

Blackpool Council

31 October 2017

To: All Members of the SACRE

The above members are requested to attend the:

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Wednesday, 8 November 2017 at 6.00 pm
in St George's Church of England Academy, Cherry Tree Road, Blackpool

A G E N D A

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

- (1) the type of interest concerned; and
- (2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 17 MAY 2017 (Pages 1 - 4)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 May 2017 as a true and correct record.

3 MEMBERS NEWS

To receive verbal updates from Members of the SACRE as to any projects or issues within their area.

4 UPDATE ON KIDSMEET PROPOSAL (Pages 5 - 8)

Further to previous meeting to receive a verbal update on the proposal presented at the last meeting regarding a project to develop a Kidsmeet.

5 COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INTERIM REPORT AND CONSULTATION EXERCISE (Pages 9 - 152)

Further to the previous meeting, to update members on ongoing work of the Commission on Religious Education.

6 JOINT NASACRE/AREIAC EVENT ON THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (Pages 153 - 160)

To consider the arrangements for Joint NASACRE/AREIAC event on the Commission on Religious Education Interim report.

7 UPDATE ON SYLLABUSES (Pages 161 - 226)

To consider the attached report of the Religious Education Syllabuses currently used by schools in Blackpool.

8 INTERFAITH WEEK (Pages 227 - 264)

To receive an update on Interfaith week.

9 ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 265 - 286)

To consider the development of the SACRE Annual Report.

10 FORWARD PLAN OF AGENDA ITEMS AND TRAINING NEEDS

Members to discuss future agenda items and training needs to enable a forward plan of both to be drawn up for future meetings.

11 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the previously agreed the dates of future meetings as follows:

7 March 2018 (provisional venue Blackpool Mosque)

20 June 2018 (provisional venue St Stephens on the Cliffs)

Venue information:

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Tel: 01253 477157, e-mail lennox.beattie@blackpool.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 2

MINUTES OF STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2017

Present:

Tim Cox, Blackburn Church of England Diocese, Church of England Group

(in the Chair)

Councillors Humphreys, Kirkland, O'Hara and Singleton

Helen Sage and Jo Snape, Blackburn Church of England Diocese, Church of England Group

Tammy Hackney, St George's Church of England Academy

Paul Harrison, Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School

Iman Ashfaq Patel, Islamic Representative

Margaret Wright, Roman Catholic Group

Dr Vasudev, Hindu Representative

In Attendance:

Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council

Jean Martin, School Improvement Officer

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2016

The Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 MEMBERS NEWS

1. Paul Harrison circulated details on a funding initiative and suggested that a possible bid for funding could be made to fund a Kids Meet. The theme of the event being a question time with faith leaders. A sub-group was appointed to investigate further with Tammy Hackney, Councillor Kirkland, Imam Patel and Paul Harrison to report back at the next meeting.
2. Imam Patel also highlighted the on-going work with the integration of Syrian refugees within the town.

**MINUTES OF STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2017**

4 ACCORD INCLUSIVITY AWARDS

The Committee received an update on the Accord Inclusivity awards for the first time sought only to issue awards to SACRE's rather than individual schools. The SACRE noted that the first place had been presented to Brent SACRE for its ground breaking work around Collective Worship.

Resolved:

1. To note the awards report.
2. To ask the clerk to collect further details of the award winners so that this good practice can be shared with Blackpool schools.

5 LIVING WITH DIFFERENCE

The Committee considered the report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life- Living with Difference attached at Appendix 5a, to the agenda.

Members held a discussion regarding both the vision and recommendations. The Committee was unanimous in its support of the vision behind the report of the Commission and agreed that the vision should form a key part in future discussion of religious education within Blackpool. The Committee did not necessarily agree with individually with all aspects of the recommendations but viewed the vision and the increased debate and publicity around the issues as a positive step.

Resolved:

To note the report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life- entitled Living with Difference.

6 NATRE REPORT ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Committee considered the NATRE report on their survey on Religious Education in Primary Schools as attached at Appendix 6a.

The Committee expressed concern as to the results of the survey on funding, the low level of qualification of staff delivering religious education and agreed with the concerns regarding the withdrawal of children from Mosque visits.

Resolved:

1. To note the report by NATRE on their survey on Religious Education.
2. To consider the three concerns above in any future action from the SACRE to address or work with schools of other partners.

**MINUTES OF STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2017**

7 COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Committee received an update to members on the Commission on Religious Education. It was noted that the Commission had begun its research in 2016 and it noted that the next call for evidence in the North West was in Manchester on 13 June 2017 and asked the clerk to circulate details of that event. Members were encouraged to attend where possible.

Resolved:

To note the update.

8 INTERFAITH WEEK UPDATE

The Committee considered a report on Interfaith Week, the report highlighted the aims of this year's Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels

Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society

Increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

None of those in attendance knew of any events yet organised by their groups towards Interfaith Week but members agreed to keep other SACRE members informed as events were organised.

Resolved:

1. To note that this year's Inter Faith Week will take place from Sunday 12 - Sunday 19 November 2017.
2. To agree that Board members communicate via the clerk any events organised by their groups for Interfaith Week.

9 NASACRE SUMMER NEWSLETTER

The Committee considered the NASACRE summer newsletter. It noted that a number of the issues included on the newsletter had been dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

The Committee though agreed that the Committee continued membership of NASACRE was beneficial, that Blackpool SACRE should continue to be a member and at a future meeting seek an attendee for the annual conference.

**MINUTES OF STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2017**

Resolved:

1. To note the NASACRE summer newsletter attached at Appendix 9a
2. To note the NASACRE survey currently being undertaken.
3. To agree to renew the SACRE's membership of NASACRE.

10 UPDATE ON THE NORTH WEST SACRE HUB

The Committee noted that there was no update on the North West SACRE hub but agreed that the Chairman should attend the next meeting of the hub and report back to the next meeting of the SACRE.

11 WORK PLAN

The Committee considered the development of workplan and agreed that the next meeting should include the development of further workplan including the annual report which had not been completed for a number of years.

12 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee agreed the dates of future meetings as follows:

8 November 2017 (provisional venue St George's Church of England High School)

7 March 2018 (provisional venue Blackpool Mosque)

20 June 2018 (provisional venue St Stephens on the Cliffs)

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.55 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager
Tel: lennox.beattie@blackpool.gov.uk
E-mail: 01253 477157

Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

UPDATE ON KIDSMEET PROPOSAL

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 Further to previous meeting to receive a verbal update on the proposal presented at the last meeting regarding a project to develop a Kidsmeet.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the update.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure progress is made towards the project previously agreed by the SACRE.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Members will recall that at the previous meetings, it was agreed in principal to create a project to hold a Kidsmeet with the broad principal as agreed as a Question Time exercise with Faith Leaders. The Committee appointed Tammy Hackney, Councillor Kirkland, Imam Patel and Paul Harrison as a sub-group to develop the project and to report back at the next meeting.

5.2 Members are informed that it has not been possible to arrange a sub-group meeting before now. However, a meeting is planned for Thursday 16th November at Bispham Endowed Church of England Primary School to begin at 3.30 pm.

5.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.4 List of Appendices:

None.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INTERIM REPORT AND CONSULTATION EXERCISE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 Further to the previous meeting, to update members on ongoing work of the Commission on Religious Education.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the Interim report on the Commission on Religious Education attached at Appendix 5a.

2.2 To consider any actions for the SACRE in relation to the activities of the Commission On Religious Education.

2.3 To note the consultation exercise currently being undertaken and attached to the agenda at Appendix 5b.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To assist in the further development of religious education

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, the item is for discussion.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

5.0 Background Information

The Commission on Religious Education (CoRE), was established in mid-2016, And members of the SACRE will recall an update at the previous meeting. The Commission has now published its interim report.the Commissioners were pleased to have had many positive contributions from SACREs up, down and across the country.

An interim report from CoRE was published in September 2018 and is attached at Appendix 5a. The publication started a further consultation where again, a range of views from SACREs will be vital the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 5b and of particular interest to the SACRE may be the section on page of questions directed to SACRE and members are encouraged to respond to the questionnaire. The final report of the Commission is still due out in mid-2018.

For CoRE to be a success it will need to build on the wisdom within the RE community. needs to hear about what works (and what doesn't) on a local level.

The Commission on RE is therefore the chance for every SACRE to explain what is necessary to secure a strong future for RE. There is also an event outlined in agenda Item 6.

5.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.3 List of Appendices:

Appendix 5a: Commission on Religious Education Interim report
Appendix 5b: Questionnaire on Commission on Religious Education Interim report.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

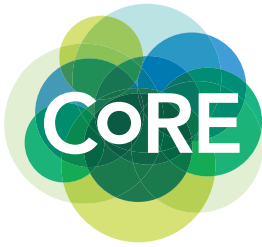
12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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Commission on
Religious Education

Appendix 5a

INTERIM REPORT

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR ALL

SEPTEMBER 2017



FOREWORD

Thank you for taking the time to read this interim report from the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE). It represents a work in progress, a step on the journey towards the final report that the Commission will publish in September 2018. In producing the interim report, we wish to engage with as many people as possible in the development of our thinking over the next academic year.

The Commissioners believe that the future of Religious Education (RE) is in the balance and have concluded that a timely intervention is necessary if RE is to continue to make its significant contribution to pupils' education. We have outlined why this is so in this, our interim report, and have made some initial recommendations that we believe will reinvigorate our subject. We now seek your views on these recommendations and the many questions that arise from them.

Young people are growing up in an ever more complex world where religious and non-religious worldviews are increasingly influential. RE has a distinctive contribution to make in equipping them for adult life and citizenship in this environment. As a Commission, we have seen much evidence of exceptional RE, but we have also been made very aware of the significant challenges it faces as a subject given the changing nature of belief in society and the changes to the education system in England, not least the move towards all schools becoming academies.

The Commission was initiated by the RE Council of England and Wales (REC), although its remit is restricted to England given the significant differences in the Welsh education system. I do, however, as Chair of the Commission stress that we are entirely independent of the REC in our deliberations and recommendations. At the same time, I wish to thank the REC for acting as the secretariat to the Commission.

As Chair of the Commission, I am delighted now to present this interim report. It is not a finished work and there are many unresolved issues. But it offers new ideas that we believe could constitute a game-changer for our subject. I do encourage you to join with us in building a new future for RE in schools by sending your thoughts in response to the consultation that we will soon be undertaking.

The Very Revd. Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster
Chair of the RE Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This interim report is published with the intention of creating an opportunity for as many people and organisations as possible to engage with the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) about our developing thoughts on RE in schools in England. The interim report explores a number of issues which have emerged during our deliberations on the evidence presented to us during the initial consultation, at the evidence gathering sessions held around the country and in written submissions received during the 2016/17 academic year. It sets out initial recommendations alongside a range of issues on which we are seeking to consult further before drawing any conclusions. We hope that there will be a full and vigorous consultation on the content of this interim report, and that this will help to inform the final report of the Commission, due to be published in 2018.

RE remains a vital academic subject for education in the 21st century. Studying RE gives young people the knowledge, understanding and motivation they need to understand important aspects of human experience, including the religious, spiritual, and moral. It gives insights into the arts, literature, history, and contemporary local and global social and political issues. It provides them with a space in the curriculum to reflect on their own worldview and to engage with others whose worldview may be different. The young people that we have spoken to have told us that RE enables them to have better friendships and to develop greater respect and empathy for others. RE is highly valued by many employers, who increasingly understand that in a globalised world, understanding others' worldviews and their impact on people's lives is essential to success.

The knowledge gained through studying RE is central to good local, national and global citizenship. It enables young people to have a nuanced and informed understanding of key political and social issues that they will need to face as they grow up in an increasingly globalised world. RE helps pupils to deal positively with controversial issues, to manage strongly held differences of belief, and to challenge stereotypes.

As local and global demographics have changed, including patterns of affiliation to religious and non-religious worldviews, today's students will encounter people with a much more diverse range of beliefs, lifestyles and backgrounds than did the previous generations. Understanding religious and non-religious worldviews, and their impact on individuals, communities and wider society, has never been more essential to good citizenship than it is now. For these reasons, we argue throughout the report that all pupils, regardless of background or the type of school they attend, are entitled to high quality RE which enables them to develop the nuanced and informed

understanding of worldviews that they will need as citizens.

We were impressed by the evidence of high quality and innovative approaches to RE that were presented during our consultations.¹ At its best, the subject offers great educational benefit for pupils and the British model of RE is highly regarded and has earned international esteem. Of particular note has been the appearance in recent years of local and national support networks for teachers and also the high level of examination entry at GCSE and A level.

Having said that, we are unanimous in the view that RE faces a perilous future without strategic, urgent intervention. Examination entries fell for the first time in 2017, and many who gave evidence saw this as a sign of further decline in years to come. Amongst the many challenges the subject faces, the following are identified as particularly significant:

- The changed patterns of religious and non-religious belief from the time when the current system was enacted in 1944 present a requirement to ensure that RE's structures reflect the realities of contemporary society. The religious landscape in the UK has diversified with fewer people identifying as Anglican and more identifying with other Christian denominations or other religious traditions. Moreover, the number of people identifying as non-religious has increased: in 2017, 53% of the population described themselves as not having a religion.² The global religious landscape has also been undergoing rapid change, where religion is highly significant in many societies.
- There is inconsistency in the quality and provision of RE, with increasing numbers of schools not even meeting the basic legal requirement. Pupils are experiencing a lottery in their access to high quality RE. Evidence presented to the Commission made clear the impact that the type of school had on the extent to which RE is provided: while 6.5% of schools that follow an RE curriculum determined by their religious character devote no part of their curriculum time to RE at key stage 4, the figure is 20.7% for schools required to follow a locally agreed syllabus for RE and 43.7% for academies without a religious character.³ This inequality of provision means that many children are being disadvantaged by being denied RE.
- As more schools become academies, leaving ever fewer under local authority control, the current framework of determination of RE via local authorities and agreed syllabuses is ceasing to be fit for purpose. A decrease in local authority funding has exacerbated this problem.

¹ Please see Appendix 1: Evidence received by the Commission for details of how we collected evidence.

² NATCEN (2017). *British Social Attitudes Survey*.
<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1469605/BSA-religion.pdf>

³ RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE (2017, forthcoming). *The State of the Nation*.

Moreover, evidence submitted to the Commission makes clear that the current approach of relying on the requirements of academy funding agreements is not sufficient for ensuring the proper provision of RE across all academies. If no action is taken, there is a serious risk of increasing numbers of pupils leaving school with an inadequate level of knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews at precisely the time when such understanding is becoming more important.

- RE has suffered from a policy environment that has not encouraged headteachers to regard it as a high-status subject. This environment includes insufficient processes to hold schools to account for their provision of RE and the omission of RE from key performance indicators published by DfE.
- There has been diminishing access to adequate training and support for teachers. This is particularly acute at primary level where the Commission heard that on average a primary trainee receives less than three hours of RE-specific training during a one-year PGCE or School Direct course.⁴
- The quality of RE is variable across schools. Low standards predominate across too many schools, including schools with and without a religious

character. Teachers are not always clear on the purpose of the subject and many lack the subject knowledge necessary to teach about sensitive and crucial issues with skill and nuance. Locally agreed syllabuses are also variable in quality. One

issue that we have noted is the fact that religion is often presented in an essentialist mode that fails to help pupils understand the complexity, diversity and historicity of religious ideas, institutions and practices. This was most often mentioned in relation to the Dharmic traditions (i.e. Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh traditions) in the written and oral evidence but affects the presentation of all religions and worldviews in resources and in the classroom.

The Commissioners have therefore made initial recommendations in four areas:

4 *Fiona Moss, oral evidence submitted to the Commission. See also NATRE (2016). An analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools.*
<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

1. **A national entitlement for RE.** This would set out clearly the aims and purpose(s) of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject. This national entitlement should be for all pupils at all state-funded schools and we seek to consult with independent schools about whether they should adopt it. We are advocating RE for all not because children belong to religious traditions or not, but because in our age a nuanced understanding of the role of worldviews must be a part of citizens' intellectual make-up. It is to do with their ability to function effectively as citizens and as human beings. This is as important an aspect of education for pupils in schools of a religious character as it is in those without a religious character. It should be introduced through non-statutory guidance as early as possible with a view to it ultimately becoming statutory, either to supplement or replace the current legislation on agreed syllabuses. This national entitlement provides a reinvigorated vision for RE for all pupils in the future, drawing on the very best of the RE that we know happens in some schools. It seeks to be a basic statement of what all pupils are entitled to, but is not a national syllabus or curriculum. We hope that the flexibility of the proposed national entitlement will ensure that a diversity of high quality approaches will emerge and that this will best suit the landscape of a school-led system. We recognise that schools will need guidance and support to translate this entitlement into curriculum planning and we are reviewing where this guidance and support should come from.
2. **Holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE.** The evidence presented to us indicates that at present too many schools are not being held to account for failing to provide adequate RE. Schools should be required to publish details on their website of how they meet the national entitlement for RE. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether schools meet the national entitlement for RE. The Commission has also given thought to how schools should provide for those Key Stage 4 pupils who are not taking the GCSE in Religious Studies and would like to consult on the possibility of a revised qualification for these pupils to ensure that their work can be accredited.
3. **A National Plan to improve teaching and learning in RE.** The Commission would like to develop a National Plan for developing teaching and learning in RE, along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education. The National Plan will bring together the Commission's recommendations for improving teacher subject knowledge and confidence and we seek to consult on how this can best be achieved.
4. **A renewed and expanded role for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs).** The evidence we have received suggests that SACREs can have an important role in promoting and supporting RE and in promoting good community relations more broadly, but that their capacity to deliver this role fully has been diminishing in many local authorities. The Commission's suggested recommendations, which are

consultative at this stage, call for consideration to be given to adding the promotion of improved community relations to the remit of SACREs and make proposals for the securing of resources for their work. There are also recommendations that seek consideration of the composition of SACREs with a call to ensure that they are fully representative, with representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.

The full recommendations are set out on pages 8 to 12.

In addition, the Commissioners are seeking to undertake further consultation in these areas and have set out the issues that they are particularly interested in exploring. These areas for consultation are set out on pages 12 to 14.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

A NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- a. There should be a national entitlement statement for RE which sets out clearly the aims and purpose of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject. A draft statement for consultation is overleaf.
- b. This entitlement should become normative through non-statutory guidance as early as possible, and should ultimately become statutory, either to supplement or to replace current legislation on agreed syllabuses.
- c. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character.
- d. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice.

The National Entitlement for Religious Education

Overleaf is the draft text of the proposed national entitlement for RE. This draft is for consultation. We welcome comments on and refinements to the text.

A National Entitlement for RE

RE in schools should enable students to engage in an intelligent and informed way with the ideas, practices and contemporary manifestations of a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. It should enable them to understand how worldviews are inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience. It should prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by enabling them to engage respectfully with people with worldviews different from their own. RE should equip pupils to develop their own beliefs, practices, values and identity in the light of their reflections on the worldviews they have studied.

Through their study of worldviews, pupils should develop a lifelong motivation to enquire into questions of meaning and purpose, and investigate others' worldviews and what they mean for individuals, communities and society. All of this will enable them to become responsible citizens and members of diverse and changing local, national and global communities.

Throughout their period of compulsory schooling, pupils should learn about, understand and engage with:

- a. The diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and ways of life that exist locally, nationally and globally.
- b. The ways in which communities and individuals holding different worldviews interact, change and maintain continuity in different times and contexts and as the surrounding culture changes.
- c. The different ways that people interpret and respond to texts and other sources of authority.
- d. The ways that people communicate their beliefs, experiences, values and identities through verbal and non-verbal means (eg prose, story, poetry, art, music, dance, ritual, architecture).
- e. How people seek moral guidance from religious and non-religious worldviews and how they interpret this guidance in their lives.
- f. The importance of experience, including extra-ordinary experiences, in shaping people's worldviews and how worldviews are used to interpret experience.

- g. The role of religious and non-religious rituals and practices in both creating and expressing experience, beliefs, values and commitments.
- h. The relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions concerning political, public, social and cultural life.
- i. Both the positive and negative exercise of power and influence resulting from people's worldviews.
- j. The important role that worldviews play in providing people with a way of making sense of their lives and in forming their identity.*

As part of a balanced programme aimed at meeting this provision, it is expected that pupils will:

1. Experience meeting and visiting people from their local community from a range of worldviews including those different from their own and that of the school.
2. Develop core skills for researching the beliefs, values and practices of individuals and groups in society.
3. Experience a range of approaches to the study of religions (e.g. phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, textual studies, theology).
4. Engage with questions of meaning and purpose and of the nature of reality raised by the worldviews that they study.
5. Think through and develop a reflective approach to their own personal responses and developing identity and learn to articulate these clearly and coherently while respecting the right of others to differ.
6. Develop the core skills and dispositions of careful listening, critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy and open-mindedness required for making wise judgments.
7. Learn to discuss controversial issues and work with others (including those that they disagree with) with the intention of securing a healthy and peaceful society in the context of significant diversity.

** We are indebted to Barbara Wintersgill, who presented her project on Big Ideas in RE. Her work has informed much of the content of this list.*

HOLDING SCHOOLS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RE

- a. Schools should be required to publish on their website details of how they meet the national entitlement for RE.
- b. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether or not schools meet the national entitlement for RE, in the light of schools' duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
- c. The DfE should either monitor, or give SACREs or other approved bodies the power and resources to monitor, the provision and quality of RE in all schools, including free schools, academies and schools of a religious character.
- d. The government should consider the impact of school performance measures, including the exclusion of RS GCSE from the EBacc, on GCSE entries and on the provision and quality of RE, and consider reviewing performance measures in the light of the evidence.

A RENEWED AND EXPANDED ROLE FOR SACRES

We seek to consult on all our recommendations relating to SACREs. (See page 12)

A NATIONAL PLAN FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE

We are considering developing a National Plan for developing teaching and learning in RE, along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education. This plan is likely to include the following recommendations:

- a. A minimum of 12 hours should be devoted to RE in all primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses.
- b. Leading primary schools for RE should be identified and all primary trainees should be given the opportunity to observe RE teaching in such a school.
- c. Include under the Teachers' Standards, part 1, section 3 (Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge), the requirement that teachers 'demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews where necessary.'
- d. Restore funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses for those applying to teach RE and for serving teachers of RE without a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject.
- e. Restore parity of bursaries for RE with those for other shortage subjects.

- f. The government and relevant funding bodies should consider how funding of grassroots teacher networks can be made more sustainable.
- g. SACREs and local authorities should review existing good practice in developing and sustaining these grassroots networks and start their own if such a network does not exist in their local area.
- h. University performance measures should be updated to credit universities for their engagement with schools, including the provision of continuing professional development (CPD) and resource materials.
- i. University staff conducting research in areas related to RE should be encouraged to contribute to grassroots networks, lead teacher development days, develop resource materials or become SACRE members. This may provide opportunities for them to demonstrate the impact of their research or increase student recruitment.

LIST OF AREAS FOR CONSULTATION

A NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. The entitlement is not a national syllabus or curriculum. It is a basic statement of what all pupils are entitled to, whatever type of school they attend. Many schools will need guidance and support to translate this entitlement into curriculum planning, particularly in relation to progression. We are still reviewing where this guidance and support will come from. We seek input on what bodies would be best placed to translate the entitlement into detailed programmes of study and how best to support schools to plan their curriculum in line with the entitlement. Several possibilities have been discussed by the Commission so far:
 - a. Removing the requirement for local authorities to hold Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs). In a context where every school will eventually become an academy, this requirement is no longer proportionate for many local authorities and will become even less so over time. However, it might be possible for programmes of study to be developed at regional levels. It would also be possible to include regional universities on this model. A regional system might not provide sufficient support to academies unless they were explicitly included. If the requirement for local authorities to develop a locally agreed syllabus were to be removed, it would not preclude those local authorities that had the resource and expertise from convening ASCs and developing programmes of study that could be adopted by those schools that chose to, within or outside that local authority.
 - b. Recommending the development of a national set of programmes of study compliant with the entitlement. This may or may not be government-funded. This has the advantage of providing consistency

across localities, which was requested by some teachers in the written and oral evidence. However, there are a number of potential difficulties with it. First, there is the vexed question of who develops programmes of study. Second, there is the justified criticism that in the era of a school-led system a nationally agreed set of programmes of study is too rigid and leaves schools insufficient freedom to undertake RE that is appropriate for their pupils and immediate community. Third, there is the question of how to ensure that the syllabus is appropriately independent of political interference. Many of those who gave oral and written evidence were concerned about excessive political interference in the scope and content of RE.

- c. Leaving the market open for schools, groups of schools, dioceses, SACREs, commercial providers and other relevant groups to write their own programmes of study. This would allow maximum freedom for schools but might not resolve the inequality in provision and quality discussed above. Non-statutory guidance or a range of model programmes of study might also be developed to support relevant groups in writing their own programmes of study.
2. There is likely to be a range of possibilities within these broad categories and other possibilities that we have not yet considered. We seek views on what would be most helpful to support schools with curriculum planning and ensure that all schools can meet the entitlement effectively.
3. The question also remains as to whether the entitlement statement should replace or supplement the current legislation on agreed syllabuses, which requires that they must 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2). This legislative statement remains a statement of historical and social fact. Of those who identify themselves as having a religion, the majority are Christian, and Christianity has played a particular role in the history of Great Britain. However, the statement in and of itself does not specify how much time should be spent on any worldview. It also does not include non-religious worldviews. We seek views on whether the entitlement should specify a number and range of worldviews, or a minimum time to be spent on one worldview.
4. We have also discussed whether the name of the subject should be changed, to signify the renewed vision for the subject. It is difficult to find an alternative name that appropriately captures the breadth and depth of the subject as outlined in the entitlement statement. We have discussed a number of options. A small majority of the Commission preferred to call the subject Religion and Ethics (or Religions and Ethics) while others wished either to preserve the current name, or to change its name to Religions and Worldviews or Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (or Philosophy, Religion and Ethics). We seek views on which of these options best captures the nature of the subject outlined in the entitlement. We

also seek suggestions on alternative names which fit the entitlement and the renewed vision for the subject.

HOLDING SCHOOLS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RE

1. We seek views on the most appropriate mechanisms for holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE at both primary and secondary level.
2. We are considering recommending that a revised qualification at Key Stage 4, for those not taking Full Course GCSE RS, be developed. This would need to meet the requirements of the national entitlement for RE and have currency in school performance measures. This qualification would not be compulsory but would count in school performance measures and in individuals' applications for work or further study. We seek views on how effective this would be and what demand there would be for such a qualification.

A RENEWED AND EXPANDED ROLE FOR SACRES

1. We seek views on the following recommendations on the role of SACREs:
 - a. The Government should publicly highlight and reaffirm the important role of SACREs in supporting and resourcing RE.
 - b. The Government should consider whether the role of SACREs should be expanded to include a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.
 - c. The Government should consider ways of securing funding to resource SACREs adequately. Options for this may include:
 - i. Ring-fenced funding for SACREs.
 - ii. Funding for SACREs from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport or the Department of Communities and Local Government.
 - iii. Specifying a minimum amount of funding (perhaps per school or per pupil) to which local authorities must adhere.
 - d. The Government should consider the composition of SACREs and the law should be changed to include representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.
 - e. The Government should publish all SACRE annual reports publicly on a dedicated website.
2. We seek views on what the duties of SACREs should be in relation to promoting good community relations, beyond matters relating to religion

and belief in schools.

3. We are still considering how the composition of SACREs should be adapted to be fit for purpose in a changed social and educational landscape. In particular, we are considering whether the committee structure should be changed or abolished. We seek views and evidence on this.
4. We seek views on which groups and organisations should be represented on SACREs.

THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

1. We seek further evidence on the number of pupils being withdrawn from RE, and the reasons given, where these are given, as well as whether the number of cases and reasons given have been changing over time.
2. We seek views on the most effective ways to manage the right of withdrawal in practice.
3. We seek views on whether it is desirable to look to adopt an overall approach to the design of the RE curriculum in every school so that it is sufficiently 'objective, critical and pluralistic' as to render it capable of being compulsory without the right of withdrawal.

A NATIONAL PLAN FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE

1. We seek views on what should be included in the National Plan for RE, beyond the recommendations set out above.
2. We seek views on how the National Plan might best be implemented.
3. There are increasing expectations of teachers to be engaged with research, by keeping up to date with published research at minimum, and where possible by engaging in action research, lesson study and other forms of practitioner research. We seek views on the kinds of research which would be most helpful for RE teachers to engage with, and what mechanisms would support this.

SECTION 1

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This interim report outlines our thinking and discussions to date, drawing on the evidence that we have received and heard so far. It is an opportunity to open up a conversation on our proposed recommendations and invite contributions ahead of the final report in September 2018.

Our proposals are tentative at this stage. We seek thoughtful discussion to improve them, so that we can establish RE on a stable, secure footing for generations to come and ensure that young people grow up with a sound knowledge and understanding of this crucial area of study.

It should also be noted at this stage that much of the evidence that we have received has concentrated on the secondary phase of education, particularly in terms of quantitative data on provision. The majority of the teachers and pupils who have contributed oral evidence have also been from secondary schools. Our recommendations at this stage therefore have more to say about secondary than primary, and we intend to redress this balance during the next stage of our deliberations.

We have also engaged extensively with the major reports that have been published in the last few years on the state of, and direction for, RE. The evidence from these reports, particularly RE for Real and the Ofsted and All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) reports of 2013, is extensive and robust, and we have found this evidence extremely useful in understanding the issues and developing ways forward.

We begin with an introduction to some of the discussions we have had on the nature of RE and its objects of study. The terms ‘religion’ and ‘worldview’ have yielded much discussion and debate, and our thinking on this has shaped our substantive proposals. Therefore, we felt that it was important to share some of this thinking at the beginning of the report.

The next section, ‘Religious Education in the 21st Century,’ begins with an argument for why RE matters and the justification for retaining it in the curriculum in a rapidly changing world. We then review the legal and structural arrangements that currently apply to RE, the strengths of the subject at the moment and the key challenges that it faces.

It is these challenges that our recommendations seek to meet. The second half of the report outlines our proposals for meeting these challenges, in particular our proposed National Entitlement for RE, to apply to all schools. The implications of this for holding schools to account, and for the role of SACREs, are also discussed. We explore the possibility of

removing the right of withdrawal and the implications of doing so. Finally, we consider ways to support high quality teaching and learning in RE and contribute some thoughts towards what a National Plan for RE might look like. The proposals for a National Plan for RE are at an earlier stage of development than those for the National Entitlement.

We conclude with some thoughts about the next phase of the Commission's activity, and details of how to contribute your views between now and the publication of the final report.

1.1 ABOUT CoRE

The Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) was established in 2016 to review the legal, educational and policy frameworks for religious education. The ultimate aim of the Commission is to improve the quality and rigour of RE and its capacity to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

The Commission's review has been, and seeks to continue to be, wide-ranging, inclusive and evidence-based. It seeks to inform policy-makers and suggest ways of tackling some of the challenges to RE that have been identified in a series of recent reports.

The Commission has been established by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC). The REC provides the secretariat for the Commission. The Commission is, however, independent of the REC and is entirely responsible for its reports and recommendations.

The Commission has had three residential meetings so far and presided over five oral evidence gathering sessions. A further four meetings are scheduled for the 2017/2018 academic year, and there will also be further opportunities for consultation. The Commission's final report is due for publication in September 2018.

The Commission's terms of reference have been set by the REC. The terms of reference were extensively consulted on among REC member organisations before being approved by the REC Board. While the REC has set the Commission's terms of reference, it is entirely up to the Commissioners to decide how to operate within these terms of reference. The terms of reference can be found in *Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for the Commission on RE*.

The Commission is made up of 14 Commissioners, including the Chair, with a wide range of expertise and professional backgrounds. Pen-portraits of the Chair and each of the Commissioners can be found in *Appendix 3: About the Commissioners*.

1.2 ABOUT THE EVIDENCE GATHERING PROCESS

The Commission's written evidence gathering took place from December 2016 to February 2017. The call for evidence was based on an online survey consisting of 17 questions. The questions set were based upon the terms of reference for the Commission. The questions were deliberately open-ended in order not to lead respondents. The survey was publicised on the REC and Commission on RE websites, via the REC's 64 member organisations, and via social media. We received 2,245 total responses to the survey, of which 862 exited without responding to the substantive questions. Once duplicates were removed, 1,377 responses were taken forward for analysis. Full details of the respondents to the call for evidence can be found in *Appendix 1: Evidence received by the Commission*.

The Commission also received 49 submissions of evidence by email to evidence@commissiononre.org.uk both during and after the time that the survey was open.

In addition to the call for written evidence, the Commission held five evidence gathering sessions in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Exeter and York from February to July 2017. Presenters were given seven minutes to present their evidence and around 10 minutes for questions from a panel of Commissioners. Half the slots available in each session were for invited individuals and organisations, including schools, while the others were booked by interested parties on a first-come-first-served basis. We would like to thank all those who presented and, particularly, all those who hosted sessions.

A total of 53 individuals and organisations presented oral evidence during the evidence gathering sessions. Full details can be found in *Appendix 1: Evidence received by the Commission*.

Individual Commissioners have also conducted school visits and attended meetings of interested organisations including SACREs and the REC. We would like to thank all those who have invited Commissioners and hosted visits.

Finally, Commissioners chose to invite selected individuals to present at Commission meetings. To date, the DfE, Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw, and Barbara Wintersgill have presented. The Commission also intends to hear from Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead at a future meeting.

We plan to hold a formal online consultation from October to December 2017 for a robust conversation about the proposals contained in this report. In addition, the evidence@commissiononre.org.uk email address remains open for those who wish to contact the Commissioners via this method.

We quote from both oral and written evidence in the report. Individuals and organisations who submitted written evidence are quoted by name where permission has been given. Pupils who contributed oral evidence are not identified by name but their year group and location are given. Teachers are also not identified by name, but their phase and location are given. Academics, SACRE members and other subject experts, as well as those who spoke as individuals, are identified by name and by the location where they presented.

SECTION 2

RELIGION, RELIGIONS AND WORLDVIEWS: THE SUBJECT MATTER FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our discussions on the appropriate subject matter for RE and how it should be defined have been wide-ranging and rich. We have found it to be complex territory and have searched for terminology that adequately covers this complexity. We have sought to be properly inclusive of the breadth of perspectives, beliefs and ways of life that make up the subject. However, we recognise that such issues will always be open to interpretation and debate.

In a context of rapidly changing patterns of affiliation to what we commonly call religions, and the rising number of people in the UK who identify with non-religious worldviews such as Humanism, it is increasingly important for our terminology and thinking to capture this dynamism and fluidity. 53%⁵ of the population of Britain describe themselves as having no religion, and many of these people live their lives with almost no reference to religious communities, ideas, or concepts.

We have found the concept of a 'worldview' extremely helpful in our discussions. Recognising that the word has been given different definitions, we have used the term 'worldview' to mean an overarching structure, often known as a metanarrative, which provides a 'lens' which is both in the world and through which one views the world. Worldviews encompass many, and sometimes all, aspects of human life – they influence how people understand what is real and what is not, how they decide what is good and what to do, how they relate to others, and how they express themselves, to name but a few examples.

We considered using the phrase 'religion and belief' to describe the subject matter for RE but worldviews – whether religious or non-religious – are more than just sets of propositional beliefs – they have affective (emotional) and affiliative (community, belonging) dimensions as well. We do use 'faith and belief communities' on occasion as this is a common way of referring to these communities and is inclusive of both religious and non-religious worldviews.

There has been a tendency to think of the subject matter for RE as 'religions and non-religious worldviews' but this suggests that religions are not themselves worldviews. It is our belief that religions are also worldviews and that the terminology should be 'religious and non-religious worldviews'.

Essentially, we see the subject matter for RE as worldviews in two senses:

⁵ NATCEN (2017). *British Social Attitudes Survey*.
<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1469605/BSA-religion.pdf>

1. Institutional systems of making meaning and structuring how one sees the world. These include 'religions' such as Christianity, Islam or Buddhism as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism, nationalism or Communism. These institutional systems are themselves complex and dynamic. They may refer back to sacred texts or narratives of continuity and at the same time be fluid, adapting to new times and cultures. They are made up of practices, rituals, narratives, experiences, interactions, social norms, doctrines, artistic expressions and other forms of cultural and individual expression, and should not be reduced simply to belief and practice but understood in all their complexity.
2. The individual process of making sense of life and making meaning. In this sense, everyone has a worldview. These worldviews may be more or less consciously constructed. They may make reference to institutional worldviews but the Commissioners are aware that increasingly young people make less explicit reference to overall institutional worldviews. They do, however, draw on ideas from these worldviews.

Therefore, the Commission uses the term 'worldview' in its broadest sense, to cover traditional and non-traditional religions, secular and atheistic movements and perspectives, non-standard forms of religious and spiritual life and the wide diversity of ways in which people make sense of their lives with or without reference or commitment to any specific religion or institutional worldview. We use 'worldview' to cover both religious and non-religious worldviews, and both institutional and individual worldviews.

We continue to use the term 'religion' or 'religious' to refer to institutional religious worldviews, and in relation to religions such as Christianity or Hinduism as well as in contexts where individuals might describe themselves as 'religious' or 'belonging to a religion'. This may make 'religions' seem as though they have harder boundaries than they do in practice. We are aware that in practice there are interactions and blurred boundaries between religions, and that individuals may not see religions as bounded entities. Equally, religious institutions as well as individuals within any one 'religion' may have different and sometimes contradictory positions on a range of matters of faith and practice.

Our comments in this report and, we believe, the content of our proposed national entitlement, are 'epistemologically agnostic' – that is, they neither affirm nor reject claims about divine revelation. Whatever the origin of worldviews, it is their manifestations in the world that RE seeks to explore (including, of course, the understanding that adherents to a particular worldview have about the origin of that worldview). Our understanding is that RE seeks to explore the language in which worldviews are expressed (whether or not they use the language of revelation) and the resulting cultural, social and intellectual responses and engagements to these over time. Both theistic and atheistic understandings of revelation itself are compatible with the approach that we have taken here.

SECTION 3

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 WHY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATTERS

1. Religious Education (RE) matters for a number of reasons, of which we have chosen to concentrate on four.
 - a. It is an essential academic subject in its own right, with a distinctive contribution to make to pupils' overall knowledge and the development of their own worldviews.
 - b. One cannot understand historical and contemporary trends and issues without an understanding of the worldviews that underpin them. RE is therefore essential to informed local, national and global citizenship.
 - c. It provides a 'safe space to discuss difference' and therefore can contribute to improved community relations.
 - d. Understanding religious and non-religious worldviews is essential to many job roles in an increasingly multicultural UK and globalised world, and RE therefore can contribute to social mobility.

I get why you go on about RE Miss. It matters to people. I need to know why people be like they are. I don't have to agree but I do have to know about it.

Comment by a year 5 pupil quoted by Fiona Moss, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

'Talking genuinely about genuine things' – RE as an essential academic subject

After taking RS A level it becomes hard to ever blindly accept a proposition again... Before we studied RE, we'd have been more egocentric. Our discussions have stopped being celebrity gossip and more talking genuinely about genuine things.

Year 13 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham

2. RE is an essential academic subject. It draws on the disciplines of Religious Studies including anthropology, philosophy, theology, phenomenology and sociology, and has a distinct set of questions, methodologies to answer these questions, and an empirical body of knowledge.
3. Studying RE enables pupils to:

- a. Study worldviews from an impartial, broad and balanced perspective
- b. Understand other political, social and cultural issues
- c. Understand other academic disciplines
- d. Develop key transferable skills
- e. Contribute as a rounded person to a modern, diverse society.

RE enables pupils to study worldviews from an impartial, broad and balanced perspective

4. Everyone has a worldview. It may be more or less conscious or systematic. It may or may not make reference to institutional religious or non-religious perspectives. It is one of the core tasks of liberal education to enable pupils to reflect on their own and others' worldviews. To flourish as a responsible adult and citizen, pupils need to understand where their own and others' worldviews come from, to understand their impact on people's actions in a whole range of areas of human life, and to be able to critique them in a climate of respect.
5. While patterns of affiliation to institutional worldviews have changed, those with no formal affiliation may still draw on ideas from institutional religious or non-religious worldviews, whether consciously or unconsciously. It is therefore important for young people growing up and working out their own worldviews to understand the origins and complexities of some of the ideas that influence them and others.

[RE's] purpose is to make you know what you want to say in the outside world more than in the classroom, to form moral and ethical beliefs that you use in daily life.

Year 9 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

Adult life is really busy but the lives of students are just as busy. Where in our busy curriculum is the space for students to step back, take a little bit of time and really think? Where is the space for them to think about the big questions that they have? Why are we here? Why did God allow my grandma to die? Why didn't God stop the suicide bomber? These are hard questions – but this is why RE is relevant.

Head of RE, secondary, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

6. Institutional worldviews remain interesting and important in their own right, both in terms of the claims they make about reality, spirituality and the nature of the good life, and in terms of their influence on politics, society and culture as well as on individuals. It is also important to study

the ways in which social and historical trends influence both institutional and individual worldviews, and the way that these change over time and in different contexts. This provides young people with knowledge of the underlying principles that will help them understand a range of social phenomena.

7. It is important for young people to have the opportunity to explore these worldviews from an impartial, broad and balanced perspective.

RE helps pupils understand political, social and cultural issues

8. Institutional religious and non-religious worldviews remain strongly influential locally, nationally and globally. Without a good understanding of these worldviews, it will be much harder for pupils to understand the political, social and cultural issues that they face on a daily basis. We discuss this further below in paragraphs 19–26.

RE helps pupils understand other academic disciplines

9. The study of worldviews can be a gateway to a number of other curriculum subjects and disciplines. The overall school curriculum in England remains rooted in historical ideas of the liberal arts, of which theology was the pinnacle. It is still the case that you cannot fully understand literature, art, music, history or politics without some understanding of the worldviews that underpin particular movements or forms of expression. This is as true of references to Muslim thought in contemporary music such as grime and hip-hop as of references to the Bible in *Paradise Lost*.
10. Because worldviews are so complex and multifaceted, they call for multidisciplinary approaches to studying them. This provides a rare opportunity in the curriculum for young people to experience how applying different disciplinary approaches to a phenomenon may contribute to a richer and more complete understanding of that phenomenon.

RE enables pupils to build transferable skills

11. RE provides key opportunities for pupils to build both specific and general transferable skills. Some of these skills are essential to all academic learning, such as critical thinking, imaginative empathy, creativity, forming reasoned judgements based on sound evidence and argument, being able to locate relevant data, and becoming aware of bias and stereotype. Others are more intrinsic to RE, such as representing views other than your own with respect and empathy, reflecting on your own assumptions, using and understanding symbolic language, and using technical terminology accurately.

Summary

12. RE makes a distinctive contribution to the overall intellectual as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of children and young people. It enables them to think through the fundamental questions of being human. It helps them to understand a range of responses to these questions, the bases for these responses and the way that they influence, and are influenced by, individuals, communities and societies. This in turn enables young people to think through their own beliefs and be more thoughtful in their overall outlook.
13. Other curriculum subjects can and do contribute to pupils' understanding of worldviews, but only in RE are worldviews studied holistically from many perspectives. As the field is so wide-ranging and diverse it requires specialist knowledge and skills. Both primary and secondary students acknowledged the crucial role of specialist teaching in their oral evidence to the Commission.
14. There remains, therefore, a need for a discrete curriculum subject in which these institutional worldviews can be explored and discussed on their own terms, and in which pupils can be given the space to reflect on their own developing individual worldviews.

RE is essential for understanding the changing local, national and global landscape

15. As stated above, it is impossible to understand contemporary political, social and cultural movements without understanding the worldviews that underpin them. Perhaps 30 years ago, it was frequently claimed that religious worldviews, in particular, were becoming less and less relevant, as religious affiliation declined in the UK and Western Europe. However, local, national and global events have reminded us that religious institutions and religious affiliation remain highly relevant whether or not we happen to be members of such institutions – indeed perhaps more so in the last 30 years than in the 50 years that preceded them.

Understanding local and national trends

16. Locally, religion continues to play a role in shaping communities. The extent to which individuals from different religious communities are able to interact positively at local levels often depends on their ability to understand and work with diversity. The response of local religious institutions to major celebrations or in the aftermath of a crisis shows that they continue to provide points of contact and connection for local communities.
17. Across England, and indeed the UK as a whole, the religious landscape has changed significantly in the last 50 years. In 2016, 53% of the UK population described itself as not having a religion, compared to 31% in

1983.⁶ Amongst those aged between 15–24, just over 70% describe themselves as not having a religion.⁷ Religious diversity has also increased, with fewer people identifying themselves as Anglican and more identifying with other Christian denominations or other religions. 50 years ago, Judaism was the largest non-Christian religion, today it is fourth behind Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.⁸

18. Religion continues to play a role in public discourse, both positively and negatively. In Britain, as in many other places, there has been a rise in extremist movements of various kinds, including those drawing upon religious, ethnic and national symbols. Some would argue that ‘religion’ has become a ‘toxic brand’ associated with wars, terrorism, restrictions on human freedom and untenable metaphysical claims, while others argue for its continued positive value in an increasingly atomised, individualistic and materialistic society. The reality is, of course, more complex than either of these two positions, and religions and worldviews can have both positive and ‘toxic’ impacts on individuals and communities, depending on a whole combination of political, social, cultural and ideological factors. It is therefore essential for young people to understand this.
19. Prejudice and discrimination against some worldviews and the communities that belong to them appears to be increasing in the UK, in particular Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.⁹ At the same time, more individuals and public commentators are making a concerted effort to combat these prejudices in public discourse and to understand the diversity within religious communities. This is a striking illustration of the division and hatred that can result from a lack of understanding about religions and how they work.

Understanding global trends

20. Globally, 84% of people describe themselves as religiously affiliated, while 16% do not. Christianity is the largest single religion at 31% and Islam the second largest at 24%. However, these statistics hide considerable diversity of belief, practice and lifestyle within both Christianity and Islam, and indeed across all those who identify as religiously affiliated. In an increasingly globalised world, pupils need to be able to appreciate the breadth of religion and belief globally, and in particular diversity within religions.¹⁰

6 NATCEN (2017). *British Social Attitudes Survey*.

<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1469605/BSA-religion.pdf>

7 NATCEN (2017). *British Social Attitudes Survey*.

<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1469605/BSA-religion.pdf>

8 *Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life (2015), Living with Difference*.

<http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/uploads/Living%20with%20Difference.pdf>

9 See, for example, the London Mayor’s hate crime dashboard:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/crime%20/hate-crime-dashboard> and the BBC ‘reality

check’ on Islamophobia: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-40346457/reality-check-is-islamophobia-on-the-rise>

21. Religion continues to play an important role in individual motivations and communal decision-making. Furthermore, geopolitical conflicts are sometimes exacerbated by ethno-religious tensions. In an increasingly globalised world, where many people have internationalised affiliations, these tensions can affect relations between individuals and groups in the UK.

Summary

22. It is very difficult to understand these local, national and global issues without an understanding of the different ways in which people believe and belong, and of the impact of religious and non-religious worldviews on individuals, communities and societies, both positively and negatively. The young people that we spoke to understood this very clearly:

[RE] can play a big role in defeating religious extremism in society – as young people are being taught more about this and they can understand the difference between truths and lies in religion.

Year 10 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

[Studying RE] helps us understand the context of world events and what is right or wrong in the media and how to respond.

Year 9 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, York

‘A safe space to discuss difference’ – the contribution of Religious Education to community relations

[Studying RE] has helped me have more friends in school – there are other faiths in school and my best friend is a Muslim. We are connected because we’ve got to understand each other’s faiths through RE.

Year 10 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

23. The phrase ‘a safe space to discuss difference,’ attributed by most to Robert Jackson of the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit,¹¹ was the most often quoted single phrase across the evidence gathering sessions. Teachers and subject experts alike turned to it to explain the distinctive place of RE in the curriculum. This is not ‘safe’ in the sense of ‘sanitised’ but rather a space where people can talk – agree and disagree – freely about the contentious issues raised by worldviews.

¹⁰ Pew Research Forum (2017). *The Changing Global Religious Landscape*.

<http://www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape/>

¹¹ Jackson, R (2014). *Signposts: Policy and Practice for Teaching about Religions and Nonreligious Worldviews in Intercultural Education*. Published by the Council of Europe.

24. Across the oral and written evidence submitted by teachers, RE was understood to play a key role in fostering positive community relations. Important and contentious issues could be discussed openly in RE and the reasons behind different opinions on key personal and social issues could be explored. Pupils also saw this as a key difference that studying RE had made to them:

We learn to accept differences in each other as understanding breeds tolerance in our diverse communities. This allows us to create a safe environment that benefits everyone.

Year 9 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham

You learn to respect your peers. You learn about their religion, rights and responsibilities – for example the 5 precepts of Buddhism. You learn what they do and why they do it. You won't then isolate them or bully them because of their faith.

Year 10 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

25. Large-scale research conducted by the Warwick Diversity Project also found that the study of religions had a positive effect on social cohesion.

The results of both qualitative and quantitative strands support REDCo¹² findings that studies of religious diversity in schools contribute positively to social cohesion, while also fulfilling other aims, such as contributing to students' knowledge and understanding, and to their personal development. Having knowledge and understanding of religions was considered to be important by young people both with and without a personal religious stance (e.g. Arweck 2016a; 2017a).

Having knowledge and understanding of religions was considered to be important by young people both with and without a personal religious stance

Among the topics explored in analysing the quantitative data of the Warwick Diversity Project was a study of young

people in England taking religious education at GCSE level, with some comparisons with pupils not studying RE to exam level. The research confirms that studies of religions at examination level contribute positively towards a harmonious climate in relation to religious diversity (Francis, Penny and McKenna 2017).

Warwick Religions And Education Research Unit (WRERU), written evidence submitted to the Commission

12 'Religion in Education: A contribution to dialogue or a factor of conflict in transforming societies of European Countries (REDCo)' research project. See <https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ces/research/wreru/research/completed/redco/> for more details.

The contribution of religious literacy to social mobility

Most occupations require a knowledge of religion – [for example] doctors need to understand patients of different backgrounds.

Year 10 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

26. Research conducted by Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw found a consensus among the employers that they consulted that learning about religion and belief was essential to success in the workplace.

A very, very large number of beliefs are relevant to the workplace, e.g. if you work in education or health sector, understanding about religious beliefs in our society today is very important. The precise utility of religious knowledge will vary by occupation, activity and sector but there is no doubt that to a wide, wide range of sectors, knowledge about religion and belief is very important. And to put the contrary, not understanding about religious belief is a serious weakness.

Employer quoted in RE For Real Report, 2015¹³

27. Pupils who have a good understanding of religions and their impact on individuals, communities and societies will be more employable than those who display ignorance or prejudice. Where some pupils receive no RE, or poor quality RE, this will put them at a disadvantage compared to their peers who have a greater understanding of religions and worldviews and their impact on public life.

28. By way of an example, EY (formerly Ernst and Young) launched a religious literacy programme for organisations, in collaboration with Coexist House. This illustrates their recognition that religious literacy – understanding the diversity and influence of religious and non-religious worldviews – is essential to the successful functioning of organisations.

As more evidence shows that recognizing religious diversity within the workplace can improve recruitment, retention of employees and team cohesion as well as maintaining an inclusive culture and enhancing brand and reputation, organizations will increasingly want to shift the dial on diversity.

Press release announcing Ernst and Young's Religious Literacy for Organizations programme

29. Encountering worldviews other than that of one's own background may open up a wider range of options for pupils. Reflecting on one's own worldview in the light of these encounters may also open up new options and ways of thinking. This may, in turn, raise their aspirations and improve

¹³ Shaw, M & Dinham, A (2015). *RE for REal: The future of teaching and learning about religion and belief. Project report. Goldsmiths, University of London.*

their understanding and relationships with peers and future colleagues.

3.2 THE LEGAL AND STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The 1944 Education Act

30. The history of RE in schools in England has been shaped by what is often known as the ‘dual system’ – the state funding of both schools of a religious character and what used to be called ‘county’ or ‘community’ schools which have no affiliation to any religious denomination. Church schools – Church of England, Roman Catholic and others – predate the establishment of state education, and began to receive state funding after the 1902 Education Act established Local Education Authorities in place of school boards.
31. Schools of a religious character were divided into ‘voluntary controlled’ and ‘voluntary aided’ schools in the 1944 Education Act. Voluntary controlled schools would have all costs met by the state, but have less autonomy over the curriculum and staffing. In contrast, the ‘foundation’ or ‘trust’ that governed a voluntary aided school would be required to contribute towards capital expenditure but would retain greater influence in the governance and running of the school. All Catholic schools are voluntary aided, whereas more than half of Church of England schools are voluntary controlled. Some Church of England and Catholic schools have now become academies.
32. The 1944 Education Act stated that ‘religious instruction shall be given in every county school and every voluntary school’ (UK Parliament, Education Act 1944, Section 25.2). Religious instruction was the only specific subject mentioned as compulsory under the 1944 Education Act. All other subjects were to be decided by the local authority in all schools except voluntary aided secondary schools, where they were to be decided by the school (Section 23.1-2).
33. Deferring to the concerns of nonconformist Christians, it was also stated in the Act that such religious instruction in county and voluntary controlled schools ‘shall be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus adopted for the school or for those pupils and shall not include any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination’ (UK Parliament, 1944 Section 26). Religious instruction in voluntary aided schools was required to be ‘under the control of the managers and governors of that school and... in accordance with any provisions of the trust deed relating to that school’ (Section 27:1).
34. The right of parents to withdraw their children from both collective worship and religious instruction, as it was then conceived, dates from the 1870 Education Act and was reinforced in the 1944 Act.
35. The 1944 Act also established the provision for local determination of

agreed syllabuses and SACREs although at this point local authorities were given the power to constitute SACREs but not required to do so. They were, however, required to convene Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) and develop agreed syllabuses. The committee structure of SACREs was also established, and at this time ‘other denominations’ was taken to refer only to other Protestant Christian denominations.

The 1988 Education Reform Act

36. During the 1960s and 1970s, academic writing on religious education began to engage with social changes, particularly secularisation and the increasing religious diversity in society.¹⁴ Ninian Smart’s ideas were particularly influential at this time, and culminated in *Working Paper 36* of the Schools Council Secondary Project on Religious Education in 1971. This paper ‘advocated the “phenomenological” or undogmatic approach to RE which saw the subject as developing understanding of religions without promoting any particular religious stance, a process drawing on scholarly methods to generate empathy with those holding religious worldviews.’¹⁵ Some schools and local authorities were already doing this in practice, and it became increasingly popular following the publication of the working paper.
37. By the 1970s some local authorities had also started to interpret the legislation on SACREs and ASCs to include religions other than Christianity within the committee structure.
38. The 1988 Education Reform Act established a National Curriculum for the first time. However, this National Curriculum did not include RE, partly because local determination was already well established, and partly also because of the right of withdrawal. RE was included as part of the basic curriculum and together with the National Curriculum constituted what was compulsory to be taught in schools.
39. The 1988 Act included significant changes to the nature of RE. These changes reflected what was already going on in practice. First, ‘religious instruction’ was changed to ‘religious education’ with the underlying meaning that RE was no longer about the transmission of religious beliefs but about understanding religions and their impact on society.
40. In addition, multi-faith RE was enshrined in law for the first time, both in terms of changes to the composition of SACREs and in direct legislation about the content of agreed syllabuses. The famous statement that agreed syllabuses ‘shall reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and

¹⁴ Jackson, R (2013) *Religious education in England : the story to 2013*. *Pedagogiek: Wetenschappelijk forum voor opvoeding, onderwijs en vorming, Volume 33 (Number 2)*. pp. 119-135. <http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/58637/>

¹⁵ Jackson (2013) *op. cit.*

practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (UK Parliament, Education Reform Act 1988, Section 8.3) was also enshrined in law at this time and has remained a requirement ever since.

41. The law relating to SACREs and ASCs was also strengthened. The role of SACREs was enhanced and members of other religions were officially included in SACRE committees for the first time.
42. The Act specified that voluntary aided schools could teach RE in accordance with their trust deed, while voluntary controlled and community schools were required to teach RE in accordance with their locally agreed syllabus.
43. RE remained compulsory until the end of Key Stage 5 in schools. It was not compulsory for students over 16 in FE or Sixth Form Colleges.
44. The Education Act of 1996 reinforced these changes.

Non-statutory developments after 1988

45. Two non-statutory model syllabuses were developed in 1994, in consultation with representative groups from the major religious traditions present in Great Britain and included in the curriculum. It was in these model syllabuses that the two well-known attainment targets for RE based on the work of Michael Grimmit, 'learning about religion' and 'learning from religion' were popularised, and these have since gained wide currency.
46. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published a non-statutory national framework for RE in 2004. This too gained wide currency and was influential in the development of many locally agreed syllabuses. The national framework referred explicitly to students having the opportunity to study 'secular philosophies such as humanism' – again a reference to a development that was already taking place in practice in some schools and local authorities.
47. RE was not included in the Coalition Government's review of the National Curriculum. The RE Council therefore conducted a review of the subject in 2013. This set out both a curriculum framework to assist those writing RE syllabuses and a series of recommendations for improving RE in the future. The programmes of study developed mirrored the 2014 National Curriculum.

The legal requirements for RE in academies

48. Academies and free schools are state-funded schools which are independent of the local authority. They operate in accordance with a funding agreement between the trust running the academy and the Secretary of State for Education. Academies do not need to follow the

National Curriculum. Some academies are operated by religious denominations and are therefore counted as ‘schools of a religious character’. Where academies are operated by religious denominations, their funding agreement usually acknowledges this in relation to their provision of RE, giving them the freedom to use a denominational RE syllabus, as in voluntary aided schools.

49. Funding agreements for other academies require them to provide RE in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses – i.e. that it must reflect that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. They do not require academies to follow the locally agreed syllabus in their local authority.

GCSE and A-level Religious Studies

50. New content for GCSE and A-level Religious Studies was developed in 2015 for first teaching in 2016 and first examination in 2018. The GCSE content required pupils to study two religions and sought to respond to criticisms of ‘current practice whereby students are rewarded for engaging in topical debates with virtually no understanding of religious teachings, beliefs or texts’.¹⁶ Humanism was not included as an option in the ‘two religions’ papers but non-religious perspectives were taken into account in the philosophical and ethical sections.

Implications

51. The legal and structural arrangements for RE are a key consideration for the Commission because they impact on the delivery of the subject. Commissioners have to consider whether the statutory requirements are still fit for purpose and provide an effective basis for securing high quality RE.
52. A key issue is whether the statutory position of RE has kept pace with wider changes both within the world of educational policy and practice and in relation to the changing nature of religion in the 21st Century. We review this below in the section on *Religious Education in 2017 – the main challenges*. In particular, we explore whether the checks and balances in the original legislation still apply in a context where local authorities no longer have responsibility for many schools and find it difficult to sustain the support for RE that they are legally required to provide.
53. Specifically, the Commission has identified the following aspects of the current legal arrangements which we believe require attention:
 - a. The principle that ‘in all maintained schools RE must be taught according

¹⁶ Department for Education (2015). *Reformed GCSE and A-level subject content, consultation response, February 2015, p.23.*

to either the locally agreed syllabus or in accordance with the school's designated religion or religious denomination, or in certain cases the trust deed relating to the school' and whether this should be revised to include some form of statutory statement of entitlement agreed at a national level to apply equally to all schools within the state sector.

- b. The requirement that RE in agreed syllabuses must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'¹⁷
 - c. The principle of local determination in the production of agreed syllabuses and whether the statutory responsibilities of ASCs should be transferred elsewhere.
 - d. The age range and key stages of schooling at which RE should be a statutory requirement.
 - e. The future of SACREs and the appropriateness of the current arrangements for membership, structure and responsibilities.
 - f. How RE should be inspected and how schools should be held to account for the provision and quality of RE.
 - g. Whether the right of withdrawal as it applies to both parents and teachers is still fit for purpose.
54. This report sets out our initial thoughts on most of these areas and we intend to consult on all of the above aspects of the current legal arrangements.

3.3 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN 2017 - KEY STRENGTHS

55. At its best, religious education in England is highly regarded across the world. It is a beacon for multi-faith inclusive RE with a focus on enabling students to understand and respond to the complex world of religion, belief and identity. The UK has nearly 50 years of experience in teaching multi-faith Religious Education, going back to the first Shap conference in 1969¹⁸ and the Schools Council Working Paper 36 in 1971. Internationally, only Sweden has as long a history of this kind of RE.
56. When RE is taught well, it is highly valued by students, as their comments from our evidence gathering sessions make clear. Other evidence, including the RE for Real report, shows that RE is valued by teachers, employers and parents.¹⁹

¹⁷ UK Parliament, *Education Act 1996, Section 375.2.*

¹⁸ *The Shap working party on World Religions in Education*
<http://www.shapworkingparty.org.uk>

¹⁹ *Shaw, M & Dinham, A (2015). RE for REal: The future of teaching and learning about religion and belief. Project report. Goldsmiths, University of London.*

I took RS (at GCSE) because I want to be informed about others' beliefs, so I don't become ignorant or prejudiced. I found the historical side of RE appealing as I could see how the Abrahamic faiths tie together. It's important if you want to do something that involves talking with or being with other people. I would like to do geography or politics later on – RE is a valuable skill to have because you need to connect with people in different ways.

Year 10 pupil, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham

57. The main strengths of RE in 2017 seem to be:
- a. The passion and commitment of teachers and school leaders
 - b. High take-up of accredited courses at secondary level
 - c. Emerging grassroots RE networks for professionals
 - d. The integration of faith communities and lived experience into the curriculum.

The passion and commitment of teachers and some school leaders

58. Nothing makes more difference to the attainment and progress of pupils than good teachers and teaching,²⁰ and we were impressed by the passion and commitment of those teachers who contributed written and oral evidence to the Commission.
59. The teachers who contributed written and oral evidence also cited the important role of school leaders in establishing and communicating the status of RE. The support of school leaders was also identified as a key enabler of good RE in the 2013 Ofsted report²¹ and the 2014 *Making a Difference* review of RE in Church of England schools.²² RE thrived where it was supported by school leaders and governors. In primary schools, this might include employing a specialist RE teacher. In secondary schools, it included protecting curriculum time and specialist subject teaching and leadership, as well as decisions about examination entries.

20 Department for Education, (2011) *The Importance of Teaching. White paper*. See also Hattie, J. (2008). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.

21 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

22 Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). *Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools*. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

Headteachers and senior leaders are crucial to high quality learning and teaching in schools. Their vision of excellence for all is shown by the way they appoint quality staff, value well being, staff training and support a balanced curriculum. Where RE is excellent, the head and senior leaders value the subject, support CPD, school visits and visitors, fund the subject fairly and have clear and supportive assessment and marking policies. Excellent RE coordinators and heads of department have high standards of themselves including the management of classroom behaviour and learning and teaching.

Jane Chipperton, written evidence submitted to the Commission

60. Previous Ofsted reports have identified outstanding practice in some schools,²³ where enquiry was embedded in the curriculum and where teachers were able to direct investigation into the lived experience of religion and connect this to pupils' own questions and beliefs.
61. We continue to be impressed by the commitment of teachers to developing their own subject knowledge and that of non-specialist colleagues. We discuss this further in paragraphs 67–72.
62. 'Passionate teachers create passionate pupils,' as one teacher told us in her oral evidence. This was clear from the pupils' comments in the oral evidence.

High take up of accredited courses at secondary level

63. The high proportion of pupils sitting for, and passing, public examinations in Religious Studies is testament to its popularity. At its height in 2011, over 400,000 pupils – nearly two thirds of the total cohort – entered for GCSE Religious Studies (RS). Even with the steep decline in GCSE Short Course entries following their exclusion from performance measures, around half the cohort still takes GCSE Religious Studies, with 293,691 taking GCSE (Full and Short Course) in 2017. Allowing for the fact that many schools made GCSE Full Course or Short Course compulsory, these figures still show that it is a popular subject.²⁴
64. RS A level entries also rose dramatically – by 96% – during the period 2002/3 to 2013/14, with small but steady increases since then until this year. In 2017 just over 22,000 pupils entered for Religious Studies A level – a slight drop of 3.6% from 2016 but still almost twice as many as entered in 2002.²⁵
65. RS A level remains popular with top universities, despite not being

²³ Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

²⁴ JCQ, *GCSE examination entries*. <https://www.jcq.org.uk/>

²⁵ JCQ, *A-level examination entries*. <https://www.jcq.org.uk/>

included on the list of ‘facilitating subjects’ due to the small number of courses which specifically require it. The Russell Group of top universities has made it clear that RS A- level provides ‘suitable preparation for University generally’,²⁶ and both Oxford and Cambridge University include RS in the top level list of ‘generally suitable Arts A levels’.

66. By way of illustration, almost 21% of students admitted to Oxford University to study English and 13.5% admitted to study History in 2015 had an RS A level. This is more than those with Economics, Physics and Business Studies A levels. 11% of those admitted to study PPE had an RS A level.²⁷

Grass-roots networks bringing professionals together

67. Some of the teachers who participated in the oral evidence gathering sessions were members of local grass-roots networks such as the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) hubs or Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE). These networks bring together primary and secondary teachers, university lecturers, professional advisers (employed by the LA or the Church of England diocese, or freelance members of professional associations), subject experts and SACRE members to improve the quality of teaching in RE. They do not yet cover every locality in England, so access to them remains patchy, but they are a promising vehicle for improving RE across the nation if they can be expanded and sustained.
68. These networks have become increasingly popular and widespread in the last five years, reflecting changes to the provision of CPD in an increasingly school-led system as well as the possibilities of technology and social media to bring people together. In a short time, they have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and subject leadership in schools. They have proven to be excellent examples of what is possible in a school-led system.
69. While many RE networks are made up of teachers working together without any external support, others rely crucially on the contributions made by professional advisers and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The thriving community of professional associations in RE provides essential support to many grass-roots networks. These associations include: the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC), the Association for University Lecturers in Religion and

26 <http://russellgroup.ac.uk/media/5457/informed-choices-2016.pdf> page 29. The text reads

“There are some advanced level subjects which provide suitable preparation for entry to university generally, but which we do not include within the facilitating subjects, because there are relatively few degree programmes where an advanced level qualification in these subjects would be a requirement for entry. Examples of such subjects include Economics, Religious Studies and Welsh.”

27 Deborah Weston, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London (based on FOI requests).

Education (AULRE), the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE), the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE), and the RE Council (REC).

70. In addition, some of these networks have relied on charitable funding in order to exist. Those that do not have charitable funding operate on no budget and rely on the goodwill of teachers. RE is in a fortunate position in that charitable organisations do exist with a remit to fund professional development and subject knowledge enhancement in RE, but such funding does tend to be short-term and the resulting networks therefore precarious.
71. The high levels of membership in subject networks and in other RE professional associations reflects the commitment of teachers to their own subject knowledge development, both through these networks and through other forms of CPD provision such as university study days and the long-standing Farmington Scholarships.²⁸
72. The RE Quality Mark (REQM)²⁹ has also been an important vehicle for professional development for those schools that have chosen to pursue it. Funded by a range of charitable donations and supported by the RE Council, it is another important example of school-led professional development. Since it began in 2012, over 400 schools have been awarded the REQM, the majority of these at Gold level. It both showcases good practice and provides an important tool for further development.

The process has challenged us further; we have already put in place a number of new ideas, such as the pupils planning and even teaching lessons. We have also renewed some ideas which had been allowed to slip for a year or two, such as developing closer community links and there are some exciting things happening as a result. You have made us take a fresh look at ourselves, through a different lens. Although we have gained a gold award, the criteria still provide lots of creative pointers to move ourselves forward even further.

Comment from a school holding the REQM Gold Award³⁰

The role of faith communities and lived experience

73. RE is distinctive among subjects in that one of the objects of study is 'living, breathing communities'.³¹ These communities may be local, national and/or international, they may be influential in the immediate vicinity of the school and children in that school may belong to some of them. The active role played by these communities in the support and

²⁸ <http://www.farmington.ac.uk/index.php/farmington-scholarships/>

²⁹ <http://reqm.org/>

³⁰ <http://reqm.org/>

³¹ Ed Pawson, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Exeter.

delivery of religious education is vital to high quality RE, particularly as one goal of RE is to understand the lived experience of individuals and communities which identify with particular (religious or non-religious) worldviews.

Teachers and students want to know how it [religion] works in practice, how it affects how we live. That has been the secret of my success to date. At the end of one session a primary school teacher said, 'I feel that I have just visited your house'.

Jeremy Michelson, written evidence submitted to the Commission

Much evidence from the Warwick Diversity Project and other WRERU projects supports the view that the more people are exposed to 'the other', the more they are able to relate to the other and the better equipped they are to deal with religious and cultural difference/situations/ environments. Thus, in religiously and ethnically diverse areas, RE (and school ethos) makes a major contribution to 'celebrating' this diversity and facilitating contact and dialogue among pupils from different backgrounds. In religiously and ethnically non-diverse areas, RE (and school ethos) can make a major contribution through the organisation of visits to religious communities, inviting outside speakers from religious or worldview communities into the school to help young people encounter and experience 'the other', and facilitating links between students and staff in different types of school (e.g. Arweck 2016, 2017c; McKenna, Iprgrave and Jackson 2008; Jackson 2014) and thus combat preconceived ideas and stereotypes.

Warwick Religions And Education Research Unit (WRERU), written evidence submitted to the Commission

74. In both written and oral evidence, mention has been made of the ways in which visits and visitors enhance the pupil experience in RE at all levels. When both visitors and teachers are well-briefed, and the learning goals are clear, visits and visitors can be extremely powerful. They provide opportunities to explore how worldviews are lived out in practice and how individuals negotiate their relationship with religious or non-religious institutions. There is also evidence of good practice in some SACREs who train faith community members to host visits to places of worship or to visit schools. We seek further evidence on this in preparation for the final report.
75. The *Making a Difference* review of RE in Church of England schools identified this interaction with members of different communities as a key enabler of effective RE:

A high quality enrichment programme to support learning in RE – for example, one [primary] school had carefully audited local resources to support the pupils' learning. These included a local

Cathedral schools festival; opportunities for some Jewish parents to talk to the children; inviting the Muslim children in the school to share their faith with others; fieldwork visits to a local mosque; and, using the local vicar to introduce topics on marriage and baptism. A key to the success was the careful integration of the fieldwork and visitors into the pupils' learning.³²

3.4 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN 2017 - THE MAIN CHALLENGES

76. Despite these strengths, which must be preserved, RE is facing serious challenges. Our oral evidence gathering found real concern about the future of the subject and evidence that it was being squeezed out in some schools, potentially damaging the overall education of pupils in those schools. These challenges are partly the result of long-standing systemic neglect and partly the result of more recent policy changes. The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE concluded in 2013 that RE had been the 'unintended victim of a combination of major policy changes'. Four years have not reversed that trend, and indeed have exacerbated it, a message strongly reinforced by teachers and students on the ground during our evidence gathering.

...the combined impact of so many severe setbacks in such a short time has been to convey the message that, even though it is a statutory subject, RE is of less value than other subjects.³³

77. The main challenges to RE in 2017 are:
- a. Inequitable provision of Religious Education across different school types
 - b. Challenges to the structures which support and resource RE
 - c. Variable standards with persistent low standards in some schools
 - d. Lack of confidence among teachers
 - e. Confusion and disagreement over purposes.

Inequitable provision of Religious Education across different school types

78. There is a statutory entitlement to RE. However, this is not being delivered equitably across all schools. This has partly been a result of the unintended consequences of policy changes over the last five years, as Michael Gove acknowledged during his tenure as Secretary of State for Education:

³² *Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). Making a Difference, op.cit.*

³³ *The All Party Parliamentary Group on Education (2013). RE: the truth unmasked - the supply of and support for religious education teachers, Religious Education Council of England and Wales.*
http://www.mmiweb.org.uk/publications/re/APPG_RETruthUnmasked.pdf

“I think, if I’m being honest, over the last three years I’ve thought, ‘Well that’s [the statutory nature of RE] protection enough’, and therefore I’ve concentrated on other areas. Therefore, I think that RE has suffered as a result of my belief that the protection of it was sufficient and I don’t think that I’ve done enough.”

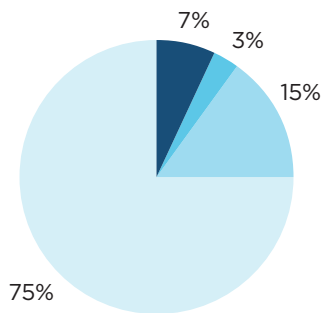
Michael Gove, comments made to a Church of England seminar. 2013³⁴

79. Thousands of secondary students – in around 26% of all state-funded schools³⁵ – are not receiving their entitlement to statutory RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. These students are being disadvantaged in terms of their preparedness for life in modern Britain and in our globalised world. They will not develop the necessary understanding of religions and worldviews which will prepare them for the workplace and

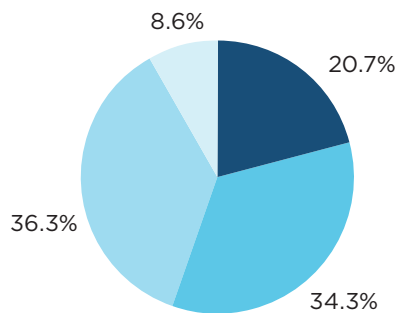
Figure 1: Curriculum time for RE in secondary schools ³⁶

Curriculum time for RE at KS4

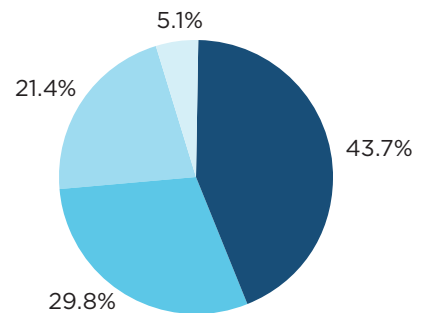
Schools of a religious character



Schools following locally agreed syllabus

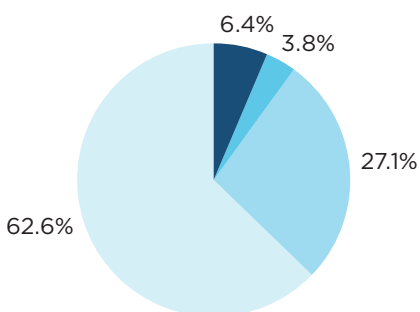


Academies without a religious character

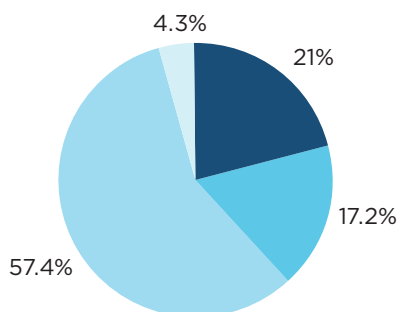


Curriculum time for RE at KS3

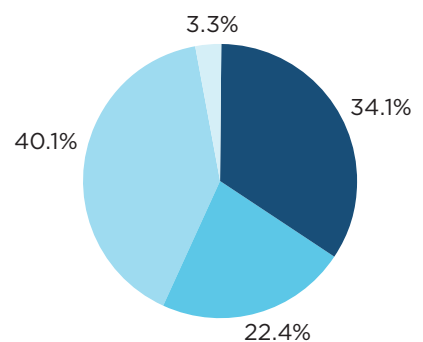
Schools of a religious character



Schools following locally agreed syllabus



Academies without a religious character

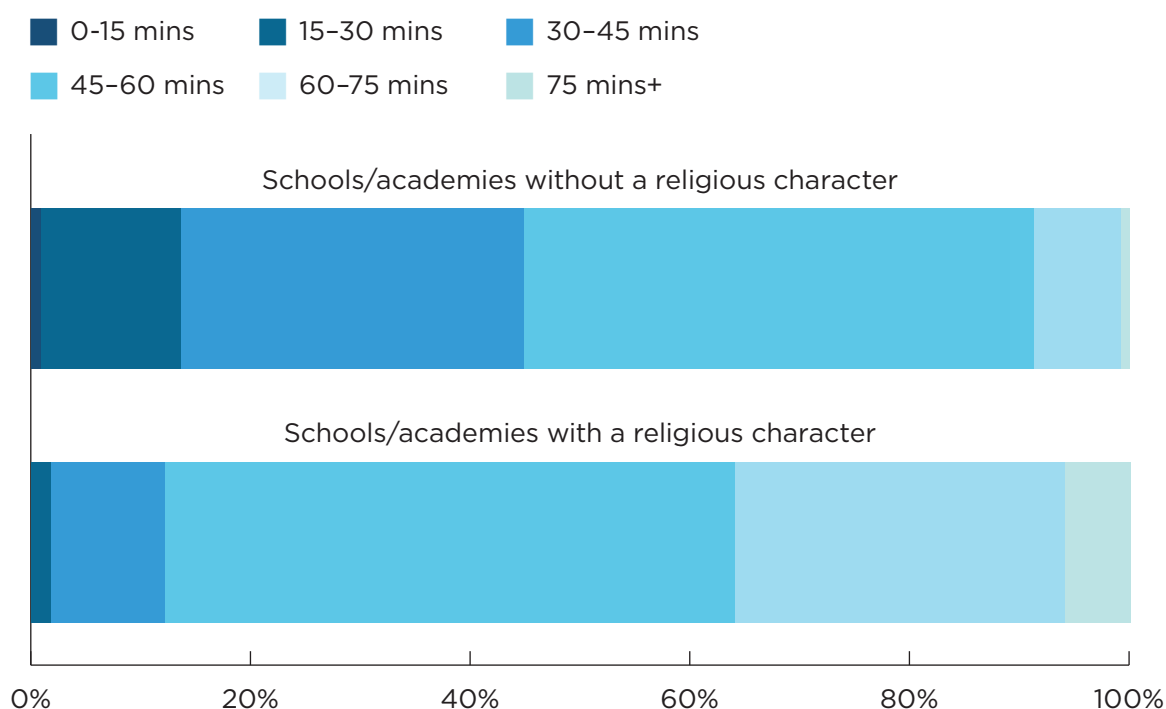


■ No RE at all ■ 0%-3% ■ 3%-6% ■ Over 6%

for responsible citizenship. This is ultimately an equity issue – some students do not have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews while others do. Schools of a religious character teach more RE than schools without a religious character.

80. There is a widening disparity of provision of RE in both primary and secondary schools, as a consequence of policy change since 2010. The REC/NATRE/RE Today ‘State of the Nation’ report (2017) highlights the inequity of provision at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. The type of school that students attend affects whether or not they receive any teaching of RE and, if so, how much. This can be clearly seen from an analysis of school workforce data at Key Stage 4. A similar pattern applies at Key Stage 3.
81. We have less robust data for primary schools, as the data comes from a NATRE survey which was filled in by interested teachers, rather than the school workforce data. Respondents to the NATRE survey were generally teachers responsible for RE, and are likely to be those with a personal

Figure 2: Curriculum time for RE in primary schools³⁷



³⁴ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10159937/Michael-Gove-quality-of-religious-education-has-dropped.html>

³⁵ RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE (2017, forthcoming) *The State of the Nation*.

³⁶ *Analysis of school workforce data from RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE (2017, forthcoming) The State of the Nation*.

³⁷ NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*. <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

interest, and in schools where there is some resource for RE. However, the data we do have from primary schools shows that there are still differences in curriculum time for RE between schools of a religious character and those without a religious character.

82. Patterns of GCSE entry also show clear disparities between schools of a religious character and schools without a religious character. 14% of academies without a religious character entered no pupils for GCSE Religious Studies in 2016, compared to nearly 10% of schools following a locally agreed syllabus and just over 2% of schools with a religious character.³⁸
83. This inequality extends to almost all aspects of RE, including the provision of CPD, the number of lessons taught by teachers with other specialisms, the subject expertise of subject leaders in primary schools, and the provision of professional advice and consultancy. For example, almost twice as many primary teachers in schools without a religious character had received no CPD in the past year (32%) as those in schools with a religious character (18%).³⁹

Why this disparity is dangerous

84. The disparity between different types of school reinforces perceptions that religions and worldviews are only interesting to their adherents and that the goal of RE is to make students more religious. The evidence received by the Commission consistently opposes this view of RE, as do the Commissioners.
85. We are concerned that, if disparities continue to widen, as seems likely if nothing is done, then there will come a time when the only schools that offer RE are schools of a religious character. For a country whose commitment to multi-faith RE for all is admired around the world, that would be a dire state of affairs. As society has changed and religious literacy has become ever more important the lack of provision for RE in some schools is dangerous.

Reasons for the disparity between different types of schools

86. This state of affairs is partly created by the large number of schools converting to Academy status. The provision for RE in academies is included in their funding agreement and the default is that they must provide RE in line with the guidance for agreed syllabuses, but they need not follow their locally agreed syllabus. This leads to considerable

³⁸ RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE (2017, forthcoming) *The State of the Nation*.

³⁹ NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*.
<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

variability of provision in academies without a religious character, with some developing their own syllabus, some using their own or another locally agreed syllabus, and others not providing RE at all, as can be seen from the data above.

87. Some of this inequality in provision at Key Stage 3 and 4 is a result of changes to school performance measures. With Short Course GCSE no longer counting in school performance measures and Full Course not included in the EBacc, school leaders are driven to make decisions to prioritise subjects that are counted in performance measures, with the unintended consequence that RE is further marginalised.
88. The non-inclusion of RE in the EBacc was cited by teachers as both evidence of an existing low profile for RE, and contributing to further decline in the profile and status of RE.

The pupils who want to study GCSE full course have been told they must choose the EBacc subjects [instead] because that's marked as a prestige pathway. [The exclusion of RE from the EBacc] redefines the subject in some pupils' eyes, and it's hard to win them over for Short Course GCSE.

Teacher of RE in a secondary school, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, York

89. In some schools, GCSE Full Course was being taught in an hour a week, less than half the recommended time, as was mentioned several times in oral and written evidence. As one teacher who contributed oral evidence put it, this led to 'superficial' teaching and 'misrepresentation of the complexity of religions'.⁴⁰ Some schools of a religious character also taught GCSE Full Course in less time than was allocated for other subjects, as mentioned in the *Making a Difference* review⁴¹.
90. The lack of curriculum time at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 contributed to poorer quality teaching and learning, as pointed out in the 2013 Ofsted report:

The provision made for GCSE in the majority of the secondary schools surveyed failed to provide enough curriculum time for pupils to extend and deepen their learning sufficiently.⁴²

⁴⁰ Head of RE, secondary school, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham.

⁴¹ Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). *Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools*. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

⁴² Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

91. Perhaps one of the reasons for the extreme variability of provision is that some school leaders at both primary and secondary do not understand the value of RE. While many of the teachers who contributed evidence were in schools where RE was explicitly valued by school leaders, this was not the case for all teachers.

My own experience is of a Head teacher who decided to cut RE to once a fortnight for Year 10s. Why? It became evident when he observed one of my lessons and at the end said: "Well, James I didn't know RE could be taught well until today!"- he saw no value in the subject, only following the lesson and outcry from parents and pupils did he back down.

Dr James Holt, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

Summary

92. We see these disparities in provision as an issue of injustice and inequality. All students should have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews in order to participate fully as citizens in an increasingly globalised world.
93. This inequality of provision is the main driving force behind our recommendations. Religious Education matters for all students and our recommendations are intended to secure high quality RE for all students in all settings.

Challenges to the structures which support RE at local level

SACREs have less capacity to support schools

94. Academisation has also significantly reduced local authority (LA) capacity. This has meant that some authorities have become unable to resource SACREs appropriately. We do not yet have evidence on the full scale of the problem but we do know that some SACREs have as little as two days per annum of time from paid advisers, and that these SACREs are therefore far less able to support schools. The 2013 APPG report found that:

The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions and the impact of the academisation programme.⁴³

95. In the four years since the 2013 APPG report, the rate of conversion to

⁴³ *The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Education (2013). RE: the truth unmasked - the supply of and support for religious education teachers, Religious Education Council of England and Wales.*

http://www.mmiweb.org.uk/publications/re/APPG_RETruthUnmasked.pdf

Academy status has increased, with a corresponding loss of local authority and SACRE capacity. Changes to the structures supporting RE have not kept pace with changes in the wider education system.

96. SACREs are therefore less able to support and advise schools, which may also be a contributing factor to the lack of provision referenced above.

I represent the Jewish community on Salford SACRE. On the SACRE there are many motivated and well-meaning people who are anxious to see that RE is well taught. They see RE as important in itself and as a means of promoting greater tolerance and social Cohesion. However, the loss of an RE adviser and the limited local authority support has severely curtailed what the SACRE is able to achieve.

Jeremy Michelson, written evidence submitted to the Commission.

The reduced capacity of SACREs was reflected in the increasing difficulties faced by many of the schools visited in obtaining guidance and support from their SACRE. Schools in a number of local authorities reported that they had had no support or guidance for implementing their new agreed syllabus.⁴⁴

SACREs are less able to monitor RE provision

97. SACREs are also less able to monitor RE provision in schools that are not under local authority control. The evidence below from Cornwall SACRE illustrates the main issues.

Most of its secondary schools and half its primary schools no longer have to teach the Cornwall locally agreed syllabus, and the SACRE has no way of knowing which ones do.

SACRE has no RE adviser, and support from the LA extends to a small budget only, with no executive or specialist RE support for its use, preparation of reports and action plan. SACRE's development plan of 2015 has not been actioned.

SACRE has not received a report on the quality of RE in its schools for three years.

John Keast on behalf of Cornwall SACRE, oral evidence presented to the Commission in Exeter

98. SACREs have found it increasingly difficult to monitor the provision and quality of RE across all schools.

Many SACREs highlighted the damaging impact of cuts to LA funding and/or RE Advisor expertise, on their ability to deliver this statutory duty at the levels possible previously. In contrast, well-

⁴⁴ Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

funded SACREs listed a range of monitoring visits and activities. Another barrier identified was the sense of RE competing with core accountability subjects, leading to a reluctance of some schools in certain areas to engage with RE monitoring initiatives. SACREs described being discouraged by those schools from organising SACRE observer visits as well as receiving no response when sending out monitoring forms. SACREs expressed a wish for Ofsted to ensure formal monitoring, enabling SACREs to follow up and support the subject.

NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission following their AGM in 2017

A number of SACREs felt that their ability to monitor effectively was hampered by a number of factors, including the power to require schools to change bad, or non-compliant practice and a lack of resource to carry out as much monitoring activity as the SACRE would like to.

NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission following a survey of members

Locally agreed syllabuses are of variable quality

99. The quality of locally agreed syllabuses and SACRE support for schools has long been variable, and has depended on local decisions about SACRE capacity and resourcing. The Commission is seeking further evidence on the variable quality of agreed syllabuses. At this stage, it can be noted that while some locally agreed syllabuses are excellent, others are not as helpful for schools as they might be. They may lack clear guidance on progression, and do not always provide what schools need to help them with curriculum planning.⁴⁵ In addition, agreed syllabuses have not always kept pace with ‘life after levels’ and changes to assessment, particularly at Key Stage 2. This has led to some schools retaining the 8-level scale for RE, while the rest of the school has moved to new models.

Summary

100. Academisation has led to greater freedoms for schools, and in some schools this freedom to innovate has been very positive for RE. However, the legal settlement for RE has not kept pace with these changes and needs to be adapted to fit the post-academisation educational landscape. The Commission’s proposals directly tackle this challenge.
101. The loss of funding for SACREs, due to academisation and local authority funding cuts, has made it much more difficult for them to carry out their

⁴⁵ Ofsted (2004). *An evaluation of the work of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education*.

<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5181/1/An%20evaluation%20of%20the%20work%20of%20Standing%20Advisory%20Councils%20for%20Religious%20Education%20%28PDF%20format%29.pdf>

statutory duty to monitor and support RE.

Variable standards with persistent low standards in many schools

102. Achievement and progress in RE were less than good in just under half of secondary schools, and in 6 out of 10 primary schools observed by Ofsted.⁴⁶ In *Making a Difference*, a review of standards in RE in Church of England schools, the reviewers found that RE was good or better in 70% of secondary schools, but only 40% of primary schools.⁴⁷ Poor standards at primary level are therefore prevalent across different school types. We do not have evidence on standards in Catholic schools and hope to be able to obtain this evidence before the final report.
103. Where RE was good or better, this was a result of strong support for RE from senior leadership and governors, effective training and good subject knowledge on the part of teachers.
104. Poor standards are a result of a number of important factors, including:
 - a. Lack of confidence on the part of teachers
 - b. Inadequate initial teacher training and CPD
 - c. The high proportion of lessons taught by non-specialists at Secondary and non-teachers at Primary
 - d. Possible lack of clarity over purpose.

Lack of confidence among teachers, especially at primary

Many teachers do not feel confident to teach RE

105. According to the APPG report *The Truth Unmasked*, half of all primary teachers did not feel confident to teach RE. The 2016 NATRE primary survey found that a quarter of teachers that it surveyed did not feel confident to teach RE, but their sample was predominantly subject leaders, whom you would expect to feel more confident. In contrast, the NATRE survey respondents reported that only just under 5% of their colleagues feel very confident about how to teach RE and 8.5% about what to teach. The main causes of lack of confidence were inadequate training and lack of subject knowledge.⁴⁸

46 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

47 *Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools*.
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

Locally, many of our teachers feel that their own religious literacy is poor and they are particularly worried about teaching a subject about which they are not confident when they feel they may cause offence if they 'get it wrong'.

Gillian Georgiou; Kathryn Wright; Olivia Seymour; Jane Chipperton, written evidence submitted to the Commission

106. The *Making a Difference* review found that many teachers in Church of England primary schools also lacked confidence in teaching RE, and that, as a result, pupils' learning was superficial.⁴⁹

Many RE teachers receive little or no training

107. At primary level, the 2016 NATRE survey reports that more than 1 in 4 respondents received no CPD in RE and 60% received less than one day in the previous year.
108. Over 60% of recently qualified primary teachers who responded to the NATRE survey had had 0-3 hours of training at ITE (over a 1-year PGCE or Schools Direct programme), compared to 20% of those who trained more than 11 years ago. The oral evidence has also stated that with so few schools offering good RE, it is difficult to find school placements with high quality RE teaching for all primary trainee teachers.⁵⁰

Many RE teachers do not have relevant qualifications

109. In 50% of primary schools that responded to the 2016 Primary NATRE survey, some RE is being delivered by a higher level teaching assistant (HLTA). In 1 in 10 schools between 25% and 50% of RE is delivered in this way.⁵¹
110. At secondary level, about twice as many teachers of RE (56%) as History (27.6%) have no relevant post A-level qualification. Almost two and a half times as many lessons in RE (27.2%) as History (11%) are taught by a teacher with no relevant post A-level qualification.⁵² The 2013 Ofsted report referred to this as one of the reasons why RE was good or better in only just over half of the schools observed, as compared to 71% in the

48 NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*. www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Additional%20Documents%2FNATRE%2520Primary%2520Survey%25202016%2520final.docx&usg=AFQjCNFDWLUicovE8LQEQEgZiiuHF7fFcAA

49 *Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools*. <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

50 NATRE, *ibid*.

51 NATRE, *ibid*.

52 Deborah Weston, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London.

most recent report on History (2011).

111. This is partly because non-specialist teachers may lack the nuanced subject knowledge required to correct pupil misconceptions (Ofsted 2013) or to respond accurately to questions. It also places an excessive burden on RE subject leaders who have to manage large numbers of non-specialist teachers, often each only teaching one or two lessons a week.
112. The shortage of specialist RE teachers at secondary is a result of various policy changes, including:
 - a. Lower bursaries for applicants for teacher training, compared to other shortage subjects such as Geography. Applicants for RE with a first class honours degree receive a bursary of £9,000 compared to £25,000 for Geography.
 - b. The removal of funding for Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses⁵³ in RE, where this continues to exist for other shortage subjects.

Is there a confusion over purposes?

113. Previous reports on RE, including Ofsted reports, have cited a ‘confusion over purposes’ as one of the reasons why teaching and learning is less than good in so many schools. The most recent Ofsted report identified a number of consequences of this confusion:

The confusion about the purpose of RE is exemplified in a number of ways.

- a. Many primary teachers, including subject leaders, were finding it difficult to separate RE from the more general, whole-school promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- b. Many schools showed a strong tendency to detach learning in RE from the more in-depth study of religion and belief. Too often teachers thought they could bring depth to the pupils’ learning by inviting them to reflect on or write introspectively about their own experience rather than rigorously investigate and evaluate religion and belief.
- c. In the primary schools visited, considerable weaknesses in teaching about Christianity frequently stemmed from a lack of clarity about the purpose of the subject. For example, Christian stories, particularly miracles, were often used to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience without any opportunity to investigate the stories’ significance within the religion itself.
- d. Much GCSE and, increasingly, Key Stage 3 work, focused primarily on the study of philosophical, moral and social issues. The work

53 Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses of 12 or 28 weeks are offered to those preparing to train to teach at secondary. They can be offered in online, blended or face to face formats. They are fully funded and students are also given a bursary.

lacked any significant development of pupils' understanding of religion and belief – and frequently distorted it.⁵⁴

114. The *Making a Difference* review found evidence of confusion over purposes in primary Church of England schools, whereas secondary schools had much greater clarity of purpose.

There was a significant lack of clarity about the purpose and place of RE within the life of a Church school – often teachers confused developing pupils' moral awareness with the educational goals of RE as a curriculum subject.⁵⁵

115. The written and oral evidence submitted to us shows evidence for a diversity of purposes, though more consensus than one would expect, and not necessarily confusion. This range of purposes can be broadly divided into two categories: learning about others' worldviews, and sorting out one's own. Because worldviews are complex and multifaceted, it is to be expected that RE will have a variety of purposes. It will need to explore the truth-claims of different worldviews, their impact on society and on individuals, the role of historical events in shaping them, and pupils' own responses to them.
116. There has been some disagreement among teachers and subject experts about whether this range of purposes is a problem. Some have argued that comparable subjects, such as History or English, have a similar range and similar debates. Some have also argued that this variety of purposes is a strength, rather than a weakness.
117. The Commission presents a renewed vision for RE, which does justice to the diversity of purposes and the complexity of the subject matter while clarifying confusion and limiting the boundaries of acceptable diversity of purposes. This can be found in paragraphs 118-119. We are aware that we need to discuss further the relationship between school type (particularly whether or not the school is of a religious character) and the purposes of RE, and we will address this over the next year in preparation for the final report.

3.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR A RENEWED VISION AND STRUCTURE

118. As academisation gathers pace and as schools come under increasing accountability pressures, there is an urgent need for a renewed vision for RE and for the structures that support it to be reviewed and adapted. This vision also responds to the changing religious and socio-political

54 *Ofsted (2013). Religious Education: Realising the potential.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

55 *Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools.*

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

landscape in Britain and the wider world today. The Commission's proposals in the rest of this report are the starting point for this renewed vision and structure. They are still consultative at this stage and we would like this document to be part of an ongoing conversation to ensure that the Commission's final recommendations are as effective as possible.

A Vision for RE

119. Reflecting on the reasons why RE matters, the current strengths and challenges, and the needs of the population as local, national and global citizens, the Commission's vision for RE is as follows:
- a. Every child is entitled to good RE and every school provides good RE. Good RE is defined as RE which enables pupils to:
 - i. Engage with lived experience and the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews in order to become a global citizen
 - ii. Explore the varied ways that people live, believe, behave and belong
 - iii. Understand how worldviews work, and their impact on individuals, communities and society
 - iv. Consider and reflect on their own individual worldview in response to others' individual and institutional worldviews.
 - b. RE is considered as an academic subject in its own right. It does develop skills and character, as all school subjects do, but its primary purpose is educational.
 - c. All teachers have access to good initial training and continuing professional development, engaging with research on religions and worldviews in order to keep their subject knowledge up to date.
 - d. RE is valued and supported by all school leaders, who recognise the vital contribution that it makes to pupils' development, and this is recognised in school

performance measures and through holding schools to account via inspection.

- e. Faith communities and communities affiliated with non-religious worldviews continue to support RE in schools, through developing resource materials, visiting schools and hosting visits to gatherings or places of worship. Schools and communities use technology ever more effectively to bring schools and religion and belief communities together.
- f. Local and national RE networks continue to thrive and expand, drawing on the expertise of teachers, university departments (both Education departments and those involved in research on religious and non-religious worldviews), professional associations, and faith and belief communities.
- g. The underpinning legal structures reflect the 21st century religious and educational landscape and provide a firm foundation for good RE.

SECTION 4

SECURING HIGH QUALITY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR ALL

4.1 THE LEGAL AND STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS

120. It is clear that the legal and structural arrangements for RE are no longer fit for purpose in the changing social and educational landscape in England:
 - a. Local determination of RE is no longer effective in a situation where there is widespread academisation and reduced local authority control of schools. There is a mismatch between making local authorities continue to be responsible for RE syllabuses, and the government's stated purpose of academisation for all.
 - b. The SACRE structure and remit is no longer fit for purpose in a nation of much greater religious diversity, looser patterns of affiliation and greater school freedoms than existed when SACREs were established.
 - c. Schools are no longer effectively held to account for their provision of effective RE. In a context of changed performance measures, it is all too easy for schools not to comply with the law and to deny pupils their entitlement to RE.
 - d. Changing patterns of religious affiliation mean that the nature and purpose of RE need to be renewed, so that RE reflects the 'real religious landscape'⁵⁶ and not a distorted ideal of what it means to have a worldview or belong to a religious or non-religious community.

A national entitlement for Religious Education

The current situation

121. Currently, RE is locally determined. Each local authority is required by statute to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) and develop a locally agreed syllabus, which is binding on all community and voluntary controlled schools.
122. Voluntary aided schools of a religious character, including voluntary aided academies, are required to teach RE in accordance with the trust deeds of that school. In practice, most of these schools will use the syllabus developed by their local Anglican or Catholic diocese, depending on the

⁵⁶ Shaw, M & Dinham, A (2015). *RE for REal: The future of teaching and learning about religion and belief. Project report. Goldsmiths, University of London.*

religious character of the school.

123. RE in academies is determined by their funding agreement. In most cases, all that is required is for academies to provide RE in accordance with the guidance for locally agreed syllabuses. Some academies do adopt their locally agreed syllabus, while others choose to use a syllabus from a different local authority or develop their own, and still others, as we have seen, do not provide any RE at all. There is almost no guidance for academies wishing to develop their own syllabus.
124. There is very little statutory guidance for locally agreed syllabuses. There is statutory guidance about the composition of the ASC but very little guidance on the content of the syllabus that results from it.
125. The statutory requirement for locally agreed syllabuses is that they must 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2).
126. Agreed syllabuses are highly variable in approach, level of detail and quality. There has not been a detailed review of agreed syllabuses, although the Ofsted review of SACREs in 2004 made some comments about agreed syllabuses.⁵⁷ The key findings of the 2004 review were:

Agreed syllabuses vary significantly in style, character, structure and quality. None of the agreed syllabus conferences (ASCs) in the LEAs inspected had the capacity to carry out an agreed syllabus revision without significant support from an adviser or consultant. The extent of the involvement of ASC members varied between LEAs.

Very few syllabuses seen were of high enough quality throughout to make a consistently sound basis for good planning, teaching, learning and assessment.⁵⁸
127. Since 2004, the non-statutory national framework for RE and the subsequent 2013 review of RE have provided some guidance for ASCs. However, as these are non-statutory, they were not universally adopted.
128. From the evidence that we have, it appears that resources for producing agreed syllabuses have been reduced in recent years. Evidence from RE

57 Ofsted (2004). *An evaluation of the work of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education*. <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5181/1/An%20evaluation%20of%20the%20work%20of%20Standing%20Advisory%20Councils%20for%20Religious%20Education%20%28PDF%20format%29.pdf>

58 Ofsted (2004). *An evaluation of the work of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education*. <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5181/1/An%20evaluation%20of%20the%20work%20of%20Standing%20Advisory%20Councils%20for%20Religious%20Education%20%28PDF%20format%29.pdf>

Today Services states that the size of contracts for producing or supporting the development of agreed syllabuses have been steadily decreasing in size and frequency.⁵⁹ This is also supported by anecdotal evidence from NASACRE and individual SACREs about cuts to funding for ASCs.⁶⁰ We seek further evidence on this.

129. Many SACREs buy in support from commercial providers to develop agreed syllabuses. RE Today Services provides support and resources to about a third of agreed syllabuses per year.⁶¹ This can range from developing the whole syllabus to providing professional advice and support to the ASCs. Local authorities do employ professional advisers as external consultants, although we do not yet have evidence on how much adviser time is normally used for developing agreed syllabuses. Those ASCs that do not have access to this professional resource rely on goodwill and voluntary commitment from teacher working groups and ASC members, or draw on the professional resources of their Anglican Diocesan RE adviser. Funding for ASCs is highly variable, and we seek further evidence on the maximum and minimum levels of funding for ASCs in the last five years.

Why the time is now right for a national entitlement to RE

The impact of academisation on locally agreed syllabuses

130. It is clear from the above that the capacity of local authorities to develop high quality agreed syllabuses is highly variable, leading to a 'postcode lottery' in the experience of pupils in schools. It is also clear that capacity has reduced in many local authorities in the last five years.
131. While current non-statutory guidance is available and helpful, it does not provide a basis for holding ASCs or schools to account.
132. Voluntary aided (VA) schools are not required to use the locally agreed syllabus, although some Church of England VA schools may do so if instructed by their diocese. Academisation has blurred the difference between voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools, with the result that some voluntary controlled schools now use their diocesan syllabus, or a mix of the locally agreed syllabus and their diocesan syllabus, rather than the locally agreed syllabus.
133. If every school is to become an Academy, Local Authorities will then be developing syllabuses when no schools are required to use them. It will render local determination of syllabuses entirely redundant.

⁵⁹ Mike McMaster on behalf of RE Today Services, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London.

⁶⁰ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission.

⁶¹ Mike McMaster on behalf of RE Today Services, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London.

134. Given that increasing numbers of ASCs buy in commercial syllabuses, some of those who gave oral evidence claimed that the system is moving towards a 'national syllabus by default'.⁶² A national entitlement would provide a consistent basis for these syllabuses and supports the general direction of travel.
135. We considered recommending that RE be included in the National Curriculum alongside any other subject. However, as academies are exempt from the National Curriculum, simply making RE part of the National Curriculum would not be sufficient to ensure that all schools meet their statutory requirements for the provision of RE.

Teachers and subject experts, including some SACREs, are in favour of a national entitlement

136. There was a strong call across the written and oral evidence for a national entitlement, although this was not universal. Most of the teachers who contributed evidence were in favour of a national entitlement as they stated that this would ensure greater consistency and enable more effective sharing of good practice and resources.

NAHT [the National Association of Head Teachers] believes that one way to overcome this lack of clarity and achieve more consistency in the experience of all pupils in RE is to provide a national framework which balances the need for academic challenge and personal inspiration and development.

NAHT, written evidence submitted to the Commission

NATRE supports a national minimum entitlement for RE (purpose and outcome based) that would be the basis for RE in all state funded schools. NATRE would also like there to be research into the possible value and impact of such a national minimum entitlement for RE.

Fiona Moss, NATRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission

137. Two-fifths of those SACREs surveyed by NASACRE (total 35 SACREs) were in favour of a national entitlement.⁶³
138. Both the Church of England Education Office and the Catholic Education Service gave qualified endorsement to the prospect of a national entitlement in their written and oral evidence, so long as it was not too prescriptive of content.

We feel this is now a vital next step forward for RE. It would need to be broad enough to incorporate the views of all sections of the RE

⁶² Primary RE teacher, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester.

⁶³ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the commission following a survey of members.

community but that is more possible now than at any time in recent history.

Derek Holloway on behalf of the Church of England Education Office, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

139. Those who favoured a national entitlement generally favoured a version that was sufficiently specific to set clear boundaries while offering sufficient openness for schools, multi-academy trusts (MATs) and resource providers to implement the entitlement appropriately for their specific context.
140. In general, those who contributed written and oral evidence did not want a national curriculum or nationally agreed syllabus with detailed programmes of study setting out the content at each Key Stage or year group. Apart from the difficulty of convening a body to write such a syllabus, there was also serious concern about the disproportionate power of entrenched interests and a fear of inappropriate political interference in the content of the subject.

The role of a national entitlement in improving the quality of RE

141. Ofsted found the following weaknesses in the quality of RE in primary schools and Key Stage 3.

In three fifths of the lessons seen, both in primary schools and throughout Key Stage 3, a key weakness was the superficial nature of pupils' subject knowledge and understanding. While pupils had a range of basic factual information about religions, their deeper understanding of the world of religion and belief was weak. For example, as pupils moved through primary and secondary education, inspectors noted that most pupils had had insufficient opportunity to develop:

- an ability to offer informed responses to a range of profound religious, philosophical or ethical questions
- an understanding of the way in which the beliefs, practices, values and ways of life of specific religions and non-religious world views are linked
- an understanding and interpretation of the distinctive nature of religious language
- a deepening understanding of the diverse nature of religion and belief in the contemporary world
- a more sophisticated understanding of the impact, both positive and negative, that religion and belief can have on individuals and society.⁶⁴

64 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

142. Similar weaknesses were found in primary Church of England schools in the *Making a Difference* review of 2014.⁶⁵
143. These are all essential aspects of RE that can often be missed in primary schools and at Key Stage 3. A national entitlement that explicitly references each of these core areas of understanding will help schools to understand what they are aiming for in their teaching of RE.
144. Ofsted also identified, as we mentioned in paragraph 113 above, that one of the possible reasons for poor quality RE is a confusion over purposes. Schools need support to manage a diversity of purposes without falling into confusion.

A clear, consistent understanding of the purpose of RE helps to ensure that teachers understand why and how they should teach the subject. This leads to a more consistent experience for children and young people, as well as a better understanding in society more generally of the reasons why RE remains on our school curriculum. We have not had this clarity of purpose in RE, despite the fact that national curriculum subjects all have a clearly stated ‘purpose of study’.

Gillian Georgiou; Kathryn Wright; Olivia Seymour; Jane Chipperton, written evidence submitted to the Commission

145. Our written and oral evidence gathering has found that despite the perception of confusion, there is much more consensus among subject experts, universities, SACREs, teachers, employers and pupils than might initially be expected. There has, in general, been a consistent message that:
- a. RE should enable pupils to understand the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews, including the interactions between them.
 - b. It should enable them to understand the interactions between religious and non-religious worldviews, individuals and societies, as well as the ways in which worldviews affect and are affected by major social and global issues.
 - c. It should provide space for pupils to develop their own beliefs on questions of meaning, purpose and ethics, in the light of a range of worldviews, and respecting the right of others to differ.
 - d. It should develop pupils’ skills in dialogue and critical reflection, and

⁶⁵ *Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England, Education Division (2014). Making a Difference: a review of Religious Education in Church of England schools.*
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20england%20schools.pdf>

their attitudes of empathy and respect.

- e. It should enable pupils to use appropriate vocabulary to discuss their own and others' beliefs, values and identity. RE is of necessity multidisciplinary, because worldviews encompass the full range of human experience. It draws on religious studies, philosophy, theology, phenomenology, sociology, history, ethics, and also a wider range of disciplines including literary theory, anthropology, psychology and aesthetics.

On the subject of the purpose of RE, it is not wrong to have a collection of purposes: understanding the beliefs and values of those who are different from themselves, developing critical reasoning, developing responses to big questions, developing understanding of the cultural heritage of humanity. The content should be religions and humanism in Britain today. Such a subject should be compulsory.

Andrew Copson on behalf of the British Humanist Association (now Humanists UK), oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

146. Both the Catholic Education Service and the Church of England Education Office emphasised that RE should be an academic discipline in its own right and that it is different from catechesis.

In all schools, RE ought to be an academic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. Therefore, it is to be distinguished from those aspects of the curriculum whose goals are not academic excellence, but rather the formation of character or preparation of pupils for participation in civic life (subjects such as PSHE, citizenship and careers).

Philip Robinson on behalf of the Catholic Education Service, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

RE is a rigorous academic study and that includes a critical evaluation of religious teachings belief and practice.

Derek Holloway on behalf of the Church of England Education Office, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

147. Our proposed national entitlement clarifies the purposes of RE along these lines, recognising the complex and dynamic nature of the subject matter. Again, this will help schools and resource providers to be clear about what they are trying to achieve and to benchmark their content and planning against the entitlement.
148. A national entitlement would also provide a basis for holding to account schools which currently do not fulfil their statutory requirements for the provision of RE.

Recommendations

149. Based on the above evidence and the case for change, the Commission therefore recommends that:
- a. There should be a national entitlement statement for RE which sets out clearly the aims and purpose of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject. A draft statement for consultation is below.
 - b. This entitlement should become normative through non-statutory guidance as early as possible, and should ultimately become statutory, either to supplement or to replace current legislation on agreed syllabuses.
 - c. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character.
 - d. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice.

The National Entitlement for Religious Education

Opposite is the draft text of the proposed national entitlement for Religious Education. This draft is for consultation and we welcome comments on and refinements to the text.

A National Entitlement for RE

RE in schools should enable students to engage in an intelligent and informed way with the ideas, practices and contemporary manifestations of a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. It should enable them to understand how worldviews are inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience. It should prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by enabling them to engage respectfully with people with worldviews different from their own. RE should equip pupils to develop their own beliefs, practices, values and identity in the light of their reflections on the worldviews they have studied. Through their study of worldviews, pupils should develop a lifetime motivation to enquire into questions of meaning and purpose, and to investigate others' worldviews and what they mean for individuals, communities and society. All of this will enable them to become responsible citizens and members of diverse and changing local, national and global communities.

Throughout their period of compulsory schooling, pupils should learn about, understand and engage with:

- a. The diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and ways of life that exist locally, nationally and globally.
- b. The ways in which communities and individuals holding different worldviews interact, change and maintain continuity in different times and contexts and as the surrounding culture changes.
- c. The different ways that people interpret and respond to texts and other sources of authority.
- d. The ways that people communicate their beliefs, experiences, values and identities through verbal and non-verbal means (eg prose, story, poetry, art, music, dance, ritual, architecture).
- e. How people seek moral guidance from religious and non-religious worldviews and how they interpret this guidance in their lives.
- f. The importance of experience, including extra-ordinary experiences, in shaping people's worldviews and how worldviews are used to interpret experience.

- g. The role of religious and non-religious rituals and practices in both creating and expressing experience, beliefs, values and commitments.
- h. The relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions concerning political, public, social and cultural life.
- i. Both the positive and negative exercise of power and influence resulting from people's worldviews.
- j. The important role that worldviews play in providing people with a way of making sense of their lives and in forming their identity.*

As part of a balanced programme aimed at meeting this provision, it is expected that pupils will:

1. Experience meeting and visiting people from their local community from a range of worldviews including those different from their own and that of the school.
2. Develop core skills for researching the beliefs, values and practices of individuals and groups in society.
3. Experience a range of approaches to the study of religions (e.g. phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, textual studies, theology).
4. Engage with questions of meaning and purpose and of the nature of reality raised by the worldviews that they study.
5. Think through and develop a reflective approach to their own personal responses and developing identity and learn to articulate these clearly and coherently while respecting the right of others to differ.
6. Develop the core skills and dispositions of careful listening, critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy and open-mindedness required for making wise judgments.
7. Learn to discuss controversial issues and work with others (including those that they disagree with) with the intention of securing a healthy and peaceful society in the context of significant diversity.

** We are indebted to Barbara Wintersgill, who presented her project on Big Ideas in RE. Her work has informed much of the content of this list.*

Areas for consultation

150. The entitlement is not a national syllabus or curriculum. It is a basic statement of what all pupils are entitled to, whatever type of school they attend. Schools will need guidance and support to translate this entitlement into curriculum planning, particularly in relation to progression. We are still reviewing where this guidance and support will come from. We seek input on what bodies would be best placed to translate the entitlement into detailed programmes of study and how best to support schools to plan their curriculum in line with the entitlement. Several possibilities have been discussed by the Commission so far:
- a. Removing the requirement for local authorities to hold ASCs. In a context where every school will eventually become an academy, this requirement is no longer proportionate for many local authorities and will become even less so over time. However, it might be possible for programmes of study to be developed at regional levels. It would also be possible to include regional universities on this model. A regional system might not provide sufficient support to academies unless they were explicitly included. If the requirement for local authorities to develop a locally agreed syllabus were to be removed, it would not preclude those local authorities that had the resource and expertise to still convene ASCs and develop programmes of study that could be adopted by those schools that chose to, within or outside that local authority.
 - b. Recommending the development of a national set of programmes of study compliant with the entitlement. This may or may not be government-funded. This has the advantage of providing consistency across localities, which was requested by some teachers in the written and oral evidence. However, there are a number of potential difficulties with it. First, there is the vexed question of who develops detailed programmes of study. Second, there is the justified criticism that in the era of a school-led system a nationally agreed set of programmes of study is too rigid and leaves schools insufficient freedom to undertake RE that is appropriate for their pupils and immediate community. Third, there is the question of how to ensure that the syllabus is appropriately independent of political interference. Many of those who gave oral and written evidence were concerned about excessive political interference in the scope and content of RE.
 - c. Leaving the market open for schools, groups of schools, dioceses, SACREs, commercial providers and other relevant groups to write their own programmes of study. This would allow maximum freedom for schools but might not resolve the inequity in provision and quality discussed above. Non-statutory guidance or a range of model programmes of study might also be developed to support relevant groups in writing their own programmes of study.
151. There is likely to be a range of possibilities within these broad categories

and other possibilities that we have not yet considered. We seek views on what would be most helpful to support schools with curriculum planning and ensure that all schools can meet the entitlement effectively.

152. The question also remains as to whether the entitlement statement should replace or supplement the current legislation on agreed syllabuses, which requires that they must ‘reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’ (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2). This legislative statement remains a statement of historical and social fact. Of those who identify themselves as having a religion, the majority are Christian, and Christianity has played a particular role in the history of Great Britain. However, the statement in and of itself does not specify how much time should be spent on any worldview. It also does not include non-religious worldviews. We seek views on whether the entitlement should specify a number and range of worldviews, or a minimum time to be spent on one worldview.
153. We have also discussed whether the name of the subject should be changed, to signify the renewed vision for the subject. It is difficult to find an alternative name that appropriately captures the breadth and depth of the subject as outlined in the entitlement statement. We have discussed a number of options. A small majority of the Commission preferred to call the subject Religion and Ethics (or Religions and Ethics) while others wished either to preserve the current name, or to change its name to Religions and Worldviews or Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (or Philosophy, Religion and Ethics). We seek views on which of these options best captures the nature of the subject outlined in the entitlement. We also seek suggestions on alternative names which fit the entitlement and the renewed vision for the subject.

HOLDING SCHOOLS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RE

The current situation

154. Ofsted no longer inspect individual subjects, nor do they conduct subject reviews. The last RE subject review was in 2013. Between 2014 and 2016, mentions of whether schools are fulfilling their statutory requirement to provide RE for all pupils were infrequent. Recent evidence from NATRE suggests that mentions have increased since 2016 and Ofsted have highlighted cases where schools were not fulfilling their statutory requirements, but they remain fairly isolated.⁶⁶
155. School performance data at primary and secondary do not offer mechanisms for checking whether schools are fulfilling their statutory

⁶⁶ NATRE (2017). *Ofsted are continuing to highlight RE in reports*. Online news article. <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/ofsted-are-continuing-to-highlight-re-in-reports/>

requirement to provide RE for all. Primary SATs cover only Maths, English and Science. Religious Studies GCSE is of course included in school performance tables at Key Stage 4, but there is no way of knowing whether schools provide RE for pupils not taking Religious Studies GCSE and no way to assess the quality of teaching and learning.

156. As stated above, SACREs find it extremely difficult to monitor the provision and quality of RE. They rely on published data, which does not give them the information that they need, or on the goodwill of schools to respond to requests for information. SACREs also have no power to monitor the provision and quality of RE in academies.
157. NATRE regularly conducts surveys of primary and secondary teachers. The most recent primary survey showed that about 10% of schools which responded are not fulfilling their statutory duties.⁶⁷ However, the scale of noncompliance is likely to be greater than this, due to the self-selecting nature of survey respondents. At secondary level, school workforce data can be used to assess how many schools are not fulfilling their statutory duties, and the results of this have been discussed in paragraphs 78–93 above.
158. Therefore, there is currently no robust mechanism for holding schools to account for either the provision or the quality of RE, at primary or secondary.

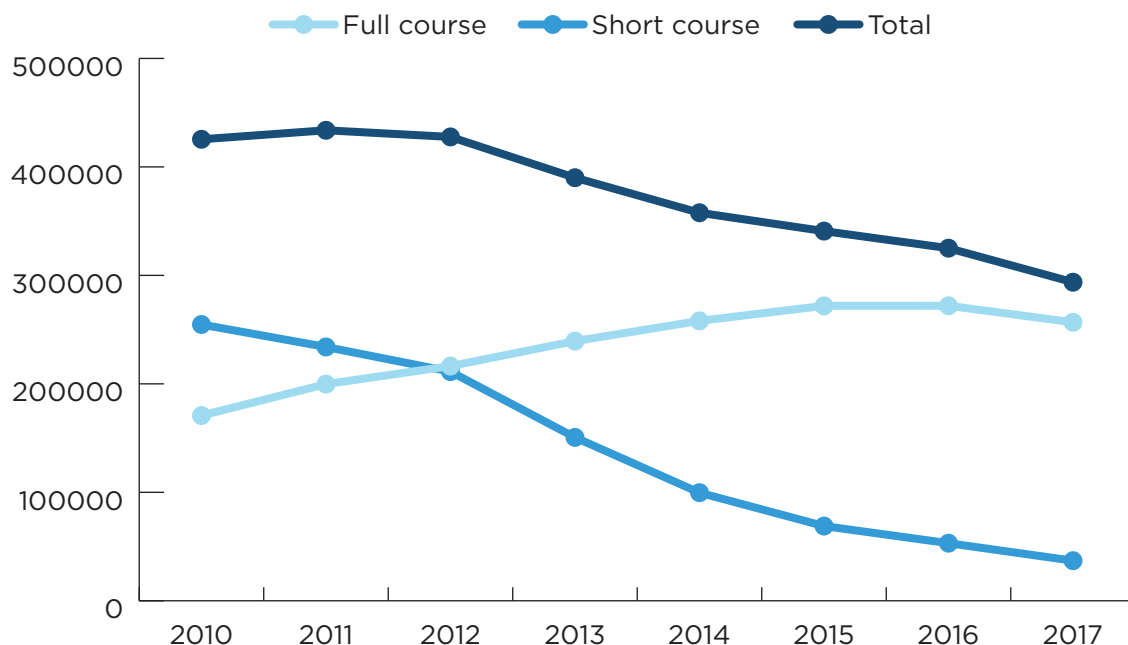
The impact of school performance measures at Key Stage 4

159. Religious Studies GCSE is not included in the EBacc performance measures. However, it is included in category D of Progress 8.
160. Short Course Religious Studies GCSE has been excluded from school performance tables since the 2013/14 performance tables.
161. Entries for Full Course GCSE rose from 170,767 in 2010 to 271,917 in 2015. They stayed almost the same in 2016, at 271,973. Full course GCSE entries in England fell for the first time in 2017, by 5.2%. They continued to rise in Wales, suggesting that the difference in performance measures between England and Wales may have contributed to the decline in GCSE entries in England.
162. Entries for Short Course GCSE plummeted from 254,698 in 2010 to 36,962 in 2017.
163. Total GCSE entries have dropped from 425,465 in 2010 to 293,691 in 2017, a drop of over 130,000, or 31%.⁶⁸

67 NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*. www.natre.org.uk%2Fuploads%2FAdditional%2520Documents%2FNATRE%2520Primary%2520Survey%25202016%2520final.docx&usg=AFQjCNFDWLUicovE8LOQEgZiUHF7fFcAA

68 All examination statistics from <https://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses>

Figure 3: Religious Studies GCSE entries 2010–2017⁶⁹



164. Some schools are attempting to teach Full Course GCSE in the time previously allotted to Short Course (i.e. an hour a week or less), and in many cases starting GCSE in Year 9 to cover the content. We do not yet have evidence on how many schools are doing this.
165. There is increasing disparity of provision between schools of a religious character and schools without a religious character. 14% of academies without a religious character entered no pupils for GCSE Religious Studies, compared to nearly 10% of schools following a locally agreed syllabus and around 2% of schools with a religious character. Over 80% of schools with a religious character entered their whole cohort for GCSE Religious Studies, compared to 40% of academies and schools following a locally agreed syllabus.⁷⁰ A pupil in a school with a religious character is twice as likely to be entered for GCSE Religious Studies as one in a school without a religious character.

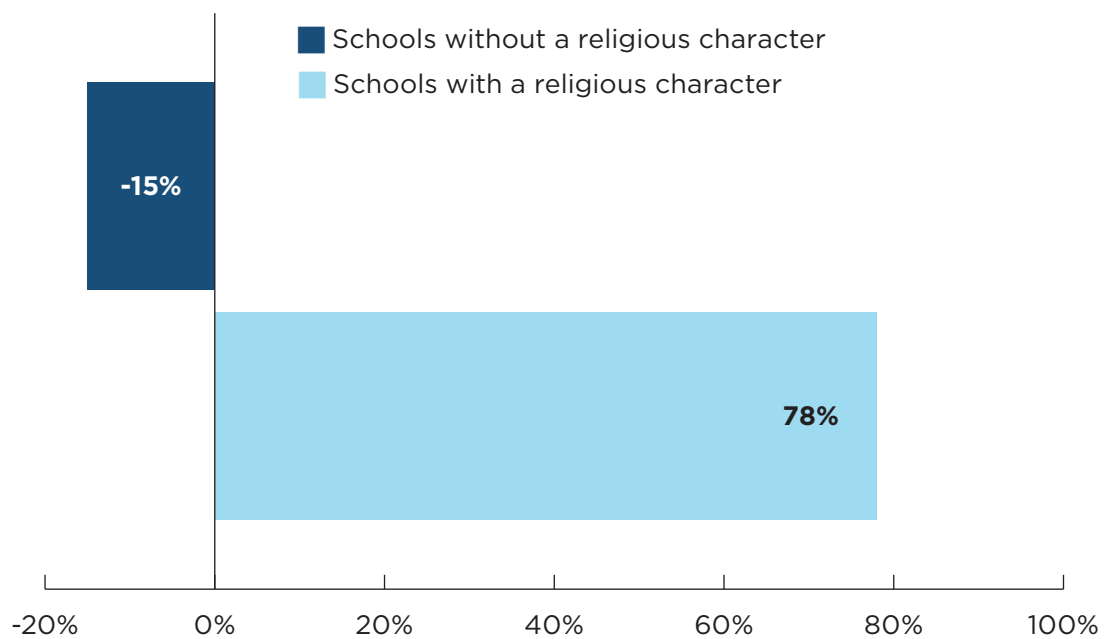
The case for change

166. Performance measures are a key driver of the behaviour of school leaders, teachers, parents and pupils. The rigorous inspection of RE led to improvements in both provision and quality in the period 1992-2010. The introduction of the GCSE Short Course led to pupils and parents valuing the subject more highly at Key Stage 4 during the same time period.

⁶⁹ 2017 figures do not include Isle of Man and Channel Islands (about 1,000 Full Course entries and 900 Short Course).

⁷⁰ RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE, *The State of the Nation* (London, 2017).

Figure 4: Likelihood of being entered for GCSE religious studies in schools with or without a religious character ⁷¹



- 167. Since 2010, changes to subject inspections and school performance measures have reversed some of these improvements in provision and quality, particularly at secondary.
- 168. We currently have less evidence on the impact of changes to inspections and school performance measures on primary schools and we are seeking further evidence on this ahead of the final report.
- 169. Those who contributed written and oral evidence clearly stated that the exclusion of Religious Studies GCSE from the EBacc and of Short Course GCSE from performance measures have led parents, pupils and school leaders to consider that RE is less academically rigorous than other Humanities subjects, and of lower status in general.
- 170. Teachers who contributed oral evidence also stated that more academically able pupils who had chosen Religious Studies as an option were being encouraged by school leaders to switch to subjects that were included in the EBacc.
- 171. There was a consensus among teachers and subject experts that unless something is done, GCSE entries would drop very steeply over the next two to three years. This appears to have already begun in 2017, the first time that GCSE entries for Full Course have dropped since 2002.

⁷¹ Source: calculations based on DfE GCSE entry and pupil cohort data.

172. The Government has made clear that there is currently no intention to add more subjects or pillars to the Ebacc but that RE remains compulsory to Key Stage 5. There is therefore an urgent need to find some way for pupils' learning in RE to be accredited for them as individuals as well as to contribute to school performance measures.

We have considered suggestions to include additional subjects or pillars within the EBacc but have decided that this could reduce pupil choice at GCSE to the point where no other subjects can be studied. Religious education must be taught to all pupils until the end of key stage 5, a qualification (such as GCSE religious studies) should be offered at the end of key stage 4 to accredit pupils' knowledge and understanding. The proportion of pupils in state funded mainstream schools entering a GCSE in religious studies remains high at 47% in 2015/16.

Government response to consultation on the EBacc.
2017⁷²

173. The loss of Short Course GCSE has left schools without a way to credit pupils for their learning in RE unless they take Full Course GCSE. This has made it more difficult in some schools to get engagement in RE from pupils and parents, who do not see the value in subjects at Key Stage 4 unless they are examined. The Government's view that a qualification should be offered at the end of Key Stage 4 opens up the possibility of new qualifications that could be accredited.
174. The lack of accountability for schools and the non-inclusion of GCSE courses in performance measures have contributed to the disparities in provision and quality of RE between schools of a religious character, schools following their locally agreed syllabus, and academies without a religious character.
175. Starting GCSE content in Year 9 when pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to build a foundational understanding of religions and worldviews leads to lower quality RE. The current HMI Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, has stated that starting GCSE in Year 9 is detrimental to pupils' learning and to a broad and balanced curriculum.⁷³
176. Equally, attempting to teach Full Course GCSE in one hour a week leads to superficial learning and pupils failing to understand the world of religion and belief in sufficient depth – an issue identified by Ofsted in 2013.⁷⁴

72 Department for Education (2017). *Implementing the English Baccalaureate. Government consultation response.* http://schoolsweek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Implementing_the_EBacc_Government_Consultation_Response-with-links.pdf

73 *Speech made by Amanda Spielman at the Festival of Education, 23 June 2017.* <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-speech-at-the-festival-of-education>

177. We believe that the lack of accountability for RE contributes to many schools giving it less curriculum time at secondary than other humanities subjects and using teaching assistants to teach it at primary.

The provision made for GCSE in the majority of the secondary schools surveyed failed to provide enough curriculum time for pupils to extend and deepen their learning sufficiently.

The way in which RE was provided in many of the primary schools visited had the effect of isolating the subject from the rest of the curriculum. It led to low-level learning and missed opportunities to support pupils' learning more widely, for example, in literacy.⁷⁵

178. Schools are already required to publish details of their curriculum on their websites. This is essential in holding schools to account for providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

Recommendations

179. The Commission therefore recommends that:
- a. Schools should be required to publish on their website details of how they meet the national entitlement for RE.
 - b. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether or not schools meet the national entitlement for RE, in the light of schools' duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
 - c. The DfE should either monitor, or give SACREs or other approved bodies the power and resources to monitor, the provision and quality of RE in all schools, including free schools, academies and schools of a religious character.
 - d. The government should consider the impact of school performance measures, including the exclusion of RS GCSE from the Ebacc, on GCSE entries and on the provision and quality of RE, and consider reviewing performance measures in the light of the evidence.

Areas for consultation

180. We seek views on the most appropriate mechanisms for holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE at both primary and secondary level.

⁷⁴ Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

⁷⁵ Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

181. We are considering recommending that a revised qualification at Key Stage 4, for those not taking Full Course GCSE RS, be developed. This would need to meet the requirements of the national entitlement for RE and have currency in school performance measures. This qualification would not be compulsory but would count in school performance measures and in individuals' applications for work or further study. We seek views on how effective this would be and what demand there would be for such a qualification.

A RENEWED AND EXPANDED ROLE FOR SACRES

The current situation

182. Each local authority is required by law to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), composed of four groups:
- a. Group A: Christian denominations and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area
 - b. Group B: the Church of England
 - c. Group C: teacher associations
 - d. Group D: the local authority
183. The SACRE is legally separate from the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) and is a permanent body. In practice, ASCs and SACREs generally comprise very similar, if not the same, individuals.
184. The local authority is required to ensure that as far as possible Group A is representative of the proportionate strengths of the denominations and religions in the area.
185. The role of the SACRE is principally to 'advise the local authority on RE given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, and on matters related to its functions, whether in response to a referral from the local authority or as it sees fit'.⁷⁶ SACREs are also required by law to 'publish an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the local authority, broadly describe the nature of that advice, and set out reasons for offering advice on matters not referred to it by the local authority'⁷⁷ and to send a copy of this report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Authority (QCDA). As the QCDA no longer exists, NASACRE advises that SACREs fulfil this last aspect of their legal responsibility by sending a copy to the DfE and one to NASACRE.

⁷⁶ UK Parliament Education Act 1996, Section 391.1(a).

⁷⁷ UK Parliament Education Act 1996, Section 391.6-7.

186. As part of this role, SACREs should:
- a. Monitor the provision and quality of RE taught according to its agreed syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus
 - b. Provide advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus; provide advice to the local authority and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training
 - c. In partnership with its local authority, consider whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered to schools in the implementation of the agreed syllabus, to improve the quality teaching and learning of RE
 - d. Offer advice to the local authority, and through the local authority to schools, concerning how an existing agreed syllabus can be interpreted so as to fit in with a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum.⁷⁸
187. SACREs may choose to co-opt members who are not part of any of the four constituent groups, to represent young people's views, provide educational expertise or represent religious and non-religious views that 'reflect a diverse multi-cultural society'.⁷⁹
188. In decision-making, each of the four constituent groups has one vote. Co-opted members do not vote.
189. SACREs are involved in a range of activities to support the quality of RE in schools. These may include:
- a. Facilitating visits to places of worship for teachers and pupils, through providing recommendations and guidance to schools, organising and sometimes accompanying visits.
 - b. Training faith representatives and community leaders to work with schools.
 - c. Contributing to continuing professional development for teachers, through running conferences and workshops or contributing to teacher network days or in-service training (INSET) days. Many of these are led by professionals such as RE advisers or external consultants.
 - d. Providing resources to support the locally agreed syllabus, including exemplar units of work.

⁷⁸ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) *Non-statutory guidance on Religious Education*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

⁷⁹ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) *Non-statutory guidance on Religious Education*.

- e. Providing resources to support the teaching of RE, including running resource centres, providing artefacts to schools, hosting and publicising relevant exhibitions and local events.
 - f. Presenting to headteachers, governors and the local council to keep RE on the agenda of these different groups.
 - g. Promoting RE through creating competitions and awards, or through events in the local community.⁸⁰
190. In addition, some SACREs already provide support and advice for schools on inclusion for students from diverse faith and belief communities. This includes:
- a. Producing guidance documents on a range of faith and belief related challenges, such as absence due to religious observance, fasting (especially during examinations), the wearing of articles of faith, providing prayer rooms and other frequently asked questions.
 - b. Providing support for specific cases as needed.
 - c. Supporting schools dealing with complaints and queries linked to sensitive issues such as safeguarding, the Prevent agenda and the right to withdraw.⁸¹

The current local system has many flaws but it does mean that a group of people have to take RE seriously in each Local Authority. Many other subjects would love to have this.

Fiona Moss, written evidence submitted to the Commission

191. SACREs also have a statutory duty to monitor the provision and quality of RE. They tend to do this by collating public examination data annually, and some collate comments from Ofsted reports. Many send out surveys to schools and, where there is capacity, some conduct school visits.⁸²
192. The capacity of SACREs to carry out this work is highly variable. A recent survey (2017) of NASACRE members (35 SACRES responded out of 151) highlights the disparity in funding and capacity of different SACREs. Budgets for those SACREs who responded to the survey ranged from none at all (25% of respondents) to over £50,000 per annum (excluding funding for ASCs).⁸³ A very small number of SACRE budgets are higher

⁸⁰ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the commission following their AGM in 2017.

⁸¹ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the commission following their AGM in 2017.

⁸² NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission following a survey of members.

⁸³ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission following a survey of members.

still, including Birmingham with a SACRE/ASC budget of £103,000 for 2017/18.⁸⁴

193. None covered in the NASACRE survey employ full time RE advisers, and the number of days of adviser time bought in range from two to 65 per annum.

194. The 2013 Ofsted report found that:

Many SACRE members have reported deterioration in the quality of professional expertise they receive as well as declining financial support from their local authority. The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) reports that financial pressures make it increasingly difficult for many SACREs to find the expertise and resources to fulfil their statutory duties for RE effectively. A 2012 survey by NASACRE found that an increasing number of SACREs described reduced professional development opportunities in RE, a loss of professional advice and consultant posts for RE in local authorities, and a reduced number of advanced skills teachers for the subject. These were among the major challenges facing the SACREs.

In addition, the loss of publicly funded national support for curriculum development work in RE has further isolated RE from wider changes in education and reduced the support for SACREs in addressing the need for curriculum development work highlighted in the previous Ofsted report.⁸⁵

195. Our written and oral evidence found that the same issues highlighted by Ofsted in 2013 had continued and been further exacerbated by funding cuts and continuing academisation.

196. Some schools which contributed oral evidence felt that SACREs were 'out of date' and they received more effective support from elsewhere, in particular grassroots teacher networks. Some teachers mentioned that schools were not always aware of their locally agreed syllabus or of the services provided by their SACRE.

⁸⁴ Guy Hordern on behalf of Birmingham SACRE, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham.

⁸⁵ Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

The case for change

The role of SACREs in linking schools with communities and promoting positive community relations

197. It is desirable for children and young people to have contact with a diverse range of people from different religious and non-religious communities, so that they can better understand how worldviews, both religious and non-religious, are lived out, and the influence that they have on individuals, communities and societies. The role of SACREs in facilitating this remains crucial.
198. SACREs can play a key role in promoting positive community relations through facilitating meaningful contact between members of different communities and making sure that schools are inclusive places for all.
199. At their best, SACREs are well placed to take on further responsibilities related to promoting positive community relations. They have strong relationships with the local authority, schools and faith and belief communities, and where they work well they promote better community relations.

A survey of SACREs by ap Sion (2014) demonstrated that benefits of SACREs extended beyond those of fulfilling statutory requirements in relation to religious education and collective worship. The survey results indicated that SACREs also carried the added and unintentional benefit of promoting interfaith dialogue and community cohesion, and cautioned that diminishing the role and effectiveness of SACREs (either by taking away the religious education provided by the schools from SACRE control or by weakening the connection between SACREs and the religions and religious leaders within individual local areas) may undermine these particular benefits.

Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU), written evidence submitted to the Commission

200. Of those SACREs which responded to the 2017 NASACRE survey, over 4/5 (28 of 35) would like to play a greater role in promoting community cohesion, interfaith relations and relations between faith and belief communities and wider society, beyond their existing work with schools.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the commission following a survey of members.

Risks to the current effectiveness of SACREs in carrying out their duties, particularly in relation to monitoring RE

201. The effective functioning of SACREs is at serious risk due to cuts to funding and to the impact of academisation.
202. Direct intervention from the DfE can make a big difference to the capacity and resourcing of SACREs and their corresponding ability to carry out their functions. One oral submission claimed that a single letter from Lord Nash highlighting the importance of SACREs enabled some SACREs successfully to request budget increases or reverse planned cuts to funding.⁸⁷
203. The monitoring function of SACREs is increasingly difficult, as the data is not readily available for them to carry out this function. SACREs depend on schools responding to surveys and requests for visits, and often schools which are cause for concern do not engage with SACRE requests.
204. Respondents to the NASACRE survey also stated that the lack of power to compel schools to change their practice undermined the monitoring activity of SACREs.⁸⁸
205. The variability of current SACRE practice, partly due to variability of funding, is a cause for concern and there needs to be greater equality in the capacity of SACREs and the support they receive.

The composition of SACREs

206. There are a number of key stakeholders in RE that are not represented on SACREs and have an equally important role to play in supporting and monitoring good RE. These include universities, teacher networks (not limited to teacher unions) and professional associations, and may also include museums and galleries or arts venues in some localities. Governors, school providers including MAT trustee boards, and parent groups are also not currently represented on SACREs but have important roles in supporting good RE.
207. In addition, the changing patterns of religious affiliation necessitate a review of the composition of faith and belief groups on SACREs. In many cases, representatives of non-religious worldviews already serve on SACREs as co-opted members and make significant positive contributions but are currently unable to vote.
208. We have not yet had sufficient evidence to make an informed judgement on whether Group B should be disbanded and incorporated into Group A.

⁸⁷ *Lat Blaylock, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham.*

⁸⁸ *NASACRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission following a survey of members.*

We seek further evidence on this issue. We recognise the important work done by Church of England dioceses in supporting SACREs, and supporting RE in community schools for which they are not directly responsible. According to oral evidence provided by the Church of England Education Office, the Diocesan RE adviser is the only provider of specialist advice to the SACRE in over 40% of SACREs and the diocesan role is described as ‘significant or greater’ in two thirds of SACREs.

209. The role of SACREs in supporting, monitoring and providing determinations for Collective Worship was outside the scope of enquiry for the Commission on RE. This needs to be considered separately.

Recommendations

210. We intend to consult on all proposed recommendations relating to SACREs.

Areas for consultation

211. We seek views on the following recommendations on the role of SACREs:
- a. The Government should publicly highlight and reaffirm the important role of SACREs in supporting and resourcing RE.
 - b. The Government should consider whether the role of SACREs should be expanded to include a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.
 - c. The Government should consider ways of securing funding to resource SACREs adequately. Options for this may include:
 - i. Ring-fenced funding for SACREs
 - ii. Funding for SACREs from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport or the Department of Communities and Local Government
 - iii. Specifying a minimum amount of funding (perhaps per school or per pupil) to which local authorities must adhere.
 - d. The Government should consider the composition of SACREs and the law should be changed to include representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.
 - e. The Government should publish all SACRE annual reports publicly on a dedicated website.
212. We seek views on what the duties of SACREs should be in relation to promoting good community relations, beyond matters relating to religion and belief in schools.

- 213. We are still considering how the composition of SACREs should be adapted to be fit for purpose in a changed social and educational landscape. In particular, we are considering whether the committee structure should be changed or abolished. We seek views and evidence on this.
- 214. We seek views on which groups and organisations should be represented on SACREs.

THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

The current situation

- 215. As mentioned in paragraph 34 above, the right of parents to withdraw their children from RE and from Collective Worship has been in existence since 1870 and has remained part of the legal settlement in both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts.
- 216. Parents may withdraw their children from some or all of the RE curriculum, without giving a reason. Non-statutory guidance released in 2010 states that the school must not influence the parents' decision but should make sure that parents are informed about the content of the curriculum.⁸⁹
- 217. The law makes provision for parents to make alternative arrangements for children to learn RE in accordance with their parents' wishes.
- 218. The school must supervise the children who are withdrawn from RE but are not required to provide additional teaching or incur extra cost.
- 219. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from teaching RE.

The case for change

Widespread support for an end to the right of withdrawal

- 220. There were strong calls across the written and oral evidence for the right of withdrawal to be abolished – a significant majority of individuals and organisations mentioned this. NATRE, the NAHT and the Church of England – representing three major stakeholders in schools – all called for an end to the right of withdrawal in their written evidence.

NAHT believes that all pupils, in all schools, should experience consistent and high quality Religious Education in order to support the development of understanding, tolerance and respect for religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and viewpoints. In

⁸⁹ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) *Non-statutory guidance on Religious Education*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

order to secure this, we would like to see amendments made to Section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which provides a parental right to remove children from religious education. We believe that a child's right to develop religious tolerance and understanding should be paramount, and that this parental right should be removed.

NAHT, written evidence submitted to the Commission

The NATRE Executive sees no good reason for prolonging the right of parental withdrawal from inclusive RE. If the right of withdrawal is maintained then it should be clarified or modified by guidance to show that it can only be used for genuine reasons of a families' religion or worldview, and not for use selectively (e.g. for reasons motivated by racism or religiously motivated discrimination). Evidence from NATRE's primary survey found that whilst withdrawal from RE is still relatively rare; incidents of this selective withdrawal are increasing.

NATRE, written evidence submitted to the Commission

The right of withdrawal from RE is perhaps the most archaic and outdated aspect of the 1944 Education Act.... [T]he clause gives comfort to those who are breaking the law and seeking to incite religious hatred. Sadly, and dangerously, the clause is now exploited by a range of shall I say 'interest groups' often using a dubious interpretation of human rights legislation. This undermines the need for all children of all backgrounds to receive a broad and balanced curriculum and thwarts efforts to enable all to live well together.

To the detriment of the subject the right of withdrawal perpetuates the myth that RE is confessional in all schools and aligns RE too closely with Collective Worship in the minds of the media and the public. This should be repealed although we would accept that it would be dependent on the development of an agreed national common entitlement statement to RE.

Derek Holloway on behalf of the Church of England Education Office, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

221. We are concerned at the anecdotal evidence here and elsewhere that the right of withdrawal is being used by parents affiliated to certain groups to withdraw children from anything in RE to do with Islam or Muslims, and that this has risen in the wake of recent terrorist activity in Europe. We do not have sufficient evidence about how widespread this is and seek further evidence ahead of the final report.
222. Some pupils were also concerned about the impact of the right of withdrawal on perceptions of RE, and on young people's ability to understand those with different beliefs and values from themselves.

Parents shouldn't be able to withdraw their children from RE. Schools have a duty to protect children from extremism. RE teaches children how to interact with people from different beliefs, and it's a relevant subject and not outdated. It's essential for children to experience different beliefs because it reduces misconceptions and stereotypes. You wouldn't do this in history or French. Parents withdraw pupils from RE for outdated assumptions, for example, they think their family's religious beliefs will be questioned or disregarded. Parents may know their children best but don't know what's best for them. It brings into question the relevance of the subject when we need it more than ever.

Year 10 pupils, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, York

223. Not all of those who contributed written and oral evidence were in favour of ending the right to withdrawal (although the majority were). Most of those who were not in favour of ending the right to withdrawal cited the rights of parents, the inconsistencies of standards in RE, and the implications of the dual system.

There should be no opt-out if the subject were to be reformed to be genuinely inclusive. BHA generally support the human right of parents not to have choices taken away in terms of how they educate their children.

Andrew Copson on behalf of the British Humanist Association, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London

The right to withdraw needs tightening up but abolishing it completely, in the current political climate, would probably be too provocative and likely to cause a backlash.

Mark Chater, written evidence submitted to the Commission

I am against the removal of the right to withdraw. In the first instance this is from a personal political view that dislikes any discussion of removing rights from parents over their children's education. Secondly, while there remain such inconsistencies in the standard of RE across schools, it is important that parents have the right of withdrawal.

Ben Wood, written evidence submitted to the Commission

Legal implications of ending the right of withdrawal

224. Both the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights expressly provide parents with rights in relation to their children's education.

225. Article 2 of the First Protocol to the ECHR provides that:
- ‘No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions’.
226. There are relatively few ECHR cases concerning parental objection to compulsory religious education. The case of *Folgero v Norway* (2007) remains the leading case, summing up the overall approach. In this case, Norway had introduced a compulsory course which sought to provide an integrated approach to the study of religion, philosophy and ethics in a non-doctrinal fashion but which reflected the Christian, and Lutheran, preponderance and cultural heritage of the country. The course had two dimensions, knowledge-based and activity-based. The right of withdrawal was available for the activity-based element but not the knowledge-based elements of the course. The legal challenge was from humanist parents who objected to their children’s participation in the course as a whole and sought full withdrawal from the course.
227. The Court was clear that in order for such a compulsory course to be acceptable its content has to be delivered, ‘in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner’. This derives from older caselaw and is well established. If the material is not considered to be delivered in an ‘objective, critical and pluralistic manner’, then the adequacy of arrangements for withdrawal needs to be considered.
228. In the *Folgero* case it was decided that the content was not delivered in such a fashion, and that arrangements for withdrawal were inadequate, because it was, in the view of the majority, not possible to separate out participation in activities from the transmission of knowledge (ie it should have been possible to withdraw from the whole subject), and the practical arrangements for requesting withdrawal were flawed.
229. It should be noted that the judgement focused on the manner of delivery, not merely the content. One could therefore argue that it is not sufficient for the curriculum to be ‘objective, critical and pluralistic’ – it must also be delivered that way in every school.
230. The Court undertook a highly detailed examination of the curriculum in order to determine whether it was ‘objective, critical and pluralistic’ – and the judges were divided 9-8 on this issue. This highlights how difficult it is to establish whether a curriculum is ‘objective, critical and pluralistic.’
231. In our current system, and indeed under a system in which there is a national entitlement but not a prescriptive national curriculum, the detailed content of the subject is developed by individual schools in many cases. In addition, as the court judgement considered the manner of delivery as well as the content, this would also be at the level of the

individual school.

232. This would result in the possibility of legal challenge, up to the ECHR itself, of each and every curriculum, very likely at the level of individual schools, and, given the likely variations in them and the varied interests of potential complainant parents, it is unlikely that any one decision would be considered definitive. A similar situation has already arisen with challenges to school uniform policies set locally.
233. The case of *Zengin v Turkey*, 2007, shows how difficult it is to be compliant with the ECHR and the requirement that RE be 'objective, critical and pluralistic.' In this case, only Christians and Jews, but not Alevi, were allowed to withdraw from religious instruction, which focused on Sunni Islam. The legal challenge from Alevi parents was successful because the court felt that the course was not objective, in that it did not include teaching about the Alevi interpretation of Islam.
234. Further complexity surrounds the involvement of groups representing religious and non-religious worldviews in devising the curriculum. If such groups are involved in devising the curriculum, and there is no right of withdrawal, it may make it easier for there to be legal challenges as to whether the curriculum is 'objective.' Even if ASCs were to be removed, groups representing religious and non-religious worldviews still develop resources, and may still develop curriculum frameworks that could be used by schools.
235. The Commission intends to discuss these issues further ahead of the final report, but it can be seen from this brief survey of the legal issues that removing the right of withdrawal would be very difficult, and has far-reaching implications for how the curriculum is developed, and indeed how it is delivered in schools.
236. Given the way that the right of withdrawal is being used in some cases, the Commission is also considering ways in which, if the right of withdrawal cannot be abolished, checks and balances can be put in place to safeguard children from extremism.

Areas for consultation

237. We seek further evidence on the number of pupils being withdrawn from RE, and the reasons given, where these are given, as well as whether the number of cases and reasons given have been changing over time.
238. We seek views on the most effective ways to manage the right of withdrawal in practice.
239. We seek views on whether it is desirable to look to adopt an overall approach to the design of the RE curriculum in every school so that it is sufficiently 'objective, critical and pluralistic' as to render it capable of

being compulsory without the right of withdrawal.

4.2 SUPPORT FOR HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

A National Plan to improve teaching and learning in RE

The current situation

240. According to the most recent Ofsted subject review (2013), the quality of teaching and learning in RE was less than good in six out of ten primary schools and just under half of secondary schools. This compares unfavourably to other humanities subjects such as history.⁹⁰
241. Primary trainee teachers receive on average three hours or fewer of subject-specific training for RE. More recently qualified teachers have received on average fewer hours of training than those trained five or more years ago, according to the most recent NATRE primary survey.⁹¹
242. In a survey of over 800 primary teacher trainees conducted by Bishop Grosseteste University in 2013, 50% of teachers said that they lacked confidence to teach RE.⁹²
243. Primary trainees are unlikely to see good RE in their school placements, given that RE was less than good in six in ten schools visited by Ofsted in 2013.⁹³
244. In the most recent NATRE primary survey some RE was being delivered by a higher level teaching assistant in 50% of schools which responded. In 1 in 10 schools between 25% and 50% of RE is delivered in this way.⁹⁴
245. Bursaries for RE teachers are £9,000 for First Class degree holders and £4,000 for 2:1 degree holders, compared to £25,000 for both for geography and classics.
246. Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses for RE are no longer funded. Funding continues to exist for Subject Knowledge Enhancement in maths, physics, languages, biology, chemistry, computing, English, geography

90 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

91 NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*.
<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

92 *The All Party Parliamentary Group on Education, RE: the truth unmasked – the supply of and support for religious education teachers*, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013;
http://www.mmiweb.org.uk/publications/re/APPG_RETruthUnmasked.pdf

93 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.

94 NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*.

and design and technology.

247. At secondary level, almost two and a half times as many lessons in RE (27.2%) as history (11%) are taught by a teacher with no relevant post A-level qualification⁹⁵. The 2013 Ofsted report referred to this as one of the reasons why RE was good or better in only just over half of the schools observed, as compared to 71% in the most recent report on history (2011).
248. Teachers with other specialisms can enhance RE in secondary schools but require extensive management and support. Schools often lack capacity to support teachers with other specialisms.

The prevalence of Teachers with Other Specialisms (TwOS) in RE teaching can also be seen as something of a constraint. Research suggests that RE suffers more than any other subject (with the possible exception of IT) from being taught by those with no qualification in the subject. As mentioned earlier, working with TwOS can be tremendously rewarding; some of the best teaching in my department is by a PE and an MFL teacher. However, working with TwOS can put a disproportionate and inequitable demand on those planning and managing RE – to be effective they demand time, resourcing and support that may be difficult to find within some schools.

Head of RE, secondary, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Birmingham

The case for change

The impact of training on the quality of teaching and learning

249. There is a clear link between access to training – both ITE and CPD – and the overall effectiveness of the subject. This was made clear in the Ofsted subject review of 2013, and has also been picked up in the oral and written evidence submitted to the Commission. Lack of subject knowledge leads to a lack of confidence to tackle the contentious issues that are the lifeblood of the subject, and can also reinforce misconceptions about religion.

In many of the primary schools visited, the senior leadership or RE subject leader acknowledged that the level of subject expertise among the staff was generally weak. Many of the teachers to whom inspectors spoke did not feel confident about teaching RE. They were often worried they might ‘say the wrong thing’ or were unsure about what they were trying to achieve in RE. Discussion with newly qualified or recently qualified primary teachers confirmed that very few had had any significant RE training during their initial training

⁹⁵ Deborah Weston, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, London.

and sometimes had had little opportunity to teach RE in their placement schools.

Some primary headteachers openly acknowledged that because of a lack of confidence about RE, some staff preferred to take their planning, preparation and assessment time during these lessons, handing responsibility for the subject to a qualified teaching assistant or supply teacher.⁹⁶

250. There is a clear lack of ITE and CPD at both primary and secondary level. In the most recent NATRE primary survey, 1 in 4 respondents during the last year received no training in RE and 60% received less than 1 day. Even more worrying, 40% of respondents reported that others who teach RE in their school received no training (not even a staff meeting) and 87% have received one day or less.⁹⁷
251. RE teachers are required to have in-depth subject knowledge of a wide range of worldviews as well as various disciplinary approaches to the study of religion. Even those with university degrees in Theology or Religious Studies may only have studied one or two worldviews in depth.

Coming from the Learning Department within the Jewish Museum, we regularly come into contact with teachers at both Primary and Secondary levels that feel under qualified to teach about Judaism. This may be due to RE not being their specialism or to not having studied Judaism before but being required to teach it as a second examined religion at GCSE and A Level. This is why we have begun to offer teacher training on Judaism so teachers can improve their knowledge of the faith. There should be further CPD opportunities for teachers who are required to teach faiths that are unknown to them. As religion is such a sensitive subject it is of the utmost importance that it is taught well, without stereotyping or misconceptions and that the variety of practice within religions is stressed.

Jewish Museum, written evidence submitted to the Commission

252. Often teachers lack knowledge of Dharmic traditions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, and this can lead to damaging misconceptions. A lack of teacher expertise leads to teachers ‘shaving off diversity’⁹⁸ or simply not teaching the Dharmic traditions, due to lack of confidence. All of the Hindu and Buddhist contributors to the oral and written evidence made this point. This makes a very strong case for reinstating funded Subject

96 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

97 NATRE (2016). *An Analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*.

<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

98 Jo Backus, oral evidence submitted to the Commission in Exeter.

Knowledge Enhancement courses for teachers during initial training and for more experienced teachers.

There are some specific challenges for Hindus: 1. The poor portrayal of the traditions, as often replicated from one text book to the next. 2. A perception (right or wrong) that schools are opting out of teaching their tradition (and other Eastern or dharmic traditions). 3. The lack of study of a Hindu moral philosophy (in addition to the study of the standard Western approaches, such as Aristotelian virtue ethics, deontology, etc.). Text books and exam question often do little more than second guess what Hindu responses to concrete moral issues might be, and often rather poorly e.g. “Hindus don’t eat meat because they believe they might be eating their (former) grandmother”. One clear challenge is that in answering questions, there is a fear that excellent answers will be marked lower than the bog-standard.

Rasamandala Das, written evidence submitted to the Commission

253. For secondary teachers in particular, access to university researchers is a key component of subject knowledge development. This has become increasingly urgent with the changes to GCSE and A-level.

Exam syllabuses are not coherent documents, they’re lists of bullet points and they need to be made more coherent. You need to be able to teach them coherently and that requires expertise – engagement with university and that undergraduate level of study for teachers. I think there’s a mutual benefit in partnerships with universities. I’ve really benefited from several days listening to great scholars. I haven’t necessarily learned what all the bullet points mean but I have been given underpinning understanding which means I can make a coherent set of lessons.

Secondary teacher, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

254. It has been very clear from pupils’ oral testimony that they value a discrete curriculum subject taught by specialist teachers with the knowledge to both make it engaging and deal with pupils’ questions.

We are lucky to have a specialist teacher who helps us to go deeper with our learning. Your teacher needs to have a good understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Year 5 pupils, oral evidence submitted to the Commission by their teacher, Exeter

Disparities in access to training and CPD across different school types

255. Teachers and subject leaders in schools without a religious character are far less likely to have received any CPD in the past year than those in schools with a religious character, as shown in research conducted by the APPG on Religious Education in 2013. The NATRE primary and secondary surveys in 2015 and 2016 corroborated this evidence.⁹⁹

Figure 5: CPD for RE subject leaders (primary)¹⁰⁰

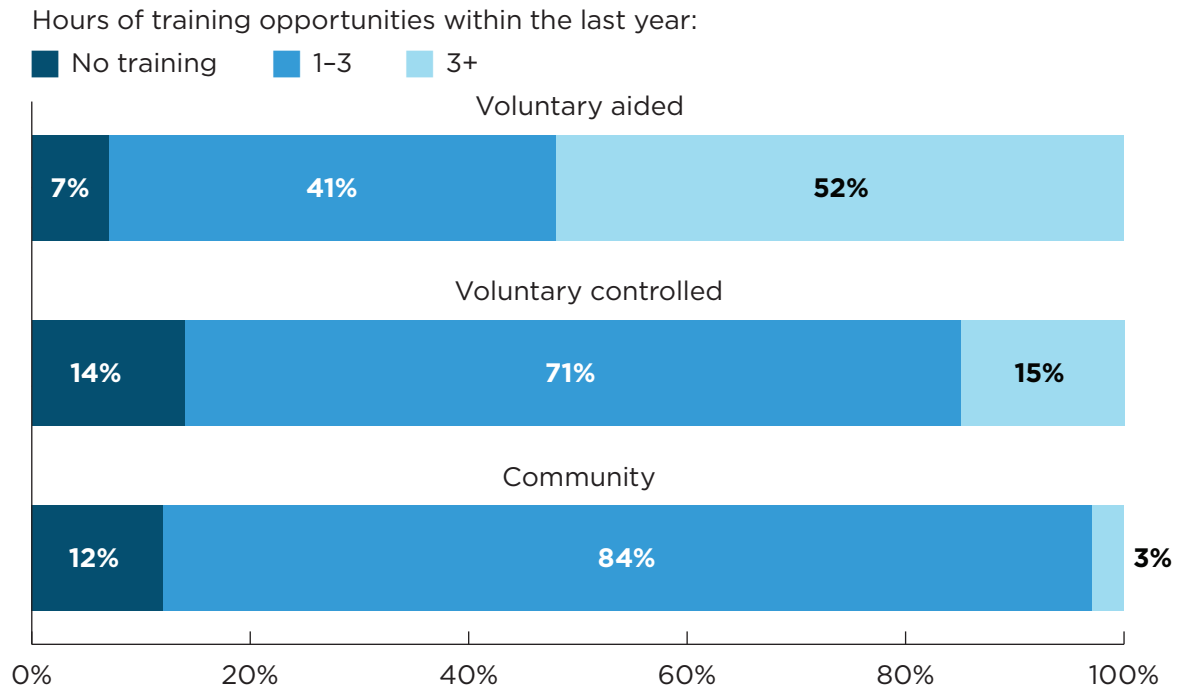
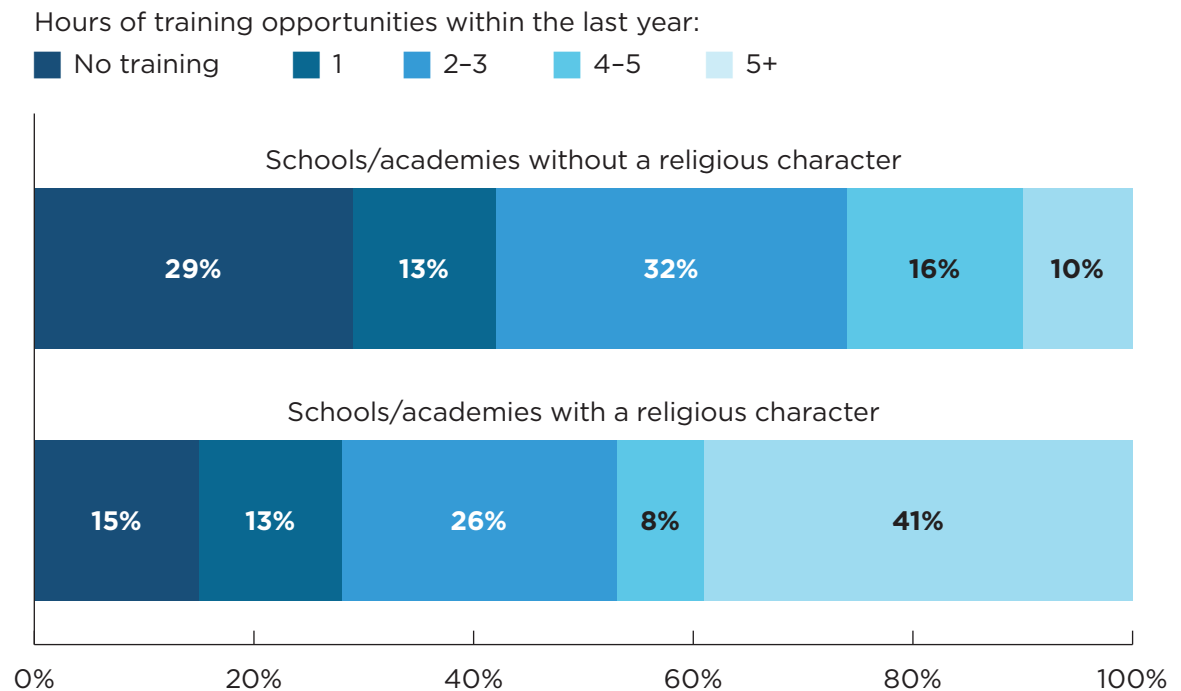


Figure 6: CPD for RE department (secondary)¹⁰¹



256. This may be due to the pressure on schools to focus on those subjects with more currency in performance measures, particularly English and mathematics.

257. These disparities between school types have an impact on teacher retention: Joy Schmack, in her oral evidence to the Commission, cited a class of 35 PGCE students. Just under half found jobs in schools of a

In a class of 35 PGCE students, just under half found jobs in schools of a religious character. Of those in schools without a religious character, only one was still teaching RE full time 10 years later.

religious character while just over half went to schools without a religious character. Of those in schools without a religious character, only one was still teaching RE full time 10 years later. This is a stark contrast to those in schools

of a religious character, who were all still teaching, and half had been promoted to either Head of Department or senior leadership.

258. Teachers reported that they felt isolated, demoralised, deskilled, and unsupported, as a result of the low status of the subject, the ongoing cuts to budgets and curriculum time, and the lack of support and CPD.

Opportunities to enhance the quality of teaching and learning

259. Research relating to religions and worldviews takes place in a number of university departments: Theology and Religious Studies, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and Cognitive Science, as well as religious education research in Education departments. There have been increasing efforts to make this research accessible to teachers, through Culham St Gabriel's *Research for RE* and *RE Today's* publications, as well as the long-standing *British Journal of Religious Education* and the *Journal of Beliefs and Values*.

260. University departments have a great deal to offer to schools and teachers, but their own accountability systems make it difficult for staff to engage with the teaching profession.

Some awareness-raising needs to be done amongst university departments, but in fairness to them, the demands of REF and TEF [the Research and Teaching Excellence Frameworks] are not conducive to any kind of engagement with schools. It's hard to get

99 All NATRE surveys can be found at <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/>

100 The All Party Parliamentary Group on Education, *RE: the truth unmasked - the supply of and support for religious education teachers*, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013.

http://www.mmiweb.org.uk/publications/re/APPG_RETruthUnmasked.pdf

101 The All Party Parliamentary Group on Education, *RE: the truth unmasked - the supply of and support for religious education teachers*, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013.

http://www.mmiweb.org.uk/publications/re/APPG_RETruthUnmasked.pdf

staff to help with teacher days – they do it but it’s at a cost to their career and to the department. It’s more than just recruitment – we have a moral responsibility because we have got that resource there to pay attention to what goes on in schools and to do what we can to assist.

Wendy Dossett, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

261. Written evidence submitted by Rob Freathy discussed the RE-searchers project, a successful and influential example of school-university collaboration exploring the use of different disciplines and methodologies in RE at Key Stage 2.¹⁰²
262. Another example of school/university collaboration on research is a joint initiative, by NATRE and the University of Bristol, researching best ways of promoting community relations within RE lessons. The project is investigating whether ‘Contact Theory’ could be applied usefully to the RE setting.
263. Teachers who gave oral evidence valued being able to access university lecturers and researchers in areas relevant to RE within Education, Theology and Religious Studies and other related disciplines.¹⁰³
264. One of the key sources of training and support for teachers of RE has, in the past, been professional local RE advisers. The capacity of local authorities to provide this has been diminished. The lack of support for RE has been detrimental to the quality of teaching and learning. This was reinforced by teachers and advisers who contributed oral evidence as well as in previous Ofsted reports.

Just having a national curriculum for history has not ensured good education in history in primary school – what has made a difference is having an adviser networking.

Pat Hannam, oral evidence submitted to the Commission

In the majority of cases, this [the quality of training provision] was directly linked to the capacity of the local authority to provide such training and support. In nearly every case where such support was not available, it had a direct and negative impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and subject leadership. RE was generally better where the locally agreed syllabus was well conceived with clear accompanying guidance, but too often the capacity of local authorities to provide this support was diminishing.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Rob Freathy, written evidence submitted to the Commission. More information can be found at <http://www.reonline.org.uk/re-searchers/>

¹⁰³ Ben Wood on behalf of NATRE, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester.

I can't support schools the way I want to. I see my role as support, because a lot of teachers aren't confident teaching RE – it's okay to challenge, it's okay to do drama, sing, be creative, make paper plates etc. My children love it.

Primary teacher with an unpaid role supporting other schools, oral evidence submitted to the Commission, Manchester

265. The lack of good local advice and support creates even more of a disparity between schools of a religious character and schools without a religious character. Schools of a religious character have far greater access to specialist advice. Church of England diocesan RE advisers do support schools without a religious character as far as they can, filling this vital gap, but it places a disproportionate burden on them.
266. Grass-roots networks have had a strong positive impact on teacher subject knowledge, skill and confidence. These networks are sometimes funded by charitable foundations. If not, then they are completely unfunded and rely entirely on the goodwill of members and on in-kind donations from teachers, schools which host meetings, and visiting speakers. They provide very cost-effective CPD, particularly as network meetings are usually held outside of school hours, and therefore carry no costs for supply cover. These networks are all the more effective when they are able to connect teachers with university researchers, professional advisers and SACRE members as well as with each other, but this depends on funding.
267. We seek further evidence on the impact of the Farmington scholarships on teaching and learning in schools.

Recommendations

268. We are considering developing a National Plan for developing teaching and learning in RE, along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education. This plan is likely to include the following recommendations:
- a. A minimum of 12 hours should be devoted to RE in all primary ITE courses.
 - b. Leading schools for RE should be identified and all primary trainees should be given the opportunity to observe RE teaching in such a school.
 - c. Include under the Teachers' Standards, part 1, section 3 (Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge), the requirement that

104 Ofsted (2013). *Religious Education: Realising the potential*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-realising-the-potential>

teachers ‘demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews where necessary.’

- d. Restore funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement courses for those applying to teach RE and for serving teachers of RE without a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject.
- e. Restore parity of bursaries for RE with those for other shortage subjects.
- f. The government and relevant funding bodies should consider how funding of grassroots teacher networks can be made more sustainable.
- g. SACREs and local authorities should review existing good practice in developing and sustaining these grassroots networks and start their own if such a network does not exist in their local area.
- h. University performance measures should be updated to credit universities for their engagement with schools, including the provision of CPD and resource materials.
- i. University staff conducting research in areas related to RE should be encouraged to contribute to grassroots networks, lead teacher development days, develop resource materials or become SACRE members. This may provide opportunities for them to demonstrate the impact of their research or increase student recruitment.

Areas for consultation

- 269. We seek views on what should be included in the National Plan for RE, beyond the recommendations set out above.
- 270. We seek views on how the National Plan might best be implemented.
- 271. There are increasing expectations on teachers to be engaged with research, by keeping up to date with published research at minimum, and where possible by engaging in action research, lesson study and other forms of practitioner research. We seek views on the kinds of research which would be most helpful for RE teachers to engage with, and what mechanisms would support this.

SECTION 5

NEXT STEPS

5.1 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AHEAD OF THE FINAL REPORT

272. We intend to have an extensive consultation process on the report, including the recommendations, areas for consultation, and any gaps or further issues to address in the final report.
- a. An online consultation process will run from mid-October to mid-December 2017. Please keep an eye on www.commissiononre.org.uk or the @CommissionOnRE twitter account (<https://twitter.com/CommissionOnRE>) as details of the consultation will be publicised here, as well as via the RE Council's member organisations.
 - b. A consultation event will take place in late November or early December 2017. Further details of this event will be publicised in due course.
 - c. You are welcome to email your views to evidence@commissiononre.org.uk throughout the next year up until the publication of the final report.
273. We are looking for school case studies around the enablers to high quality RE:
- i. Subject expertise and its impact on teaching and learning
 - ii. Support from school leaders and what this looks like when it's done well, as well as its impact on teaching and learning
 - iii. Professional development networks and their impact on teaching and learning and particularly on the experience of pupils
 - iv. How schools have made best use of local faith and belief communities.
274. We are also looking for school case studies around the barriers to high quality RE:
- i. The impact of school performance measures
 - ii. Lack of specialist teachers
 - iii. Low teacher confidence

- iv. Lack of support from school leaders.
- 275. We are also looking for case studies of good professional support from SACREs and cases where lack of SACRE support has had negative impact.
- 276. Please submit all case studies via the online consultation process when it opens, or by email to evidence@commissiononre.org.uk after the consultation process has closed.
- 277. Commissioners will be able to make limited further visits to schools, professional bodies and SACREs.
- 278. The final report will contain details of the consultation and our responses to the consultation. We will not be publishing a separate consultation response.

5.2 KEY AREAS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION AHEAD OF THE FINAL REPORT

- 279. The Commissioners have identified a number of areas for further discussion ahead of the final report. These include the areas for consultation we have identified above:
 - a. The implications of the 'dual system' for RE, in terms of the purposes of RE as well as the legal and structural arrangements, particularly in the light of the proposed national entitlement.
 - b. Who should provide detailed curriculum guidance, including programmes of study, based on the proposed national entitlement.
 - c. What the role of SACREs should be.
 - d. The state of the subject at primary level and specific recommendations for improving it.
 - e. Improving the quality of teaching and learning – further discussion on the suggested National Plan.
 - f. The right of withdrawal and how to proceed in the face of the complexities identified in this report.

APPENDIX 1: EVIDENCE RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION

RESPONSES TO THE WRITTEN CALL FOR EVIDENCE

2,245 responses were received through the web-based call for evidence. Of the 2,245 responses received, 862 exited the survey without answering any of the substantive questions. Once duplicates were removed, there were 1,377 responses that were analysed. Of the 1,377 responses, 190 came from organisations (just under 14%). Many of the individual responses came from those working in particular organisations with an interest in RE, but did not claim to be answering on behalf of those organisations.

Of the organisational responses, 115 were from schools. This included 74 primary schools and 31 secondary schools, along with 10 belonging to other configurations (e.g. all-through, middle, or prep).

98 schools were of a religious character and 17 were not. 59 were Catholic, 33 Church of England, 6 were other faith schools.

56 responses were from religious groups. Defining an organisation as a 'religious group' can be a subjective exercise. We have taken any organisation that includes a specific religious position as part of its identity as a 'religious group', e.g. the Association of Christian Teachers has been defined as a religious group, whereas the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) has been defined as a professional body. This is not to deny that members of the Association of Christian Teachers are themselves professionals, nor that the personal religious position of members of NATRE will have an impact on their professional work. Of these religious groups, 44 were Christian. There were 3 Hindu groups, 2 Jewish groups, 2 Jain groups, 1 Muslim group, 1 Buddhist group, and 1 Baha'i group. In addition, there was 1 response from an organisation representing non-religious views.

9 SACREs submitted evidence, along with evidence from the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). 6 further professional bodies submitted evidence including NATRE, NAHT and the Federation of RE Centres.

In addition, we have received 49 written responses that were submitted directly, outside the confines of the online call for evidence. These were either received by email to evidence@commissiononre.org.uk, or from the submission facility on the Commission website. These included a mixture of submissions on behalf of individuals and organisations. As with the responses from organisations to the formal online call for evidence, some came from professional bodies, some from SACRES and some from religious groups (and one came from a non-religious group).

Schools that responded to the call for evidence

Names of all individuals and organisations have been left unedited: they appear as submitted online

Philip Robinson	Aldro School
Kathryn Humphrey	All Saints Catholic School York
Jane Yates	Armathwaite Community Primary School
Penny Watkin	Barlow Church of England Primary School
Luke Angell	Bath Community Academy
Anja Webb-Ingall	Benington Primary School
Catherine Horton	Blessed Mother Teresa's Catholic Primary School
Luisa Maylard-Mason	Blessed Robert Widmerpool Primary School
Richard Smith	Bristol Grammar School Philosophy, Religion and Ethics Department
FIONA TODD	Bunbury Aldersey & St Oswald's
Hilary Alcock	Buntingsdale Primary School and Nursery
Julie Warburton	Cardinal Newman Catholic High School
Sandra Mallon	Cardinal Newman Catholic School Coventry
Mrs Sarah Boyle	Cardinal Newman School Coventry
Christina Stewardson	Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School
Rose Magill	Charters School
Mike Madden	Chatsmore CHS
Sue Beckett	Christ Church CE Primary School
Tracy Johnson	Clayton Hall Academy
Toni Harris	Cranbrook School
julie kirk	Crich Church of England Infant school
J Johnstone	Dame Alice Owen's School
Chris Davies	De Lisle College: A Voluntary Catholic Academy
Kerry Anstee	Devonport High School for Boys
Bridget Knight	Eardisley CE Primary School
K Radford-Rea	Edenham c e primary school
Susan Thorn	Edward Peake CE Middle School
Liz Peachman	Ellison Boulters CE Academy
Caroline Vickers	Emmanuel Christian School Leicester
Alison Gourlay	FBEC
Karin Baker	Fritchley CE Primary School
Chloe Probert	Great Denham Primary School
Morag Flower	Great Torrington Bluecoat C.of E. Primary School
Ahmed Peeperbhai	Green Academy Trust
Ben McArdle	Hagley Catholic High School
Dr Neal Carrier	Hampton School
Weena West	Headington Prep School
Cathryn Clarke	Henry Box School
Simon Brown	Hertswood Academy
Lorna buchanan	Holy Trinity
Timothy Oxley	Holy Trinity Catholic School, Oakely Road, Small Heath, Birmingham, B10 OAX
Jacqui French	Holywell Middle school
Mrs Sally Billam	Hornsea Community Primary School East Yorkshire
Miss Jane Cawthorn	Howden Church of England Infant School
Debbie Lewis	James Allen's Girls' School
Anna Crosby	John Harrison C of E Primary
Nick Seward	Kingham Hill School
Charis Geoghegan	Little Gaddesden School
MO'Sullivan	MOD Schools

Kelvin Gibbs	Mundy Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School
Sue Hart	Netherseal St Peter's C E Primary School
Christine Shasha	Oak Farm Infant school
Christine finnegan	Our lady & st kenelm primary school
Paul Carroll	Our Lady & St Rose of Lima Catholic Primary School
Clare McNally	Our Lady & St. Hubert's Catholic Primary
Kirstie Richards	Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School
Clare van Vliet	Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School
Ben Taylor	Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Primary School
Lauren Rickards	Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School
Angela Pitcher	Our Lady Queen of Heaven RC Primary
christine finnegan	OUR LADY ST KENELM RC PRIMARY
Stephen Oliver	Our Lady's Abingdon
Colette Harris	Painsley Catholic College
Adrian Hawkes	Phoenix Academy
Dorothy Marlow	Ponsbourne St. Mary's School
K Cox	Primary school
Stephanie Mcloughlin	Primary School
Jo Galloway	Radlett Lodge Schoo
Julie Ashwell	Raynsford Church of England Academy
Rachel Hames	Richard Hill Church of England Primary School
ELIZABETH O'CONNOR	Saint Augustine's Catholic High School, Redditch
Julie Sedgley	Saint Francis Catholic Primary
Mrs Ann King	Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School
Therese Langford	School within Birmingham Doicese
kerry shilling	Selborne Primary School
Lisa Huphries	Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
Shereen ahmed	Smiths wood sports college
H Webb	Spalding Primary School
Jenny Byrne	SS Peter and Paul Catholic Primary Academy & Nursery
David Jobburns	St . Joseph's Catholic Primary School Rugeley
Mrs Ruth Vayro	St Ambrose RC Primary School
John Clapham	St Andrew's CE Primary School
Judy King	St Andrew's CE Primary School Much Hadham
Ian Crawford	St Andrews CofE Junior School, Hadfield
Susannah Hunt	St Andrew's Lower School
Michael Walters	St Anselm's Catholic School
Tamsin Davis	St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Wolverhampton
Lisa Machin	St Augustine's Catholic Academy
Sarah Rayson	St Bartholomew's C of E Academy
nicholas gibson	st benedicts catholic high school
Emma Paton	St Bernard's RC Primary School
Andy Lewis	St Bonaventure's School, Forest Gate
Krystyna Bickley	St Catherine of Siena Academy
Ann Marie Owen	St Clare's Primary School
Patricia Opalko	St Edmund Champion Catholic Primary School Maidenhead
Louise Flanagan	St Edwards catholic primary
Louise Flanagan	St Edwards Catholic Primary Coleshill
Michelle Walsh	St Elizabeths Catholic Primary School
Peter Burke	St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School
Dawn Farmer	St George and St Martin
Louise Norris	St George's CE Primary School
David Hird	St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

Fiona Leyshon	St Giles CE Primary School Killamarsh
Catherine Craig	St Godric's RC Primary School
NEIL SPENCER	st hilda's church of England High School
James Allen	St Joachims School
Theresa Madden	St John Fisher Catholic College
Janette Turner	St John Fisher Catholic School
Paul Reid	St John the Baptist CE Primary School
Veronica Gosling	St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
Debbie Peskett	St Johns Academy
John Morgan	St John's College, Cardiff - 68741
Anita Gallagher	St Joseph's Camberwell Catholic Schools' Federation
Paula Lowry	St Joseph's Catholic and C of E Parimary
Paula Nudd	St Lawrence VA Cof E Lower School NN10 9LL
Sarah Nankivell	St Mary and StJohnSchool
Owen Finnegan	St Mary's Catholic Primary School STUDLEY
Isobel Vassallo	St Mary's Beckenham
Matt Rebbitt	St Mary's Catholic High School, Croydon
Stephen Breeze	St Marys Catholic Primary School, Cannock
Mary Lynch	St Nicholas RC Primary School
Sarah Smith	St Peter & St Paul CE Primary School
Colleen Owen	St Peter's Catholic Primary School
Richard Cunningham	St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Waterlooville
Ann Gunn	St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School
Nathan Price	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
Diane	St Teresa's RC Primary School
MARTINA MORAN	ST THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL
Mr F Waugh	St Thomas More Catholic Academy
Sarah Hatfield	St Thomas More Catholic School
Carl Mclver	St Willibrord's RC Primary
Graham Cotter	St. Andrew's Primary School, Buckland Monachorum.
Sue Rolfe	St. Andrew's VC Lower School
Marie Clark	St. Anne's C of E Primary
Deirdre Godsall	St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Cardiff
Barbara Meaney	St. Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle School
Alicia Bullock	St. Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School
Mandy Brown	St. George's C.E. (V.A.) Primary School
Jennie Molloy	St. James' Junior School, Derby
Roger Averis	St. John's CE Primary School - BELPER - Derbyshire
Louise Stephens	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary
Yvonne Wozniak	St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, SW15 2 QD
James Salt	St. Joseph's Preparatory School
Mrs Grainne Davies	St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School
Claire Speakman	St.alban's RC Primary
Catherine Amos	St.Mary's the Mount School
Steve Deadman	St.Patricks Primary School Southampton
RICHARD BAKER	ST.WILFRID'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Melodie Harmer	Stourport High School and 6th form centre
Claire Whalley	Sunning Hill Primary School
Sue Pimlott	Sutterton Fourfields Primary School
steven meredith	tarvin primary school
Anne Green	The Faber Catholic Primary School
Anne Parr	The Federation of St George's with Our Lady and St Peter RC Primary School
Giles Mercer	The governors of St John's Catholic Primary School, Bath

LIZ	THUNDRIDGE SCHOOL
Liz Collins	Toddington St George C of E School
Amy Abbott	Tring School
Amy Abbott	Tring School
Clare Porter	Trinity Academy
Trudie Pabor	Trinity Catholic School
Leondre Douglas	Twyford Church of England High School
Helen Simms	Uffington Church of England Primary School
Rebecca Harvey	Walter Evans CE Primary School
Kate Markham	Well Green Primary School
sheila Anstey	welwyn st marys primary school
Andrew Watkinson-Trim	West Buckland School
Alison Gooderson	Weston CE Primary school
Helen Mancini	Weston on Trent Primary School
Nick Newitt	Weston St Mary CE Primary School
Ruth Maxwell	Whipton Barton Junior School

Organisations that responded to the call for evidence

Names of all individuals and organisations have been left unedited: they appear as submitted online

Wendy Dossett	A small group within TRS-UK - does not necessarily reflect the views of the full membership
Graham Nicholls	Affinity
Irfan Malik	Ahmadiyya Muslim Association
Yousif	Al-Khoei Foundation
Rev Desmond Seddon	Archdiocese of Liverpool
Clive Ireson	Association of Christian Teachers
Paul Spear	Association of Grace Baptist Churches South East
Charles Baily	Bedfordshire Humanists
Mike Otter	Bible Society
Fr Jonathan Veasey	Birmingham Diocesan Education Service
Guy HORDERN	Birmingham SACRE
Dawn Waterman	Board of Deputies of British Jews
Dr D Corrywright	British Association for the Study of Religions
Victor Sulaiman	CAC Reformation Chapel Intl
Malcolm Edwards	Carmel Baptist Church, Pontlliw, Swansea
Father Bernard Sixtus	Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff
Vincent Adukor	Central Lyceum of ICGC
Mame kate	Charity organisation
Ebenezer Mogaji	Christ Apostolic Church -east of Luton
Peter Oguntimihin	Christ Apostolic Church Victory Centre
Andrea Williams	Christian Concern
Barbara Moore	Christian Concern
Sidney Cordle	Christian Peoples Alliance
Peter Sammons	Christian Publications International
Roy Johnson	Christin concern
Me	Church
Julia Lall	Church of England
Derek Holloway	Church of England Education Office AKA The National
Richard Partridge	Corringham Evangelical Church
Emma griffiths	Coventry Cathedral
	Coventry Multi-Faith Forum

Lucy Lambert	Coventry Multi-Faith Forum
Geoff Chapman	Coventry SACRE
Wayne Harris	Creation Resources Trust
Ed Pawson	cross teach trust
Sarah Feist	Devon SACRE
Helen Sage	Diocese of Arundel and Brighton Education Service
Tatiana Wilson	Diocese of Blackburn
Simon Cameron	Diocese of Exeter
Linda Gardner	Diocese of St Asaph Education Department
Richard Buxton	Doncaster Schools Work Trust
George Casley	Ealing Christian Centre
Rev. Stephen Mizzi	Education Religion Culture Ltd
David Patterson	Elim Christian centre Evesham
Lydia Revett	Emmaus Christian Fellowship
Sarah Lane Cawte	Federation of RE Centres
Jay Lakhani	Free Churches Group
Indriyasha Das	Hindu Council UK
Sue Brown	Hinduism Education Services
Harshadray N Sanghrajka	Hinxton Church
Tanuja Shukla	Institute of Jainology
Narayani Dasi	ISKCON Educational Services
Lauren Johnson	ISKCON Educational Services (Bhaktivedanta Manor Branch)
Steve Manion	Jewish Museum London
Marilyn Cowling	Kent SACRE
Paras Mamanian	Kingston upon Hull SACRE
Steve Macfarlane	KOJAIN UK
Gillian Lawson	Langstone Church, Portsmouth
ying chen	Liverpool SACRE
Adrian Lowe	london huaxia christian church
William & Freda Kerr	Love Dudley Churches Network
Sarah Hannafin	Mid-Ulster Christian Helpline & MUCH Publications
Linda Edwards	NAHT
Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf	Narberth Baptist Fellowship
Fiona Moss	NASACRE
Peter Ward	National Association of Teachers of Religious Education NATRE
Stephen Evans	National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers
David Quinn	National Secular Society
Paul	Nottingham Diocese
Steve Beegoo	Our Lady & St Rose of Lima Catholic Primary School
William Bernard Johnson	Oxfordshire Community Churches - Education
Alison Chevassut	Private submission thus unable publish organisation
Celia Morgan	RE Inspired
Cathy Lightowler	Redland Education Centre
Molly Sutherland	REonDemand school workshops
Elizabeth Morgan	Resurrected Life Ministries
Daniella Fetuga-Joensuu	RS teachers of Group 86
Andrew Rickett	SACRE Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea
S Whitehouse	Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education and Sarum St Michael Education Charity
Dr. Erica C D Hunter	school
Suzy Pearson	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
Jane Williams	Scripture Union
Chris Davis	self
	Southampton City Mission

Julia Almond	Spiritualists' National Union
PATRICK WARD	sr
Diarmuid Collins	SS de Garabandal' Association, UK
Ann Tuesley	St John the Baptist Church, Fleet Street Coventry
Olly Elliott	St Peter's Church, Harold Wood
mariano marcigaglia	The Buddhist Society
	The Buddhist Society
	The Buddhist Society
Philip Robinson	The Catholic Education Service
James Holt	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Jeremy Andrews	The Evangelical Church, Three Legged Cross
Ian Mason	The Gideons International
Derek J Humphrey	The Hockerill Educational Foundation
Barbara Easton	The Methodist Church in Britain
Patrick O'Mara	The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom
Mike Stygal	The Pagan Federation
Ed Pawson	Torbay SACRE
Graham	Trinitarian Bible Society
Richard Dickson	Westhill Endowment Trust
Lindsay Thorne	Worcestershire SACRE
Jill Bird	Wycliffe Baptist church Reading Berks
Sharron Taylor	Yorkshire adn Humber hub group -hull

Individuals who responded to the call for evidence

Names of all individuals and organisations have been left unedited: they appear as submitted online

(Dr.) Cameron Tallach	Andrew Willis	Brian Halliday	Christabel McLean
A Bakare	Andy Bruce	Brian Hammond	Christian Pountain
A J GILL	Angela Rundle	Brian Hunter	Christine Bryant
A. Marshall	Angela Sarjeant	Brian Lucas	Christine Crossley
Abigail Donohoe	Angela Wright	brian parry	Christine Hardy
Abigail Newman	Ann Couper-Johnston	Brian Pocock	Christine Hartley
Adegboyega Oyinloye	Ann Crowe	brian smith	Christine Howard
Adeline Johnton	Ann Farmer	Bridget Jones	Christine Hurst
Adeline Selvaraj	Anna Klosowski	Bridget Whitaker	Christine Martin
Adeyinka Odebade	Annabella Fowler	Bruce Budd	Christopher Arnold
Adrian Cox	Anne Andrews	C Hedman	Christopher Clarke
Agata Dryja	Anne Pringuer	Carl Gale	Christopher
AGHOGHO SIMONE	Anne Simpson	Carol	Cocksworth
LINDSAY	Anne Stockdale	Carol	Christopher King
Ailsa Wright	Anthony Ernest Wilson	Carole Hawkins	Christopher Marchant
Alan Beber	ANTHONY LYON	Carole Leah	Claire
Alan Brook	Anthony Ward	Caroline King	Claire Cole
Alan Jenner	Antonia Tully	Caroline Quinton	Claire Richardson
Alan Palmer	Anya Poole	Cassy Lawton Jenkins	Clare
Alan Scott	Arabella Norton	Cath Milnes	Clare Constant
Albina Kumirova	Arthur Rowe	Catherine Bates	Clare Jackson
Alex Howard	Ash Leighton Plom	Catherine Dyer	Clare nolan
Alexandra Benson	Ashley Dickenson	Catherine Simpson	Clare Pomfret
Alice Colson	Ayo	Catherine Smith	Clare Stafford
Alice Einarsson	Balwinder Farmer	Cathryn Clarke	Clifford Watson
Alice levins	Barbara Farrington	Cathryn Levick-Mason	Clive weston
Alice Littlehailes	Barry Davis	Catriona Card	Cllr Ian Robertson
Alick Lavers	Bathsheba	Celia Morgan	Cllr Phil Davison
Alison Bradley	Beatrice K Newman	Charles	Colin & Gloria Roberts
Alison Carter	Benedicta Emojevbe	Charles and Shirley	Colin Taylor
Alison Davies	Benjamin Erdeaw	Stone	Colin Wilkinson
Alison Down	Benjamin Savjani	Charles Conaghan	Collette Iglinski
Alison Green	Benjamin Wood	Charles Hunter	constantia pennie
Alison Marchant	bernard kelly	Charles Patmore	Corinne Brixton
Alison Smith	Bernice Burton MBE	Charlie Arbuthnot	Corrine Guntrip
Allan Foulds	Beryl Lovett	Charlie Yianoullou	Cris obudo
Allan J Lowe	Beth Grove	Charlotte Cummins	D.Cairns
Amanda Dodd	Bethan Rose	Charlotte Mackie	Dalene Musora
Amanda Martin	Bethany Vellacott	Che Webster	Dan Kelly
Amilcar Formoso	Bill Moore	Cheryll Older	Daniella Fetuga-
Amy Pritchard	Bob Baker	Chris Bales	Joensuu
Andrea Beswick	Bob Day	Chris Cole	Danielle
Andrea Hardisty	Brenda Lord	Chris Edwards	Daphne
Andrew Blench	Brenda Martindale	Chris Ekwonna	Darryll Flint
Andrew edney	Briab Wood	Chris Hawker	Dave Francis
Andrew Maclean	brian	Chris Jewell	Dave Pamphilon
Andrew Ostler	Brian Box	chris moss	dave peddie
ANDREW PETTIGREW	Brian Carlson	Chris Rimmer	David Beckitt
Andrew Price	Brian Ernest Wakeman	Chris Selway	David Bone
Andrew Widdowson	Brian Evans	Chris Wren	David Brock

David Burton	Dr JULian Kennedy	Freya cripps	Heather Molloy
David Clark	Dr Nigel Shield	Funke Oshikoya	Heather Wright
David Clifford	Dr Opinderjit Kaur	Fyaz Fyaz	Helen Anders
David Goodman	Takhar	G C Maynard	Helen hargreaves
David Greer	Dr Philip Meager	G H Bateman	Helen Matter
David Healey	Dr Robert Philip Morris	Gail Eiloart	Helen Shepherd
David Jones	Dr Roger Sewell	Gail Jones	Helena Elliott
David Keen	Dr. Anthony Blunden	Gareth Jones	hermione
David Iennon	Dr. Barry Bird	Garry Cockrill	Hugh Bettles
David Lindsay	DurgaMata Chaudhuri	Gavin Cox	Iain Erskine
David Longworth	E M Lindsay Griffiths	Gavin Skilton	Iain Scott Bainbridge
David Lundie	Edmund Velarde	Geoff Simons	Ian
David Meacock	Edward Turner	George and Rose	Ian Birkin
David Midwinter	Edwin Self	Fenton	Ian Brew
David Morell	Eifion ap Llwyd Dafydd	George Crossley	Ian Hames
David Moreton	Eileen adamson	M.R.S.C.	Ian M. LaRiviere
David Newby	Eileen Gunton	george Nevin	Ian Maclennan
David Nickless	Eilis Moffatt	Gerald Edgecombe	Ian Nicholson
David Perry	Ejiro	Geralde Vincent-	Ian Smith
David Strong	Elaine Goodwin	Bancroft	Irene Davies
DAVID THOMAS	Elaine Murphy-Dunn	Geraldine Rita Corke	Irene FASEYI
David Tyler	Elaine Venning	Gerry Cohen	Irene Longstaff
Davina Attwell	Eleanor	Gerry Williams	Isaiah. Yeboah
Davuid T Ward	Eleanor Garner	Gift F Adu-Gyamfi	Jack Harper
Deborah Crane	Elisabeth Carr	Gill Robins	Jacqueline Bailey
Deborah Gomer	Elizabeth English	Gill Tewkesbury	Jacqueline Cowx
Dee Wheeler	Elizabeth Fermor	Gillian Georgiou;	Jacqueline Smith
Dena Alderson	Elizabeth Frost	Kathryn Wright; Olivia	Jacqui Nelms
Dennis Milns	Elizabeth Gibbins	Seymour; Jane	James Doggrell
Dennis Pedley	Elizabeth Mackenzie	Chipperton	James Dye
Derek John Smith	Ellie Olmer	GILLIAN HOLT	James Goodman
Derek Marshall	Emilie Dana Bruell	Gillian Kingston	james Nicholl
Derek Matthews	Emma Crosley	Gillian Matthews	james Ransom
Derek Smith	Emma Oliver	Gillian Valente	James Stacey
Desmond Bellew	Emma Wheeler	Gina Liliou	Jan Francis
Diane Thomas	Eric Asumang	Glenda	Jan Rzymiski
Dianne white	Eric John Davison	Glenys Sturgess	Jan Benton
Dominic Hughes	Erica Beeden	Gloria Folaranmi	Jane Brooke AREIAC
Donald Fleming	Erin goldbey	Godwin mafi	member
Donna Crookes	Ethel Degui	Gosia Shannon	Jane Chipperton
Donney Samuel	Eueu Ukat	Grace	Jane Mann
Doreen S Taylor	Eugenia Eudo-mitchell	Grace Easmon	Jane Stewart
Dorothy Lenton	Felicity west	graham bridge	Janet Mobbs
Douglas Allen	Fiona Moss	Graham Cooper	Janet Orchard
Douglas Barrett	Foluke	Graham Jennings	Janet Shepherd
Wilkinson	Fr. Paul Fox	gurmit	Janet Smith
Douglas Moore	Fran Morris	Guy Hordern	Janet Vince
Dr Alistair Robertson	Frances Alexander	Guy Rowland	Janet Walch
Dr Anna Sallnow	Frances Benton	Gwyneth Enticott	JaneYelland
Dr David Hill	Frances Speake	GYLLIAN BROWN	janice crittenden
Dr Fiona Macaskill	Francis Frost	Harold Smith	Jasjit Singh
Dr H C Rae	Fred Newell	Hasya Qureshi	Jasparl Grewal
Dr John Etherton	Fred Stainthorpe	Hazel Ward	Jay Dowell
MRCGP	Frederick Asquith	Heather Cale	Jean Allen

Jean Horner	Josee Hawkins Mrs.	Kerry Tomlins	Margaret Saunderson
Jean Obichukwu	Joseph Percy	KEVIN LEYS	Margaret Surrey
Jeff Couzins	josephie Soon	Kevin Sheridan	Maria Stead
Jeffrey Wise	JOY HOWE	Kevin Tuck	Marianne Porter
jennie loach	Joy Schmack	Kim Northwood	mariella whitehead
Jennifer	Judith Acquaye	Kirsty Martindale	Marion Watson
Jennifer Bentley	Judith bradley	Kristian	Mark Boyes
Jennifer Evans	Judith Burcham	Lance Blackwood	Mark Chater
Jennifer Flood	Judith Ellison	Laura Morgan	Mark Neale
Jeremy Burrowes	Judith Emery	Laura Passmore	Mark Tubey
Jeremy Cox	Judith Hamilton-	Laura Watson	Martha joveluro
Jeremy Nash	Johansson	Laurie and Margaret	Martin Harris
Jessica Munden	Judith Longman	James	Martin Thompson
Jill Saxton	Judy Hunt	Laurina Rushworth	Mary Melton
Jim O'Gara	Julia Matthews	LeeAnne Baker	Masha Woollard
Jo Anderson	Julia mason	Leeanne Reid	Matthew Gillman
Jo Coton	Julia StQuintin	Lesley Currie	matthew gregor
Jo Crabtree	Juliana Brimicombe	Lesley P. Humphreys	Matthew Inglis
Jo Wakefield	Julie Miles	Leticia	Matthew Mulvenna
Jo Williams	Juliet Chaplin	Lian Soon DING	Matthew Vince
Joan Davies	JulieViviennr	Liane Pibworth	Matthew Williams
Joan Myers OBE	June Little	Lilian Weatherley	Maurice Bacon
Joanna Hartl	june todd	LINDA BRANT	Maurice Haynes
Joanna haynes	Justin Francis	Linda stockley	Maurice Rogers
Joanna Theophilus	justine Ball	Lindsay Duggan	Mavis Noble
Joanne Hutchinson	Karen	Lizzie McWhirter	Mavis Scott
Joanne Murphy	Karine Dubois-Jones	Loarne Ferguson	Maxine Mauger
Jodi Gray	Karl Gay	Lorraine roles	Meg
Jodie Lomax	Kate Discombe	Lorraine Stimson-Read	melissa hughes
Joe Feely	Katherine France	Louise Bown	Merilyn Morris
John Hallett	Katherine Marston	Louise Mills	Mervyn Bufton
John Barfoot	Katherine Medlicott	Lucia Silva-Clark	Mervyn Shaw
John Clark	Katherine Walcot	Luke Buckley	Michael Arnold
John Deeney	KATHRYN HODKINSON	luvinia bolletta	Michael Askew
john Edwards	Katie Brett	Lydia Revett	Michael Bentley
John Fellows	Katrina	Lynda McLean	Michael Brogden
John Fletcher	Katy McDougall	Lyndsey Simpson	Michael Buckley
John Gordon	Katy Staples	Lynette Gautier	Michael Carter
John Gould MA (Oxon)	Kay James	Lynn Egger	Michael Cooper
Cert Ed (London)	Kea Byer	Lynn hunter	Michael Fawdrey
John Grainger	Keith Blackburn	Lynn Shelley	Michael Fereday
John Holwell	Keith Bowley	M. Anderson	Michael Foster
John Humphrey	Keith Green	m. folkard-Ward	Michael George Jutsum
John King	Keith Miles	Maggie Everett	Michael Jerrom
John Meason	Keith Sharpe	Malc Seaman	Michael Lampard
John Miklausic	Keith Stenner	Malcolm D. Powell	MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN
John Parker	Kemba 5	Mandy	Michael Moir
John Stanyon	Ken Harrow	Marcus Bull	Michael Moyes
John Wainwright	ken johnson	Marcus Rose	Michael Penrose
John Walker	Ken Revie	Margaret Adu-Baah	Michael Petek
John Winlow	Ken Walze	Margaret Hobbs	michael r robertson
jonathan	Kenneth C Williams	Margaret Malcolm	Michael Wilcock
jonathan longstaff	Kenneth Rotter	Margaret Olusegun	Michelle Cockram
Jonathan Story	Kerri mcintosh	Margaret Phillips	

Mick Cull-Dodd	Nigel Steele	Philip Gowland	Robert Dring
Mike Dyce	Nigel Wildish	Philip Head	Robert Harper
Mike Fuller	Nina Cook	Philomena Sanders	Robert Molloy
Mike Gallagher	Nitin Mehta	Phoebe-Lois Otchere	Robert Parsonage
Millie Kwakye	Norma Watson	Pierre Rossouw	Robert Stevenson
Miss Claire Gunnell	Norman Woolcock	Pippa Blizzard	ROBERT WILKINSON
miss Irene raymond	Olufemi Ajayi	Pippa Hadfield	Robert Wood
Modupe Ajayi	Ottilia Mazivanhanga	Prof Maureen	Robin Evans
Modupe Hector-Goma	P	Edmondson	Robin Hardy
Morris Rowlands	P T Raggett	R Winward	Rod Thomas
Mr A N Carlier	P.F.Latham	R. Atkinson-Brown	Roger Aldridge
Mr David Rust	Pamela Draycott	rachael Jackson-Royal	Roger Averis
Mr Eric David Hodges	Pamela Stevens	Rachel Bruins	Roger Butler
Mr Koffi Benjamin	PAMELA TILNEY ELLIS	Rachel Buckby	Roger Grant
Adingra	Pamela Welch	Rachel Knight	Roger Gray
Mr Lat Blaylock	Pat Barker	Rachel Steven	ROGER PALING
Mr Philip Mear	Pat Tweed	Rachel yeboah	Ronald Catchick
Mr R P Dee	Patricia	Raheem Bello	Rosalind Couchman
Mr Terry Allen	Patricia Cox	rami atalla	Rose Mee
Mrs candida clayton	Patricia Hannam	Rasamandala Das	Rosemary Bird
Mrs Carol Lanham	Patrick Hampshire	Ray Graham	Rosemary Langley
MRS CYNTHIA GREEN	Patrick Kearney	Ray White	Rosie Dowler
Mrs G. Clark	Paul Acheaw	Raymond L. Hardway	Roy Moody
Mrs Irene Mary Asquith	Paul Cox	(Dr)	Roy Pope
Mrs Jean Dunning	Paul Kenny	Rebecca Davidge	Rudi Hayward
Mrs Linda Peake	Paul Knight	Rebecca Fitzpatrick	Russell Hargrave
Mrs M Davies	Paul Naughton	Rebecca Swansbury	Russell Herbert
Mrs M Watts	Paul Raj	Rev Peter Hodge	Ruth
Mrs Margaret Pedley	Paul Selby	Rev Richard Bache	Ruth Butler
Mrs pauline semple	Paul Wignall	Rev S c Bazlinton	Ruth Loten
Mrs Ruth Baldwin	Pauline Deards	Rev. & Mrs. Michael &	Ruth MacLean
Mrs Susan Sharman	Pauline Hinton	Barbara Haighton	Ruth Trigg
Mrs Valerie Williams	Pedzisai Esnath	Rev. Jess Stubenbord	Ryan Parker
Mrs. Carol E. Jackson	Penney Humber	Rev'd Martin Oram	Saima Saleh
Mrs. Elizabeth Hitchens	penny thompson	Rev'd Michael Frost	sally carson
Mrs. Lesley Jardine	Pete Duckworth	Revd Nicholas Pye	Sally Smith
N Griffiths	Peter & Rosemary	Rev'd Yvonne Stone	Sally Whitby
naomi martin	Pearson	Rhonda McIlwrath	Samantha Wilson
Nastassia Dhanraj	Peter Bauer	Richard Bowdery	Samuel Kyeremeh
Natalie Nussey	Peter Beynon	Richard Carver	Samuel Topping
Nathan Jelf	PETER BOORMAN	Richard Coupe	Sandra Marr
Neera Vyas	Peter Bourne	richard craigiw	Sandra p lee
Neil	Peter Duncalfe	Richard Cussons	Sandra Provan
Neil Dupres	Peter Fillier	Richard Dickson	Sandra Symonds
Neil Fazackerley	Peter Gray	Richard Goodman	Sara Vallis
Neil McKain	Peter Klemperer	Richard knight	Sarah
Neville & Penny Stevens	Peter Linnekar	Richard Morriss	Sarah Brooks
Nevis	Peter Marynissen	RICHARD SEWELL	Sarah Edmondson
Nic Abery	peter reed	richard silman	sarah evans
Nicholas Applebee	Peter Smith	Richard Stephens	Sarah GLeave
Nicholas sabine	Peter Todd	Richard Worthington	Sarah Payne
Nicole Jeffery	Phil Taylor	Ricky Cattell	Sheila Wood
NIGEL FANCOURT	Philip	RMGale	Shiela E.G.Stone
Nigel Knights Johnson	Philip Boggis	Rob Packard	

Shiela Porter	Sue mcNeill	Thomas Sterling	Vivienne Freeman
Simon farris	Sue Piper	Tim Smith	Vivienne Towse
Sophie Poduval	Sue Strangeway	Tim Watkins	Wayne Buisst
Sophy Cartledge	Susan Betts	Tom Ferguson	Wendy Churchill (Mrs)
Stefanie Tegelaars	susan cuthbert	Toni Moseley	Wendy Prosser
Stephanie Chadwick	Susan Marson	tony	Will Bissett
Stephen Daltry	Susan Mason	Tracie Yebovi	will brooks
Stephen D'Arcy	Susan McCaffery	Tracy Knox	William D
Stephen Spikes	susan ward	Trevor Cooling	WILLIAM JAMES HARPER
Stephen West	Suzanne Box	Trevor Pine	William McCurrie
stephen wood	Suzanne Gamble	Tricia Bailey	William Saunders
steven meredith	Sydney Merriman-Johnson	Ubongabasi Inyang	Y E Nana-Marfo
Steven Vickers	Tanya Charlton	Uel Erwin	Yasen Zhelev
Steven Williams	Tarjinder Gill	Ursula Sutherland	Yemi Ajayi
stuart watson	Theresa Worrall	Vernel Bailey	Yvette Brazier
SUBODH PATEL	Thomas Arthur Dagleish	Vernon Stanbridge	Zoe Hancock
Sue	Thomas Halley	Victor Neill	Zoe Higgins
Sue Hesselwood		Victoria Ann Middleton	?ania M
Sue Lord		Victoria Holland	

Individuals and organisations who submitted evidence by email

Mark Chater	Anne Krisman
Peter Ward, NBRIA	Christine Haddon
Accord Inclusivity Award	Chris Maxwell
Hertfordshire SACRE	Bob Bowie
Jeremy Michaelson, Salford SACRE	Elvis (no surname provided)
Brian Gates, University of Cumbria	Manny Doku
David Pollock	Lat Blaylock
Dr Desmond Rollo Biddulph, The Buddhist Society	David Feasey, St Thomas Canterbury RC Primary School
V Lefort	Mabel Buhari
Christina Cation, Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit	Thomas Shipp
Hampshire SACRE	Janice Laycock
Rasamandala Das, ISKCON Educational Services (National Office)	Guy Hordern MBE, Birmingham SACRE
Brian Richardson	Anne Cleary, Priory School
Peter Butler, Oldham SACRE	Ruth Brew, Open the Book
Richard Robinson	Sid Robbins
Robin Webb	Philip Robinson, Catholic Education Service
LeeAnne Baker	Andrew Copson, Humanists UK (Formerly British Humanist Association)
Peter K Katumba	Andrew Strachan, Torquay Girls' Grammar School
Kate Rayner	Bob Bowie, AULRE
Claire Clinton, Newham SACRE (RE Adviser)	Michael Metcalf
Ben Shapiro	Dr Berry Billingsley
Austin Tiffany, Commission on Religion and Belief in Public Life	Roger Butler
Phil Seaman, Queensmead School	Rob Freathy, University of Exeter
Rachel Thurley	
P Oliver and M Mulcrow	
Jasparl Grewal	
Christopher Devanny	
Adrian John German	

ORAL EVIDENCE RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION

Alice McNeil, Independent School Religious Studies Association and Ampleforth
Allan Hayes
Andrew Copson, Humanists UK (formerly the British Humanist Association)
Andy Lewis, St Bonaventure Catholic Secondary School
Ben Wood, NATRE
Cllr Emma Brennan
Dave Francis
Deborah Weston
Derek Holloway, Church of England Education Office
Dilwyn Hunt
Dr David Lundie, University of St Mark and St John
Dr Dureid Rifai, Cornwall SACRE
Dr Geoff Teece, University of Exeter
Dr James Holt, University of Chester
Dr Moner Ahmed
Dr Patricia Hannam, RE Adviser for Hampshire
Dr Sarah Hall, University of Birmingham
Ed Pawson and Tatiana Wilson
Fiona Moss
Gill Robins, Christians in Education
Guy Hordern, Birmingham SACRE
Jan Lever
Janet Buck and Steve Birkinshaw, Trinity High School
Jenny Lockwood and Lindsay Thorne, UK Bahá'í Community
Jo Backus
John Keast, Cornwall SACRE
Jonathan Saunders, Christian Concern
Joy Schmack
Judith Everington, Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit
Julian Stern, York St John University
Katie Freeman
Lat Blaylock
Linda Rudge
Lisa O'Connor and pupils, Kings Norton Girls' School
Lynsey Wilkinson, Redhill Academy, Nottingham
Mark Chater
Michael Metcalf
Mike McMaster, RE Today
Paul Smalley, NASACRE
Philip Robinson, Catholic Education Service
Professor Brian Gates, University of Cumbria
Pupils, Grey Coat Hospital School
Pupils, King Edward VI High School for Girls
Pupils, Trinity High School
Rachael Jackson-Royal, King Edward VI High School for Girls
Rachel Kemp, Birchfield Primary School
REC Young Ambassadors, Redhill Academy, Nottingham
REC Young Ambassadors, Venerable Bede Academy, Sunderland
Sarah Lane Cawte, Free Church Education Committee
Secondary PGCE RE Students, University of Exeter
Shahana Jabbar, York SACRE
Syed Jaafar Milani, al-Khoei Foundation
Wendy Dossett, University of Chester and TRS-UK

APPENDIX 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

i. Name of Commission:

Commission on Religious Education

ii. The purposes of the Commission:

To review the legal, education and policy frameworks for RE, by a wide-ranging, inclusive and evidence-based process designed to inform policy makers about these areas. The ultimate aim will be to improve the quality and rigour of religious education and its capacity to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

iii. Remit of the Commission:

- To consider the nature, purposes, and scope of religious education
- To identify the enabling factors that currently promote high quality RE, and the barriers that currently limit it
- To identify what changes are needed to ensure the highest quality provision of RE
- To ensure that recommendations focus on realistic and specific proposals aimed at both immediate and long-term implementation in the context of continuing educational reform.

In considering the above 4 tasks, the REC has identified the following areas for the Commission to consider:

- The quality of teaching and learning in RE
- The legal and structural arrangements
- The public and professional profile of the subject
- Recruitment, Initial Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development
- The range of school settings in which RE should be required
- The age range for which RE should be required
- The right to withdraw (parents or carers, pupils and teachers)
- Whether or not there should be a common entitlement in RE, and if so what the entitlement should be

- The REC expects the Commission to make explicit the evidence base for the recommendations they make, and ensure the conceptual clarity of any key terms used.

iv. Parameters of the Commission

The Commission should consider RE in all schools and colleges in England that educate pupils of any age up to 19, irrespective of whether they are mainstream, special or alternative provision, independent or maintained, and of a religious character or not.

5.2.1 The Commission should not consider:

- Admissions policies in schools of a religious character
- Employment of staff on the basis of their religion
- Collective worship.

APPENDIX 3: ABOUT THE COMMISSIONERS

Chair

The Very Rev Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster. Former Chief Education Officer for the Church of England, having previously been Diocesan Director of Education in Blackburn, serving the people of Lancashire. Earlier he had ministered in parishes in London, and before that taught RE at a community comprehensive school in Hull. He chairs the Governors of Westminster School and of Harris Westminster Sixth Form, a free school.

Commissioners

Samira Ahmed, Journalist, broadcaster and Visiting Professor of Journalism at Kingston University. She presents *Front Row* on Radio 4 and *Newswatch* on BBC1 and a range of cultural and religious programmes and documentaries across BBC and Radio. These have included *Something Understood* and *Sunday* on Radio 4 and BBC1's religion and ethics discussion show *Sunday Morning Live*.

Alan Brine, HMI in Ofsted from 2001 to 2014 where he was National Adviser for RE from 2007 to 2014. He is author of many key publications on RE, including the most recent report from Ofsted, *Religious Education: Realising the Potential* (2013) and the key Church of England survey report on RE in Church Schools, *Making a Difference?* (2014). Previously he was a teacher of RE in schools and HE, and County Inspector for RE in Hampshire.

Professor Denise Cush was Head of Study of Religions at Bath Spa University. She specialises in Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and alternative spiritualities, as well as religious education. She has also taught Religious Studies in a sixth form college, and trained both primary and secondary teachers of religious

education. She is deputy editor of the *British Journal of Religious Education*.

Esther Deans MBE, Humanities KS4 Lead at Malmesbury School. She is formerly an initial teacher training Associate Tutor for Bath Spa University and Bristol University. She is a member of the Race Equality in Education steering group in Bristol, Chair of the Stand Against Racism & Inequality and Chair of Bristol SACRE.

Professor Sir Malcolm Evans KCMG OBE, Professor of Public International Law, University of Bristol. He was a member of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion and Belief for ten years and is currently Chair of the United Nations Subcommittee for Prevention of Torture. He is Chair of the governing body of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

Dame Helen Hyde, Former Head of Watford Grammar School for Girls (1987–2016). She is a commissioner on the National Holocaust Commission and she chairs its education work stream. She is a member of the Freedom and Autonomy, National Schools Association (FASNA) board, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a trustee of the Holocaust Education Trust. She is Patron of the Rwandan Sisterhood working with survivors of the genocide and deprived women in Kigali.

Emma Knights, CEO, National Governors' Association. Prior to her appointment to the NGA in 2010 she was joint CEO of the Daycare Trust. Before that, she worked in a number of roles in the voluntary sector, particularly in the Legal Services Commission, Citizens Advice and the Local Government Association.

Juliet Lyal, retired from her role as a teacher at Cunningham Hill Infant School in August 2017, and has extensive experience at junior and infant level. She serves on Hertfordshire SACRE and was on the writing group for its agreed syllabus (2017-22). She has national experience supporting local RE groups, having founded the St Albans RE Teachers Together group and is the primary vice-chair of the NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE). Juliet is a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspector.

Dr Joyce Miller, Associate Fellow in the Religions and Education Research Unit at the University of Warwick (WRERU). In 2007 she retired as Head of Diversity and Cohesion at Education Bradford, prior to which she was a Senior Lecturer in religious studies at the University of Wolverhampton. She taught in secondary schools in Coventry and Northumberland. She is a former Chair of the RE Council, AREIAC, Bradford SACRE and the Schools Linking Network.

Eleanor Nesbitt, Emeritus Professor, University of Warwick. She is an expert in the religious socialisation of young people of Christian, Hindu and Sikh background, and in qualitative research methods. She is author of *Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction* (2nd edition 2016). Between 1986 and 2007 (after briefly teaching RE in India and Coventry), she contributed to the training of secondary RE teachers and non-specialist primary teachers at the University of Warwick. She serves on Coventry SACRE.

Dr Vanessa Ogden, CEO of the Mulberry Schools Trust. Her teaching career covers twenty years of practice in challenging inner-city schools across London and involves work in school improvement. She is a religious education teacher and served on Ealing SACRE. Vanessa is

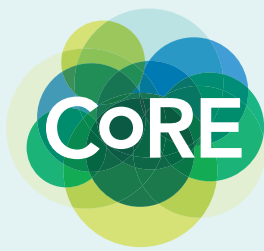
designated a 'National Leader in Education'. She has contributed to curriculum development in RE nationally. She is a Visiting Fellow at UCL Institute of Education and she has a doctorate specialising in education policy and school improvement.

Dr Farid Panjwani, Director, Centre for Research and Evaluation in Muslim Education, UCL Institute of Education. He has published widely on the aims, curriculum and pedagogy of religious education. He has worked on several curriculum and teacher education projects in religious and inter-cultural education. He has a wide range of experience of teaching religious education in formal and non-formal settings. In addition to the UK, he has taught courses in universities in Italy, Canada, Tunisia and Pakistan.

Dr Anthony Towey is Director of the Aquinas Centre for Theological Literacy at St Mary's University, Twickenham. He lectured in Rome, Durham and Birmingham before leading the RE department at Loreto College, Moss Side. He is an Ofqual subject specialist and has assisted in the shaping of the Religious Education Reforms at A-Level and in particular by developing new specifications and resources at GCSE with AQA and Eduqas.

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Commission on Religious Education

Report drafter: Amira Chilvers
Report produced for the Commission on Religious Education
by NCVO-CES

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About you

Thank you for participating in the consultation on the Commission on RE's interim report. The consultation is open until 1 December 2017.

Your responses to the consultation will help inform the Commission's final report in September 2018. We will not be publishing a separate consultation response.

* 1. What is your name?

* 2. Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- As an individual
- On behalf of an organisation

* 3. What is your role? You may have more than one, so please select the most relevant.

4. If you have any other roles that you think are relevant to this consultation, please tick them here.

- Parent
- Teacher
- Inspector, adviser or consultant
- SACRE member
- School leader (assistant, deputy, head teacher, executive head, MAT CEO)
- Governor or MAT trustee
- Member of a faith-based organisation
- Academic - post-doctoral researcher or above
- Other (please specify)

5. Do you consent to your name and organisation being included in the final report?

- Yes
- No

6. May we quote from your responses in the final report, if necessary?

- Yes
- No

7. Did you participate in the initial consultation last year? You may have given written evidence via our survey or by email, or given oral evidence at one of our evidence gathering sessions.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Your data will be stored in a secure location and will only be used by the Commission on RE for the purposes of developing the final report. We will not give your personal data to any third party. The data will be stored by the Commission on RE and by NCVO CES who designed the survey for up to three years before being deleted.

About your school

* 8. Please tell us more about the school that you work in. Which phases of education does it cover?

- Primary
- Secondary
- All-through
- Special
- Other (please specify)

* 9. What type of school is it?

If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in the box below

* 10. Is your school part of a Teaching School Alliance?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If you are a member of a Teaching School Alliance, please enter the name of the Alliance in the box below.

11. Are you a member of any of the following professional organisations?

- NATRE
- ISRSA
- NAHT
- ASCL
- NGA
- Other (please specify)

About your school or college

* 12. Please tell us more about the school or college that you attend, or that your child attends. Which phases of education does it cover?

- Primary
- Secondary
- All-through
- Special
- Sixth form college
- FE college
- Other (please specify)

* 13. What type of school is it?

If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in the box below

About your university

* 14. Which university or college do you attend?

* 15. What degree course are you studying?

Level (eg BA, BEd, MA,
PhD)

Title of degree

Department

* 16. Which SACRE(s) are you a member of?

More about your role

* 17. Which professional organisation(s) are you a member of?

- NATRE
- AULRE
- AREIAC
- NASACRE
- Other (please specify)

* 18. Are you employed by a Local Authority or SACRE as an adviser?

- Yes
- No

If so, which local authority or authorities are you employed by and for how many days each?

* 19. Are you employed by a Church of England or Roman Catholic diocese as an adviser?

- Yes
- No

If so, which diocese(s) are you employed by and for how many days each?

* 20. Which faith-based organisation are you a member of?

* 21. Which university and department do you work in?

University

Department

About your organisation

* 22. What type of organisation are you responding on behalf of?

- School or college
- MAT
- Local authority
- SACRE
- Professional body
- Faith-based organisation
- Other (please specify)

* 23. Please enter the name of your organisation

The National Entitlement for RE

24. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. There should be a national entitlement statement (see below) for RE which sets out clearly the aims and purpose of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. This entitlement should become normative through non-statutory guidance as early as possible, and should ultimately become statutory, either to supplement or to replace current legislation on agreed syllabuses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

Here is the proposed national entitlement for RE:

RE in schools should enable students to engage in an intelligent and informed way with the ideas, practices and contemporary manifestations of a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. It should enable them to understand how worldviews are inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience. It should prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by enabling them to engage respectfully with people with worldviews different from their own. It should equip pupils to develop their own beliefs, practices, values and identity in the light of their reflections on the worldviews they have studied.

Through their study of worldviews, pupils should develop a lifelong motivation to enquire into questions of meaning and purpose, and investigate others' worldviews and what they mean for individuals, communities and society. All of this will enable them to become responsible citizens and members of diverse and changing local, national and global communities.

Throughout their period of compulsory schooling, pupils should learn about, understand and engage with:

- a. the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and ways of life that exist locally, nationally and globally.
- b. the ways in which communities and individuals holding different worldviews interact, change and maintain continuity in different times and contexts and as the surrounding culture changes.
- c. the different ways that people interpret and respond to texts and other sources of authority.
- d. the ways that people communicate their beliefs, experiences, values and identities through verbal and non-verbal means (eg prose, story, poetry, art, music, dance, ritual, architecture).
- e. How people seek moral guidance from religious and non-religious worldviews and how they interpret this guidance in their lives.
- f. the importance of experience, including extra-ordinary experiences, in shaping people's worldviews and how worldviews are used to interpret experience.
- g. the role of religious and non-religious rituals and practices in both creating and expressing experience, beliefs, values and commitments.
- h. the relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions concerning political, public, social and cultural life.
- i. both the positive and negative exercise of power and influence resulting from people's worldviews.
- j. the important role that worldviews play in providing people with a way of making sense of their lives and in forming their identity.

As part of a balanced programme aimed at meeting this provision, it is expected that pupils will:

1. experience meeting and visiting people from their local community from a range of worldviews including those different from their own and that of the school.
2. develop core skills for researching the beliefs, values and practices of individuals and groups in society.
3. experience a range of approaches to the study of religions (e.g. phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, textual studies, theology).
4. engage with questions of meaning and purpose and of the nature of reality raised by the worldviews that they study.
5. think through and develop a reflective approach to their own personal responses and developing identity and learn to articulate these clearly and coherently while respecting the right of others to differ.
6. Develop the core skills and dispositions of careful listening, critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy and openmindedness required for making wise judgments.
7. learn to discuss controversial issues and work with others (including those that they disagree with) with the intention of securing a healthy and peaceful society in the context of significant diversity.

26. Is the above national entitlement at the right level of specificity?

- Too specific and detailed
- About right
- Not specific and detailed enough
- No opinion

Please comment on your response, in particular to explain what should be added or removed.

27. Should the entitlement be accompanied by expected standards of attainment at each Key Stage?

- Yes
- No
- No opinion
- Don't know

Please comment on your response and the reasons that you have chosen it.

28. Please comment further on the national entitlement in the box below.

29. Should the requirement for local authorities to produce locally agreed syllabuses be removed?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- No opinion

Please comment on your answer below

30. If the requirement to produce locally agreed syllabuses were removed, what do you think would happen to SACREs and why?

31. How should the entitlement statement be translated into detailed programmes of study?

- There should be one single national set of programmes of study to apply to all schools.
- Local authorities should continue to be required to produce locally agreed syllabuses as they currently do.
- The market should be left open for schools, groups of schools, dioceses and other relevant providers to produce their own programmes of study.
- There should be a non-statutory national model set of programmes of study and the market should also be left open for other providers to produce their own programmes of study.
- Other (please specify)

32. Please comment further on who should develop programmes of study and how this can best be organised to meet the needs of all schools. Please explain your response to the question above on how the national entitlement should be translated into detailed programmes of study.

33. How should the national entitlement interact with the current statement in legislation that agreed syllabuses must 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2).

- This statement should remain on the statute books and the national entitlement should have the status of non-statutory guidance
- This statement should remain on the statute books and the national entitlement should also become statutory
- This statement should be removed from the statute books and the national entitlement should replace it
- Other - please specify in the comment box
- No opinion
- Don't know

Please comment on the reasons for your choice. If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in this box.

34. Should the entitlement specify a number and range of worldviews?

- No, we should avoid limiting RE to a specific number or range of worldviews
- Yes, it should specify a minimum number of worldviews but nothing further
- Yes, it should specify a minimum number of worldviews and that there should be one Abrahamic worldview, one Dharmic worldview and one non-religious worldview.
- Yes, it should specify a number of worldviews and name particular worldviews that should be studied (please specify).
- Don't know
- Other, please specify in the comment box below.

Please comment on your response in the box below. If you were asked to specify your answer, please do so here.

35. Should the entitlement specify a minimum amount of time to be spent on any one worldview?

- No, a minimum time should not be specified
- Yes, there should be a minimum time specified for one worldview
- Yes, there should be a minimum time specified for more than one worldview
- Yes, and there should also be a maximum time specified
- Don't know

Please comment on your answer below. If you have suggested that there should be a minimum or maximum time, please specify these below.

36. Should the name of the subject be changed? If so, which option would best fit the entitlement statement?

- Don't change it, stick with Religious Education
- Religion and Ethics
- Religions and Ethics
- Religions and Worldviews
- Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
- Philosophy, Religion and Ethics
- Other (please specify)

37. Please explain your reasons for your choice of name.

38. If you have any other comments about the National Entitlement for RE, please enter them in the box below.

Holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE

39. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. Schools should be required to publish on their website details of how they meet the national entitlement for RE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether or not schools meet the national entitlement for RE, in the light of schools' duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The DfE should either monitor, or give SACREs or other approved bodies the power and resources to monitor, the provision and quality of RE in all schools, including free schools, academies and schools of a religious character.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The government should consider the impact of school performance measures, including the exclusion of RS GCSE from the EBacc, on GCSE entries and on the provision and quality of RE, and consider reviewing performance measures in the light of the evidence.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

40. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

41. What are the most effective ways to hold schools to account for the provision and quality of RE, at both primary and secondary levels?

42. Should a revised Key Stage 4 qualification for those not taking GCSE RS be developed? This would need to meet the requirements of the entitlement and have currency in school performance measures.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- No opinion

Please comment on your answer and the reason for your choice.

43. Please add any further comments about holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE in the box below.

--

A renewed and expanded role for SACREs

44. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. The Government should publicly highlight and reaffirm the important role of SACREs in supporting and resourcing RE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The Government should consider whether the role of SACREs should be expanded to include a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The Government should consider ways of securing funding to resource SACREs adequately.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. i. The Government should consider the composition of SACREs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. ii. The law should be changed to include representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The Government should publish all SACRE annual reports publicly on a dedicated website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

45. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

46. Should the role of SACREs be expanded to include promoting good community relations beyond matters of religion and belief in schools?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- No opinion

Please comment on your answer. If you answered yes, what should this role involve?

47. SACREs currently have a committee structure. Should the committee structure be abolished?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- No opinion

Please comment on your answer below.

48. Which groups and organisations should be represented on SACREs? Tick as many as apply.

- The Church of England
- Representatives of other Christian denominations
- Representatives of the other five major religious worldviews commonly studied: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism
- Representatives of smaller religious worldviews
- Representatives of non religious worldviews
- Teacher associations - please specify
- Teachers
- Parents
- School governors
- School leaders
- MAT trustees
- Universities
- NATRE
- AREIAC
- Local heritage sites eg museums
- Other (please specify. Add as many groups/organisations as you wish)

49. If you have any other comments on the role and function of SACREs, please enter them in the box below.

The right of withdrawal

Parents and carers currently have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE. While the majority of those we consulted would like to see an end to the right of withdrawal, the legal implications of this are complex and difficult. Please see the interim report for more information on this.

50. Please comment on the most effective ways to manage the right of withdrawal in practice, given the legal issues discussed in the report.

51. Should the Commission be seeking an approach to RE that is 'objective, critical and pluralistic' enough to be compulsory, without the right of withdrawal?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- No opinion

Please comment on the reasons for your answer choice.

52. If you have any other comments on the right of withdrawal, or any further information about the right of withdrawal as currently practised, please enter them in the box below.

A National Plan for improving teaching and learning in RE

53. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No opinion
a. A minimum of 12 hours should be devoted to RE in all primary initial teacher education (ITE) courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Leading primary schools for RE should be identified and all primary trainees should be given the opportunity to observe RE teaching in such a school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. include under the Teachers' Standards, part 1, section 3 (Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge), the requirement that teachers 'demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews where necessary.'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Restore funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses for those applying to teach RE and for serving teachers of RE without a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Restore parity of bursaries for RE with those for other shortage subjects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. The government and relevant funding bodies should consider how funding of RE networks can be made more sustainable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. SACREs and local authorities should review existing good practice in developing and sustaining these RE networks and start their own if such a network does not exist in their local area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. University performance measures should be updated to credit universities for their engagement with schools, including the provision of continuing professional development (CPD) and resource materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. University staff conducting research in areas related to RE should be encouraged to contribute to RE networks, lead teacher development days, develop resource materials or become SACRE members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

54. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

55. What else, if anything, should be included in a National Plan to improve teaching and learning in RE?

56. How should the National Plan for RE be implemented in order to be most effective?

57. If you have any other comments on how to improve teaching and learning in RE, please enter them in the box below.

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Next steps

58. If you would like to comment on any other aspect of the interim report, or anything else that you think the Commission should be aware of, please enter your comments in the box below.

59. If you would like to be kept in touch with the progress of the Commission and sent a link to the final report when it is published, please include your name and email address below.

Name

Email Address

Alongside this consultation, the Commission is also looking for case studies from schools, advisers and organisations. They are keen to receive case studies of approaches and curriculum that exemplify the delivery of the national entitlement, or those that show the ways in which current practice would need to change to meet the entitlement. They are also seeking case studies of good practice that does not fit the entitlement. If you would like to contribute a case study, you can do so here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CoRECaseStudies>.

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Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

JOINT NASACRE/AREIAC EVENT ON THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the arrangements for Joint NASACRE/AREIAC event on the Commission on RE- Interim report.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To note the date of the joint NASACRE/AREIAC event in Birmingham on the Commission on Religious Education on Friday 24 November 2017.
- 2.2 To consider if the SACRE wishes to send a delegate to the NASACRE Conference

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The conference will seek answers to many vital questions regarding the Commission on RE: The Interim Report including what its recommendations might mean for pupils, teachers, advisers and SACREs.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is

“Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Committees of Religious Education (NASACRE). The body has organised an event with the Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants to discuss the Interim report of the Commission for Religious Education. The SACRE is asked to consider the attached programme at Appendix xA and determine if it wishes to send a representative to the conference and how that member would report back to the rest of the SACRE. The Commission for Religious Education Interim report and consultation exercise are dealt with elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

The Conference provides space to consider:

- What are the key issues the CoRE Interim Report identifies?
- What does the Report say about the evidence that has been presented so far?
- Does the Report comment on the nature or quality of the evidence that the Commission has received?
- Is the Commission still looking for additional evidence?
- In the light of the Interim Report what questions would you wish to put to the Commission?

This conference will be of great interest to all SACRE members, RE advisers, RE teachers and anyone interested in the future of RE.

5.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.3 List of Appendices:

Appendix 6a Information on event to be held on 24 November 2017

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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date: **Fri 24th Nov 2017**
10.00 am - 3.45 pm

venue: **Ibis Hotel** (New Street),
Arcadian Centre
21 Ladywell Walk,
Birmingham B5 4ST
(five minute walk from New Street Station)

“The Commission on RE: The Interim Report”



What issues does the Interim Report raise? Opportunity, threat, a middle way? What might it mean for pupils, teachers, advisers & SACREs?

The Commission on Religious Education: The Interim Report

What are the key issues the Interim Report identifies? What does the Report say about the evidence that has been presented so far? Does the Report comment on the nature or quality of the evidence that the Commission has received? Is the Commission still looking for additional evidence? In the light of the Interim Report what questions would you wish to put to the Commission?



What has the Commission on RE been asked to consider?

Should there be a common entitlement in RE?

If so what should that entitlement be?

Should there be a change in the legal arrangements for RE?

Should RE be locally or centrally controlled, or something else?

Should parents still have the right to withdraw their child?

Should teachers keep the right to withdraw from teaching RE if they wish?

What is the nature, purpose and scope of RE?

What changes are needed to ensure high quality RE?

Cost: for AREIAC & for NASACRE members £75
non-Members £90

Refreshments and lunch provided

“The Commission on RE: The Interim Report”

date: **Fri 24th Nov 2017** 10.00 am – 3.45 pm

venue: **Ibis Hotel** (New Street), Arcadian Centre 21, Ladywell Walk, Birmingham B5 4ST

Programme

10.00 am – 10.50 am **Registration** tea and coffee on arrival

10.50 am – 11.00 am **Welcome** Paul Smalley and Jane Brooke

11.00 am – 12.00 noon **The Commission on RE – The Interim Report, observations and perspectives** What does the Interim Report say? What issues does the Report raise?

Presenters: Prof Denise Cush and Dr Anthony Towey

12.00 noon – 12.30 pm Group discussion, thoughts on the interim report.
Q&A session with the morning’s presenter

12.30 pm – 1.15 pm **Lunch**

1.15 – 1.45 pm **In Groups discuss suitable questions** for the Question Time Panel, submit questions for Question Time Panel

1.45 – 3.00 pm

Question Time Panel

Panel members:

Rt Hon. Charles Clarke

Denise Cush CoRE Commissioner

Dr Anthony Towey CoRE Commissioner

One other person (tbc)



Rt Hon. Charles Clarke



Prof Denise Cush

(tea & coffee will be available
at the end of this session)



Dr Anthony Towey



One other person (TBC)

3.00 – 3.40 pm **Open Discussion**, remaining issues, outstanding questions, thoughts, hopes or concerns

3.40 – 3.45 pm Evaluation

3.45 pm **Finish**

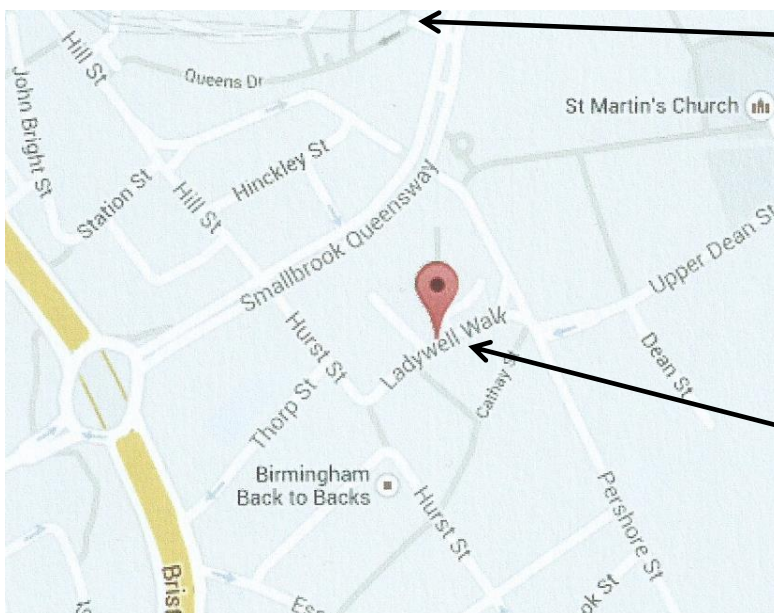
Booking Form: “The Commission on RE: The Interim Report”

To reserve a place for the Conference on Friday 24th Nov 2017 please use the online form <http://tinyurl.com/CoREInterim>

If you wish to attend this important and highly relevant conference please click on the link above. This will take you (be patient it may take a little while) to a simple form. You will be asked to submit your email address, name, postal address and phone number. You will also be asked to tick a box to indicate whether you are a member of AREIAC or NASACRE, or if you are not a member of any of these organisations. Also, you will be asked if you have any dietary requirements.

There is also a ‘reCAPTCHA’ task which you must not ignore. It is a simple task. You will be asked to click a couple of boxes in which you can see an image. Apparently the task is designed to put robots off applying to attend the conference.

You will receive confirmation of your booking form and an invoice will be emailed to you. You should also receive an email confirming your application within 60 mins of submitting your application. If not check your responses and try again. If again your application is not confirmed by email within 60 mins please contact the Chair of NASACRE Paul Smalley. Paul can be contacted on: chair@nasacre.org.uk



New Street Station, Birmingham



Ibis Hotel
Birmingham Centre
21 Ladywell Walk, Arcadian
Centre, Birmingham B5 4ST
(5 minute walk from New Street Station)

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Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

SYLLABUS UPDATES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the attached report of the Religious Education Syllabuses currently used by schools in Blackpool.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To note the Syllabuses currently in use in Blackpool schools for Religious Education as outlined in report at Appendix 7a.
- 2.2 To agree any further actions by the SACRE.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To raise members' awareness and allow members to consider whether Syllabuses in use address the recommendations of reviews of Religious Education.
- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes
- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:
None.

4.0 Council Priority:

- 4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Members will recall that at previous meetings, the large number of Academy schools in Blackpool was highlighted. It was noted that these schools had a greater degree of autonomy in selected their syllabus so that it was possible that a variety syllabuses where in use. As requested schools have therefore be requested to provide details of the Syllabus in use and this is attached at Appendix 7a.

5.2 The SACRE may wish to consider any actions or further research it wishes to undertake regarding syllabus particularly to satisfy the SACRE as to whether the syllabuses used address the recommendations of the interim report of the Commission for Religious Education (Item 5 on the agenda) and the State of the Nation review previously presented to the SACRE attached at Appendix 7b.

5.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.4 List of Appendices:

Appendix 7a: Syllabuses in use in Blackpool.
Appendix 7b: State of the Nation review

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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Appendix 7a SCHOOLS LIST – RE SYLLABUS

	<u>SCHOOL</u>		<u>COMMENTS</u>
1	ANCHORSHOLME		**
2	BAINES	X	Uses Blackburn Diocese
3	BISPHAM		**
4	BOUNDARY	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
5	CHRIST the KING	X	Currently writing their own
6	DEVONSHIRE	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus but using 2011 version as no access to 2016 version
7	GATEWAY		**
8	HAWESSIDE		**
9	HOLY FAMILY		**
10	KINCRAIG		**
11	LANGDALE		**
12	LAYTON		**
13	MARTON	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
14	MERESIDE	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus but using 2011 version
15	MOORPARK	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
16	NORBRECK	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
17	OUR LADY	X	Uses Bishop's Conference materials
18	REVOE		**
19	ROSEACRE	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
20	ST BERNADETTE'S		**
21	ST CUTHBERT'S	X	Currently writing their own
22	ST JOHN VIANNEY		**
23	ST JOHN'S	X	Uses Blackburn Syllabus
24	ST KENTIGERN'S	X	Does not use Lancashire (did not quote what they use)
25	ST NICHOLAS	X	Uses Diocesan Syllabus
26	ST TERESA'S		**
27	STANLEY	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
28	THAMES	✓	Does use Lancashire Syllabus
29	UNITY P		**
30	WATERLOO		**
31	WESTCLIFF	✓/X	Does currently but switching to Blackburn/ Leicester Syllabus after Christmas
32	WESTMINSTER		**
1	HIGHFURLONG		**
2	PARK		**
3	WOODLANDS		**
4	ED DIVERSITY		**

** School did not give a reply.

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The State of the Nation: A report on Religious Education provision within secondary schools in England

Contents

4	Executive Summary
9	The Importance of Religious Education in Schools
14	About the State of the Nation – Report Methodology
18	School Survey Findings
29	Teacher Qualifications and Specialism
37	School Workforce Census Findings
42	GCSE Entries Findings
50	Conclusion
52	Appendix 1
58	References

Executive Summary



Religious Education (RE) is a vibrant, academically rigorous subject which covers multiple religious and non-religious worldviews. RE challenges young people to explore religion and belief in a way that enhances their transferable skills of literacy and reasoning in the classroom and allows them to gain a better understanding of the world around them. With the continued importance of religion and belief in public life, and substantial media coverage of issues relating to religion and belief, whether debates about ethical issues or coverage of conflicts with religious elements, it is crucial to ensure that all young people are religiously literate and

able to understand and question the accuracy of claims about different belief systems, regardless of whether they are themselves religious or not.

The importance of this subject is reflected in its legal standing. All state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, are legally required to provide Religious Education as part of a balanced curriculum.

Key findings of the State of the Nation

The State of the Nation report looks at the extent to which schools in England meet their statutory requirements to teach RE. It provides a comparison between schools where the RE curriculum is determined in three different ways:

- 1) Schools, including some academies, following an RE curriculum determined by their religious character;
- 2) Academies and other schools such as Free Schools where the RE is determined by their funding agreements;
- 3) Schools where a locally agreed RE syllabus must be followed.

The report argues that it is vital that students receive a high quality RE. It is neither educationally, morally or legally justifiable for schools to provide minimal time on the school timetable for RE, or to expect teachers with insufficient training or expertise to deliver the subject. Neither is it acceptable for any young person to leave school without the knowledge and skills delivered through RE which will allow them to understand the beliefs and values of our diverse British society, without which they will be ill equipped to take their place in the modern world.

Findings from this report include:

- **28% of secondary schools told the Department for Education that they gave no dedicated curriculum time to RE.** It is estimated that this equates to 800,000 pupils being deprived of their legal right to learn about major religions and beliefs, leaving them without the religious literacy they need for life in modern multi-faith Britain.¹
- **The level of provision of RE is largely dependent on the type of school pupils attend,** leading to widespread variation across the country.
- **Schools with a religious character typically provide a higher level of provision of RE,** suggesting that these schools place a higher priority on the subject than other types of school. 96% of schools with a religious character offer RE at KS4.² 90% dedicate at least 3% of their timetables (around 40 minutes a week) to RE at KS4.³ In addition, 90% of these schools say that over half of their RE lessons are taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification.⁴
- **Academies are the least likely type of school to offer RE at KS4,** with just 73% of schools reporting that they offer RE at this level⁵, and just 27% providing more than 3% curriculum time to RE.⁶

Just 66% of academies said that over half of their RE lessons are taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification.⁷

- **Schools following a locally agreed syllabus for RE tend to have higher levels of provision than academies, but lower than schools of a religious character.** At KS4, 45% dedicate 3% or more of their timetables to RE.⁸ As these schools convert to academy status and are no longer required to follow their locally agreed syllabus, there is a real concern that their level of RE provision may drop.
- Full course Religious Studies GCSE students should receive 10% curriculum time (more than two hours per week) of RE lessons and pupils taking the short course GCSE should spend 5% of curriculum time (one hour) on this subject.⁹ This standard is very rarely met, meaning that **RS is not being treated fairly in comparison with other GCSE subjects and students across the country are not receiving the level of provision they deserve.**
- A worrying number of **schools are teaching RE full course on short course hours.** Almost half (42%) of academies and agreed syllabus schools (43%) reported that students taking the full course GCSE receive just one hour

or less per week.¹⁰

- **Non-examined RE is often not sufficient to meet the aims of the subject and leads to schools simply not teaching it,** which fails pupils. Of the schools claiming to offer non-examined RE to Year 11 pupils, 83% admitted their students receive zero minutes of teaching per week.¹¹ It may be that offering RE is done as a tick-box exercise with schools claiming not to be resourced effectively in terms of trained or qualified staff or funding to deliver appropriate teaching.
- **The number of schools removing GCSE RS from their curriculum entirely has risen steadily between 2014 and 2016 (3% overall).**¹² Schools with a religious character are least likely to not enter any pupils for GCSE RS but more than 14% of academies do not enter a single pupil for any GCSE in RS.¹³
- **Only 47% of academies have at least 75% of their RE lessons taught by a fully qualified specialist.** This compared to 58% of agreed syllabus schools. Once again schools with religious character perform best, with 77% of respondents reporting this standard.¹⁴
- **Students at schools with religious character are significantly more likely**

to be taught RE by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification than students in an academy, meaning that once again, academy students are missing out.

- The number of schools entering between 90 and 100% of their year 11

cohort has fallen steadily from 49% in 2014 to 45% in 2016.¹⁵ This reflects a move away from entering whole cohorts for either the short course of the full course, almost certainly prompted by the removal of the short course from accountability measures.¹⁶

Summary of recommendations

The Department for Education should:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Hold schools to account for the level of provision and standards of teaching of RE. |
| 2 | Encourage ministers to speak about the importance of RE in the curriculum and about its impact on wider educational outcomes, including on society at large. |
| 3 | Issue a clear public statement that it is not acceptable in any circumstances for a school to be failing to provide RE at any Key Stage as part of its broad and balanced curriculum. |
| 4 | Publish data about RE provision routinely in an accessible format (without the need to issue Freedom of Information requests) to allow local Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACREs) and other bodies to more easily fulfil their duty to monitor provision for RE in their local area. This data should include school workforce data and GCSE entries. |
| 5 | Clarify and strengthen the mechanisms by which complaints can be made about schools failing to provide pupils with their entitlement to high quality RE. |
| 6 | Ensure that it is a condition of the successful completion of teacher training that there is evidence that newly qualified RE teachers have an appropriate level of RE knowledge, understanding and skills to take up their first post. |

School leaders including headteachers and governors should:

7	Review the specific requirements for RE provision and ensure that they can demonstrate that each pupil on the school roll is receiving their entitlement to RE in each school year.
8	Review the specific content requirements (in particular where they include being taught an accredited course at Key Stage 4 if that is what is required in the syllabus).
9	Ensure that all specialist and non-specialist teachers who provide RE have access to subject specific CPD throughout their career.
10	Ensure that all non-specialist RE teachers who teach RE receive high quality subject specific training, such as the Teach RE course, before they commence teaching RE.

Ofsted should:

11	Ensure that the level of provision for RE is monitored during routine inspections with an expectation that the curriculum cannot be considered 'broad and balanced' unless RE is provided.
12	Ensure that all those teaching RE are suitably qualified and/or trained to do so.
13	Review the training of inspectors so that they are aware of specific requirements for RE in each school that is inspected and can differentiate between strong and weak provision.
14	Carry out an investigation into the impact of different levels and quality of RE provision on wider pupil outcomes.

Parents/Carers should:

15	Request information about the programme of RE taught at their child's school (this should be published on the school website). If RE is not mentioned, or if the practice does not seem to match the published plan, ask questions or complain if necessary.
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The Importance of Religious Education in Schools



RE as a subject

RE is a vibrant, academically rigorous subject that has developed significantly in recent decades. Alongside the subject's contribution to pupils' mental, cognitive and linguistic development, it offers distinctive opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.¹⁷

Covering multiple religious and non-religious world views, RE challenges children to explore religion and belief in a way that develops the transferable skills of literacy and reasoning in the classroom and allows them to gain a better understanding of the world around them. By developing knowledge and understanding of different religions and worldviews in the security of a

classroom, young people have the opportunity to engage with complex, diverse, and constantly evolving subject matter.

The value of RE is recognised by the public at large. Research into attitudes to RE conducted by YouGov in 2012 showed that the public backs RE as a compulsory subject, with 50% saying it should remain compulsory and 32% saying it should not.¹⁹

At a time where religious extremism plays such a significant role in the news, it is more important than ever to be religiously literate and to understand and question the accuracy of claims about different faiths.

“Religious Education is highly valued and a vital part of the curriculum we offer”

(Anonymous – school survey response)



“I unexpectedly – but happily – found out I was interested in Religious Studies when I was doing my GCSE. I have now completed my A Level and am in the process of starting a theology and ethics degree at Manchester University.

Religion is the most written about and talked about subject in the history of humanity. My interest in the subject evolved as I studied just some of the range of texts on the curriculum and developed the key academic skills of independent, critical thinking and analysis – recognising and appreciating that in a classroom of 30 students, three might be 30 different but equally strongly-held opinions.

My studies helped me to understand the logical connection between ideas, and as my confidence grew I was increasingly able to take part in class discussions on issues that could sometimes be controversial.

For me, every day introduced new aspects to studying RS that challenged and stimulated me – from the big, cosmological questions around the existence of God to situational ethics and the role of religious practices in contemporary 21st century society – and which have allowed me to have a better understanding of people and the variety of ideas, and have prepared me for life”.

- Louise Pryah, Haslingden High School

The legal basis of RE

All state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, are legally required by the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act to provide RE as part of a balanced curriculum.¹⁸ This includes provision for RE for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (or withdrawing themselves if they are aged 18 or over) in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The key document in determining the teaching of RE in most schools is the locally agreed syllabus within the local authority concerned. Schools, including academies and free schools, designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses.¹⁹ Academies without a religious character must deliver RE in accordance with the requirements of their funding agreement with the Secretary of State. Local authorities must ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

Schools are not obliged to provide RE to

pupils who are under compulsory school age, although there are many instances of good practice where RE is taught to these pupils. Separate legislative provision on RE is made for maintained special schools.²⁰ Regulations covering maintained special schools require them to ensure that, as far as practicable, a pupil receives RE.²¹

Agreed syllabus schools, including community, foundation and voluntary-aided or voluntary-controlled schools without a religious character: RE must be taught according to the locally agreed syllabus adopted by the local authority by which the school is maintained.²²

Schools with religious character, including foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character: RE provision is to be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. However, where the parent of any pupil at the school requests that RE is provided in accordance with provisions of the trust deed relating to the school (or, where there is no provision in the trust deed, in accordance with the religion or denomination mentioned in the order designating the school as having a religious character), then the governors must make arrangements for ensuring that RE is provided to the pupil in accordance with the relevant religion for up to two periods a week unless they are satisfied that there are special circumstances which would make it unreasonable to do so.²³

In voluntary-aided schools with a religious character, RE is to be determined by the governors and in accordance with the provisions of the trust deed relating to the school or, where there is no provision in the trust deed, with the religion or denomination mentioned in the order designating the school as having a religious character. However, where parents prefer their children to receive RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, and they cannot reasonably or conveniently send their children to a school where the syllabus is in use, then the governing body must make arrangements for RE to be provided to the children within the school in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus unless they are satisfied that there are special circumstances which would make it unreasonable to do so. If the local authority is satisfied that the governing body is unwilling to make such arrangements, the local authority must make them instead.^{xxiv}

Academies: Academies are all-ability, state-funded schools managed by independent sponsors, established under Section 482 of the Education Act 1996. Some academies have a religious character. All academies are required, through their funding agreements, to teach RE.

The Funding Agreement for an Academy **without a religious designation** states that it must arrange for RE to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements

for agreed syllabuses that are set out in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph (5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. This means a syllabus that “reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain”. It also means that an academy without a religious designation must not provide an RE syllabus to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination. This gives an academy without a religious designation the freedom to design its own RE syllabus (within those constraints) and not be bound by the specific locally agreed syllabus that maintained schools are required to follow. However, academies are free to follow the locally agreed syllabus if they choose or they can choose another from a different local authority area.

Foundation or voluntary controlled schools **with a religious designation** that convert to academies must arrange for RE in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses (in the main Christian whilst taking account of the other principal religions etc. as set out above) unless any parents request that their children receive RE in accordance with the tenets of the school’s faith. If any parents do request this, the academy must make arrangements for those children to receive such RE unless,

because of special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so. The Funding Agreement sets this out (by applying the relevant provisions of the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998). In practice, these academies generally choose to follow the locally agreed syllabus.²⁵

RECOMMENDATION 7:

School leaders should review specific requirements for RE provision and ensure that they can demonstrate that each pupil on the school roll is receiving their RE entitlement in each school year.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Schools leaders should review the specific content requirements (in particular where they include being taught an accredited course at Key Stage 4 if that is what is required in the syllabus).

About the State of the Nation – Report Methodology



The aim of this State of the Nation report is to draw together existing data sets, and supplement them with new survey material, in order to demonstrate the current levels of provision of RE across the country. The report focuses exclusively on secondary school provision.

The State of the Nation Report's findings are based on three data sets.

1) School survey

The first data set that this report is based on is a direct survey of schools about their RE provision. This survey was carried out online with all secondary schools in England emailed an invitation to participate. This survey was carried out by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE), The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and RE Today Services. The schools that provided responses were then cross-referenced using

their unique reference number (URN) in EduBase, which allowed the responses to be filtered and categorised into different groups to aid analysis.

A total of 790 responses were received. 318 were from schools where a locally agreed syllabus applies, 93 were from schools with religious character (including Academies where a Diocesan or 'faith-based' syllabus applies), and 139 were from academies without a religious character (but where the funding agreement determines the requirement for RE provision). At the remaining 240 schools the means by which the schools RE is determined could not be identified. Data from these 240 schools has only been included in the report analysis where relevant.

By comparing the sample of schools in the school survey with information on EduBase, it was found that schools with a locally agreed syllabus were overrepresented in the sample (accounting for 56% of schools in the sample, while making up only 24% of secondary schools nationally), schools with religious character were relatively accurately represented (accounting for 19% of schools in the sample, while making up 18% of secondary schools nationally), but academies without a religious character were significantly underrepresented (58% nationally and 25% within this data set).

Whilst the overall sample generated by the

school survey is not perfectly representative, the types of schools that are under-represented are those that (where they have answered) have the worst levels of provision. This means that the picture of RE provision generated by the school survey is likely to under-emphasise the scale of the problem. While the school survey provides alarming figures for the degree to which schools are failing to meet their legal obligations to provide RE, this deeply concerning snapshot is, if anything, a conservative under-estimate of the degree of non-compliance.

2) School Workforce Census data for the years 2010-2015

The second data set that this report draws on is the school workforce data collected from schools by the Department for Education (DfE) between 2010-2015. This specific data set was obtained following discussions with the DfE and a Freedom of Information Request on 4th February 2017 by the National Association of Teachers of RE.

The following data was requested from each secondary school that admits secondary aged pupils in England, for each of the five years 2010-2015 and for each year group:

- the number of hours of RE taught (including those where the information

provided would be 'no response' or the response is zero);

- the number of hours taught to the year group;
- the percentage of the hours taught in a school week that is RE focussed.

The School Workforce Census collects curriculum information from a large sample of secondary schools. Curriculum information is requested from all secondary, middle deemed secondary and all-through schools, including relevant academy schools, with the timetabling software that interfaces with their Management Information System. In 2015 2,909 secondary schools provided curriculum information. However, not all schools provided complete curriculum information.

We found that 787 schools (28%) of all the 2,793 Census schools reported that they gave no time to RE. We then multiplied that figure by the average state secondary school size (1,000) to reach a figure of 800,000 pupils being deprived of their legal right to RE.

3) Data on entries for GCSE Religious Studies for the years 2014-2016

The third data set on which this report is based is the Department for Education's (DfE) data on GCSE entries. This was

obtained following a Freedom of Information Request on 11th April 2017 by the National Association of Teachers of RE.

The following data was requested from each school that admits secondary aged pupils in England, for each of the three years 2014-2016:

- The percentage of the year 11 cohort entered for:
 1. Full course Religious Studies GCSE
 2. Short course Religious Studies GCSE
 3. No GCSE in Religious Studies
- The percentage of pupils achieving a grade within the range A*-C as a proportion of those entering:
 - Full course Religious Studies GCSE only
 - Short course Religious Studies GCSE only

The 2015 data includes information from 2,856 secondary schools but some data is suppressed to protect confidentiality. This is the case where there are only one or two entries and it might be possible to identify an individual. This does not have a significant effect on the analysis.

Categorising the data

For the purpose of interrogating the various data sets and making useful comparisons, this report categories schools into the following three groups:

1. Agreed Syllabus:

Schools where a local Agreed Syllabus applies. Includes:

- Community Schools
- Foundation Schools
- Voluntary Aided Schools without a religious character
- Voluntary Controlled Schools

2. Religious Character:

Schools including Academies where a Diocesan or 'faith-based' syllabus applies. Includes:

- Sponsor-Led Academies with a religious character
- Voluntary Aided Schools with a religious character
- Church of England, Roman Catholic and other faith-based Academies - sponsored and not sponsored

3. Academies:

Academies without a religious character where the funding agreement states the requirement for the provision for RE – including:

- Free Schools
- Academy sponsor led without a religious character

The State of the Nation report was commissioned and produced by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE), The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and RE Today working in a joint venture as the RE PR Group.

School survey findings



Level of provision

All schools (as specified in the earlier chapter on legal obligations) must teach RE. This can be provided through a variety of formats; including, for pupils at KS4, a number of examined options – GCSE RS full course and short course – as well as non-examined religious education. This does not mean that schools can ‘provide RE’ as a tick-box exercise. Schools have a responsibility to ensure that teaching hours for this subject are sufficient to cover the curriculum and meet subject aims. RE is a rigorous and academic subject that covers a substantial volume of specialist material:

it is not possible to do justice to the subject if it is not given sufficient curriculum time, and a cursory study of RE denies students the opportunity to develop the religious literacy necessary for life in modern Britain.

Lack of provision

Despite the clear legal and contractual obligations schools have to teach RE, the results of the school survey of secondary schools found that **25% of all schools do not offer RE to all students at KS4.**²⁶ This lack of provision is likely to be driven by a range of factors. The exclusion of RS from

the Ebacc, the removal of short course GCSE from performance tables and a lack of vocal support for the subject from government ministers has meant that some headteachers have felt unable to prioritise the subject: without support from heads and senior leaders the subject has become vulnerable.

The exclusion of all short course GCSEs from the Department for Education's performance tables has led to a dramatic fall in entries for the short course in RS, down over 80% since 2010.²⁷ This has had a particularly significant effect on RE as this was the way many schools ensured pupils received their RE provision. In some schools the lack of available appropriately qualified teachers to provide the lessons has encouraged schools to cut the subject. The lack of repercussions for any school failing to meet their statutory duties to offer RE has made it easier for schools to make these cuts and the subject has suffered as a result.

Provision of RE varies significantly between types of school. **96% of schools with religious character offer RE at Key Stage 4.**²⁸ This is likely to reflect the status that RE

has within these schools as an important and academically significant subject.

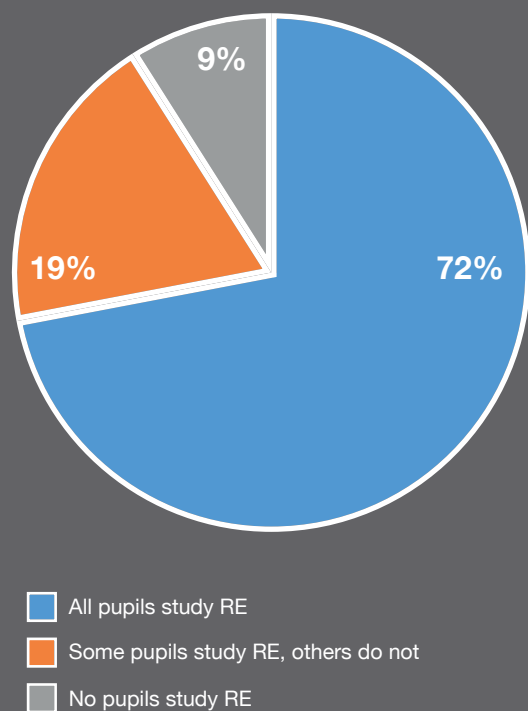
In contrast to this, **academies have a much lower level of provision of RE at KS4, with just 73% of schools reporting that they offer RE at all at this level**, suggesting that using the academies funding agreement to require it to make suitable provision for RE is not always an effective way to ensure that pupils are able to study the subject.²⁹ Whilst the freedoms bestowed upon academies allow for flexibility in designing certain elements of a curriculum, it is important that academies are fully aware of their obligation to provide RE, and make provision accordingly.

Schools following a locally agreed syllabus for RE tend to have higher levels of provision than academies, but lower than schools of a religious character.³⁰ As these schools convert to academy status and are no longer required to follow their locally agreed syllabus, there is a real concern that their level and quality of RE provision may drop. The Government must ensure that the structure put in place works

“Disappointed in the way RE is being pushed to one side even though we are a statutory subject”

(Anonymous – school survey response)

Describing provision for RE in schools at Key Stage 4 in England



for academy converters to ensure that they are able to provide an appropriate level and quality of RE.

The issue of many schools failing to make appropriate provision for RE at Key Stage 4 is underlined by the findings of the school survey. Schools were asked about the nature of their RE provision at KS4. In 72% of schools all of the pupils study RE. In 19% of schools some of the pupils study RE but others do not. In 9% of the schools there are no pupils studying RE at all.

The figure above shows that 28% of

schools do not make full RE provision for all students in breach of their legal obligation, echoing our earlier findings on the level of non-compliance.³¹

All pupils, no matter what type of school they attend, have the right to receive RE. It is unfair for pupils that the type of school they attend can have such a substantial impact on their chances of being offered the option of taking Religious Studies at GCSE. Given that the problem of ensuring that legal requirements to offer RE appears to be particularly acute at academies, steps should be taken to provide them with the support they need to be able to meet their statutory and contractual obligations. If more schools that currently follow locally agreed syllabuses become academies then this will become even more necessary.

Non-examined RE

Schools do not have to offer an examined course in RE to meet their legal obligations. Depending on the Agreed Syllabus followed it is sometimes possible to offer a non-examined course in RE, taught at an appropriate level and to a high standard. Nonetheless, these non-examined courses should still meet the recommended curriculum time (5%). The school survey found, however, that **non-examined RE is often insufficient and in many cases those schools claiming to offer a non-examined RE course also**

reveal that they spend no time teaching it.

Of the schools claiming to offer non-examined RE to pupils in year 11, 83% admitted that their non-examined year 11 RE students received zero minutes of teaching per week.³² In addition, just 3% of schools with religious character, 1% of academies and no agreed syllabus schools report more than 60 minutes of teaching per week on non-examined RE.³³ There are still relatively few schools providing 31-60 minutes of teaching per week for non-examined RE: just 11% of academies, 3% of schools with religious character and 6% of agreed syllabus schools.³⁴ It is clear that non-examined RE is not associated with an adequate number of minutes of teaching per week, no matter what the school type. **In all but a handful of cases, if a school is not offering full or short course GCSE**

RS at key stage 4, the provision of RE is not sufficient and the school will almost certainly be in breach of their legal obligations.

In some schools, it may be that the official claim is that they are offering RE through another subject, such as PSHE or in a registration session, but this practice is often not adequate to be able to deliver appropriate teaching, especially when teachers with other specialisms, who do not have sufficient training or subject expertise, are responsible for the lessons. Non-examined RE should not be used as a tick-box exercise as a means for schools to appear to meet their statutory obligations. All children have a right to an effective and informative education, and it is deeply unfair on the young people whose schools simply do not provide any meaningful teaching on this subject.

“I don’t want to offer KS4 compulsory non-examined because it won’t be taken seriously”

(Anonymous – school survey response)

OFSTED CASE STUDY:

Successfully involving students in learning RE through a non-examined course

About the programme: Broughton Business and Enterprise College actively involved students in their learning in RE through an imaginative curriculum, high quality teaching, and a lively programme of enrichment activities. The aim of this initiative was to ensure that all students would leave with knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare them for their adult lives.

How it worked: The RE curriculum was designed to ensure that it supported the overall approach to the subject by allowing for genuine challenge and sustained enquiry.

In Year 7, RE was taught as part of a Humanities programme with RE-focused units taught for five lessons a week for two weeks every half-term. One teacher led all three humanities subjects with their class. In addition there were integrated units to which RE made a contribution. In Year 8, the three

humanities subjects were taught separately with specialist staff on a carousel programme. Students spent four hours a week on RE for three weeks, four times a year. And in Year 9, students had the more traditional one period a week of RE across the whole year.

At Key Stage 4, the full-course GCSE was offered in an open-option process and up-take was good. All students had a non-examined core programme, which proved popular. Because of the high quality of the experience of RE at Key Stage 3, students knew what to expect and they valued the enrichment time to discuss and reflect without the pressure of an examination: RE for RE's sake!

Outcome: Students felt that the course did not tell them what to believe, but made them think about their values. This school was recognised through the award of a national Gold Standard RE Quality Mark in 2012.³⁵

Curriculum time based on school type

The Ofqual register of qualifications states that full course Religious Studies (RS)

GCSE students should receive between 120-140 teaching hours which equates to 10% of curriculum time (more than two hours per week) of RE lessons, an amount

comparable to other GCSE full course subjects, with the expectation of 5% of curriculum (one hour) for short course students.³⁶ The school survey has found

that this standard is very rarely met, meaning that **students across the country are not receiving the level of provision they deserve.**

Summary of findings from the school survey:³⁷

- In Year 10:
 - 45% of agreed syllabus schools stated that their full course Year 10 students receive just 60 minutes or less of teaching per week;
 - 14% of schools with religious character stated that their full course Year 10 students receive 60 minutes or less of teaching per week;
 - 39% of academies stated that their full course Year 10 students receive 60 minutes or less of teaching per week.
- In Year 11:
 - 41% of agreed syllabus schools stated that their full course Year 11 students receive just 60 minutes or under of teaching per week;
 - 22% of schools with religious character stated that their full course Year 11 students receive 60 minutes or less of teaching per week;
 - 45% of academies stated that their full course Year 11 students receive just 60 minutes or under of teaching per week.

There remains an unacceptable level of provision across all school types in terms of timetabled contact hours for those students in Key Stage 4 who are studying for the full course.

The school survey shows that a worrying

number of **schools are teaching RE full course on short course hours.**³⁸ 18% of schools with religious character are failing to provide even 5% timetabled hours for the full course (around one hour a week). This rises to **42% of academies and 43% of schools with an agreed syllabus** where

pupils who are undertaking the full course GCSE receive one hour or less per week, when they should be receiving at least two hours of formal RE contact time. This demonstrates that a significant number of schools are expecting teachers to prepare students for a full course RE in the time expected for a short course or even less. The result is that many students are entering GCSE examinations having had significantly fewer lessons than many of their counterparts. They also receive fewer lessons than pupils studying similar subjects such as history or geography.

This is likely to be the result of a number of reasons, including pressures on staff numbers and available time-table hours. At a time when many schools are finding their budgets increasingly squeezed, subjects which are considered lower priorities are often the first to suffer cuts; including RE.

Even more concerning, the school survey has uncovered a significant number of

secondary schools which fail to even provide 3% curriculum time for any type of course. Any school offering less than 3% would be deemed a problem school in terms of their RE provision.

For Key Stage 4 full course students:⁴⁰

- **25%** of academies provide **less than 3%** timetable time for RE
- **25%** of agreed syllabus schools provide **less than 3%** timetable time for RE
- **7%** of schools with religious character provide **less than 3%** timetable time for RE

Once again Key Stage 4 students studying full course at a school with religious character are significantly more likely to receive an acceptable amount of teaching time than their counterparts in academies or schools with an agreed syllabus.

“RE is side-lined along with the Arts subjects due to more timetabling for EBacc subjects”

(Anonymous – school survey response)

Tackling non-compliance

In too many cases, there are no consequences for those schools that actively, or unintentionally flout their legal obligation, as RE does not feature in measures such as the EBacc and performance tables which are used to hold schools to account.

In England, the DfE measures and reports on school performance, thereby incentivising schools to provide teaching and qualifications in a restricted list of subjects, known as the EBacc. RS GCSE, however, is excluded from the EBacc, meaning that an important incentivisation mechanism is lost. This is in contrast to the system in Wales, where the Government did not introduce the EBacc and instead measures school performance in terms of 5 A*-C grades which must include Maths and either English or Welsh, but which otherwise can include any subject including RS. The result of this is that GCSE entry numbers have continued to rise in Wales while they have begun to fall in England.⁴¹

The Government needs to refine school accountability measures to prevent them acting as a disincentive to RE provision. Ofsted inspectors should be equipped for school visits with information about the form of RE provision that they should expect to see at the specific school, alerted where prior data suggests there might be a problem and sufficiently trained to make

judgements about the quality of outcomes they might evidence through pupil work and conversations and in classrooms.

Further to this, it is important to ensure a clear process is in place for escalating and dealing with concerns about the level and quality of provision of RE in schools. Schools should have a clear process for dealing with complaints. The DfE should be responsible for ensuring schools are aware of the need to have a process, and should clarify how such a process should work.

Dealing with a complaint

In order to maximise compliance, the DfE must hold schools to account for the level of provision and standards of teaching of RE. This report demonstrates the need for data on school performance to be closely monitored and acted upon by the DfE. This should, however, go further; the DfE should make data about RE routinely available without the need for a Freedom of Information Request, in order to allow local Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACREs), parents, students and other interested parties to understand how a school is performing and take action to raise a complaint if necessary. The data that should be made routinely available should include school workforce data and GCSE entry data (for both full and short course) – both at school level.

It is important to have a clear process for dealing with complaints and to ensure that schools are aware of this process. A complaint can be made by anyone (including students, parents and teachers) and can be on a wide range of issues, including failure to provide adequate RE. All schools are required to have a complaints policy so that anyone is able to make a complaint and have it dealt with appropriately. The current process usually follows the following pattern:

- When a complaint is made, generally the headteacher will informally try to settle the complaint.
- If no settlement can be achieved, then a formal complaint can be made to the headteacher in writing.
- Should the complaint fail to be resolved, it would then be escalated to the board of governors.

- Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of the decision made by the governors, then schools complaints policies often provide for the complainant to appeal to a panel of governors (it should be noted that not all schools will have an appeal panel).
- Should the complainant remain dissatisfied, the complaint would be escalated to the Secretary of State for Education.

NATRE tested this process in 2017. In doing so, the Secretary of State, through the Department for Education, has demonstrated a willingness to intervene when necessary in resolving complaints about a school failing to make appropriate provision for RE.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The DfE should hold schools to account for the level of provision and standards of teaching RE.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The DfE should issue a clear public statement that it is not acceptable in any circumstances for a school to fail to provide RE at any Key Stage as part of its broad and balanced curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

The DfE should clarify and strengthen the mechanisms by which complaints can be made about schools failing to provide pupils with their entitlement to high quality RE.

RECOMMENDATION 15:

Parents/Carers should request information about the programme of RE taught at their child's school (this should be published on the school website). If RE is not mentioned, or if the practice does not seem to match the published plan, ask questions or complain if necessary.

The role of Ofsted

Ofsted has a role in inspecting and regulating services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Inspections are conducted using a framework for inspection.

In order to inspect RE provision, inspectors need to understand the specific

requirements relating to the provision of RE for different school types, and should ensure that every school they inspect can provide evidence of quality of RE provision. This is essential in order to ensure that schools do not flout their responsibilities and young people do not miss out on their entitlement to high quality RE. Non-compliance must be reported in Ofsted reports.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Ofsted should ensure that the level of provision for RE is monitored during routine inspections with an expectation that the curriculum cannot be considered 'broad and balanced' unless RE is provided.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

Ofsted should ensure that all those teaching RE are suitably qualified and/or trained to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 13:

Ofsted should review the training of inspectors so that they are aware of specific requirements for RE in each school that is inspected and can differentiate between strong and weak provision.

RECOMMENDATION 14:

Ofsted should carry out an investigation into the impact of different levels and quality of RE provision on wider pupil outcomes.

Teacher Qualifications and Specialism



In addition to access to RE, students have a right to receive high quality RE, taught by highly qualified and well-trained teachers no matter what type of school they attend or where in the country their school is located.

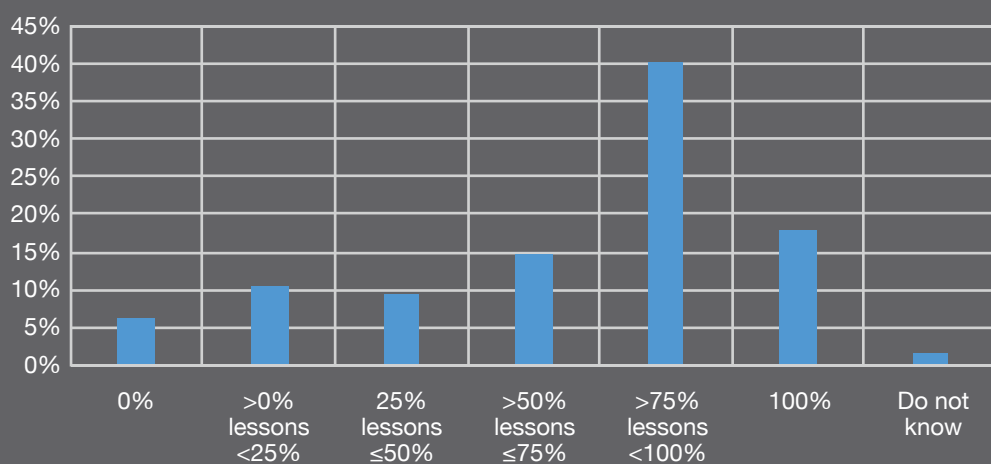
The type of school again has a significant impact on the likelihood of a student to be taught by a specialist RE teacher. **Students at a school with religious character are significantly more likely to be taught RE by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification** than students in an academy,

meaning that once again academy students are missing out. 90% of schools with religious character reported that over half of RE lessons are taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification, while this is the case in just 66% of academies.⁴² Agreed syllabus schools fall somewhere in between the two, with 73% of lessons taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification, suggesting that you are more likely to get a trained RE teacher in an agreed syllabus school than an academy, but still not as likely as in a school with religious character.

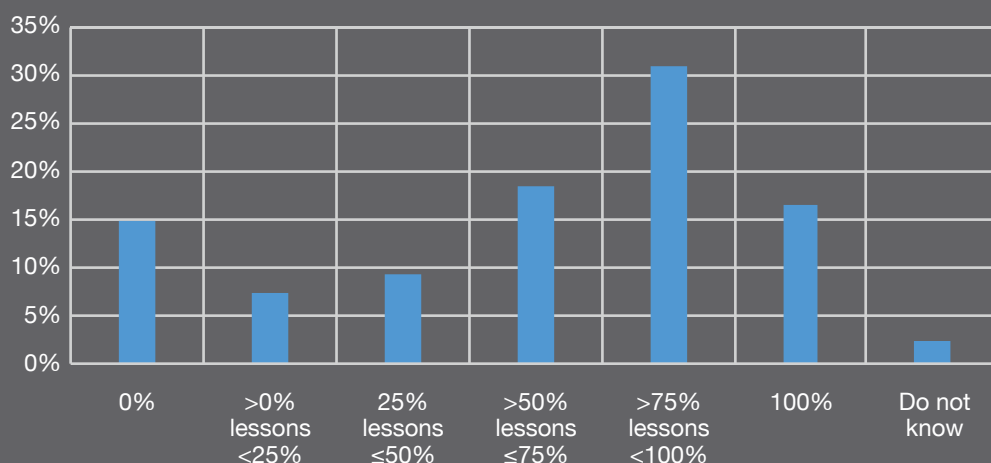
The school survey asked “what percentage of Religious Education lessons at your school are taught by a teacher with a relevant post-A-level qualification (degree or PGCE in Theology/Religious Studies/Philosophy etc.)”? These charts show how

significantly the likelihood of being taught RE by an appropriately qualified teacher changes in different types of school.

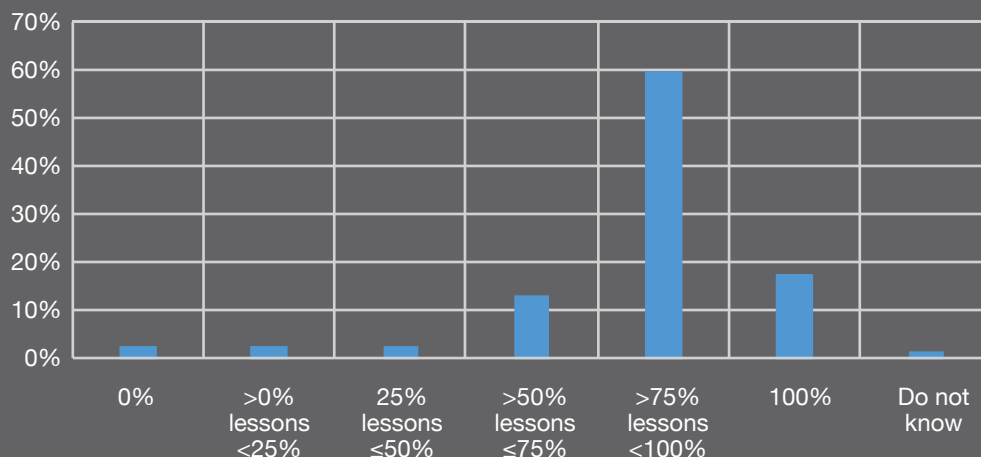
Agreed Syllabus



Academies



Religious Character



Recruitment of RE specialist teachers

There are two ways to become a specialist RE teacher: firstly through being trained, and secondly through gaining experience of teaching the subject.

Students who receive RE from a specialist teacher are more likely to receive higher quality teaching than students who are taught by non-specialist teachers.

“Serious concerns about future staffing and delivery of new specification due to limited teacher specialists. Hard to cover content and many classes taught by non-specialists who are struggling to understand new concepts”

(Anonymous – school survey response)

The Beyond the Ordinary Campaign

The Religious Education Council was concerned by the continued fall in numbers of trainee secondary RE teachers. After bursaries for RE teacher trainees were removed for 2013/14, recruitment had dropped to just 71% of the Government target. As a result, the Religious Education Council, NATRE and others campaigned for the restoration of the bursaries.

The Department for Education did reintroduce RE training bursaries, in October 2014. With RE bursaries ranging from £4,000 to £9,000 (compared with up to £30,000 for other subjects), growing disillusionment within the teaching profession, and the Government's Get Into Teaching campaign focused on attracting STEM subject teachers, the challenge was to inspire potential candidates about teaching a stimulating, fascinating subject.

The Religious Education Council, supported by NATRE and the Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education, therefore launched the "Beyond the Ordinary" campaign to try and attract more people to train to become RE teachers. The campaign launched in March 2015, when applications were still 25% down on the

previous year (960 versus 1,280) despite the re-introduction of bursaries five months earlier. It ran until October 2015.

- By May (two months after launch) the decline started to reverse, with successful applicants up year-on-year for the first time (from 340 to 350).
- By September 2015 RE applications reached 1,630, closing the deficit by 14 percentage points (from -25% to -11%) and outperforming all other subjects as a whole (-15%).
- The decline in recruitment was reversed. By September the number of trainees placed had increased 8% versus 2014 (420 versus 390).
- Research among trainee RE teachers in October 2015 (by the Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education) found 38% were aware of Beyond the Ordinary. Of these, 44% said their decision to become an RE teacher was influenced by the campaign.
- The legacy of the campaign continues today. By February 2016, RE teacher trainee applications were up 35% year-on-year. Over the same period all secondary teacher trainee applications were down -2.5%.

The Beyond the Ordinary campaign

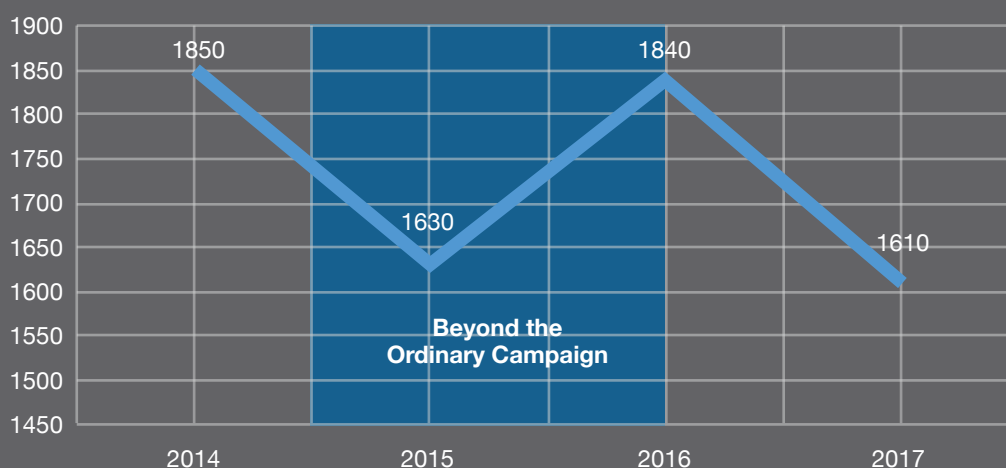
The Beyond the Ordinary campaign reversed the decline in applications for trainee secondary RE teachers. By February 2016

applications had increased by a staggering 35% year-on-year. Despite this success, changes to bursaries for RE teachers meant that the number of 2017 applications is down, as demonstrated by the following graphs:

RS ITT Application 2014-2017

N.B. 2017 figures at 21.08.17

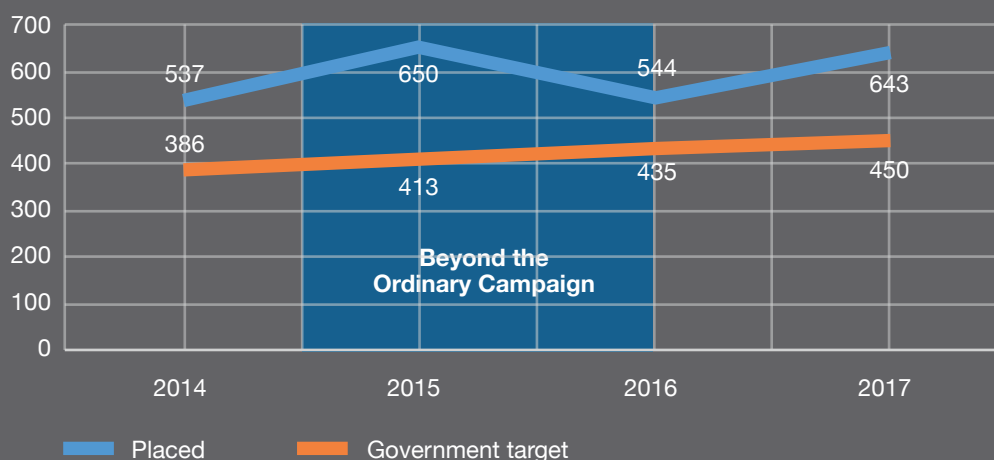
Applications



Number of applicants places completed with DfE target 2014-2017

N.B. 2017 figures = Placed or Conditionally Placed at 21.08.17

Placed v Government Target



It is evident that steps can be taken to improve the number of applications for RE teacher training. The Beyond the Ordinary Campaign, entirely funded by the RE community, greatly contributed to the peak in number of applications to 1,840 in 2016. The drop in applications in 2017 to 1,610 suggests that more effort needs to be made to encourage applications. The end of funding for the Beyond the Ordinary campaign, a decline in application numbers generally and the fact that the bursary level is low means that the numbers applying to be RE teachers are not sufficient to meet demand.

Incentivisation mechanisms, such as bursaries, play an important role in encouraging a higher number of applications for RE, and should be promoted to students considering a career in teaching. At a time where people's worldviews are increasingly complex, it is vital to ensure that appropriately trained, specialist RE teachers are available to encourage religious literacy and encourage honest and open dialogue about the religions and beliefs that we live amongst.

The school survey found that where RE specialist roles exist within schools, very few have vacancies. This suggests that RE specialist teachers are valued and recognised as essential to the delivery of good RE. However, it might also suggest that schools are cutting the number of RE

specialist posts, relying instead on teachers with other specialisms to teach the subject. In fact, the school survey found **that in 49% of secondary schools fewer than half of the RE lessons are taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification.**⁴³

Training non-specialist teachers

More than twice as many teachers of RE (56%) as History (28%) have no post-A level qualification in the subject as demonstrated by the DfE School Workforce Data 2015.⁴⁴ Even more worrying, the situation has deteriorated even further from 2014 in both Religious Education and Geography.

Whilst in principle it might not be a problem for a teacher qualified in another related subject, to retrain to teach RE, it is of crucial importance to ensure that anyone teaching RE receives training in order to ensure they deliver accurate information to students. The danger of having inadequately training non-specialist teachers teaching RE could be severe in terms of perpetuating inaccuracies about religions or beliefs.

It is equally unacceptable for schools where there is one specialist RE teacher to expect them to plan lessons for non-specialist teachers who then deliver the RE lesson. This has serious implications for teachers' workloads and once again this risks the

accuracy of any discussion that is able to take place within the classroom.

The school survey found that 15% of academies reported that no RE lessons were taught by a teacher with a relevant post A-Level qualification, suggesting that these schools are not putting a high priority on securing staff with relevant qualifications, but are making simple provisions to meet their statutory or contractual requirements.⁴⁵ It is likely that schools of all types that fail to provide training for non-specialist RE teachers teaching RE are failing to take their duty to

religiously educate their students seriously and placing them at risk of not having their questions answered appropriately or accurately.

Training must be provided for all non-specialist teachers who deliver RE lessons, before they commence teaching any RE lessons; for example completion of the *Teach RE* course.⁴⁶ It is surely a students' entitlement that they are educated by a teacher who has a solid grasp of the subject which they are teaching so that they are able to provide a high quality education.

CASE STUDY: ARK Network Events

In 2016-17 ARK schools held three full day network events that involved subject team training.

“Subject specialist training is so important in RE to ensure that the quality of provision gives our students the opportunity to develop excellent religious literacy. With training cuts nationally at post-graduate level for RE recruitment, many schools are faced with asking non-specialists to teach RE.

With this in mind, it is imperative that subject knowledge and pedagogical tools necessary to teach good quality RE lessons are shared in a collaborative

fashion across a network. Sharing resources each term lifts a burden off teachers that have less experience and are struggling with the demands of new specifications that require expert subject knowledge.

Further to this, where school leaders are not providing adequate time for the provision of RE, coming together to strengthen discussions and proposals that can be put to school leaders (and MATs) ensure its profile and status in a school is upheld.”

Provided by: Adam Whitlock, Senior Leader, Head of RE Faculty & Collective Worship, ARK Schools

RECOMMENDATION 9:

School leaders should ensure that all specialist and non-specialist teachers who provide RE have access to subject specific CPD throughout their career.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

School leaders have a responsibility to ensure that all non-specialist RE teachers who teach RE receive high quality subject specific training, such as the Teach RE course, before they commence teaching RE.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

The DfE should ensure that it is a condition of the successful completion of teacher training that there is evidence that newly RE qualified teachers have an appropriate level of RE knowledge, understanding and skills to take up their first post.

School Workforce Census Findings



Results of analysis of the school workforce survey: Provision for RE in different types of schools

Since the Dearing Report, The National Curriculum and its Assessment (1994), recommended that schools devote at least 5% of curriculum time to RE (just one hour per week on average), most agreed syllabuses have either assumed or stipulated that this would be the time required to meet the outcomes. There were good reasons for this recommendation in 1994 which is just as relevant in 2017 if not more so. The equivalent of an hour per week is not unreasonable given the legal expectation set

out in 375 (3) of the Education Act 1996 that by the end of their school careers, all pupils in state funded schools will have followed a continuous programme of learning that encompasses not only Christianity but ‘teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’. It is often forgotten that although academies and free schools have a choice over whether or not to follow a local agreed syllabus, this requirement is included in their Funding Agreements with the Department for Education and so is contractually binding on them also.

The development of the GCSE short course

reinforced the expectation that 5% of time will be provided for RE by building an accredited course that required 60-70 guided learning hours - i.e. around an hour per week over two years.

What proportion of a school's teaching hours are dedicated to RE?

Whereas around 28% of all state funded schools (787 of the 2793 that provided relevant information in 2015) report that they are making no provision for RE even though it is a requirement for all to do so, that figure varies significantly depending on the type of school and has increased by 12% since 2011.

- At Key Stage 3 (pupils aged 11-13 years), **34% all academies report that they offer no timetable time for RE at all**. That figure increases to almost 44% at Key Stage 4 (pupils aged 14-16 years).
- This means that **pupils attending academies without a religious character are half as likely to receive RE lessons as their peers in local authority maintained schools** where the law states that a local determined agreed syllabus must be followed.
- However, even given the apparent protection of the law, in around **one in five local authority maintained**

schools where the agreed syllabus applies, **there is no timetable time for RE in Key Stage 3**. In a similar proportion of these schools, there is no timetable time for RE in Key Stage 4.

- **Schools with a religious character are far more likely to be making provision at or above the 5% level** assumed by the writers of most agreed syllabuses. Around 6% of these schools report making no timetable provision and it is likely that the majority of these do not report timetable time for Religious Education because they give the subject a title specific to the type of school.
- In addition to the schools reporting no timetable time for RE, **many are falling short of the 5%** curriculum time assumed by the writers of most agreed syllabuses would be required to meet the outcomes. Again, this figure varies by type of school as follows:
 - At Key Stage 3 (pupils aged 11-13) the 5% standard is met or exceeded in:
 - 62% of agreed syllabus schools
 - 90% of schools with a Religious Character
 - 44% of Academies
 - At Key Stage 4: (pupils aged 14-16) the 5% standard is met or exceeded in:
 - 45% of agreed syllabus schools
 - 91% of schools with a religious character
 - 27% of academies

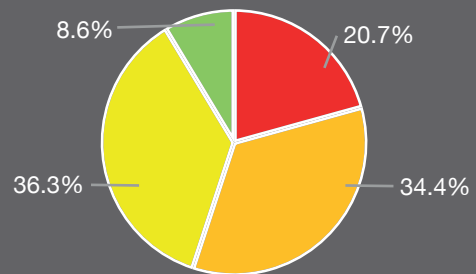
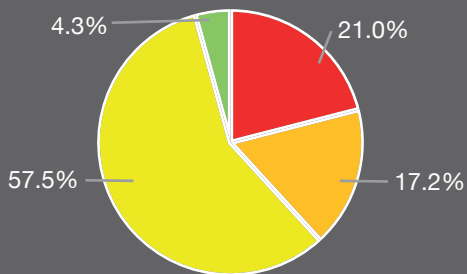
At Key Stage 3 the 5% standard is **MET OR EXCEEDED** in 64% of all state funded schools.

At Key Stage 4 the 5% standard is **MET OR EXCEEDED** in 50% of all state funded schools.

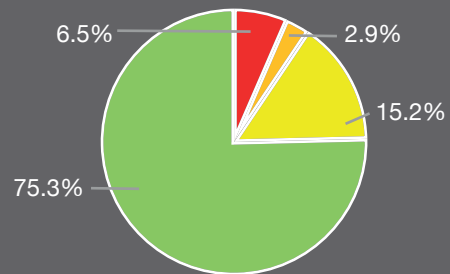
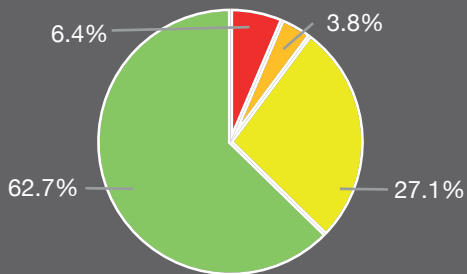
Percentage of curriculum time spent on RE in KS3

Percentage of curriculum time spent on RE in KS4

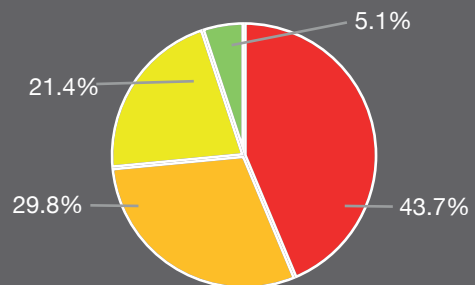
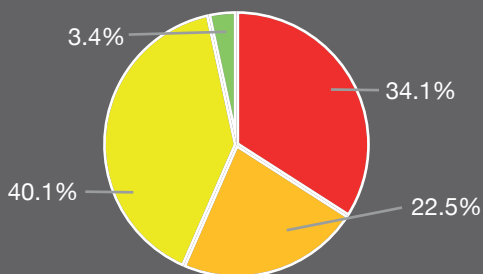
Schools where an Agreed Syllabus applies



Schools with a Religious Character

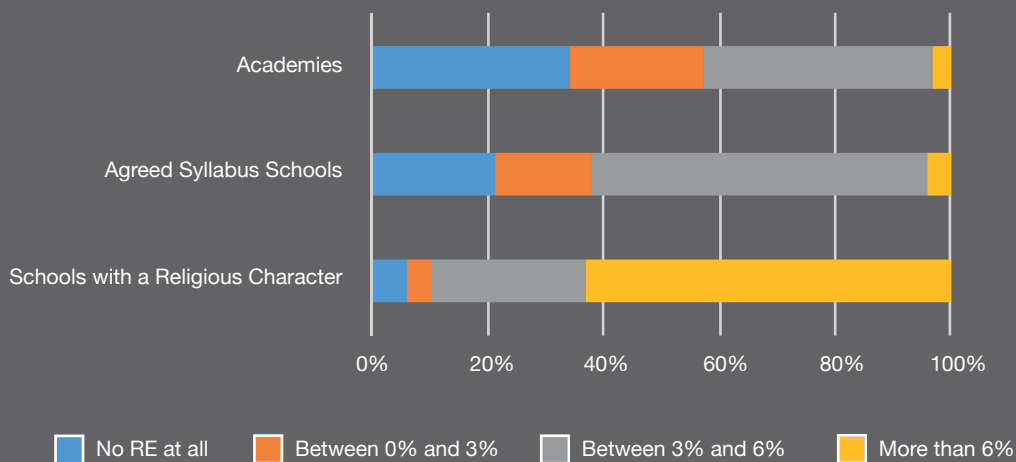


Academies

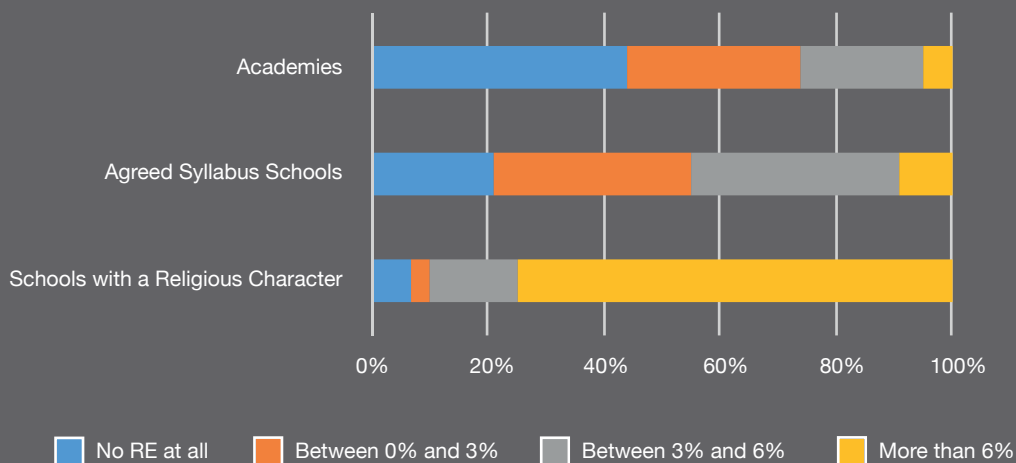


■ No RE at all
 ■ Between 0% and 3%
 ■ Between 3% and 6%
 ■ More than 6%

Curriculum time for RE at Key Stage 3



Curriculum time for RE at Key Stage 4



Regional Variation in Provision in Different Types of Schools



GCSE Entries Findings



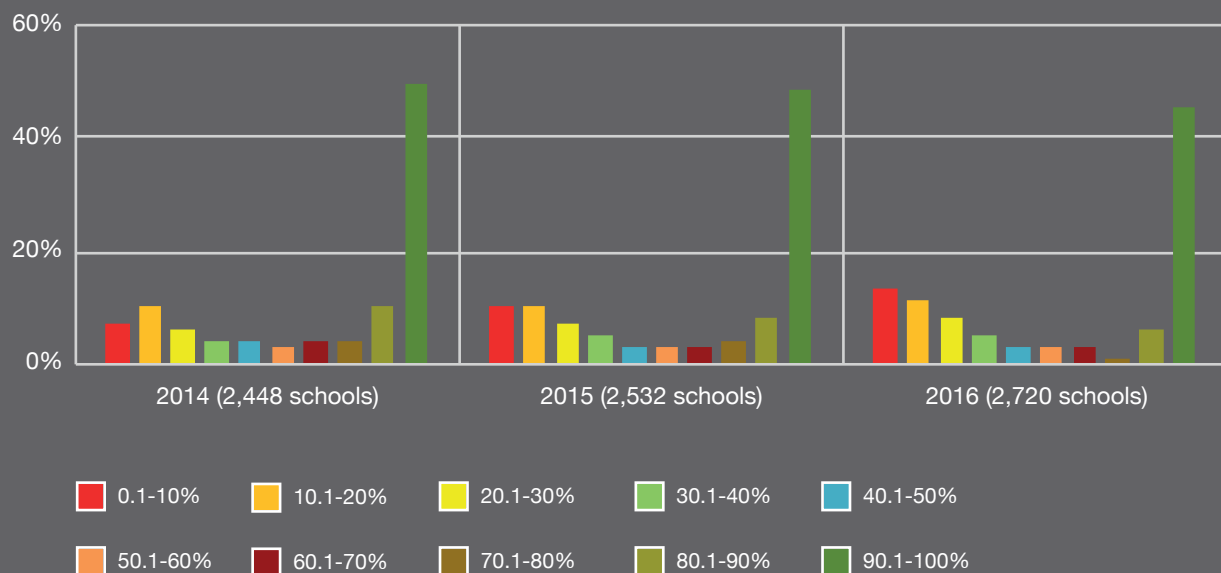
A report on GCSE Entries is produced on an annual basis by NATRE as part of its work to support its members in campaigning for high quality provision for RE for all pupils. In schools where a local Agreed syllabus applies, it is common for there to be a requirement that students follow a GCSE qualification at Key Stage 4; either short or full course. Where this regulation applies, the percentage of entries is *an indicator* of the degree to which a school is meeting its legal requirements, although there are often good educational reasons why a small

number of pupils in each cohort might not be entered. The short course is designed to be taught in 60-70 teaching hours; the equivalent of about one hour per week over two years.

The analysis that follows highlights a number of issues including different patterns of entry in different types of school, regional variations in entries and most alarming, the number of schools entering no pupils at all for any Religious Studies GCSE.

Percentage of year 11 cohort entered for GCSE *

*Excluding those schools making no entries for any GCSE in RS



The number of entries for GCSE has remained steady over the last three years however, this figure masks some major changes to patterns of entry. The number of schools entering between 90 and 100% of their year 11 cohort has fallen steadily from 49% in 2014 to 45% in 2016. This reflects

a move away from entering whole cohorts for either the short course or the full course, almost certainly prompted by the removal of the short course from accountability measures. Those entering 80-90% has also fallen from 10% in 2014 to 6% in 2016.

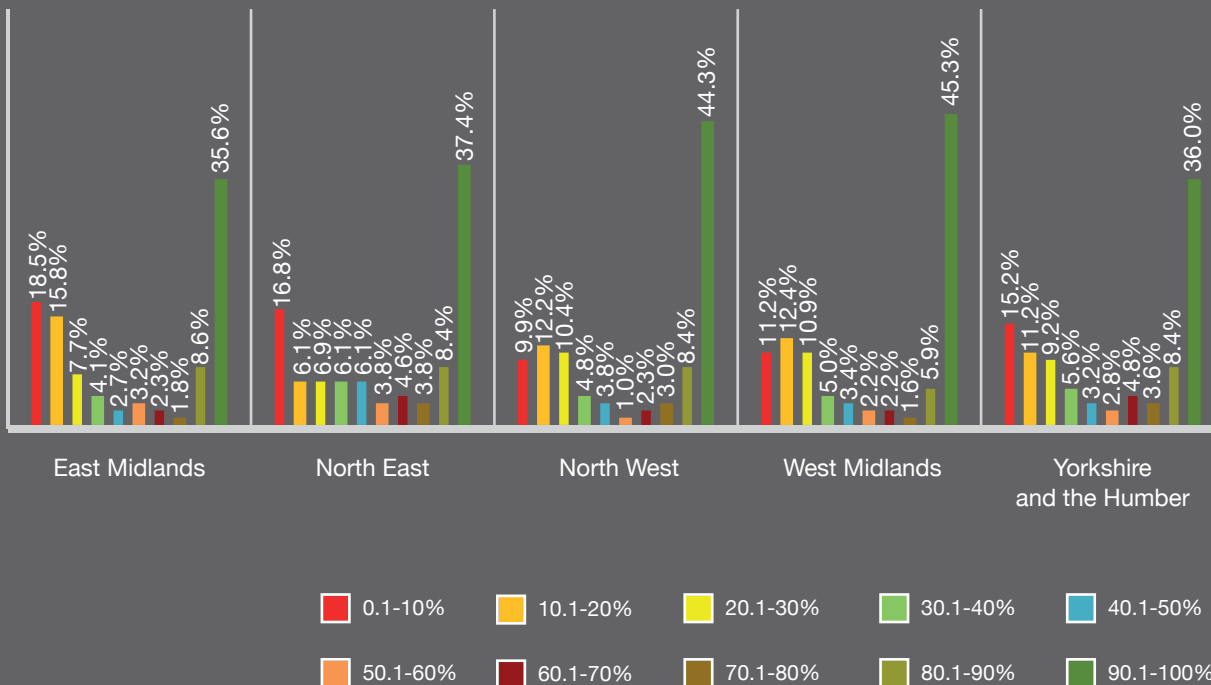
GCSE Religious Studies Entries in England 2010-2017



Percentage of pupils entered for GCSE RS in 2016 by region -SOUTH



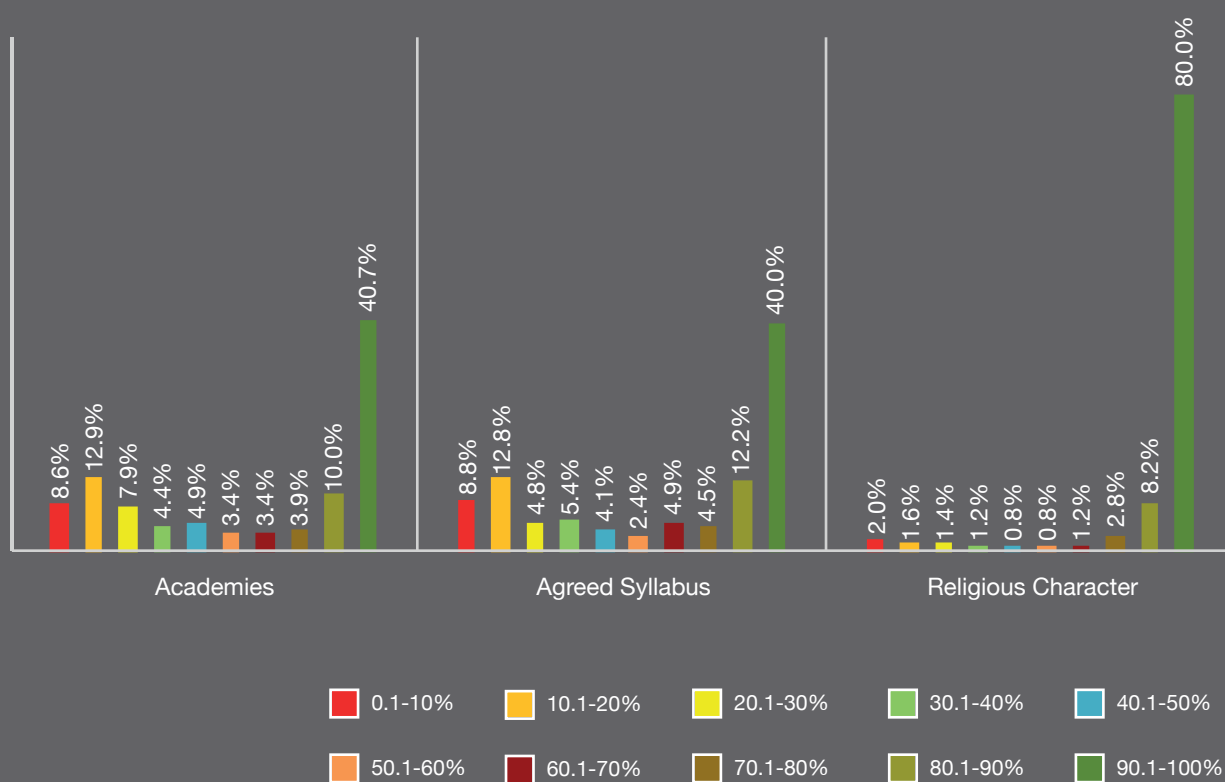
percentage of pupils entered for GCSE RS IN 2016 by region Midlands and the North



At the other end of the scale, more schools are entering smaller groups of pupils, i.e. those who have opted to study the full course GCSE. The number of schools

entering between 0.1% and 10% of the cohort has risen from 7.4% in 2014 to 13.3% in 2016.

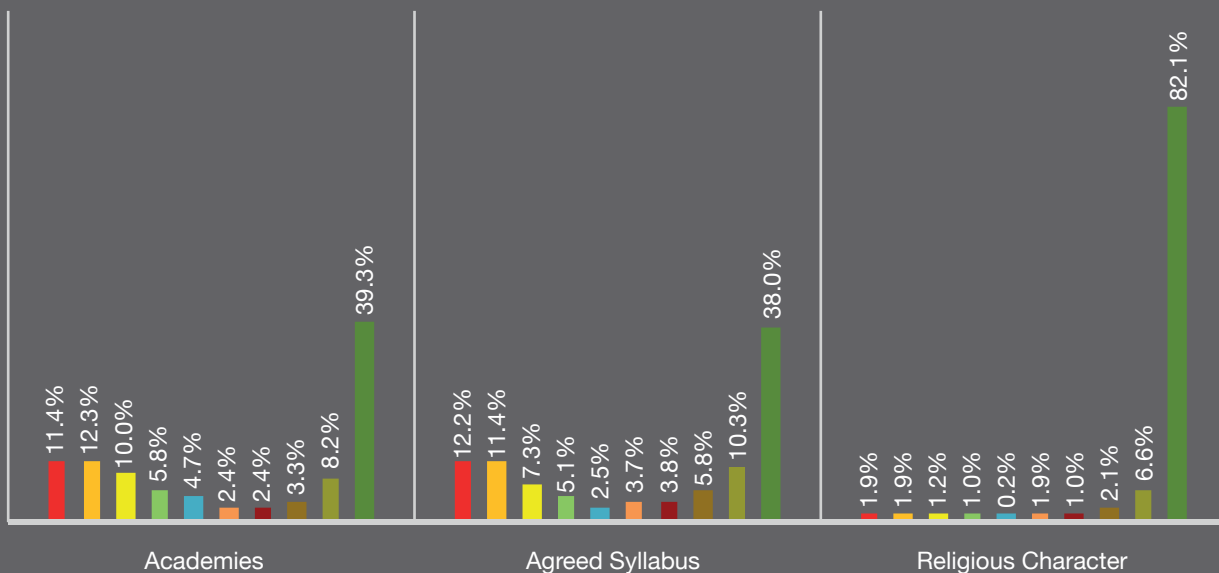
Percentage of year 11 cohort entered 2014 - 2448 Schools



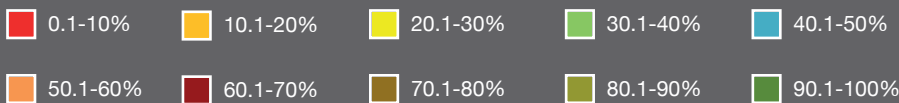
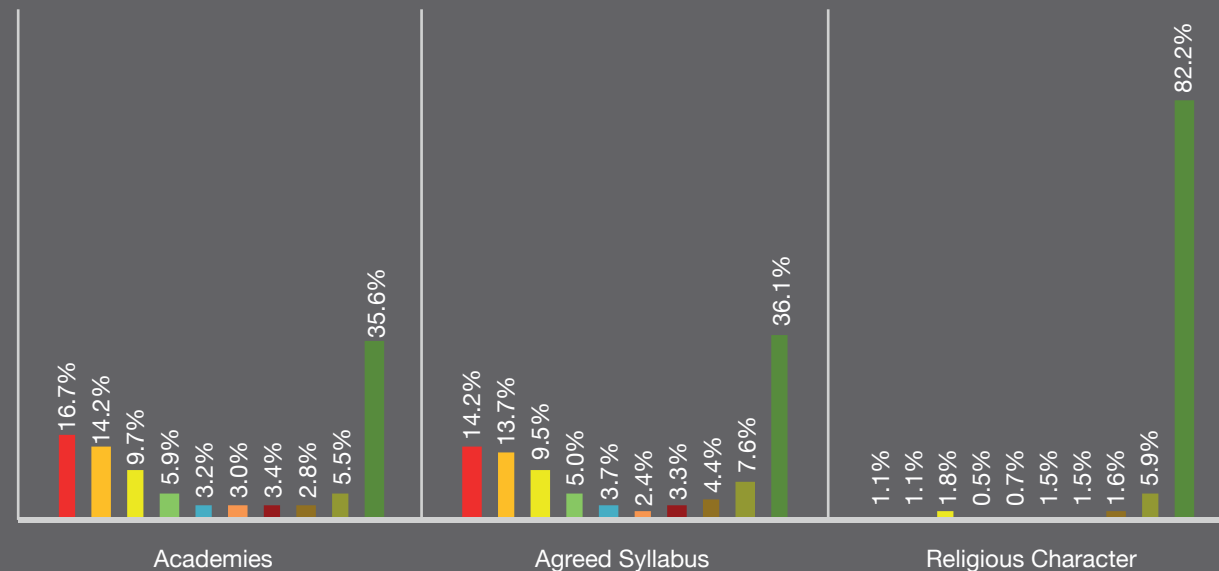
There is a marked difference between types of schools in relation to the patterns of entry. Most schools with a religious character enter almost the whole cohort of year 11 for a GCSE. In 2014, between 90 and 100% of pupils at 80% of these schools were entered for a GCSE in RS. In other types of school, in 2014, half as many

schools entered this proportion of students (40%) but this figure has fallen to around 36% by 2016. The number of schools without a religious character entering between 0 and 10% of their cohorts increased from around 8% in 2014 to around 16% in 2016.

Percentage of year 11 cohort entered 2015 - 2532 Schools



Percentage of year 11 cohort entered 2016 - 2720 Schools

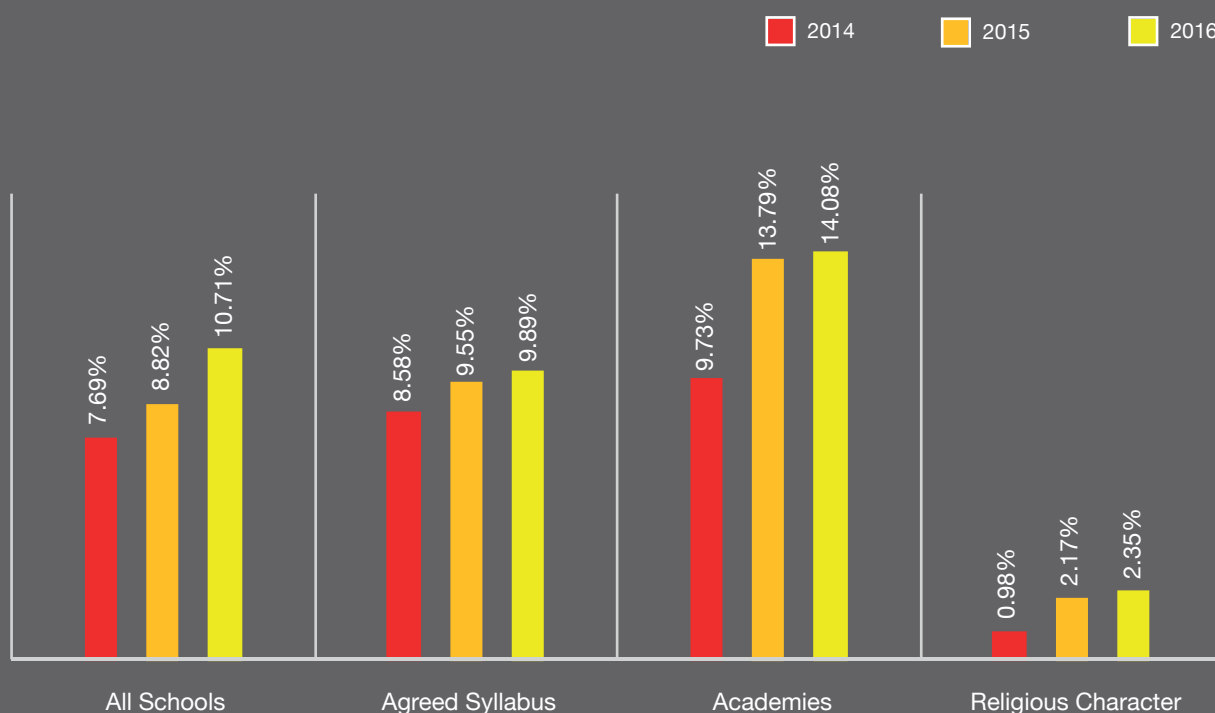


Schools where Religious Studies is not studied at GCSE level at all

The number of schools removing GCSE RS from their curriculum entirely has risen steadily between 2014 and 2016 (3%

overall). Schools with a religious character are least likely to not enter any pupils for GCSE RS but more than 14% of Academies do not enter a single pupil for any GCSE in RS.

Percentage of Schools of Different Types Making No Entries For Any GCSE 2014-16



The ability of students to access RE teaching is likely to have a direct impact on the number of entries made for GCSE examinations. Naturally, this extends to the number of entries made for A-Level examinations and the number of entries for

RE within the International Baccalaureate. This in turn affects to university entries, and further again, the number of theology and religious studies graduates, alongside those in other related disciplines, who might decide train to teach RE.

Percentage of the 326 schools with no GCSE RS entries in each region



RECOMMENDATION 4:

The DfE should publish data about RE provision routinely in an accessible format (without the need to issue Freedom of Information requests) to allow local Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACREs) and other bodies to more easily fulfil their duty to monitor provision for RE in their local area. This data should include school workforce data and GCSE entries.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The DfE should encourage ministers to speak about the importance of RE in the curriculum and about its impact on wider educational outcomes, including on society at large.

Conclusion



There are many excellent examples of RE being taught to a high level and quality across the country and within various different school types. Where RE is taught well, it leads to informed discussion around complex religions and beliefs, thereby promoting religious understanding and tolerance. At a time where the UK is becoming increasingly multicultural, it is more important than ever for young people to understand the religions and beliefs of the communities in the United Kingdom. We must do our best to ensure that students leaving school are religiously literate.

The State of the Nation report has

demonstrated that there are problems around the country with both the level and quality of provision of RE, meaning that around 800,000 students are missing out on the education they are entitled to every year. This is unacceptable. The DfE, Ofsted and individual schools must ensure that provision requirements are met – not just as a tick-box exercise, but as a means of genuinely educating young people. This should be reflected in the curriculum time dedicated to RE, as well as the investment in specialist RE teachers. Where it is not possible to recruit specialist RE teachers, schools must ensure that any teacher delivering RE lessons has an appropriate

level of training in order to avoid perpetuating inaccuracies which could impact on cohesion and inclusivity in society.

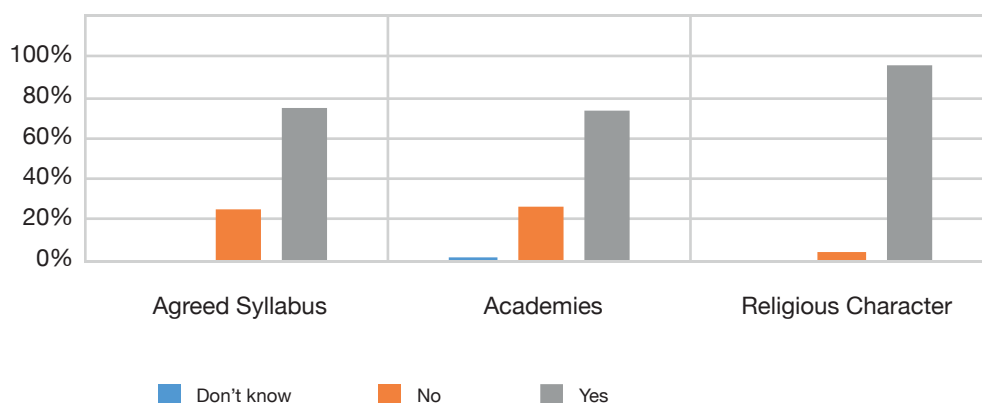
This State of the Nation report has highlighted a number of recommendations, which should be acted upon by the DfE, Ofsted and school leaders. It is essential that these recommendations are followed so that that all pupils in all secondary schools receive fair access to RE and a high quality of teaching.

Appendix

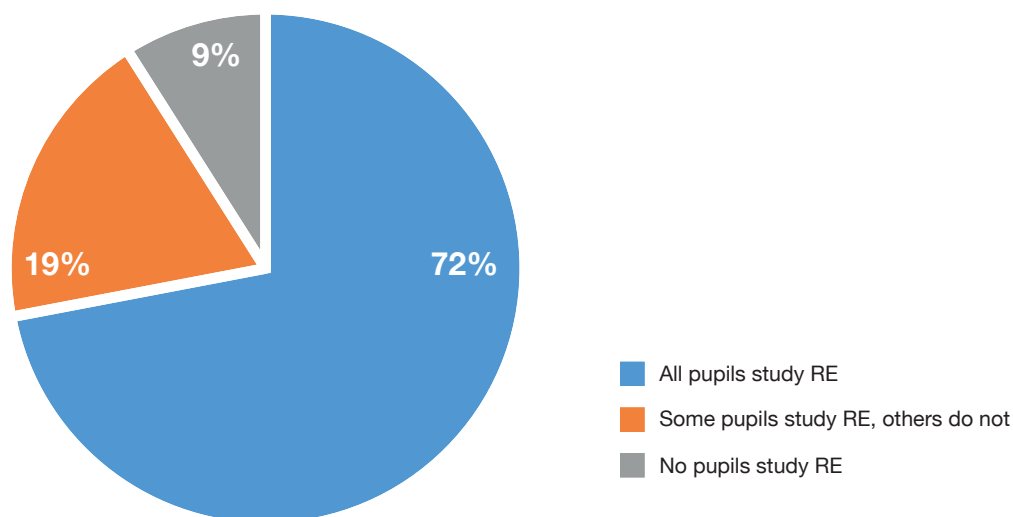
This provides a summary of the answers given in the school survey for a number of the questions asked which have been cited in this report.

Does your school offer Religious Studies to all students at Key Stage 4 (KS4)?

	Don't know	No	Yes
Agreed Syllabus	0%	25%	75%
Academies	1%	26%	73%
Religious Character	0%	4%	96%



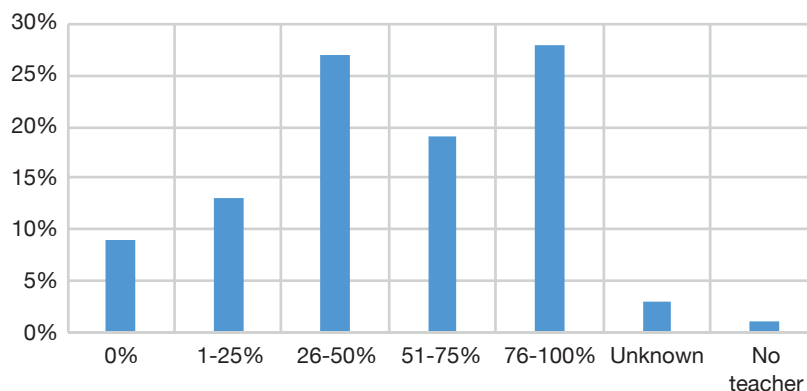
How would you describe your school's Religious Education provision at KS4 for Year 10?



How many teachers currently teaching Religious Education have a relevant post A-Level qualification (degree or PGCE in Theology/Religious Studies/Philosophy etc.)?

Percentage of schools	Percentage of schools
0%	9%
1% to 25%	13%
26% to 50%	27%
51% to 75%	19%
76% to 100%	28%
Unknown	3%
No teacher	1%

Percentage of RE teachers at each school with a relevant post A level qualification



“What percentage of Religious Education lessons at your school are taught by a teacher with a relevant post-A-Level qualification (degree or PGCE in Theology/Religious Studies/Philosophy etc.)”?

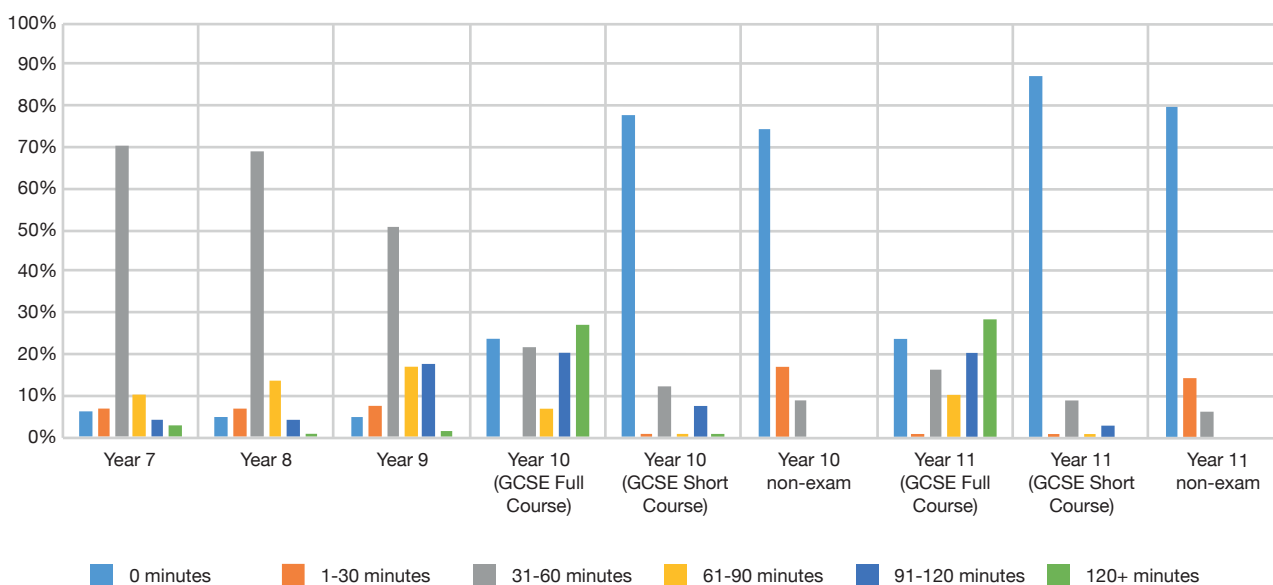
	0%	>0% lessons <25%	25% lessons =50%	>50% lessons =75%	>75% lessons <100%	100%	Do not know
Agreed Syllabus	5.98%	10.26%	9.40%	14.53%	40.17%	17.95%	1.71%
Academies	14.98%	7.37%	9.22%	18.43%	30.88%	16.59%	2.53%
Religious Character	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	13.04%	59.42%	17.39%	1.45%
All schools	10.89%	7.22%	8.48%	16.96%	36.58%	17.59%	2.28%

“How many minutes of Religious Education does each pupil receive on average each week”?

Agreed Syllabus Schools:

How many minutes of Religious Education does each pupil receive on average each week?

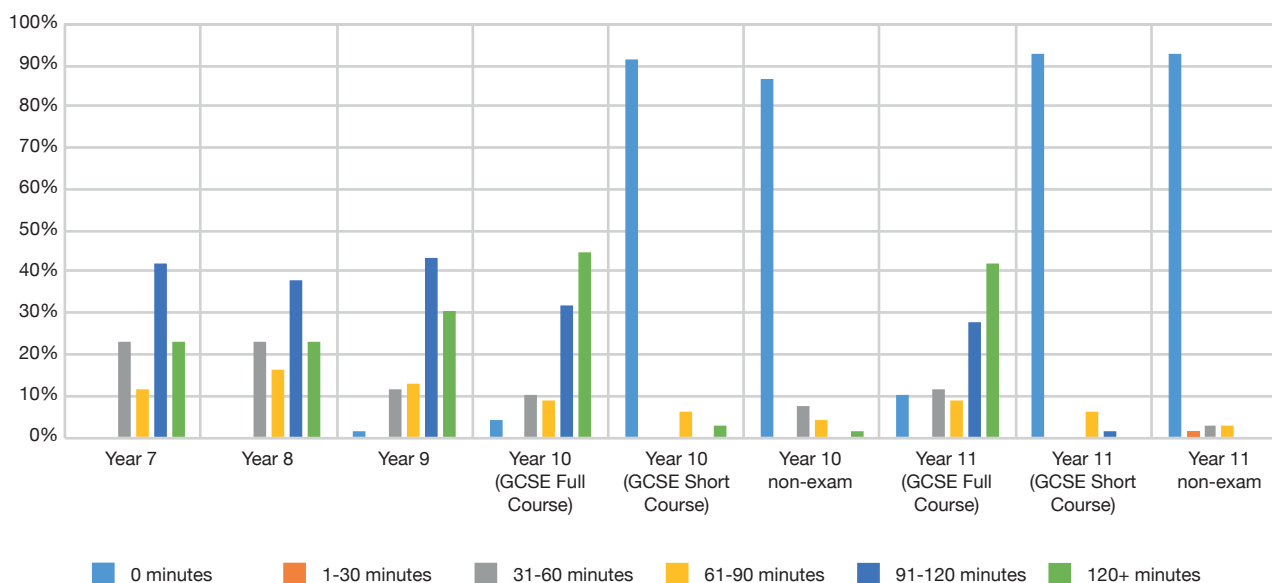
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10 (GCSE full course)	Year 10 (GCSE short course)	Year 10 non-exam	Year 11 (GCSE full course)	Year 11 (GCSE short course)	Year 11 non-exam
0 minutes	6%	5%	5%	24%	78%	74%	24%	87%	79%
1-30 minutes	7%	7%	8%	0%	1%	17%	1%	1%	15%
31-60 minutes	70%	69%	50%	21%	12%	9%	16%	9%	6%
61-90 minutes	10%	14%	17%	7%	1%	0%	10%	1%	0%
91-120 minutes	4%	4%	18%	21%	8%	0%	21%	3%	0%
121+ minutes	3%	1%	2%	27%	1%	0%	28%	0%	0%



Schools with a religious character:

How many minutes of Religious Education does each pupil receive on average each week?

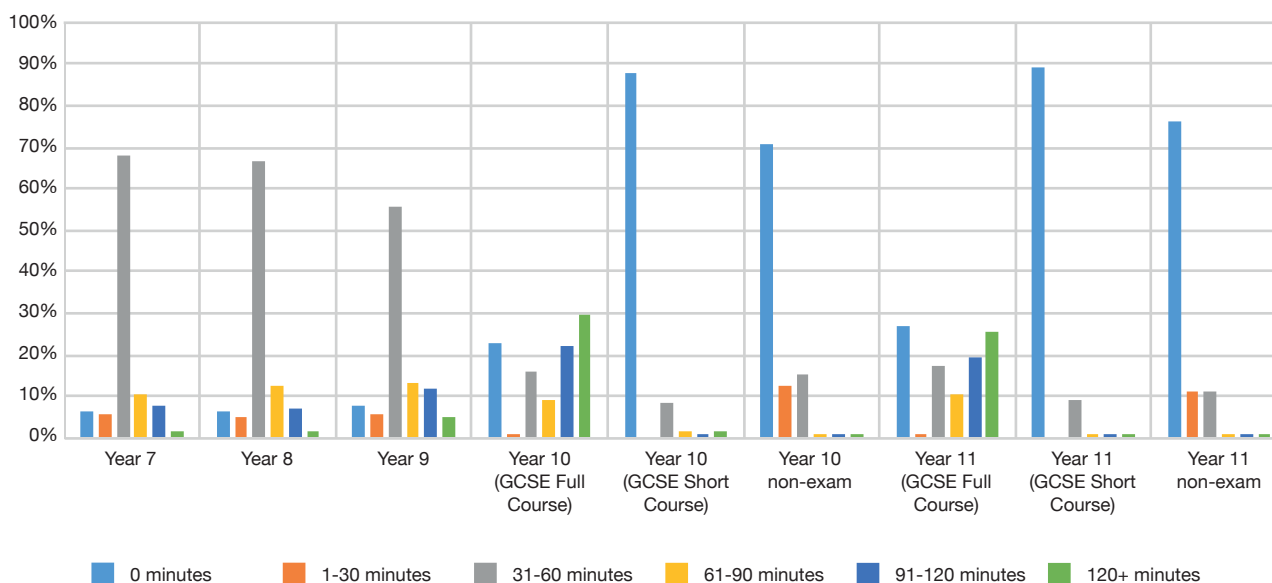
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10 (GCSE full course)	Year 10 (GCSE short course)	Year 10 non-exam	Year 11 (GCSE full course)	Year 11 (GCSE short course)	Year 11 non-exam
0 minutes	0%	0%	1%	4%	91%	87%	10%	93%	93%
1-30 minutes	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
31-60 minutes	23%	23%	12%	10%	0%	7%	12%	0%	3%
61-90 minutes	12%	16%	13%	9%	6%	4%	9%	6%	3%
91-120 minutes	42%	38%	43%	32%	0%	0%	28%	1%	0%
121+ minutes	23%	23%	30%	45%	3%	1%	42%	0%	0%



Academies:

How many minutes of Religious Education does each pupil receive on average each week?

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10 (GCSE full course)	Year 10 (GCSE short course)	Year 10 non-exam	Year 11 (GCSE full course)	Year 11 (GCSE short course)	Year 11 non-exam
0 minutes	6%	7%	8%	23%	88%	71%	27%	89%	76%
1-30 minutes	6%	5%	6%	0%	0%	13%	0%	0%	11%
31-60 minutes	68%	67%	56%	16%	9%	15%	17%	9%	11%
61-90 minutes	10%	12%	13%	9%	1%	1%	10%	1%	1%
91-120 minutes	8%	7%	12%	22%	1%	0%	20%	0%	0%
121+ minutes	2%	2%	5%	29%	2%	0%	25%	1%	0%



References

- 1 Schools Workforce Census 2010-2015 – <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/NATRE%20Report%20on%20the%20provision%20for%20RE%20SWF%20for%20SOTN%202017%20final4%20130917.pdf>.
- 2 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 3 Schools Workforce Census 2010-2015 – <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/NATRE%20Report%20on%20the%20provision%20for%20RE%20SWF%20for%20SOTN%202017%20final4%20130917.pdf>.
- 4 School survey, Question 13 – See Appendix 1.
- 5 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 6 Schools Workforce Census 2010-2015 – <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/NATRE%20Report%20on%20the%20provision%20for%20RE%20SWF%20for%20SOTN%202017%20final4%20130917.pdf>.
- 7 School survey, Question 13 – See Appendix 1.
- 8 Schools Workforce Census 2010-2015 – <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/NATRE%20Report%20on%20the%20provision%20for%20RE%20SWF%20for%20SOTN%202017%20final4%20130917.pdf>.
- 9 Register of Regulated Qualifications (<https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>): The Ofqual register of qualifications that sets out that pupils that follow a GCSE Full course should expect to receive between 120 and 140 hours of classroom teaching over the course which equates to approximately 10% of curriculum time.
- 10 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 11 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 12 GCSE Entries Findings, <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>.
- 13 GCSE Entries Findings, <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>.
- 14 School survey, Question 13 – See Appendix 1.
- 15 GCSE Entries Findings, <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>.
- 16 GCSE Entries Findings, <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>.
- 17 A Review of Religious Education in England: The Religious Education Council of England and Wales, October 2013, pg.15.
- 18 School Standards and Framework Act 1998:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/pdfs/ukpga_19980031_en.pdf
- 19 Church of England schools generally follow their locally agreed syllabus, which is why the SIAMS inspections do not inspect RE specifically (Core Q 3) although do look at it in Core Q 1 - the impact of RE on the Christian distinctiveness of the school and SMSC.
- 20 Section 80(2)(a), Education Act 2002.
- 21 Religious Education in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010, page 10:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf
- 22 Section 375, Education Act 1996.
- 23 Schedule 19(3), School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 24 Schedule 19(2), School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 25 RE and Collective Worship in Academies and Free Schools -Department for Education FAQs.

- 26 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 27 GCSE Entries Findings, GCSE Entries Findings,
<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>.
- 28 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 29 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 30 School survey, Question 1 – See Appendix 1.
- 31 School survey, Question 2 – See Appendix 1.
- 32 School survey, Question 19 – See Appendix 1.
- 33 School survey, Question 19 – See Appendix 1.
- 34 School survey, Question 19 – See Appendix 1.
- 35 Engaging students in high quality and challenging religious education: Broughton Business and Enterprise College, Ofsted Case Study, 2013. Link:
http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/Broughton_Business_and_Enterprise_Co.pdf
- 36 Register of Regulated Qualifications: <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>.
- 37 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 38 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 39 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 40 School survey, Question 19 - See Appendix 1.
- 41 GCSE Entries Findings, <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/GCSE%20RS%20entries%20analysis%20over%20time%20final3%20130917.pdf>..
- 42 School survey, Question 13 – See Appendix 1.
- 43 School survey, Question 12 – See Appendix 1.
- 44 <https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/School%20workforce%20survey%202015%20report%20301016.pdf>
- 45 Schools with a religious character
- 46 Link: <http://www.teachre.co.uk/teach-re-course/>



Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

INTERFAITH WEEK UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To receive an update on Interfaith week.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note that this year's Inter Faith Week will take place from Sunday 12 - Sunday 19 November 2017.

2.2 To note any actions already planned by other organisations.

2.3 To consider the report attached at Appendix xA on last year's Interfaith Week.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To encourage participation and understanding of the Interfaith week.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, the item is for discussion.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 What is Interfaith Week?

Inter Faith Week:

Highlights the good work done by local faith, inter faith and faith-based groups and organisations

Draws new people into inter faith learning and cooperation

Enables greater interaction between people of different backgrounds

Helps develop integrated and neighbourly communities

Celebrates diversity and commonality

Opens new possibilities for partnership

Building good relationships and working partnerships between people of different faith beliefs is part of the year-round work of many people and organisations across the UK. Having a special Week provides a focal point, helping to open inter faith activity up to a wider audience so that more and more people are made aware of the importance of this vital work and are able to participate in it.

The aims of the week will be

- Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

This year's Interfaith Week takes place between the 12 and 19 November 2017. Attached for members' information at Appendix 8a is information published by Interfaith week organisers on success stories from last year's week.

Members of the SACRE are invited to update the SACRE on any activities already planned for the week by their organisations.

5.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

5.3 List of Appendices:

Appendix 8a: Interfaith Week stories from 2016 and Inspiration for 2017

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 <https://www.interfaithweek.org/about>

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Inter Faith Week

Stories from 2016, inspiration for 2017



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Department for
Communities and
Local Government

FRONT COVER PHOTOS

Top left: Participants at the 3FF Parlia Mentors' Youth Interfaith Summit discussing 'Faith on Campus' (Photo: 3FF)

Top middle: Participants at a multi faith football tournament organised by Shapla Sports and Sporting Equals in Bradford to mark Inter Faith Week (Photo: Shapla Sports)

Top right: Noor-ul-Islam and Waltham Forest Faith Communities Forum's 'Interfaith Friends Dinner' (Photo: IFN)

Bottom left: Attendees at a Slough Faith Partnership Inter Faith Week event (Photo: Slough Faith Partnership)

Bottom middle: Organisers at the 'Indian Soldiers' event at the Zoroastrian Centre, Harrow, held by Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe and the Golden Tours Foundation (Photo: V Kumar Photography)

Bottom right: A tour of Bristol Progressive Synagogue as part of Bristol Multi Faith Forum's 'Faith Walks' (Photo: IFN)

Design: Tattersall Hammarling & Silk Ltd

The Inter Faith Network for the UK

Inter Faith Week is a programme of the Inter Faith Network for the UK.

The Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN) was founded in 1987 to “advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of the different faith communities in Britain, including an awareness both of their distinctive features and their common ground and to promote good relations between persons of different faiths.”

IFN's role is unique: linking national faith community representative bodies, local, regional and national inter faith bodies, academic and educational bodies with a focus on inter faith or multi-faith issues and working with them to deepen inter faith understanding and cooperation as part of working for the common good.

IFN carries out its work through raising awareness within wider society of the importance of inter faith issues, creating opportunities for linking and sharing of good practice, and providing advice and information to help the development of new inter faith initiatives and the strengthening of existing ones. Inter Faith Week is one of IFN's major programmes.

IFN works for the public benefit and its wide ranging activity touches the lives of many thousands of people directly and through the organisations and initiatives with which it engages. Working with its member bodies is an important part of this. Each of those makes its own contribution to inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK.

To find out more or to make a donation to support IFN's work of promoting inter faith understanding and cooperation, please visit www.interfaith.org.uk.

Inter Faith Week

Stories from 2016, inspiration for 2017



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Inter Faith Week 2016

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“Inter faith understanding and cooperation are a vital part of living well together in our increasingly diverse United Kingdom. Inter Faith Week is an excellent time to highlight this and to widen involvement in joint social action projects, dialogue and learning.”

THE TRUSTEES OF THE INTER FAITH NETWORK

RESPECT EDUCATION DIALOGUE INTEGRITY VALUES
COMMUNITY COOPERATION DISTINCTIVENESS ACTION
BELONGING COMMON GOOD FAITH UNDERSTANDING
NEIGHBOURLINES STACKLING PREJUDICE RESPECT

Foreword

Inter Faith Week is a time each year when the spotlight falls on faith and belief and on the importance of inter faith understanding and cooperation. It is a special time for creating new connections, tackling prejudice and suspicion, deepening mutual understanding and making common cause for the benefit of our neighbourhoods and wider society.

This short report celebrates Inter Faith Week 2016, which took place from 13-20 November. This was the ninth such Week in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with more events than ever before. As usual it was also a time for finding out more about each others' faiths and beliefs, getting involved in practical multi faith social action projects and enjoying many cultural and social events. And in a year which saw spikes in hate crime and many challenges, the Week was also a chance for many to lift up their commitment to a shared society characterised by neighbourliness that resists the wedges of division.

We hope you will be inspired to take part in the next Inter Faith Week, and that the Week can continue to grow and to help draw even more people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved.

The Inter Faith Network is grateful to all who contributed to the production of this report by providing photographs and quotations, and for reporting on their experiences of the Week, whether through an online survey or in other ways.

Most of all, IFN is grateful to those who took part in the Week and ensured that its message reached a wider audience than ever before.

Inter Faith Week 2017 will take place from Sunday 12 November to Sunday 19 November. This booklet ends with links to resources to plan your event. We do hope that you will take part!

From the Co-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK



Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE and Jatinder Singh Birdi, Co-Chairs, Inter Faith Network (Photo: Myles Fisher for IFN)

About Inter Faith Week

www.interfaithweek.org

The Week is supported and led by the Inter Faith Network as part of its overall work to support the development and deepening of cooperation and good relations between people of different faiths in the UK, working with the Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum and the Inter-faith Council for Wales.¹

Inter Faith Week takes place every November. Its aims are to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

Inter Faith Week was initiated in 2009 by the Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN), in partnership for the first year with the Department for Communities and Local Government. It is marked each November in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, in the second or third week. The Week drew inspiration from the pioneering Scottish Interfaith Week, led by Interfaith Scotland, which has run since 2004 and with which it works in close relationship.

“We are greatly enriched by the diversity of faiths that call our country home, all of whom play an integral part in their local communities. Inter Faith Week is a terrific way for people to learn from one another and celebrate the tremendous amount we have in common.”

LORD BOURNE OF ABERYSTWYTH, MINISTER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAITH AND INTEGRATION AND COHESION AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

“Inter Faith Week is all about bringing people together to help improve understanding of different faiths and share what we have in common.”

THE RT HON SAJID JAVID MP, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

“Inter Faith Week is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the incredible diversity and richness of faith communities in Britain. It is also a chance for people of all faiths to come together and to highlight the invaluable contribution they collectively make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society.”

THE RT HON THERESA MAY MP, PRIME MINISTER

¹ In 2016, for the first time, Scottish Interfaith Week took place at the same time as the Week elsewhere in the UK, and the website listed events in all four nations.

Inter Faith Week 2016 – a big impact

Inter Faith Week 2016 was the biggest Week to date. 573 events are known to have taken place across England, Northern Ireland and Wales. 70 events took place in the same week to mark Scottish Interfaith Week.

Thousands of people took part in these events, many of which involved several different activities.

The importance of the Week in the words of participants...

“I believe events like Inter Faith Week are very important in terms of promoting cohesion and understanding between different communities and faith groups.”

CEO, KENT EQUALITY COHESION COUNCIL

“Participation seems to be increasing year on year, with an ever-widening range of activities linked to the Week. From Facebook postings we can see that this has really taken off nationwide.”

GUILDFORD & GODALMING INTERFAITH FORUM

“The Week allowed not only an opportunity to get involved in activities with colleagues who are members of different faiths, but equally as importantly the activities provided an excellent forum to talk to others who we might not normally get to.”

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

“The most important thing about Inter Faith Week is the opportunity it provides to learn about and celebrate the diversity of religions in Northern Ireland today.”

LOCAL AUTHORITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

“Inter Faith Week encourages you to link with other faith based organisations to jointly work on a project and organise activities. It bonds people of different faiths together for the common good.”

ZOROASTRIAN TRUST FUNDS OF EUROPE

“It is the highlight of the whole year.”

PRESTON FAITH FORUM

“Inter Faith Week is all about bringing communities together to celebrate our differences and our similarities. It’s about working together, developing new partnerships and new friendships, gaining greater understanding of one another and what is important to each other. Inter Faith Week is about inclusion.”

PAGAN FEDERATION MEMBER WRITING IN PAGAN DAWN

“National Inter Faith Week gives us a further opportunity to cement and enhance the work we do in Bolton.”

BOLTON INTERFAITH COUNCIL

A fantastic spread of events

Activities which took place during the Week were wide-ranging. They included: multi faith Remembrance events; peace and non-violence events; activities highlighting the arts, culture and music of the UK's faith communities; celebrations and festivals; pilgrimages, walks, faith trails and open door days; dialogues and discussions; events at higher and further education institutions; those promoting increased religious literacy; school activities; social action projects; sporting activities; women's events; those held by local authorities and public agencies; national events and initiatives and special projects in the media, online and on social media.

Events took place in many different kinds of places: places of worship; schools; campuses; libraries; civic buildings; museums; outdoor spaces such as woods; sports grounds and even inside the Houses of Parliament.

In several towns and cities, such as York, Birmingham, Norwich, Leicester and Southampton, a whole week-long programme of events was organised.

This short report gives a flavour of the events. For more detailed information visit www.interfaithweek.org/resources/2016-snapshots.



To view a report of events and activities that took place to mark Scottish Interfaith Week, visit www.interfaithscotland.org/scottish-interfaith-week.

“The events of Inter Faith Week are public indicators of Britain’s substantial interethnic and interfaith solidarity all fifty-two weeks of the year.”

PROFESSOR ELEANOR NESBITT, LSE BLOG



Visitors to York Mosque during Inter Faith Week pose for a photograph (Photo: York Interfaith Group)

“Inter Faith Week is a high profile burst of activity which transcends religious & cultural barriers. Against a backdrop of increased anxiety, Inter Faith Week allows us to get to know people we wouldn't normally meet.”

IFN MEMBER BODY

Events Map



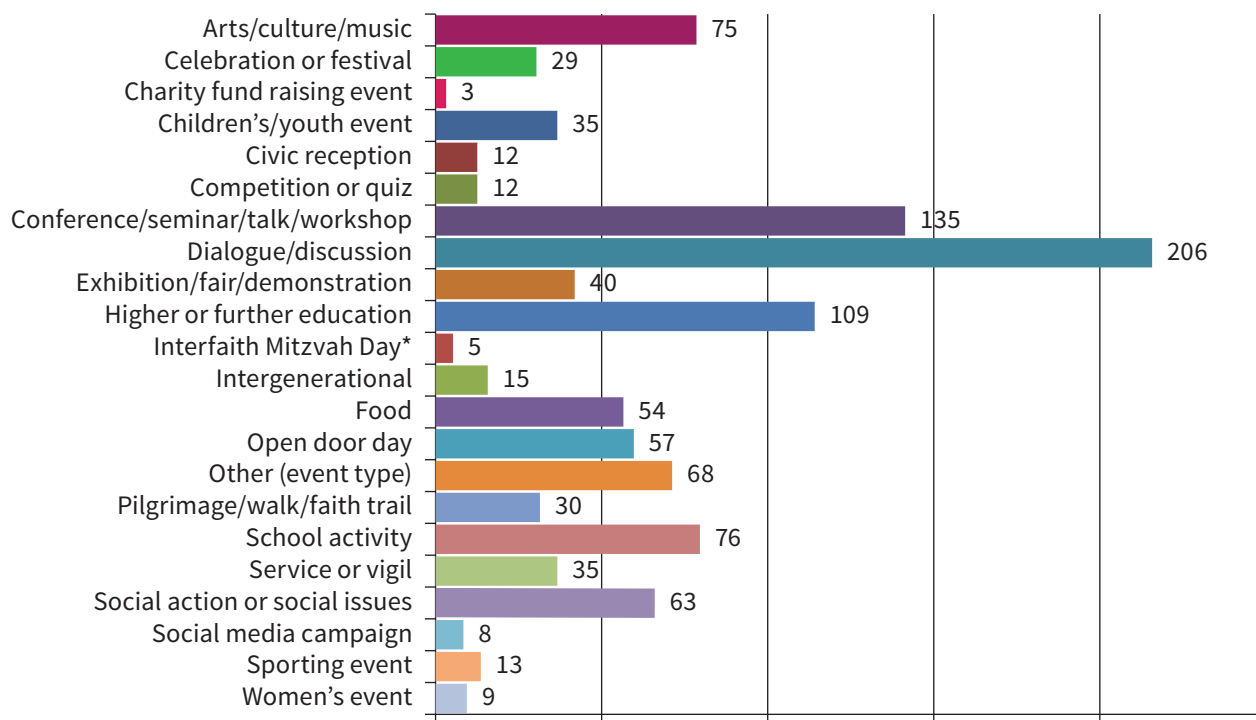
A map showing the location of all events that took place to mark Inter Faith Week 2016 in England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Types of event

A wide variety of events are known by IFN to have taken place to mark Inter Faith Week 2016. The chart below shows the number and types of events held in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is based on the categories of event on the Inter Faith Week website event submission form.²

The category 'other' has been used to describe 68 events such as radio broadcasts, film screenings and awards ceremonies.

Inter Faith Week 2016 – Types of Event



*Mitzvah Day 2016 took place on Sunday 27 November. Because this year it fell a week after Inter Faith Week, its many events with an inter faith dimension are not included (as they were in previous years). However, a small number of Mitzvah Day events which were held early, during Inter Faith Week, are reflected in the chart above.

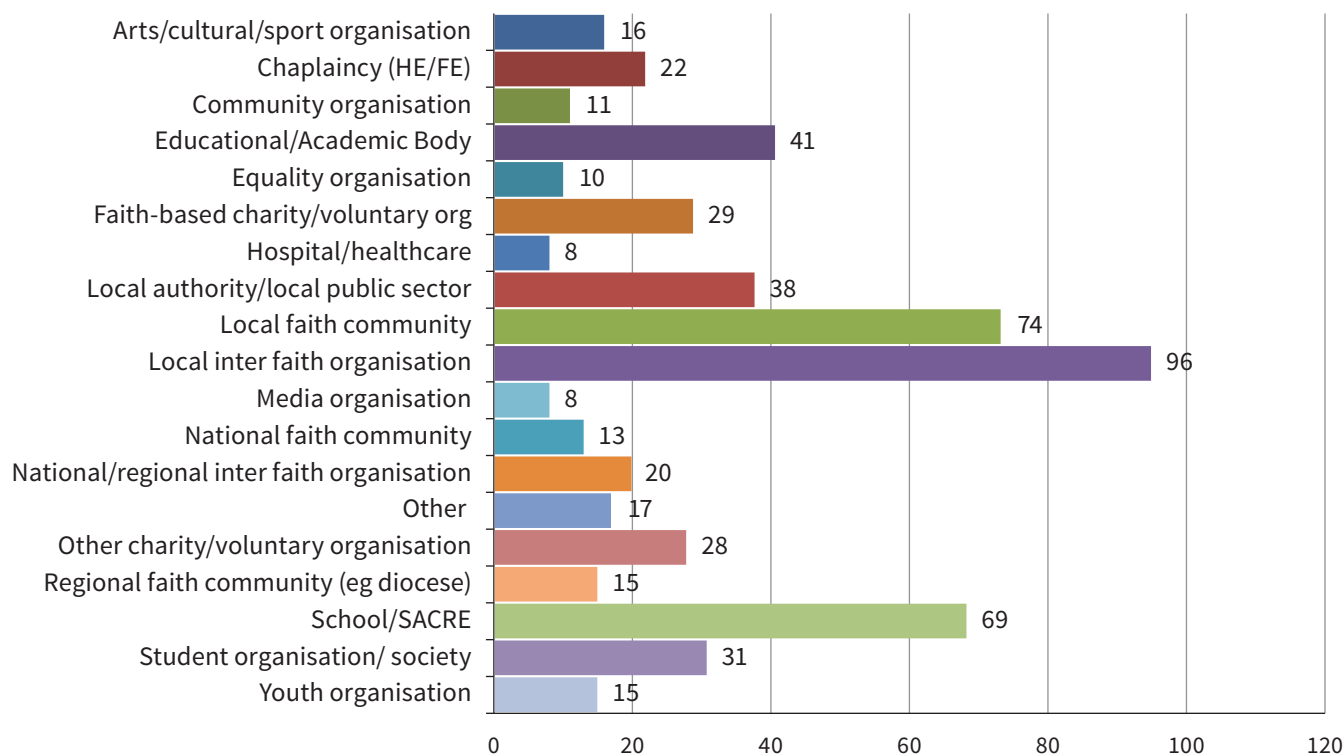
² Events can be assigned to multiple categories, so the total is not equal to the total number of events.

Who marked the Week?

The 573 events that took place to mark the Week in England, Wales and Northern Ireland involved over 560 organisations of many kinds. The chart below gives a breakdown of those known to have organised events.³

In addition to those organisations that directly contributed to events, others are known to have supported the Week by encouraging participation. This includes media organisations; professional bodies; sports bodies; prominent individuals and SACREs among others.

Types of organisations marking Inter Faith Week 2016



³ Organisations are listed according to their main characteristic

Multi Faith remembrance and peace events

The Inter Faith Network Board of Trustees decided that Inter Faith Week 2016 would begin on Remembrance Sunday, encouraging people of different backgrounds to mark it together, particularly at this time of commemorating World War I in which people of many faiths and beliefs served.

Remembrance events

A number of Inter Faith Week multi faith remembrance events took place, some in places of worship, some at war memorials and in other public spaces. Many organisations were involved. There were also events that focused on particular aspects of remembrance, such as the historic contribution of ethnic minority soldiers.



Attendees at a multi faith Remembrance Service at the Gurdwara Gur Panth Parkash, Leicester during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Sikh Welfare and Cultural Society)



Servicemen and women at an event in Smethwick to remember the contributions of people of many faiths, beliefs and nationalities that served the UK during times of war (Photo: Ruth Burgess)



Organisers at the 'Indian Soldiers' event at the Zoroastrian Centre, Heron, held by Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe and the Golden Tours Foundation (Photo: V Kumar Photography)



Participants at an East Northants Faith Group and Northampton Inter Faith Forum walk during Inter Faith Week, which included an act of remembrance (Photo: Northampton Inter Faith Forum)



Caption: Attendees in discussion at a Stafford and District Friends of Faith 'Festival of Peace' during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Stafford and District Friends of Faith)

Peace events

Some events were also organised with a focus on peace or non-violence through services and vigils or celebrations and festivals.



A candle for peace at 'Space for Peace', an event held at the Vedic Society Hindu Temple, Southampton (Photo: The Parkes Institute at the University of Southampton)

National events

A number of 'national' level events took place, along with events that reflected a UK-wide focus, such as the launches of a number of projects or parliamentary events. The Week was also chosen by some national faith communities and other bodies as the time to launch a number of significant initiatives.



Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid MP speaking at an event held by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society during Inter Faith Week



Attendees with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth at the launch of the 'In Good Faith' initiative during Inter Faith Week (Photo: [Leanne O'Pride](#))



Caption: Members of the Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum meeting the Lord Mayor of Belfast during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum)



The All Party Parliamentary Interfaith Group with the Inter Faith Network, Inter Faith Week event at the Houses of Parliament, Westminster (Photo: IFN)

Social action and social issues

Inter Faith Week is a time of the year that brings faith communities together, and many choose to celebrate through practical cooperation for the common good.

An array of multi faith social action events took place. Popular initiatives included helping the homeless; campaigning for environmental change; improving public spaces; and action to support refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

A huge variety of organisations took part, including places of worship; national faith community bodies; inter faith bodies; voluntary organisations such as those working with refugees and the homeless and public agencies. Some organisations and projects, such as Near Neighbours programme of the Church Urban Fund and the Church of England, organised and encouraged events held by many others.

Mitzvah Day took place close to Inter Faith Week and some inter faith Mitzvah Day activities were held early, during the Week. Mitzvah Day is led by the Jewish community and is one of three annual major days of faith-linked social action throughout the year, along with Sewa Day and Sadaqa Day which fall earlier in the year.



A multi faith tree planting organised by Wakefield Interfaith Group
(Photo: Wakefield Interfaith Group)



Members of Northampton Inter Faith Forum and the Midland Langar Sewa Society serving food and donating clothing to the needy (Photo: Northampton Inter Faith Forum)



Members of Leicester City Council's 'Interfaith Taskforce' on a social action project (Photo: Leicester City Council)



A 'Walk of Witness' in solidarity with refugees in Plymouth. (Photo: Diocese of Exeter)



Tulip Siddiq MP and others cooking at the Jewish Arts, Culture and Community Centre as part of Mitzvah Day and Inter Faith Week (Photo: Mitzvah Day)

Arts, culture and music

Inter Faith Week provided a great opportunity for events showcasing the arts, culture and music of faith communities across the UK.

People also used art, culture and music to remind one another of the things that unite people of different faiths, and to explore and display harmony and common ground.

Members of the public experienced the art, culture and music of faith communities by visiting a place of worship or going on a faith trail. People of different faiths also came together to produce art as part of a joint social action project to raise awareness of issues such as hate crime, or the refugee crisis.



Attendee at the awards ceremony of the 'Faith Through a Lens' photography competition, which takes place annually during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Faith Through a Lens/Congregational Insurance)



Right: Participants at a 'Day of Craft for Women' in Feltham, West London, organised by Hounslow Friends of Faith (Photo: Hounslow Friends of Faith)

Left: Storytelling as part of the Jewish Museum's Inter Faith Week 'Inter Faith Celebration Day', London (Photo: Jewish Museum London)

Discussion and debate

Inter Faith Week saw many events encouraging dialogue, discussion and debate between people of different faiths and beliefs.

These included informal discussion or exploration of particular commonalities and differences. In a number of cases, a 'debate' format was used to explore different perspectives on challenging issues.



Participants in discussion during a Council of Christians and Jews dialogue on the story of Cain and Abel, held at the London School of Economics (Photo: CCJ)



Panellists at an Interfaith 'Question Time' organised by Cardiff University Chaplaincy (Photo: Cardiff University Chaplaincy)



Participants at the 3FF Parlia Mentors' youth Interfaith Summit discussing 'Faith on Campus' (Photo: 3FF)



An Inter Faith Week panel discussion at Blue Coat School, Coventry (Photo: Blue Coat School)

Sharing and learning

Inter Faith Week provides a great opportunity to increase religious literacy. Many events advance awareness, as people learn more about one another's beliefs and something of the contribution that others make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society. This happens through conversation, dialogues, visits to places of worship, hands on learning experiences and more.

Faith communities opened their doors for people of other backgrounds and the public to come in and learn about different traditions, and places of worship. Faith-based organisations and local inter faith groups invited speakers in to increase awareness of a particular tradition or traditions. Some also chose to learn about other faiths by going on a pilgrimage, walk, or faith trail.



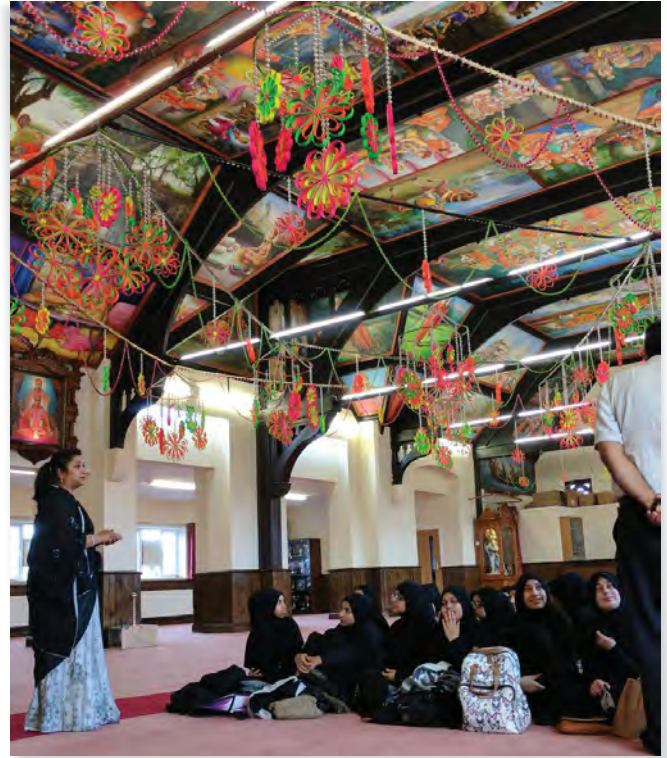
A 'Speed Faithing' event organised by Leeds University Student Union during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Leeds University Interfaith)



A YouTube video produced by the London Boroughs Faiths Network in support of the Mayor of London's #LondonIsOpen campaign. The video can be watched at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bExx8ZzfAnw. (Photo: London Boroughs Faiths Network)



Students from Edge Hill University visit the Guru Harkrishan Sahib Gurdwara in Manchester during Inter Faith Week (Photo: Paul Smalley)



Pupils from Bolton Muslim Girls' School on a Faith Trail during Inter Faith Week organised by Bolton Interfaith Council (Photo: Bolton Muslim Girls' School)



A tour of Bristol Progressive Synagogue as part of Bristol Multi Faith Forum's 'Faith Walks' (Photo: IFN)



Police officers from Surrey Police in conversation during a visit to Wat Phra Dammakaya

Celebrating

For many participants, Inter Faith Week was a time to celebrate the diversity of their communities, the contributions that faith groups make to their localities or particular achievements such as those of young people.

Celebratory events were held by such bodies as inter faith organisations; local inter faith groups; local authorities; schools; higher and further education institutions and faith communities themselves. Some events celebrated particular themes such as 'unity' or 'peace', while others saw faith communities welcoming members of the public in to celebrate a particular festival or occasion.

Some events also included awards ceremonies, where those that have made a particular impact were recognised and their work celebrated.

“Inter Faith Week ... is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the work done by local faith and interfaith groups, increase awareness of interfaith learning and cooperation, celebrate diversity and commonality and open up new avenues for communication and partnership.”

Baha’i Community of the UK



An Inter Faith Week event at the London Buddhist Vihara (Photo: Amal Abeyawardene)



A shared meal at an Inter Faith Week 'Interfaith Friends Dinner' in East London organised by Waltham Forest Faith Communities Forum and Noor-ul-Islam (Photo: Waltham Forest Faith Communities Forum)



School pupils light candles as part of the Birmingham Council of Faiths Inter Faith Week launch held at Birmingham City Hall (Photo: Birmingham Council of Faiths)



Above: Attendees in discussion at the Portsmouth University Chaplaincy's 'Festival of Light' (Photo: Portsmouth University Chaplaincy)

Left: A stall representing the Pagan community at the Inter Faith Week 'Light for Leeds' exhibition at Kirkstall Abbey



Students from Bradford University on a Faith Walk (Photo: Bradford University Chaplaincy)

Sporting events

Sport is increasingly seen as a good way to bring people of different faiths and beliefs together, fostering community cohesion and mutual respect between people of different faiths. A number of Inter Faith Week sports events brought people together to enjoy each other's company and learn from one another. These were organised by local inter faith groups, sports clubs, charities such as Sporting Equals, Shapla and The Feast, university Students' Unions or faith and belief societies as well as faith communities.

Sports played during Inter Faith Week included football, badminton, netball, swimming, volleyball, tennis and dodgeball.



The Ryman League promoting Inter Faith Week on Facebook

Sports grounds were also used as event venues: for example the stadium of Rochdale FC, and a number of clubs and leagues helped to raise awareness of the Week.

(Right) An inter-school sports challenge organised by The Feast at Eden Boys' School, Birmingham



Participants at a multi faith football tournament organised by Shapla Sports and Sporting Equals in Bradford to mark Inter Faith Week (Photo: Shapla Sports)



Publicity for the Week

The Inter Faith Network for the UK publicised the Week across the months leading up to it, using a dedicated website www.interfaithweek.org, target mailings, a widely distributed flyer and social media.

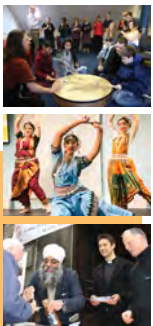
Event organisers publicised their events online and with many colourful flyers and posters, a selection of which can be seen below:

Inter Faith Week 2016

13–20 November



An opportunity to:


- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs



**REFLECT/DEBATE/
COOPERATE/LEARN/
QUESTION/RESPECT/
APPRECIATE/MAKE
FRIENDS/CELEBRATE**

www.interfaithweek.org

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:
 [facebook.com/IFWeek](https://www.facebook.com/IFWeek)
  [@IFWeek](https://twitter.com/IFWeek)



Posters from (left to right): York Interfaith Group; Newcastle University Students' Union; Cherwell District Council; Lancashire Police Chaplaincy; Nishkam Centre; Sporting Equals; As-Suffa Institute; BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir; Near Neighbours; Methodist Church London District; University of Gloucestershire; Middlesex University Students' Union



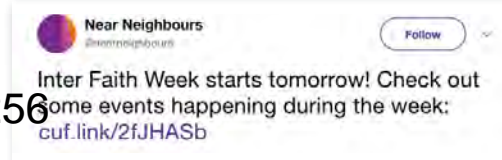
Social media and online

Inter Faith Week 2016 was marked by a high social media buzz, and the week was also promoted through the Inter Faith Week website, www.interfaithweek.org.

Inter Faith Week was active on Twitter and Facebook in the build up to the Week and throughout the Week itself. Inter Faith Week tweets @IFWeek and is on Facebook at 'Inter Faith Week'.

On Twitter, use of the hashtag #ifweek was encouraged. In total, tweets about the Week reached 5.9 million Twitter users, the most to date, registering around 19.7 million impressions. On Facebook, people were encouraged to 'like' the Inter Faith Week page.

Some examples of tweets shared during the Week are below:





“The #IFWeek hashtag was well used and the @IFWeek account was busy from before the Week started and a great source of quick information & photos. Linking to the Facebook page was also good. Connecting on social media created a 'festival' atmosphere, bringing together many different activities and groups.”

LONDON BOROUGH'S FAITHS NETWORK

In addition, a new Inter Faith Week website was launched on the first day of the Week, which can be visited at www.interfaithweek.org. This includes additional ways to view event information, a simpler event submission form and improved security. The website is also fully compatible with mobile and tablet devices. The website is packed with information and ideas about how to get involved in the Week.

During 2016, the Inter Faith Week website saw the highest number of unique visits, and first time visits to date, with over 20,000 people visiting the site including 8,179 page views during the Week itself.



Traditional media

The impact of events held for Inter Faith Week is significantly increased by media coverage. Hearing about and seeing images from events encourages people to take part and also to plan events for the coming year. It also prompts some people to consider getting involved in inter faith activity for the first time.

As noted in the preceding pages, Inter Faith Week 2016 was widely publicised on social media, and this was a significant growth area. The Week also continued to receive good coverage from traditional media, particularly from local news organisations, and faith and cultural news outlets. In addition, a number of people and organisations blogged about the Week, such as a series of blog posts featured in the Jewish News.

PRESS CLIPPINGS (TOP TO BOTTOM)

[An article on Inter Faith Week from the Sunderland Echo](#)

[A report on an Inter Faith Week event by the Ely Standard](#)

[A report on the Week in the Bolton News](#)

[A report on an Inter Faith Week event in Norwich from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Newsroom](#)

[A blog on Inter Faith Week in the Huffington Post](#)

[A Jewish News Inter Faith Week blog](#)

Interfaith Week celebrates diversity and vibrancy of Sunderland's religious communities

Cambs Fire & Rescue station commander visits Witchford Village College as part of Inter Faith Week

PUBLISHED: 16:51 18 November 2016 | UPDATED: 16:51 18 November 2016 [Ben Jolley](#)

12th November 2016

Bolton celebrates Interfaith Week with those of all faiths and none

Norwich Joins in National Interfaith Week

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Norwich, Norfolk area recently took part in the National Interfaith Week by holding a sports event at the chapel, participating in a progressive meal at various places of worship in the city and joining an Interfaith Choir. The choir performed at the Norwich Anglican Cathedral and featured representatives from many faiths, including Buddhist, Jewish, Church of England and Spiritualist.

MULTIMEDIA



THE BLOG

Interfaith Week: The Value Of Religious Dialogue In An Increasingly Secular Age

© 22/11/2016 12:18

Building strong friendships between Britain's faith communities

Scottish Interfaith Week

Scottish Interfaith Week has taken place since 2004 and is led by Interfaith Scotland with great success.

The theme for Scottish Interfaith Week 2016 was 'Religion and the Media'. 70 events took place across Scotland.

For more information about Scottish Interfaith Week, visit www.interfaithscotland.org/scottish-interfaith-week/.

Scottish Interfaith Week and Inter Faith Week work closely together and in 2016 their dates were the same.



 **InterfaithScot**
@InterfaithScot

[Follow](#)

Tune in now to [@BBCRadioScot](#) to hear Dr Maureen Sier speak about [@InterfaithWeek](#)



Photographs from the launch of Scottish Interfaith Week 2016, Page 259 (Photos: Interfaith Scotland)

Inter Faith Week 2017

Inter Faith Week 2017 will take place from 12-19 November in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scottish Interfaith Week will also take place during the same week.

We hope that this short report has inspired you to take part in the Week this year, either by attending an event or becoming an event organiser.

Join the many faith, belief and inter faith bodies, community and voluntary organisations, workplaces, local authorities, emergency services, SACREs, schools, colleges, universities, chaplaincies, sports organisations and others who will be taking part this year! The Week runs from a Sunday to a Sunday, beginning on Remembrance Sunday.

FIND OUT MORE

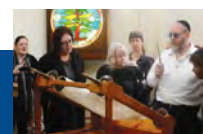
Visit www.interfaithweek.org/about

To register an event for 2017, go to www.interfaithweek.org/events/submit

Follow Inter Faith Week on Twitter through [@IFWeek](https://twitter.com/IFWeek) or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/IFWeek

Inter Faith Week 2017

12–19 November



An opportunity to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

REFLECT/DEBATE/
COOPERATE/LEARN/
QUESTION/RESPECT/
APPRECIATE/MAKE
FRIENDS/CELEBRATE

www.interfaithweek.org

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:
[facebook.com/IFWeek](https://www.facebook.com/IFWeek) [@IFWeek](https://twitter.com/IFWeek)



Three great resources

The Inter Faith Week Toolkit

A special new resource was developed for Inter Faith Week to encourage even more people to take part and give them tips and ideas for doing so.

The Inter Faith Week Toolkit is packed with suggestions for marking the Week as well as examples and illustrations drawn from the many successful activities held for the Week to date. It can be downloaded at www.interfaithweek.org/resources/toolkit



The second resource produced with a link to the Week is:

Inter Faith Learning, Dialogue and Cooperation: Next Steps

This was published immediately after Inter Faith Week 2016 as a resource for people who have attended an event or followed the Week on social media and want to get further involved in inter faith activity.

The booklet was developed with the member bodies of the Inter Faith Network and includes information and pointers about different ways to get further involved with inter faith activity. *Next Steps* can be downloaded at www.interfaithweek.org/resources/next-steps



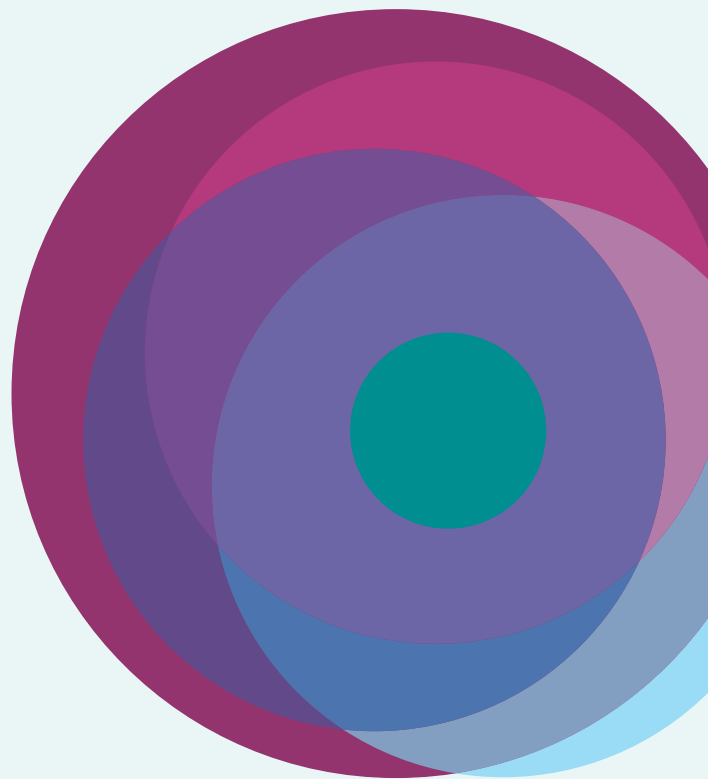
A third resource that readers may find useful is:

Let's Talk: Practical pointers for inter faith dialogue

This was published by the Inter Faith Network in March 2017 as a resource for those wishing to deepen their engagement with inter faith activity by getting involved in dialogue with people of different faiths and beliefs.

The booklet offers some short reflections and examples drawn from the work of IFN and its member bodies, with the aim of inspiring and encouraging further discussion and engagement. It contains practical pointers for dialogue, and includes sections on some of the practicalities of dialogue, such as what may make for effective and successful dialogues and how difficult issues may best be approached. *Let's Talk* can be downloaded at www.interfaith.org.uk/uploads/LetsTalk2017web.pdf

Hard copies of all three publications are available on request from the IFN office.



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Department for
Communities and
Local Government



Report to:	SACRE
Relevant Officer:	Amanda Whitehead, Head of Schools, Standards and Effectiveness
Date of Meeting:	8 November 2017

BLACKPOOL SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider and approve the draft annual report for the SACRE.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the draft annual report.

2.2 To agree any further actions for the completion of the annual report.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To further progress the annual report of the SACRE.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 Background Information

5.1 It is a requirement of best practice that SACRE's produce an annual report. In view of the lack of meetings and business of the SACRE over the last few years- this has not taken place. The attached document at Appendix 9a is a draft report covering the period from 2015-16 academic year including updated information.

5.2 The annual report includes a number of key areas that are required: the Role of SACRE, Religious Education in schools and the Effectiveness and Delivery of the Agreed Syllabus. The Committee's views are requested on any additional information or work to be undertaken in completing the annual report.

5.3 The Committee is requested to agree a small sub-group to complete an update of the annual report for its submission to NASACRE and the Department for Education.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

Appendix 9a: Draft Annual Report

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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The Annual Report of the Blackpool Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

2015 - 2016



Blackpool: A fair place where aspiration and ambition are encouraged

'To support pupils'
personal search for meaning by engaging enquiry
into the question
'What is it to be human?'
- exploring answers offered by religion and belief.'

Joint Lancashire and Blackpool Agreed Syllabus 2015 - 2016

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Foreword

The last years has been a period of immense change, both for Education and the Blackpool SACRE.

As we approach the time for review of the syllabus, we are also being asked to re-examine the strengths of local determination and the potential for collaboration with Lancashire SACRE.

Global and national events continue to influence our work, along with the pressures which central government apply to state education. It is therefore important that control to our role is making sense of what it is to be human, and sharing what it is we have in common, rather than what promotes division in Britain today.

Over the years SACRE Blackpool has been represented at the meetings with members from other SACREs in the northwest – this has proved to be a valuable exercise, which we hope can continue - providing ongoing support in enabling SACRE Blackpool to continue to function.

The liaison with Lancashire SACRE has meant that information and support is available to Blackpool schools and academies. The work of our teacher and headteacher members keeps us grounded in what actually works in the classroom. We acknowledge with grateful thanks also, the valuable contribution made by Helen Sage, who as chair, has stepped down after a number years on SACRE.

Whilst the meetings have been infrequent and a number of loyal and active members have retired, Blackpool SACRE continues to be representative of faith groups, schools and the local authority.

However, as we re-convene for a new academic year in 2016 – 17, with a new agreed syllabus, that we welcome new members. It is also only right that the work of the group as a whole is recognised. They continue to work hard to keep the work of SACRE visible and to spread best practice.

Role of SACRE

The role of the SACRE is:

To consider any requests from Head teachers to hold Collective Worship that is not of a broadly Christian character.

Advice

SACRE has not provided advice to the local authority on RE during the 2015/16 academic year.

SACRE has provided advice to schools through the officer to SACRE on a number of issues relating to the use of the Agreed Syllabus and their statutory duties in the teaching of RE. Schools have responded well to the advice provided.

SACRE has not given any advice to HM Government on RE during the past academic year.

Determinations

Determinations are made where a school, on behalf of a number of parents, requests Collective Worship other than that set down by statute. No such requests have been received by SACRE during the past year.

Complaints

SACRE has a role in investigating complaints against schools in relation to RE and Collective Worship. No such complaints were received in the past year.

Support for SACRE

NNW SACRE and NA SACRE continue to provide support to the Blackpool SACRE when requested and has provided valuable information back to SACRE meetings via the chair or other members.

Support for schools

The SACRE officer has linked with schools/academies through the local RE network and its chair.

RE network report as incorporated into this report.

RE Quality Mark

No school achieved this award in 2015/16.

Collective Worship

No issues surrounding Collective Worship have been submitted to SACRE.

Contribution to the wider diversity agendas

Prevent agenda incorporated in report.

SRE and D & A are delivered through an SOW organised by public health. Schools/academies interpret the moral arguments to these through SMSC, RE and tutor sessions.

Community Cohesion

British Values is supported in schools through SMSC.

LANCS SACRE

During the year, Lancashire SACRE continued to host support and training to raise issues of common concern and share good practice and ways of working together.

DRAFT

SACRE Frequently Asked Questions*

What is SACRE?

The acronym SACRE stands for the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Why is there a SACRE?

Every local authority has to have a SACRE by law. In 1944, local education authorities (LEAs) were given the chance to set up a SACRE, if they so wished. In 1988, all LEAs were required to have a SACRE.

What does a SACRE do?

There is no other group anywhere else like the SACRE; it is unique. The law says that RE must be taught in all schools and a SACRE's role is to advise its local authority on what needs to be done to improve religious education (RE) and collective worship for schools in its area.

Who attends the SACRE meeting?

A SACRE is set up to represent a balance of all the interests of the local community. Blackpool's SACRE has elected councillors, representatives of local faith communities, teachers and head teachers, at its SACRE meetings.

What are a SACRE's duties?

The SACRE's main function is to advise the local authority on matters related to the religious education, which follows the locally agreed syllabus, and on collective worship in schools.

What is a locally agreed syllabus?

The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory document for RE in the local authority. It sets out what should be taught to pupils in all key stages and the standards expected of them at the end of each key stage. It was reviewed in 2011 and produced in partnership with Lancashire SACRE. It is presently being reviewed for 2016 for the next five years.

What else can a SACRE do?

A SACRE's broad role is to support good RE and collective worship within Blackpool's community schools.

How is this report compiled?

During the four full SACRE meetings held annually the SACRE receives reports regarding support and monitoring of RE and Collective Worship in Community and some Voluntary Controlled schools. The information from these reports, and exam and end of key stage data, is then used to create this report.

Can this report help support my CPD?

This report highlights the support available for training, individual school consultancies, Staff INSETs and the links to the faith communities in the area.

How can this report help my school move forward with SMSC?

Blackpool SACRE is committed to working with local faith groups to support local school as they help their children understand all members of our diverse community. SACRE Blackpool also upholds the attitudes found in their locally agreed syllabus of being open minded and having respect for all. At the heart of the New agreed Syllabus for RE is the quest for understanding; "What it is to be human". The work of the SACRE supports the Field of enquiry model which allows children to consider what is of worth and who they really are.

*with thanks to NASACRE for the FAQs

Management of the SACRE and Partnership with the LA

The SACRE is advised and supported by professional and administrative staff of the Authority and its business is administered centrally through the Clerk to the SACRE.

The SACRE had a modest budget which is used to fund the following areas:

- Attendance at the NASACRE Annual Conference
- Annual subscription payment to NASACRE
- Advice and expertise from Consultants for RE

This needs to be considered in the light of local spending review and a small dedicated budget identified.

Other key stakeholders

NASACRE

The SACRE is affiliated to NASACRE. NASACRE support documents are circulated to new members and are used as the basis for training for members. Blackpool attends the NASACRE Annual Conference and the newsletter is circulated to SACRE members.

Lancashire LA

Blackpool have enjoyed a good working relationship with Lancashire, sharing best practice and most recently acting as partners to develop the new Agreed Syllabus.

AREIAC

The RE Consultant's membership of the AREIAC Trans Pennine Group provides good networking and practice sharing opportunities.

School Report

“I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand”

Confucius

Helping children not only to know a little about different faiths but to understand is a big challenge and we very much work on the principle above. So bearing that in mind, our Year 5 children learned a little more about Judaism – they heard the stories, they saw the photographs but they understood the significance of the Seder Meal when they experienced it for themselves.



Standards in Religious Education

The need for exemplification of attainment in Religious Education specific to the local Agreed Syllabus has been raised by both the Lancashire and Blackpool SACREs.

As a response to this the reviewed Agreed Syllabus contains two attainment targets based on those found in non-statutory guidance on RE (QCA 2000). This takes the format of:

Attainment target 1 - Learning about Religion and Human Experience

Attainment target 2 - Learning from Religion and Human Experience.

Each attainment target has been sub-divided into the key areas of the Field of Enquiry identified within the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. These are then given exemplification from Christianity and one other faith required to be studied by the Agreed Syllabus.

GCSE results for Blackpool Schools 2015

Religious Studies Full Course

Centre	Entries 2015	%A*-C of entry
National	295,730	72.7
Blackpool (all schools)		
Blackpool (non-church schools)		
Aspire Academy		
Highfield Academy	116	46
Montgomery Academy	7	14
South Shore Academy	54	59
Unity Academy	9	55
St.George's Church of England Academy	179	61
St.Mary's Catholic Academy	209	64

Commentary:

- Nationally GCSE RE results have improved in the number of entries and the improvement in performance (% A – C) over the last two years (71.5% 2014). In Blackpool the figure is below the national average.
- In 2015 – 16 the total number of Year 10 students taking GCSE RE locally amounted to 841 out of a possible 1237 students (68%). The main exam board is Welsh Board with one academy using AQA and another using Edexcel.
- Some academies offer a short course in RE when appropriate.

A Level RE

There have been no results for A Level reported to SACRE

DRAFT

Collective Worship

The SACRE continues to emphasise its commitment to high quality Collective Worship. Guidance and advice with regard to Collective Worship is given in line with Circular 1/94

Section 394 (1) of the Education Act

The 1996 Education Act empowers a SACRE to grant the request of a Headteacher for alternative Collective Worship, where it is considered that the nature of a pupil population makes it inappropriate to be wholly or mainly Christian. Currently Blackpool has no schools with an active determination.

Determinations

In the year of this report, the SACRE has not received any request for any determinations.

Complaints concerning Collective Worship

The LEA has received no formal complaints about the content or organisation of Collective Worship during the period of this report.

Complaints concerning Religious Education

Blackpool Council had received no formal complaints about Religious Education, under the local statutory complaints procedure, during the reporting year.

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

The functions of a SACRE are detailed in the Education Act 1996 (Section 391). They are as follows:

- To advise the local education authority upon such matters connected with religious worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the SACRE or as the SACRE may see fit.

The matters referred to above include, in particular, methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.

- To require the authority (on a vote of the representative groups of the Church of England, other denominations and teachers' associations) to review any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority by the convening of a statutory conference in accordance with the provision of Schedule 5 to the Education Act 1944 and subsequent amendments in the Education Acts 1993 and 1996.
- In each year, to publish a report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups during the preceding year. The report shall in particular:
 - Specify any matters in respect of which the SACRE has given advice to the Authority,
 - Broadly describe the nature of the advice given, and
 - Where any such matter was not referred to the SACRE by the Authority, give the SACRE's reasons for offering advice on that matter.
- In accordance with Section 394 of the Education Act 1996, to consider applications made by headteachers of county schools (subsequently, community schools without a religious character; (School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Schedule 20) whether it is appropriate for the requirements for Christian collective worship to apply in the case of a particular school, or in the case of any class or description of pupils.

Appendix 2 Constitution of the Blackpool SACRE 2012

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Construction

In this document, unless the context otherwise requires:-

“The Act” means the Education Act 1996;

“The Authority” means Blackpool Borough Council;

“SACRE” means the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education required to be established in accordance with Section 390 of the Education Act 1996;

“Representative Group” means one of the four statutory representatives groups required to be included on the SACRE by Section 390 of the Education Act 1996.

2. Composition of SACRE

The SACRE shall include representatives of the following groups:-

A. Representative Groups

As required by Section 390 of the Act SACRE is to include four representative groups as follows:-

(i) Christian and other religious denominations which appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area

(ii) The Church of England 5 representatives

(iii) Associations representing teachers 5 representatives

(iv) The Authority 5 representatives

B. Academy School Representative

Where the Authority’s agreed syllabus is in use in one or more Academy schools, the SACRE shall include a person appointed by the governing body/bodies of the schools concerned.

C. Co-opted Members

The representative groups on the SACRE may appoint a further four co-opted members.

The SACRE may make recommendations to the Authority in respect of its composition.

3. Terms of Reference

The SACRE shall have the following functions:-

- a. To advise the Authority upon such matters connected with the religious worship in Community Schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the Authority may refer to the SACRE or as the SACRE may see fit.
- b. The matters referred to in 'a' above include in particular, methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- c. The SACRE shall each year publish a report with respect to the exercise of their functions. The report shall in particular:-
 - (i) Specify any matters in respect of which the SACRE have given advice to the Authority;
 - (ii) Broadly describe the nature of the advice given; and
 - (iii) Where any such matter was not referred to the SACRE by the Authority, give the SACRE's reasons for offering advice on the matter.
- d. To require the Authority (on a vote of representative groups representing Christian denominations and other religions, the Church of England and teachers' associations) to review the agreed syllabus by convening a statutory conference in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996.
- e. In accordance with Section 387 of the Act to consider applications made by the Headteachers of Community Schools after consultation with the governing body, whether it would be appropriate for the requirement for Christian collective worship to apply in the case of a particular school, or in case of any class or description of pupils at the school.

4. Terms of Office

- a. Subject to sub-paragraph 'c' below, each member of the SACRE shall hold office for a term of four years.
- b. A member of SACRE shall be eligible to be re-appointed for a further term.
- c. The Authority may from time to time review the constitution and composition of the SACRE and any person appointed to the representative groups may be removed by the Authority.
- d. A person appointed to represent Academy Schools may be removed by the governing body or bodies which appointed that person.
- e. A person appointed as a co-opted member may be removed by the SACRE.
- f. A member of the SACRE may at any time resign his/her office.
- g. On resignation or removal by the Authority or Academy School(s), an appointed person shall be replaced by the Authority or Academy School(s) for the remainder of the term of office by another member.

5. Chairmanship

The representative groups on the SACRE shall each year, normally at their annual meeting, elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from amongst the membership of the representative groups. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will take the chair and in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman a Chairman will be elected for the meeting from amongst the members of the representative groups. The Chairman of the meeting shall not be entitled to exercise a second or casting vote.

6. Meetings

The SACRE shall hold at least one meeting per year at which the annual report shall be agreed.

7. Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the SACRE shall be six members.

8. Voting

- a. Subject to paragraph 'b' below, on any question to be decided by the SACRE, only the representative groups shall have a single vote.
- b. For the purpose of voting, each representative group will elect a spokesperson at each meeting.
- c. In the event of a formal vote being taken, votes will be cast by the nominated spokesperson for each group to consider how its vote should be cast. The meeting shall, if necessary, agree a time limit for this purpose.
- d. The single vote of each representative group shall be cast on the basis of the simple majority view within each group. A tied vote shall be treated as an abstention by that group.

9. Officers

- a. The Clerk to the SACRE shall be provided by the Chief Executive.
- b. The Director of Education shall be entitled to attend, or be represented by members of his staff at any meetings of the SACRE or any meeting of sub-groups or working parties established by the SACRE.

Appendix 3 Summary

Blackpool SACRE – 2015-17

GROUP A – Christian and other religions not including Church of England	
Roman Catholic	Mrs M Wright
Islam	Imam Ashraq Patel
Judaism	Rabbi Guttenberg
Buddhism	Kelsang Pagma
Hinduism	Dr Vasudev
Salvation Army	Major Harris
Methodist	Mrs E Savage
GROUP B - Church of England	
	Mrs H Sage
	Mr P Harrison
	Mr T Cox
	Mrs H Wilby
	Miss J Snape
GROUP C – Teacher Representations 2 vacancies	
NUT	Tammy Hackney
ASCL	TBC
NAHT	TBC
RE Network	Rebecca Binns
GROUP D – Members of the Authority	
	Cllr Blackburn
	Cllr Collett
	Cllr Jackson
	Cllr Cross
	Cllr Henderson

Other

Dave Brennand – Blackpool School Improvement Team
Lennox Beattie - Executive and Regulatory Manager

Appendix 4 Glossary

Blackpool SACRE Acronyms

AfL	Assessment for Learning
AREIAC	Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants
B & V	Beliefs and Values [Lancashire Field of Enquiry]
CfSA	Council for Subject Associations
CW	Collective Worship
D & A	Drug and Alcohol
DFE	Department for Education
EOKS	End of Key Stage
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KS	Key Stage
LAS	Local Agreed Syllabus
LRT	Living Religious Tradition [Lancashire Field of Enquiry]
NASACRE	National Association of SACREs
NATRE	National Association of Teachers of RE
[NS]NFWKRE	Non statutory National Framework for RE
NSSWk	Non Statutory Scheme of Work
OFQUAL	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
RE	Religious Education
REC	Religious Education Council
RS	Religious Studies
SACRE	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
SHE	Shared Human Experience [Lancashire Field of Enquiry]
SRE	Sex & Relationships Education
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
SOW	Scheme of work
SPM	Search for Personal Meaning [Lancashire Field of Enquiry]