own identities, understanding others, and imagining more just and compassionate communities. These spaces might take the form of physical areas, like a Working Wall, Peace Diary, or Harmony Haven (see page 30), but can also be woven into routines such as circle time and collective worship.

Such environments invite pupils to be active participants in their own learning and development, encouraging them to:

- Consider thoughtful questions and be open to new perspectives
- Practise presence and empathy with peers
- Reflect on how they can make a positive difference in their relationships and communities

Ultimately, these intentional practices help pupils move from learning about: difference to living it, developing the skills and values they need to flourish as individuals and as part of a diverse and interconnected world.



Including everyone

Wellbeing

The below guidance is intended to help you create an accessible and welcoming environment that will enable the pupils in your school to engage with – and enjoy – *Difference*.

Every person is different

It is particularly important to bear in mind that every person in your group will come to *Difference* with unique life experiences, perspectives, and needs. Some children may need encouragement to step out of their comfort zones and be given opportunities for reflection. For others, it will be important to underline the importance of their wellbeing and ensure that they do not feel under pressure to engage (with individuals, groups, or issues) if it does not feel helpful or safe for them to do so at this point.

Emotional regulation

Emotional regulation involves recognising, understanding, and responding to emotions. It plays a key role in how we learn to reflect on our own experiences and build relationships with others. Some pupils may be going through personal situations that make it hard for them to regulate emotion. It is important to keep this in mind when facilitating activities where children are invited to reflect on area of conflict or on their own perspectives.

When we feel threatened, embarrassed, or angry, it's normal for there to be an emotional reaction. This happens because the emotional part of our brain (the amygdala) takes over, and puts our rational thinking on hold. It's like our brain switches to survival mode, focusing on protecting ourselves in the moment rather than engage in careful thinking. This can make it hard to regulate emotions, stay focused, or prevent impulsive actions.

Feeling safe

Starting a journey to explore and develop the habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining involves pupils feeling safe enough to share stories, express personal opinions, and listen to those of others.

Creating a safe social, physical, and emotional space for pupils will provide containment for the sessions – particularly for any pupils who may be struggling to regulate emotion. The following recommendations will help create a safe and nurturing environment where children feel empowered to explore and express complex emotions and ideas.



A safe social space

As we welcome pupils, we need to create a space where they feel comfortable and safe to be themselves. This is not something that can be done by you alone, as an educator; it requires involvement and collaboration with your pupils.

Before beginning the sessions, establish a positive group culture – for example, by creating a class agreement. As pupils contribute their ideas, reflect back what you believe the children are expressing and avoid making assumptions. Think about how you can enable the children to have ownership of the process – for example, a pupil could act as a scribe or help summarise suggestions. The more ownership the children feel through this process, the easier it will be to establish and maintain a group culture that practices the habits.

A safe emotional space

When exploring personal or emotive topics, creating a psychologically safe space is essential to ensure pupils feel secure, respected, and able to engage meaningfully.

- Start by collaboratively establishing clear ground rules that promote respectful behaviour and active listening without judgement, so every child knows their thoughts and feelings will be valued.
- Encourage a culture of empathy by encouraging pupils to recognise and appreciate one another's perspectives, using storytelling, role play, or shared experiences to build understanding and connection.
- Provide opportunities for self-expression in various forms – through drawing, writing, speaking, or using reflection or thought boxes – allowing pupils the flexibility to process and share in ways that suit them best.
- Ensure all language and materials used are age-appropriate and accessible. Avoid jargon and offer clear, simple explanations that children can easily understand.
- Most importantly, remain present and responsive throughout, tuning into emotional cues, offering reassurance, and making space for pupils to talk privately if they need extra support (in accordance with your school's pupil wellbeing and safeguarding guidelines).



A safe physical space

In addition to creating a space that is emotionally, mentally, and spiritually safe, we need to create a space that is physically safe.

Location

It can be beneficial to consider how the pupils in your group perceive the space where you are gathering. The space you are using may carry specific connotations influenced by its other uses – for example, it may be associated with a class subject at school that they find boring or challenging. Consider ways to enhance their sense of ownership for the purpose of this course, making it a place where the children can relax and be themselves.



Set-up

Think carefully about the layout of your room. How are the chairs positioned? Are some arrangements more formal or imposing? Will you use chairs, or would beanbags or floor cushions be more appropriate? If you choose the latter, will everyone be able to sit down and get up comfortably? If some people in your group have limited mobility, consider how to make the room inclusive for them.



Area to take a break

It could be helpful to designate an area as a quiet space. Sometimes discussions, activities, or interactions can become overwhelming for some people – we don't always know what may be triggering due to different experiences or circumstances. A pupil might need to spend a few moments on their own in a quiet space until they feel ready to return to the group. If possible, set up a corner of your room with comfortable seating and items such as noise-cancelling headphones and fidget toys. Ask the children what would help them most if they need to take a break. At the start of each session, remind the group that this area is available.



Consider accessibility

The course materials are designed to be inclusive and interactive, including some movement around the room. It's essential to review each session and consider any necessary adaptations based on the needs of your group.

Widgit mats

A printable widgit mat is provided for each session to enhance accessibility and support diverse learning needs. The widgit symbols and visual aids provide clear, visual representations of key terms and concepts, which can significantly benefit pupils with different learning styles and abilities, including those with language or cognitive challenges.



Widgit mats can be particularly useful for pre-teaching – giving pupils the opportunity to familiarise themselves with vocabulary and concepts before they come up in the main lesson. This proactive approach not only aids comprehension and retention but also creates an inclusive environment where all pupils can engage more effectively with the material. The use of visual vocabulary helps to bridge gaps in communication and ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to understand and participate in the lessons.

- ✉ Widgit mats for every session will be available to download in English via the training and resources hub. If you require widgit mats in a different language, please email us (via hello@rln.global) – we'd be happy to provide these for you!

Some things to consider are:

- For children with auditory impairments, consider what adjustments they need so that you can ensure they are in the best position to hear clearly or lip-read if applicable.
- When using visual materials, be prepared to describe them accurately and promptly for pupils with visual impairments.
- Some children may struggle to empathise with others or understand different perspectives. Break down activities into smaller steps and provide extra support in assessing emotions.
- Listening can be challenging for those who struggle with interrupting, inferring, or changing topics while others are speaking. Provide additional support by reminding them of how they can demonstrate active listening during these sessions.
- Fidget toys or putty can be beneficial for pupils who need to occupy their hands to aid concentration.
- A visual running order for the session (displayed on a flip chart or piece of paper), along with time warnings/notices about activity endings, can help your group prepare for transitions and changes.



The background is a solid blue color. In the upper left and lower right corners, there are abstract, overlapping shapes with a fine, light blue dot pattern. Centered in the middle of the page is a white rounded rectangle with a thick white border. Inside this rectangle, the text "Key Stage 1 overview and sessions" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines.

Key Stage 1 overview and sessions

Key Stage 1 (KS1)

The Key Stage 1 (KS1) resources help young children explore big ideas through stories, discussions, and creative activities. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their feelings and understand that everyone sees the world differently.

They learn to listen well, speak kindly, and build positive relationships. The sessions also show that even small acts of care, fairness, or courage can help make their classroom and community a better place.

Be Curious (Community)

We are all different and we are all connected – we need to honour each other.

This means taking time to learn about other people – their ideas, cultures, families, and stories. Even though we are all different, we are all part of one big community. Being curious helps us understand and respect those differences.

When we listen, ask kind questions, and try to understand others, we show that we care. It helps everyone feel included and valued. Being curious helps us honour each other and grow stronger together.

Be Present (Embrace)

We can make people feel welcome by... (diverse approaches).

When we notice the people around us, we make them feel seen, safe, and welcome. We all have different ways of showing kindness, such as smiling, listening, using someone's name, or inviting them to play.

When we're really present, we pay attention to how others are feeling and try to include them. It's a way of showing love and care, helping everyone feel like they belong.

Reimagine (Power)

There are important stories and experiences; we can listen, care, and understand .

Reimagining means thinking about how things could be different, and better. It's about having hope that the world can change and become a kinder, fairer place for everyone.

When we take time to listen to other people's stories and experiences, especially those that are different from our own, we begin to understand how they feel. This helps us care more, include others, and stand up for what's right.

Reimagining invites us to believe that, with kindness, courage, and hope, we can help build a better world.

These materials explore key themes that help pupils develop awareness and empathy, including:

1 Bravery

Understanding how we can use courage to overcome our fears. Pupils will examine how to embrace courage whilst recognising how fear can sometimes hold us back.

2 Hope

Exploring how to hold on to hope and think positively in the face of challenges. Pupils will examine how they can assess challenging situations and apply a positive mindset to envision a better future.

3 Hospitality

Examining how to embrace others, this theme looks at how we can welcome those who are different from us, understanding how to value those differences and create a sense of belonging.

Through these themes, pupils will gain the tools to think critically, challenge assumptions, and engage in meaningful discussions that help shape a more inclusive and thoughtful world.

Theological underpinning

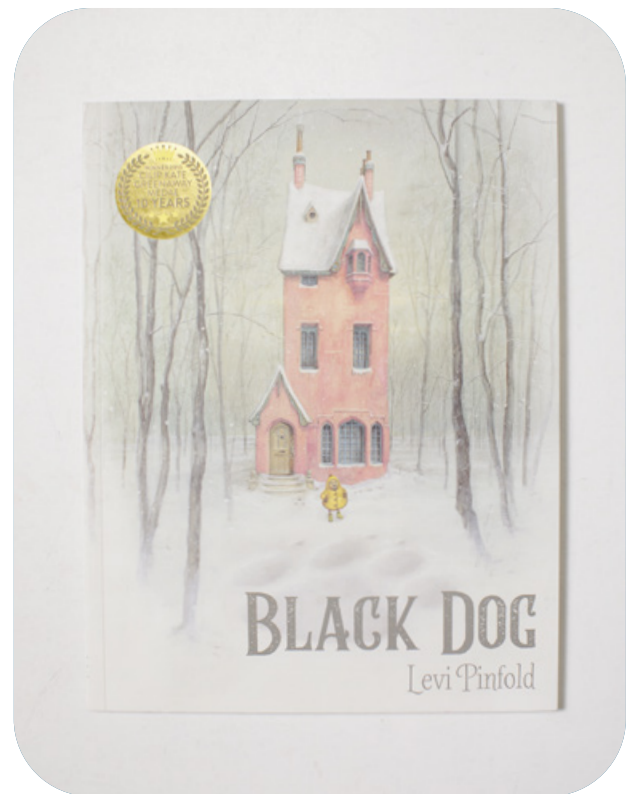
- All humans are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139) and have intrinsic worth.
- We know that everyone makes mistakes, but it is important to make amends, especially if someone has been hurt. (Matthew 5:23-24)
- We enjoy learning about people who are different from us; it helps us to understand more about the world. (1 Corinthians 12)

Children's literature

Central to these resources is the importance of creating a sense of belonging among pupils, their communities, and beyond. The key texts, *Black Dog* by Levi Pinfold and *Tin Forest* by Helen Ward and Wayne Anderson, serve as a powerful tool to illustrate these themes.

Black Dog

Black Dog is a beautifully illustrated book that tells the story of a large black dog waiting outside Hope's family home. Whilst the family fears the oversized dog, the youngest (and smallest) member of the family is the only one to venture outside and shows the others how to confront their fear. Singing on her journey into the outside world, the Hopes' positive spirit and courage gradually reduces the dog's size until it is small enough to be welcomed inside by the others, as another member of their family. The story explores themes of courage, fear, hope, belonging and hospitality and is a useful springboard for discussions related to difference.



Through *Black Dog* pupils can:

- Consider how fear can create a barrier to progress in our lives.
- Understand the importance of embracing courage when we are fearful.
- Explore how other people with different perspectives can offer us hope in challenging times.
- Understand the importance of welcoming others and how this contributes to a sense of belonging.

Tin Forest

Tin Forest is an imaginative story about nature, helping children to understand that they can find beauty in unlikely places. At the start of the story, an old man feels isolated in a world made purely of rubbish and tin. As we progress, the forest grows, the energy of new life brings animals and plants once more and the man is no longer alone. Children will learn how we can feel connected through nature and how working together can create a world where we all feel a sense of belonging.



Through *Tin Forest* pupils can:

- Explore how beauty is about love, kindness, growth and hope.
- Understand how we can create beauty in our own communities.
- Consider the importance of belonging.

Wondering questions

Each course begins with a wondering question – an open-ended prompt designed to spark curiosity and reflection. Wonderings are a powerful teaching approach that support pupils to take ownership of their learning, leading to greater engagement and deeper thinking.

Key Stage 1



I wonder...

Are we braver than we think?

Continuous learning



Working Wall

An interactive classroom display that reflects current learning. It evolves over time to show the learning journey, helping pupils to recall key concepts, vocabulary, and ideas. In RE or thematic learning, a Working Wall might include key questions, scripture, artwork, pupil responses, and prompts for reflection. It serves as both a learning aid and a celebration of pupil thinking and progress.

Key Stage 1



Prompt question: How can you be brave?



Harmony Havens

A dedicated space designed to promote prayer, mindfulness, meditation, and reflection for students to cultivate a sense of presence. Utilise these havens as spaces for pupils to recharge and reflect.

Key Stage 1



Questions to reflect on: How does fear stop us from finding peace within ourselves? How can we help others to live more peacefully?



Peace Diaries

Introduce "Peace Diaries" where pupils document their experiences, thoughts, and unique approaches to conflict resolution. Create a platform for pupils to share their insights, creating a sense of empowerment and collective learning.

Key Stage 1



Consider: What makes you feel calm? How can we make others feel welcome?

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Difference for Primary Schools reflects some of the aims of the **United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals** by nurturing values and habits that encourage pupils to think critically, care deeply, and act responsibly. Through the habits of **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine**, children explore themes of justice, inclusion, peace, and sustainability in age-appropriate ways. This helps to build a foundation for global citizenship, empowering pupils to reflect on their place in the world and their potential to make a positive difference in their communities and beyond.

The following goals can be explored through the materials for this key stage, with some guiding questions from The Flourish Project.

Key Stage 1



- What do we have to do to be healthy?
- What makes us happy or sad and why?
- Why do we need a happy planet?
- Building a world where everybody can be happy and well.
- What does it look and feel like to be healthy?



- Learning about how everybody is different and special.
- Learning about different backgrounds.
- Learning about how words can hurt.
- Taking care of others.
- Creating a world where everybody matters.

Scan QR to access United Nations' educational materials



The sessions →

Session 1

Introduction

Key learning

Pupils are introduced to the concept of hope, a key theme in the sessions to follow, understanding that hope is a powerful force that can have a positive impact on their lives.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Quiet space for reflection

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Song

Play calming music at the start of the session
– we've shared an example in the slide deck, or
you can find your own music online.

Notes

Discussing the habits

It is essential to help pupils develop habits that will enhance their engagement and understanding. The *Difference* habits – **Be Curious**, **Be Present**, and **Reimagine** – will help pupils approach the resources with an open mind, active engagement, and creative thinking.



Film

Show your class the KS1 *Difference* habits video.

We recommend playing the KS1 *Difference* habits video as a gentle and engaging way to introduce the key ideas of the course. We'd encourage you to replay this video at any point during the course – it can be a helpful reminder of the habits or a prompt for reflection as pupils grow in their understanding.

Discussion

What does hope mean?

Start with the key question above to gauge children's level of understanding. Explain that hope is when we believe something can go right, more than go wrong.

For example:

- I am hopeful that it will be sunny tomorrow.
- I am hopeful that I will have a lovely playtime.
- I am hopeful I will make friends in my new class.

Notes



Bible passage

"And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you."

Psalm 39:7 (ESV)

Explain that this verse is about letting go of worry and trusting that we are not alone in difficult times. Christians believe that God is always with them, and this belief can help them find hope and strength when life is challenging.

Invite pupils to share where they see similar principles and values in their faith, or other worldviews, cultures, or community traditions.



Film

Load the video of The Windmill Farmer – but don't press play yet! The film is provided in the resources

Show children the still of the film and ask them:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)

Notes



Film

Play **The Windmill Farmer** until 2:32 – pause when the farmer returns inside after the rain.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- How did he care for the windmill seeds?
- How do you think he felt when the weather changed?
- Do you think he should have hope? Why? Why not?



Film

Continue to watch the rest of the film.

- How do you think he felt after the storm had passed?





Activity Guided imagery

Notes

Read this to your pupils:

Let's all close our eyes. Imagine you are a small seed in the ground. It's dark, and you can hear the rain falling. But deep inside, you feel something warm and bright. It's hope. Slowly, you start to grow. You push through the soil and feel the sunshine on your leaves. You keep growing until you become a tall, strong tree. How do you feel now?

Pupils are welcome to put actions to this exercise.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- What did you feel when you were growing into a tree?
- How can we use hope in our own lives when things feel hard?

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Just like the farmer, there will be times when storms enter our lives. It's important to be hopeful that things will get better, and the storms will pass. Having hope helps us think about all the good things that can go right.



Prayer

Dear God,

Teach us to be patient and to have hope when things go wrong. We trust that you will guide us through difficult storms and into the light.

We put our faith in you.

Amen.

 **Notes**



End of session 1

Session 2

Crossing Divides

Key learning

Pupils explore how assumptions or prejudices divide us from others and learn how to challenge these by being curious about the story we don't know.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A copy of the book *Black Dog* by Levi Pinfold
- Copies of hope clouds for children
- Pencils and coloured pencils
- A quiet space for reflection

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Children's literature

Introduce the key text and show children the cover of *Black Dog*.

Ask:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Children's literature

Read the story all the way through, asking questions as you go.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Why are the family scared?
- What does it mean to hope?
- How is Hope (Small) different from her family?
- Can you think of a time when you felt scared?
- Why was the dog compared to a tyrannosaurus rex?

Notes

Discuss the size of the dinosaur and why this may feel scary to the children and the family.

Ask:

- Are there times that we might be afraid of things that we can see and that we can't see?

Gather responses from children as to why they may be afraid.

Discussion

Explore the concept of hope versus fear in more detail with the children.

Scenario: Imagine you want to learn to ride a bike, but you're so afraid of falling that you don't even want to try. How will you learn to ride if you never get on the bike?

Model different ways of choosing hope over fear and refer to Session 1 when you discussed hope as believing things can go right, more than believing things can go wrong.

This is also an opportunity for you to suggest other scenarios that are relevant to your pupils.

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

"Be strong, and let your heart take courage."

Psalms 31:24 (ESV)

Explain that this means that we don't give up, even when things feel difficult or when we feel nervous.

difference.



Activity

Hope clouds

Give each child a template of a cloud and ask them to write or draw something they hope for.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes in life we can feel scared or frightened when things are new. Sometimes this can be when we see something that is different from what we are used to. But, if we are brave and show courage, we may be able to make our fear go away and find that the new activity, thing or person we get to know might not be scary



Important note: Let pupils know that sometimes fear is helpful in keeping us safe, such as not putting our hand near the fire. But this session looks at when fear hold us back from things that are good for us to do. Remind your pupils that healthy fear is helpful..



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for teaching us how to be brave and how to have hope when things feel difficult.

Teach us to try our best, and to show courage when we need it. May we all work hard treat others with kindness and not to be afraid of those of seem different from us.

We ask this in your name,

Amen.

End of session 2

Session 3

Navigating Disagreement



Key learning

Pupils explore the concept of disagreement and how positive relationships can be maintained, even when disagreement is present. Instead of being afraid of disagreement we can develop empathy for those we disagree with.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A quiet place for reflection
- 'Agree' and 'disagree' signs
- Sticky tack
- A copy of the book *Black Dog* by Levi Pinfold

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Song

Play the song *This is Our World* by iSingPop.



Children's literature

Remind your pupils about the book *Black Dog* that you read in the last session.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Which characters thought the same as each other in *Black Dog*?
- Which character thought differently from the others?
- How do we know?
- Did they agree or disagree with one another?

Explore vocabulary

Discuss the key terms 'agree' and 'disagree' with the children and ensure that they are clear on the definitions.

 Notes



Activity

Agree or disagree?

Let the children know that you will read out statements that they will either agree or disagree with. Ask them to move to the side of the room that matches what they think for each sentence (or stand in the middle for 'maybe').

Alternative format: Explain that thumbs up means 'agree/yes', middle thumbs means 'maybe/not sure', and thumbs down means 'disagree/no'.

This can also be done on the carpet or at table places if no movement is preferred.

Here are some examples of statements, but you may like to pick your own to engage your class:

- No one should have to wear school uniform.
- We should be friends with everyone.
- Pineapple is yummy on pizza.

Ask the children questions when they show their opinions – for example, "why do you think that?"

Through this exercise:

- Model valuing their opinions.
- Invite them to notice how they are expressing their view with their bodies, or how their body feels – ask them: 'what emotions or reactions do you feel in your bodies?'
- Ask them how they feel – were they upset or cross at any point?

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Notes



Bible passage

"A kind answer soothes angry feelings, but harsh words stir them up."

Proverbs 15:1 (CEV)

Explain that sometimes, when someone is angry or shouting, we might feel like shouting too. But if we stay calm and try to use kind and gentle words instead, it can help everyone feel better. If we use angry words and shout back, it can make the problem bigger, and people might get more upset.

Ask:

- How can we disagree kindly?

Talk through the steps below with your pupils, using an example from the activity. For example: "I don't think chocolate should be banned because..."

Remind your group:

- Listen to what the other person is saying.
- Respond kindly, e.g. "Thank you for sharing. I disagree because..."
- Say why you disagree and we don't need to argue when we disagree with someone.

Model valuing their opinions, e.g. "That's interesting, I never thought of that."

Ask:

- Why do we not always agree?

Discuss how it's okay to have differences.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes we don't agree with people. We may think one thing and they may think something else. Sometimes we don't agree with our friends and that's okay!

We all have different experiences of the world and sometimes that means we don't think the same, but we can be kind and listen to what everyone thinks.



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for helping us to share our differences with others. Teach us to listen to our friends if they don't think the same as us as we know we don't always have to agree.

We want to live in a world where we care about others, even when they think differently. May we still be kind and welcoming to them.

Amen.

Notes



End of session 3

Session 4

Pursuing Justice

Key learning

Pupils explore the concept of justice as an important part of peacemaking – they are invited to recognise that the world is not as it should be, and to join with others to pursue a just and flourishing world.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- PE equipment to make an obstacle course (cones, mats, etc.)
- *Optional:* Blindfolds for children



Notes

difference.

Story

Be Curious (Community)

Notes



Song

Play the song *Love, Peace, and Happiness* by iSingPop.

Ask:

- How does your body feel?

Discuss with your pupils how to take notice of how their body feels (their heartbeat, their mind, their breathing) however it is appropriate to do so from their own understanding.



Film

Work through a mindfulness video to 'calm bodies' – we've included an example is included in the resources

Support the children with focusing, pausing the video if required.

Use a different mindfulness/calming technique if preferred to try and help the children calm their bodies.

Ask:

- How do you feel?

Discuss with children how their body feels, helping them understand what 'peace' and 'calm' feel like.

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Activity

Lead a partner

Set up an obstacle course for the children in the hall/ classroom/playground and put them into pairs. Have one partner cover their eyes with material whilst the other person leads them through the course – and then have them swap roles.

The purpose of this activity is for children to feel out of their comfort zone engaging in this exercise, but to also trust their partner. Discuss with the leader how they can be calm and gentle with their partner.

Ask:

- How might we help our partner feel calm?
- What did you feel in your tummy?
- What were you thinking?
- Did you notice anything else?
- How did you feel letting your partner lead you?

Elicit discussions around fear and courage. Children may also discuss trusting their partner.

For example, some children may recognise feeling scared or worried, but they trusted their partner to lead them.

Some may have felt scared and didn't like the sensation of not being able to see what was coming next – discuss the idea of fearing what we can't see.

Notes



Bible passage

**"Do all you can to live in peace
with everyone."**

Romans 12:18 (NLT)

Discuss what this means in terms of being kind to others, trying not to get angry, and encouraging people.

Discussion

Ask:

- How can we live more peacefully?

Revisit the discussion around being kind to others and trying not to argue from the previous session. Remind children of when they felt calm at the start of the session. Bring back the idea of 'noticing our feelings' and talk through what we can learn from the feelings in our body, e.g. when we feel calm, we may feel happy; when we have butterflies in our tummy, we may feel scared.

Highlight appropriate examples with children, such as crossing a busy road: feeling scared here reminds us to keep safe. Ask children for their own examples so they understand why it's also normal to feel scared sometimes.

Discuss the idea of 'peace' in the context of how our body feels.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- When did you feel most at peace in this session?
- Why is it important to feel calm and peaceful?
- Why do we need peace in the world?

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Notes



Film

Play the *Kid President* video showing how he wants to make the world a better place.

Pause and discuss ideas as the video progresses. Ask children what message they would want to share with the world – for example, be kind to one another etc.

Refer to the video where Kid President showed how love helps other people.

Ask:

- How does sharing love help spread more peace?

Discussion

Talk together about what it means to make the world a more awesome place. You could start with a classroom example, like how to create a kind and caring classroom, or think outside the classroom, such as being kind to others at break time or helping someone who's feeling left out.

You could also consider things from a national or global perspective, such as less pollution.

Explore how this can help bring more peace and happiness.

Ask:

- How would you make the world more awesome or better?
- How would you make the world fairer?



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

It's important for us to notice feelings in our bodies, as they give us important messages. Sometimes our bodies may tell us we are afraid, and sometimes they may tell us we are calm.

When we feel less scared, our body starts to feel peace and we like this feeling! This means we are less likely to have arguments with other people and more likely to be kind to them. We want to look for more ways to live peacefully in our day to day lives.

Feeling peace inside our bodies also helps us to help others to be more awesome! We want to spread love so that other people can also feel happier in our world.



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for helping us to listen to the feelings in our body and know the difference between feeling scared and feeling calm.

Help us to find peace and to pass this onto others in acts of kindness. We know that the world will thrive when everyone is able to live more peacefully with one another.

Amen.

Notes

End of session 4

Session 5

Practising Forgiveness



Key learning

Pupils learn what it means to forgive, understanding how to let go in order to move forward. They explore how forgiveness of others can help them to see if a better relationship is possible in the future.

Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A feather for each person

Story

Be Curious (Community)



Song

Play the song *This is Our World* by iSingPop.

Notes



Film

Show the children *The Moon Gig* video from Cheeky Pandas.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Why do you think CJ got so frustrated during the Moon Gig?
- How did CJ's feelings affect the rest of the Cheeky Pandas?
- What helped CJ calm down and think more clearly?
- What can we do when we feel angry or overwhelmed, like CJ did?
- Why is it important to use self-control or be calm, even when things don't go our way?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Activity

Learning how to forgive

Give a feather to each person, and guide them through the instructions below:

- Hold your feather in your hand.
- Think about a time when someone made you upset or angry.

- Now think about how it felt when that person said sorry. How did you feel afterwards?
- Now think about how it would feel if they had not said sorry. How would that make you feel. Would it be harder to let go of your upset or anger?

Letting go

Following on from the previous activity, explore letting go and forgiving.

Say: Imagine that your feather is all the hurt you felt when someone upset you. When you blow your feather away, imagine that the hurt is blowing away.

Discuss with the children how they may feel more peaceful after they have forgiven someone – referring to the last session.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- What would happen if you were always angry?
- Why is it important to forgive others?
- How does your body feel when you gently blow away the feather?
- What else could you do? (Children might suggest praying or talking to a friend or adult.)



Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Notes



Bible passage

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

Christians believe that God will always forgive, and we are invited to forgive others.

Discuss the bible quote in terms of kindness and how important it is to look after others, such as saying kind things, sharing and helping.

Invite pupils to share where they see similar principles and values on forgiveness in their faith, or other worldviews, cultures, or community traditions.

Discussion

Ask:

- Can you think of times when we may need to forgive our friends?

Discuss times with children when it may be appropriate for them to forgive (e.g. incidents at playtime etc) and make a class list of what may help them to forgive one another and how they can demonstrate this.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Sometimes other people upset or hurt us. These people can include our friends and family. It is okay to feel hurt, upset, or even angry. But we don't want to get stuck being angry as it stops us enjoying the good things in life.

When we forgive, it can feel we are 'blowing the anger out of our heart' and it can help us to feel calm and enjoy our day; we do not want to be angry all the time.



Prayer

Dear God,

We know that sometimes people may do the wrong thing and make choices that may upset or anger us. Help us to let go of our anger so that we can find peace within ourselves.

We also know we make mistakes, and we thank you for forgiving us.

May we continue to practise forgiveness and show more kindness to one another, making our world a better place.

Amen.



End of session 5

Session 6

Belonging Together

Key learning

Children reflect on the beauty in the world, exploring how we flourish when we recognise our interconnectedness and the unique value we each have.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- A copy of the book *The Tin Forest*
- Newspapers
- Recyclable materials
- Sticking materials (glue, masking tape, sticky tape)
- Scissors
- A quiet place for reflection

Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)

Notes



Song

Play the song *This is Our World* by iSingPop.



Children's literature

Show the cover of *The Tin Forest* – either as a physical copy of the book or an image on the board.

Ask the children:

- What do you see?
- What do you think?
- What do you know?
- What do you want to know?

Read *The Tin Forest* all the way through.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- How do you think the man felt at the beginning?
- What does it mean to 'ache'?
- Why did he 'ache with emptiness'?
- How did he feel at the end? What changed for him?

Space

Be Present (Embrace)

Discussion

Reflect on looking after our world.

Suggested questions:

- How does the old man look after the world around him?
- Why do you think the bird wants to come?
- Why do you think the bird wants to stay?

Talk about making people feel welcome.

Ask:

- How can we look after people in our community?
- How can we make them feel they want to stay?

Talk with the children about how they make visitors to the classroom feel welcome – for example: smile, say hello, checking if they are okay etc.



Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)



Bible passage

"When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them."

Leviticus 19:33

Suggested questions for discussion:

- What is a 'foreigner'? *Use this opportunity to gauge pupils' understanding/thinking.*
- Who are the foreigners in the story? (e.g. the bird)
- How do you think hearing the word 'foreigner' might make some people feel?
- Which words can we use instead to make others feel more welcome?

Ask:

- How can we create beauty out of things which seem unwanted or undervalued?



Activity Creating beauty

Show children a selection of images of discarded items that have been reused to create beautiful objects – we've included some examples in the slide deck, or you can show your own.

Then choose which activity to complete with the children:

1 Newspaper flowers

Make newspaper flowers or recycled art with the class. Create a display to show how unwanted or used items can be turned into a thing of beauty.

2 Sculptures

Collect objects weeks prior to this session such as egg boxes, cereal boxes and make sculptures from them.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

It is important to look after the world around us and welcome others. Sometimes people may feel unwanted and unwelcome, but it is important to make them feel valued, so they feel like they belong.

We want to welcome everyone into our class and into our community!



Prayer

Dear God,

We want everyone in our world to feel as though they have a place. Help us to show kindness to others so that they know they are wanted in our community.

May we continue to feel peace in places where we belong and help others to feel the same.

We ask this in your name.

Amen.



Song

Finish the course by playing the song *Three Little Birds* by Bob Marley – you can find this online.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Why does the song tell us 'don't worry'?
- Why is it good not to worry?
- In the song, the three little birds are singing in the morning. How would you feel if you heard birds singing at the start of the day?

Remind the children about the first session – how we talked about hope being when we believe that things can turn out well, instead of worrying that something will go wrong. We want to live with more hope and less worry.



End of sessions

Feedback



We'd love to celebrate the amazing work your school is doing through the *Difference* for Primary Schools programme. Whether it's pupil quotes, classroom displays, photos (with permission), creative responses, or stories of impact – please do share them with us! It's a joy to see how schools are engaging with the resources, and we'd be delighted to highlight your school's journey as part of a growing community of young peacemakers.

Please share your feedback

We'd also love to hear your feedback and suggestions for how to improve future versions of *Difference*. Share your stories and ideas with us at hello@rln.global.

Licensing

Scriptures

NIV

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

CEV

Scripture quotations marked (CEV) are from the Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by Permission.

ESV

Scripture quotations marked (ESV) are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. ESV Text Edition: 2025. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

NLT

Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

iSingPop

Songs shared with permission of iSingPop, Innervation Trust's singing, performing, and resourcing project. iSingPop supports schools in creating inspirational collective worship and helps equip churches with the confidence to reach out to the inter-generational church.

Bonnier Books UK

Images of the covers of Black Dog by Levi Pinfold and The Tin Forest by Helen Ward and Wayne Anderson (both published by Templar Books) are shared with permission of Bonnier Books UK, 5th Floor, HYLO, 105 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LZ.

difference.

🖱 **difference.rln.global**

✉ **hello@rln.global**

RLN DIFFERENCE IS A PART OF THE
RECONCILING LEADERS NETWORK

Difference has been created by the Reconciling Leaders Network, a registered charity in England and Wales (1176374).

Copyright © 2025 Reconciling Leaders Network. All rights reserved.
difference.rln.global