

# Agenda

## Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)

Date: **Friday 29 June 2018**

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Time: **2.00 pm**

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Place: **Committee Room 1 - The Shire Hall, St. Peter's  
Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX**

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Notes: Please note the time, date and venue of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Matthew Evans, Democratic Services Officer**

Tel: 01432 383690

Email: [matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format, please call Matthew Evans, Democratic Services Officer on 01432 383690 or e-mail [matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

# **Agenda for the meeting of the Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)**

## **Membership**

**Chairman                      Councillor J Stone**

**Vice-Chairman**

**Mrs Carolyn Ault  
Mrs L Barker  
Ben Caldicott  
Venerable    Tsuiltrim    Tenzin  
Choesang  
Councillor EPJ Harvey  
Councillor MT McEvelly  
Jonathan Nicholas  
Anna Nugent  
Miss Allyson Taylor**

## Agenda

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
<b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b> To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
<b>3. MINUTES</b> To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2018.	7 - 10
<b>4. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)</b> To answer any pre-received written questions from members of the public.	
<b>5. SACRE MEMBERSHIP</b> To discuss the membership of SACRE and agree any actions to fill the current vacancies. The latest membership of SACRE and a list of actions since the previous meeting on 16 March are attached for information.	11 - 20
<b>6. PLANS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b> To receive an update on this year's summer conferences for primary, secondary and special schools.	21 - 24
<b>7. UPDATE ON NEW INITIATIVES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</b> To consider an update on recent national developments and their implications on the teaching of RE in Herefordshire schools.	25 - 28
<b>8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> The next meeting of SACRE is scheduled for 16 November 2018.	



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- Inspect minutes of the Council and all Committees and Sub-Committees and written statements of decisions taken by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
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## **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

**SHIRE HALL, ST PETER'S SQUARE, HEREFORD, HR1 2HX.**

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You should then proceed to the Assembly Point which is located in the car park at the front of the building. A check will be undertaken to ensure that those recorded as present have vacated the building following which further instructions will be given.

Please do not allow any items of clothing, etc. to obstruct any of the exits.

Do not delay your vacation of the building by stopping or returning to collect coats or other personal belongings.

**Minutes of the meeting of Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE) held at Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX on Friday 16 March 2018 at 3.00 pm**

**14. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT (Pages 3 - 4)**

The Chairman informed the meeting that SACRE was not quorate therefore proceedings were adjourned.

The members of SACRE held informal discussions; a summary of these discussions is attached as appendix 1.

**Chairman**





**Summary of discussions following the adjournment of the meeting of SACRE on 16 March 2018 due to inquoracy.**

Membership

It was suggested that the clerk to the committee discuss potential teacher representatives with Mrs Barker.

It was suggested that the Hospital Chaplaincy be approached to possibly fill a vacancy. Contact details were available from Councillor McEvilly.

The current vacancy of a Hindu representative was queried. It was felt that this should be looked into as part of a review of the membership.

Guide for visits and visitors for RE

Some out of date information was contained in the visitors guide. An example was Maurice Rollnick who was no longer a member of SACRE.

Canon Anna Nugent asked for her details to be included as a contact for Churches Together.

The changes and updates would be advised to Lorna Philip and an updated version circulated.

It was suggested that the guide was emailed to all schools – to RE coordinators and head teachers.

Plans for professional development

The RE conference for special schools had been postponed until 3 July. The special conference flyer should be included in spotlight following the inclusion of the primary conference publicity.

Budget

A budget of £5,000 for 2018/19 was reported. The budget was spent on commissioning an external body, RE Today, to carry out the statutory functions of the local authority.

A point was raised regarding bidding for funding for specific projects through SACRE. The guide for visits and visitors for RE was highlighted as such an example. A potential project involving an interactive map online allowing visits to local places of worship was raised.

Update on new initiatives in RE

An update on the Commission on RE was reported.

Statistics which showed the level of funding provided by local authorities against pupil numbers was requested to compare the level of funding in Herefordshire. The detail would be looked into and an attempt made to produce statistics.

An exchange with pupils from other local authority areas was raised as a project which could be proposed to attract funding. The exchange could be conducted by video online. It was proposed that Neville Meredith was approached for any detail of funding available around community cohesion. Funding and willing volunteers were key; proposals which identified sources of funding could be considered and promoted by SACRE.

Date of next meeting

Arrangements for an additional meeting of SCARE for 29 June 2018 would be investigated.





<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Standing advisory council for religious education (SACRE)</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Friday 29 June 2018</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>SACRE Membership</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Democratic Services Officer</b>

## Classification

Open

## Decision type

This is not an executive decision

## Wards affected

(All Wards);

## Purpose and summary

Following the approval of SACRE's amended constitution at the previous meeting on 17 November it was requested that the current membership was discussed at the next meeting, 16 March 2018. The meeting of SACRE on 16 March was inquorate therefore this report is resubmitted to the current meeting to enable the committee to reach decisions concerning actions required to fill existing vacancies. This report sets out the membership of SACRE, existing vacancies and actions taken since the 16 March 2018. SACRE will agree any actions to be undertaken to fill existing vacancies.

## Recommendation(s)

**That: SACRE agrees any actions required to fill existing membership vacancies.**

## Alternative options

1. SACRE could choose not to consider its current membership and vacancies however given the current level of vacancies it is advisable to undertake this exercise.

## Key considerations

2. Under Section 390(4) of the Education Act 1996, the SACRE must include persons appointed by the LA to represent respectively –
  - A. such Christian denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area (not including persons to represent the Church of England);
  - B. the Church of England;
  - C. such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the LA, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented;
  - D. the Local Education Authority (LA).
3. In accordance with the requirements of Section 390(4), the membership of the SACRE for Herefordshire comprises –
  - Group (A) One Roman Catholic representative (nominated by the Roman Catholic hierarchy);  
One Free Church representative (nominated by Churches together in Herefordshire);  
One representative of other faiths as a whole;  
One representative of the Bahá'í faith;  
One representative of the Muslim faith;  
One representative of the Sikh faith.  
One representative of the Jewish faith.  
One representative of the Buddhist religion.
  - Group (B) Three Church of England representatives (nominated in consultation with the Diocesan Education Authority).
  - Group (C) Three Teachers' representatives, with one drawn from each of the primary, secondary and special education sectors (nominated through recommendation of recognised Teacher Associations) and one Co-opted Member.
  - Group (D) Three Herefordshire Council members as Local Education Authority representatives.
4. The Membership of SACRE comprises 17 members. There are seven existing vacancies. The current membership and the existing vacancies are listed in full in the appendix to the report.
5. SACRE is recommended to consider agreeing actions to fill vacancies. In agreeing any actions SACRE should also consider the attendance records of those members who are currently appointed to the committee. In analysis conducted of meetings of SACRE since the elections in 2015 one representative has been absent from the five meetings held and another member has not attended the previous two meetings. The current vacancies on SACRE and absences from meetings resulted in an inquorate meeting on 18 November 2016.

6. In agreeing actions to be undertaken to address current vacancies and lack of attendance at meetings SACRE could consider the following:
  - That the Chairman of SACRE writes to the Primary Schools Head Teachers Association, and a representative body for the SEN schools Herefordshire to request the nomination of representatives for the committee;
  - That the Chairman of SACRE writes to the leaders of the Muslim and Sikh communities and the Herefordshire Interfaith Group to request the nomination of representatives for the committee;
  - That the Chairman of SACRE writes to the Diocesan Education Authority to request the nomination of a representative for the Church of England.
  - The production of recruitment material setting out the role of being a representative of SACRE and listing some of the achievements of the committee;
  - Existing representatives of SACRE attending nominating bodies to promote and explain the role;
  - That the Chairman of SACRE writes to those representatives whose attendance has been low to establish their continued interest and if there are any barriers to their attendance. If it transpires that the nominated representative will no longer attend meetings the Chairman has authority to write to nominating bodies requesting an alternative;
  - To request a review of the constitution of SACRE to incorporate a term of office for members and periodic membership review.
7. Appendix 2 to the report shows those actions which have been undertaken since the meeting of SACRE on 16 March 2018.

## **Community impact**

8. The provision of Religious Education and collective worship seeks to increase understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities, supporting achievement of the council's corporate plan priority to keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life
9. Ensuring that the membership of SCARE is kept up to date supports the council to uphold the principles in its adopted code of corporate governance.

## **Equality duty**

10. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

11. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) required the council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that 'due regard' is paid during decision making concerning the design of policies and the delivery of services. The provision of religious education seeks to contribute positively to the specific duty by increasing the understanding and tolerance of all religions in local communities. SACRE contributes to this duty by advising the LA on its arrangements for religious education.

## Resource implications

12. There are no resource implications involved in the production and consideration of this report. Members of the Council attending SACRE do not get paid an allowance. Travel and subsistence expenses are only payable for meetings of SACRE outside Herefordshire. Travel and subsistence expenses are payable to external representatives on SACRE.

## Legal implications

13. Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires the council to constitute Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise them on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship in community and foundation schools which do not have a religious character.
  - a. The Act sets out that SACRE shall consist of such groups of persons appointed by the council as representative groups are set out in section 390(4):A group to represent the Christian denominations and other religions that in the opinion of the council appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions of the area;
  - b. A group to represent the Church of England;
  - c. A group to represent associations representing teachers, who in the opinion of the council ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area;
  - d. A group to represent the council.
  - e. SACRE may also co-opt members as required.

The numbers in each group should broadly reflect the proportional strength of denominations or religions in the area, so far as is consistent with the efficient discharge of the groups functions.

On any question to be decided upon by SACRE only the aforementioned groups shall be entitled to vote; with one vote per group.

## Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Meetings of SACRE are not quorate, a representative from each of the four groups must be present at a meeting of SACRE to ensure quoracy.	The recommendations in this report mitigate against this by seeking to fill vacancies and thereby increase attendance at meetings.

## **Consultees**

14. None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – current membership and vacancies

Appendix 2 – Updates since the meeting of SACRE on 16 March 2018

## **Background papers**

None





## SACRE Membership and Current Vacancies (Updated June 2018)

### Group (A)

One Roman Catholic representative (nominated by the Roman Catholic hierarchy)	Vacancy
One Free Church representative (nominated by Churches together in Herefordshire)	Canon Nugent
One representative of other faiths as a whole	Vacancy
One representative of the Bahá'í faith	Mrs Ault
One representative of the Muslim faith	Vacancy
One representative of the Sikh faith	Vacancy
One representative of the Jewish faith	Vacancy
One representative of the Buddhist religion	Ven. Choesang

### Group B - Three Church of England representatives (nominated in consultation with the Diocesan Education Authority).

	Vacancy
	Miss A Taylor
	Mr J Nicholas

### Group (C) Three teachers' representatives, with one drawn from each of the primary, secondary and special education sectors (nominated through recommendation of recognised teacher associations) and one co-opted member.

Primary	Mr Caldicott
Secondary	Mrs Barker
SEN	Vacancy
Co-optee	Vacancy

### Group (D) Three Herefordshire Council members as local education authority representatives

	Cllr Harvey
	Cllr McEvilly
	Cllr Stone (Chairman)



## Updates since the meeting of SACRE on 18 March 2018

<b>Vacancy/Member</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Response</b>
One representative of the Muslim faith (Vacancy)	Herefordshire Interfaith Group – email to request nominee	23/04/18	None to date
One representative of the Sikh faith (Vacancy)	Herefordshire Interfaith Group – email to request nominee	23/04/18	None to date
Church of England representative (Vacancy)	Diocese of Hereford – email to request nominee	23/04/18	None to date
Primary teachers' representative (Vacancy)	Primary Schools Head Teachers Association – email to request nominee	23/04/18	Ben Caldicott nominated to vacancy and appointed
Special education sector teachers' representative (Vacancy)	Special Schools Head Teachers in Herefordshire	23/04/18	Initial response, no nominee received
One representative of the Jewish faith (Member)	Email – to establish continued interest	23/04/18	None to date
One Roman Catholic representative (Member)	Email – to establish continued interest	23/04/18	None to date



	excellent	good	satisfactory
Session 1: RE, learning and the brain	40%	60%	
Session 2: Teaching non-religious worldviews	80%	20%	
Session 3: RE update	42%	53%	
Session 4: Effective assessment in RE	80%	20%	
Venue: how do you rate it?	27%	67%	6%
Overall value of the conference (14 responses)	50%	50%	

**Any comments about the conference?**

- Well delivered and informative
- Content was great – assessment particularly useful for me at this stage
- Great practical activities. Reverse the order as the assessment information was very useful.
- I found the assessment ideas particularly valuable and relevant
- It has been really informative and very inspiring
- Encouraged to attend by HT as part of CPD
- Interesting and useful content
- Some useful ideas to take back to school
- Useful activities which are relevant and practical to take back into the classroom. Good use of resources – handouts/electronic handouts which can all be used
- Very useful. Given me lots of ideas and suggestions to take back to school.
- Great advice given and reassurance of what good practice/assessment looks like. Lots of ideas to use in the classroom were used
- Thank you, Stephen and Fiona. Your knowledge and expertise is truly inspiring!
- Glad it exists – too many ‘foundation’ subjects are left stranded. Good central venue.

**Timing of conference:**

- I would have preferred a whole day/morning session
- A whole day would be better from the attendees’ viewpoint although greater cost to the school
- I can understand with tight budgets that half a day is easier for schools but there was a lot to take in at a fast pace. As a participant a full day is better.
- Return of day conference – more useful, have gained deeper understanding from day courses.
- Would have been better as a full day course, I feel
- I think that the timings help schools (cover costs reduced) but not attendees (childcare costs/impacts)
- Not sure about the 1-5.30 thing, but understand it reduces impact on school day.
- Holding it in an afternoon is preferred
- Good time of day for the conference.
- Half a day is better – easier to cover classes at school

**Actions you will take to follow up from this conference**

- Discuss changes/developments in RE from the update with SLT
- Setting up assessment recording system and revisiting RE policy
- Review our school’s assessment methods. Use ‘talking tubs’ in lessons. Feed back to staff.

- Use assessment ideas in school. Report activity ideas to staff – talking tubs etc.
- Review assessment criteria; pupil questionnaire; talking tubs; cascade ideas to other staff
- Staff meeting to share information from the conference. Review assessment in RE for our school. Discuss with the head how we will proceed with RE in our school.
- Make sure we follow up assessment grids and do pupil interviews. Ensure we incorporate non-religious views.
- Share information with staff. Investigate suggested websites, authors etc. Look at assessment in school.
- Staff meeting to inform staff of new ideas. RE learning walk and feedback. Review our school's assessment framework.
- Development of assessment sheets. Monitor assessment. Input of lesson ideas and feedback to staff for future use.
- Slightly tweak our assessment sheets. Confidently tell teachers we don't need written/photographic evidence for every lesson.
- Ensure team are all aware of objectives and move forward purposely for the children (next-steps). Not all work needs to be forced into hard-evidence in writing.
- Great suggestions for assessment. Also, I love the talking tubs to introduce a topic.
- Work on assessment system in school. Share what we have learned with other staff at school.
- Will talk about death with class. Will use conscience alley ideas. Will 'tighten up' assessment. Will share select content with staff at meeting. Will share executive function ideas.

#### **Suggestions/requests for future support in Herefordshire**

- It would be great to see a focus on Early Years
- A link up between Understanding Christianity and the new 2020 syllabus that will provide opportunities to cover different religious/non-religious views
- More training opportunities please
- Ideas for RE in EYFS
- Subject knowledge for class teachers around different religions.
- Staff meetings/twilights pitched at whole school staff. A lot of staff would benefit from listening to this conference
- More courses for teachers on agreed syllabus/ideas to teach it creatively

Stephen Pett  
RE Today  
20 June 2018

# DEEPER THINKING: DEEPER LEARNING

## Secondary RE conference 2018

Supporting better teaching about  
Christianity and Islam in RE, Years 7–11

**Thursday 28 June 2018**

### CONFERENCE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

Gloucestershire SACRE, Herefordshire SACRE,  
Worcestershire SACRE, South Bromsgrove High School  
TSA, University of Worcester, Wigmore School TSA,  
NATRE, RE Today

### SPEAKERS:

Lat Blaylock (RE Today),  
Rebecca Davidge (University of Worcester),  
Michelle Dodd (Severn Vale School),  
Chris Giles (South Bromsgrove High School),  
Stephen Pett (RE Today)

**Venue: Puckrup Hall Hotel, GL20 6EL**

**9.00 am–4.00 pm (registration and refreshments from 8.30 am)**

#### KEYNOTE 1:

**Engaging students at GCSE –  
not just ‘getting through’**

Lat Blaylock

How can we manage the  
additional demands of the GCSE  
and still engage students in  
creative, thoughtful RE?  
Some practical suggestions.

#### KEYNOTE 2:

**More learning, less marking:  
assessment models that work**

Michelle Dodd and Stephen Pett

Down-to-earth, real solutions  
for effective assessment. Make  
a difference to your students’  
progress and regain some work–  
life balance.

#### TEACHMEET

Chris Giles will introduce five-  
minute slots to share practical and  
relevant ideas for your classroom.  
Sign up overleaf to offer an idea  
that works!

### THREE SESSIONS OF INTERACTIVE SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS

**Choose one out of two each time.**

<b>SEMINAR A</b>	<b>A1. Five ways to encourage excellence in writing</b> Lat Blaylock	<b>A2. Practical strategies to develop religious literacy in Islam</b> Chris Giles
	Practical ideas for getting students to write better, exploring and expressing key concepts in RE.	A range of activities to fill gaps in students’ religious literacy; writing extended answers and making the most of trips and visitors.
<b>SEMINAR B</b>	<b>B1. Salvation and atonement in Christian thought and practice</b> Stephen Pett	<b>B2. Teaching concepts of God creatively and thoughtfully in Islam and Christianity</b> Lat Blaylock
	A selection of practical strategies for engaging students and helping them to make sense of key concepts.	Practical ideas to engage students in grappling with concepts of God, with outcomes that show their understanding.
<b>SEMINAR C</b>	<b>C1. Raising the profile of the RE Department</b> Rebecca Davidge and Chris Giles	<b>C2. Christians and life after death: authority, diversity and implications</b> Stephen Pett
	Practical and effective ideas for winning over school leadership, pupils and parents.	Creative and thoughtful ideas, resources and models to enable students to handle diverse Christian views on life after death.

# DEEPER THINKING: DEEPER LEARNING Secondary RE conference 2018

Supporting better teaching about  
Christianity and Islam in RE, Years 7–11

## BOOKING FORM:

**Deeper thinking: deeper learning** Secondary RE conference  
**Thursday 28 June 2018**

Fee: £100 or £175 for two teachers from the same school

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Seminar choices (please tick)

Seminar A  A1  A2

Seminar B  B1  B2

Seminar C  C1  C2

**Yes** – I will bring a five-minute something  
for the TeachMeet!

### Special dietary requirements

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PROGRAMME:

9.00 Intro and welcome  
9.05–10.00 Keynote 1: Lat Blaylock  
10.05–11.05 **Seminar A** choose one of two  
Break  
11.30–12.30 **Seminar B** choose one of two  
Lunch  
1.15–2.15 **Seminar C** choose one of two  
2.20–3.10 Keynote 2: Michelle Dodd and  
Stephen Pett  
3.15–3.45 TeachMeet: Chris Giles  
3.45 Evaluations and close

## Payment details

Please invoice the school

### Invoice/credit card billing address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque, payable to **RE Today Services**

**I will pay by**  Visa  Mastercard  Switch

Card number:

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Expiry date:

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Start date:

\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_|

Security code:

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Issue no. (Switch)

\_\_\_\_|\_\_\_\_|

(last three numbers on signature strip)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to:** RE Today Services, 5–6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH

**Tel:** 0121 458 3313 **Fax:** 0121 285 1816 **Email:** Mark Clarke – mark@retoday.org.uk



## Herefordshire SACRE National Update: Summer 2018

### Funding from Government for SACRE

SACREs will be funded through the central school services block (CSSB) from 2018-19, which is one of the blocks of funding in the national funding formula. For further information, see the [NFF Policy Document](#) and the [2018-19 Operational Guidance](#) (specifically paragraph 133).

### NATRE primary RE survey

NATRE needs primary teachers/headteachers to fill in its national primary RE survey. This takes under 10 mins to complete. On completion, each participant receives a £5 voucher for materials from RE Today and is entered into a FREE draw for a year's platinum NATRE membership (worth £250).

### [Complete the survey](#)

### Position of RE in all schools and complaints – Parliamentary answer March 27 2018

Answer to question by Stephen Timms MP:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether (a) his Department and (b) other public bodies have commissioned research into the practices of schools in relation to their statutory obligation to provide religious education since 2010; and if he will make a statement.

Answered by Nick Gibb, MP

Religious Education (RE) is compulsory for all state-funded schools, including academies and free schools, at all key stages. The Department investigates complaints made about schools not fulfilling their statutory duties in respect of RE.

The Department does not gather data on schools' level of compliance with the requirement. One formal complaint was made to the Department about a school's non-compliance with its statutory duties in respect of RE in the period since 2010-2011.

Faith schools are required to arrange a separate inspection of denominational religious education and collective worship, leading to published reports. Ofsted does not inspect individual curriculum subjects, but is required to report on whether the curriculum offered by the school is broad and balanced and promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

If an individual is concerned that a school is not meeting its duty to provide religious education they should follow that school's complaint procedure in the first instance. If the complaint is not resolved, then the issue can be escalated to the Department's School Complaints Unit for maintained schools, or the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, free schools, university technical colleges or studio schools. Information about complaint procedures for schools can be found at [www.gov.uk/complain-about-school](http://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school).

My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education has a range of powers to ensure schools comply with their statutory obligations. The powers used will depend on the nature of the statutory duty in question and the potential impact of any failure to comply. These powers include a direction under section 497 of the Education Act 1996, a performance and standards warning notice under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and a referral to Ofsted for an inspection. Where academies are subject to the same statutory duties as maintained schools, the Secretary of State has powers to enforce compliance via the terms of the funding agreement.

## Academy funding agreements

**NATRE** are delighted to report that following their negotiations, the DfE has raised the profile of Religious Education in the revised academy funding agreements published recently. By placing RE alongside the core subjects that **MUST** be included in a ‘balanced and broadly based’ curriculum, no one can be in any doubt of the expectations.

The information on RE has been made clearer and has moved considerably earlier in the document

### Curriculum

- 2.1 The curriculum is the responsibility of the Academy Trust.
- 2.2 The Academy Trust must ensure that the curriculum provided in each Academy to pupils up to the age of 16 is balanced and broadly based. In respect of **Mainstream, Special Academies, UTCs and Studio Schools**, the Academy Trust must ensure that the curriculum includes English, mathematics, science and (subject to the provisions in clause 2.V of the Mainstream academy and free school: supplemental funding agreement), (subject to the provisions in clause 2.V of the UTC and Studio School supplemental funding agreement) and (subject to the provisions in clause 2.HH-JJ of the Special School: supplemental funding agreement) **religious education**. In respect of **Alternative Provision Academies** the Academy Trust must ensure that the curriculum includes English, mathematics and science.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-and-free-school-multi-model-master-funding-agreement>

### DfE guidance on RE in academies

At the end of March 2018, minister for schools, Nick Gibb MP responded to a parliamentary question about RE. In the response he said the following: “Where academies are subject to the same statutory duties as maintained schools, the Secretary of State has powers to enforce compliance via the terms of the funding agreement.” NATRE subsequently wrote to the DfE in an attempt to clarify what sort of matter might result in a Secretary of State using these powers in relation to RE. NATRE asked: ‘Can you please provide us with some guidance about how you might judge a complaint about the failure of an academy to meet its funding agreement in relation to RE?’

The letter NATRE received in response this week included the following six points:

1. In most non-religiously designated academy funding agreements, the requirement to provide religious education is in line with S.375(3) of the Education Act 1996 – religious education that reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are Christian, whilst taking into account the practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain;
2. Academies may choose to use an agreed syllabus in full or part to meet their requirements to provide RE. They may also choose to develop their own syllabus that meets the requirements in their funding agreement (including S.375 above);
3. We would expect that all schools provide pupils with a curriculum that is high quality and promotes progression through the key stages, including in RE;
4. ... head teachers should ensure that “the subject is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE, and the quality of the provision, are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;

5. If inspectors become aware that a school is not delivering the curriculum that it is expected to be offering, this will be reflected in the assessment of the leadership and management of the school, which in turn will inform the overall effectiveness of the school;

6. ...if the department is made aware of an academy that is not meeting the requirements for providing RE as outlined above, the complaint would be passed onto the operational team where the academy was located. The operational team would work with the policy team to understand the arrangements and specific situation in that school, and work with the school to resolve the matter.

The implication of these points is that when academies publish details of their curriculum for RE for each year group (as they are required to do following statutory guidance) the curriculum must be clear about:

a) how it 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 (S.375(3) of the Education Act 1996)

b) which specific syllabus is followed e.g. A local Agreed Syllabus or other Syllabus that includes sufficient clear information to allow teachers, parents and others to be clear about what content is to be taught in each year of each key stage? (Note: a previous complaint about a syllabus for RE has secured this working definition of a syllabus with support from DfE lawyers)

c) how progression in knowledge, understanding and skills is secured in Religious Education as pupils move from one-year group to another

### **Ofsted is scrutinising school workforce data:**

Last year NATRE received an invitation to meet with Ofsted in London to discuss the potential of school workforce data with senior officers. Predictably, professional data analysts were able to identify even more potential in the data. In view of this, it is not surprising that Sean Harford (Ofsted National Director, Education) has stated that Ofsted is including the school workforce data in its new computer based risk assessment of good and outstanding schools. 'The new computer model uses progress and attainment data from the Department for Education, enhanced with school workforce census data and Parent View responses, to produce scores for each school, ranging from the lowest risk up to the highest risk'.

Failure to take proper account of published data can have serious consequences for a school. With a renewed focus on the curriculum very much part of OFSTED's agenda, all schools need to take recording of data very seriously and that includes the school workforce census.

### **RE in Ofsted reports**

NATRE are pleased to note an increase in mentions of RE in Ofsted reports this term. Please see the three examples below. Is your school providing good RE for all pupils on role?

#### **School 1: Community Primary school**

The quality of pupils' work in some foundation subjects is variable. For example, science reporting lacks structure and content in some year groups. While religious education and PSHCE books have examples of extended writing with the same high expectations of presentation and spelling as in English books, the good-quality presentation and focus on writing skills are not evident across books in all subject areas. History and geography books show that pupils' work is variable in quality. In these subjects, the most able pupils in history, geography and science are not always provided with an appropriate level of challenge to achieve as well as they could.

The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, strong teaching in art enables pupils to study artists from around the world, focusing on the features of the traditions and different cultures their work represents. School leaders have built up strong links with local churches and promote links with local charities.

### **School 2: Community Primary school**

The school continues to provide a curriculum which enriches the whole child. The well-trained subject leaders ensure that their pupils learn well in subjects across the national curriculum. The school environment is enhanced by pupils' excellent work, for example in history, geography and religious education. Provision for music and the arts is strong and the curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of additional clubs and visits, including to diverse places of worship.

### **School 3: Secondary School**

The curriculum is inadequate. It does not include some essential elements, such as religious education

### **Commission on RE (CORE)**

The final report will be launched on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **New SIAMS Schedule**

From September 2018 there will be a new inspection schedule for Church of England schools. The categories will be renamed Excellent/Good/Requires Improvement/Ineffective as a church school. It is assumed the majority of schools will be good – this is different to previously (currently about half outstanding).

### **20:20 RE Practice, Policy and Powerful Words in Religious Education**

Four RE professional associations (NASACRE, AULRE, AREIAC and NATRE) are collaborating to produce an exciting conference on Religious Education. There will be 40 top quality breakout sessions with a balance between policy, theory and practice including some sessions aimed particularly at primary and some at secondary, with others relevant to all.

The conference will held on **Saturday 13 October – Sunday 14 October 2018 in Crewe.**

**Click [here](#) to book a place.**

Stephen Pett  
RE Today/NATRE  
Herefordshire SACRE  
June 2018