

Herefordshire SACRE National News update

OFSTED and RE

The new Education Inspection Framework has been used in schools for one term. There have been a large number of reports that have mentioned RE. In November NATRE produced a summary of those published so far.

www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/101-re-mentions-in-ofsted-primary-and-secondary-reports/

In November NATRE also had conversations with OFSTED over the number of deep dives in RE and noted that the number of these deep dives have increased. In simple terms a deep dive is something that happens within an inspection and is a review of the subject, how it is planned and taught in the school and evidence of the impact that it is having on pupil learning.

Evidence is also being collected by OFSTED for a thematic review in RE.

It is interesting to consider the themes that are emerging from these reports;

1. Pupils need to learn subjects in sufficient depth so that they remember what they have learnt
2. All pupils need to follow a broad curriculum which is similar in breadth and ambition to the basic/national curriculum
3. Where time for RE and PSHE is contracted into shared provision, this limits pupils' understanding of both areas
4. Planning needs to be sufficiently detailed and sequenced so that pupils develop secure long-term understanding, building on what they have learnt before
5. Well-designed assessment allows teachers to plan more accurately and enabling pupils to know and remember more
6. Effective training leads to primary teachers having good subject knowledge that they use to help pupils learn more effectively
7. RE makes a valuable contribution to pupil's personal development and to their understanding of the wider world
8. Visits to places of worship, handling artefacts and receiving visitors, help pupils to remember what they have learnt and deepens understanding
9. Rushing content, including in secondaries where there is a two-year key stage 3, sometimes leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and makes it harder for pupils to comprehend the more advanced GCSE content
10. Where RS is an option at key stage 4, those who do not choose GCSE RS must have enough opportunity to study RE
11. Learning in RE helps to underpin the development of respect and tolerance and supports school values and the preparation of pupils for life in modern Britain
12. Where the curriculum is well planned, the interaction between subject content and skills, such as across the Humanities is made explicit which strengthens learning

Examples of recent statements on RE in OFSTED reports: Primary

Good: The organisation of the curriculum allows pupils to build on what they have learnt before. Pupils are able to make links across the subjects. For example, pupils talk with confidence about history and how this links to the learning in religious education and geography

Good (RE deep dive): Teachers make lessons interesting. Pupils enjoy learning about other cultures, for example when handling Sikh artefacts. They debate arguments, for example 'for and against' having rules, with enthusiasm. Pupils find out about different cultures when listening to visiting speakers such as a rabbi.

Good (RE deep dive): Pupils learn well because, linked to the school's agreed policy, teachers plan interesting and creative topics. They develop positive attitudes to learning. Following a visit to the church, for example, Year 2 pupils considered why it is a special place for Christians. They were articulate when asking questions and giving their views. They explained why the artefacts they saw are special to some people, including other pupils in their class, but not to others.

Outstanding (RE deep dive): Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn in each subject during their time at school. They have sequenced knowledge and skills well so that pupils build on what they already know. This is important because it helps pupils to have a secure understanding of their learning. The school provides an excellent quality of education for its pupils.

The development of pupils' personal, social and emotional intelligence is a great strength. Pupils have a range of worthwhile, well-taught activities and experience

Inadequate (RE deep dive): Leaders' ambition for pupils is not high enough, so pupils do not learn enough. Pupils study the full range of subjects, but teachers do not consider deeply what pupils need to learn and when. This means pupils do not gain as much knowledge as they should. This includes learning about, and appreciating, different religions and other cultures.

The planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) does not support pupils to be confident, determined and independent in their learning. Neither does the planned curriculum provide pupils with a rich knowledge of religion and other cultures.

Pupils are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum gives pupils sufficient understanding and appreciation of religion and different cultures.

Good (RE deep dive): In most other subjects, including science, history, geography, art and physical education, the curriculum is well planned and organised. However, religious education (RE) is not planned with such precision. Information provided for teachers is short of detail. This, combined with limited training in this subject, leads to uncertainty about important knowledge. As a result, pupils do not learn the knowledge they should. Planning in most subjects, including reading, mathematics and science, is thorough. However, in RE, it lacks important detail. Teachers do not have the knowledge or the training to teach this subject well. Consequently, pupils' knowledge in RE is not as strong as it is in other areas of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the RE programme of study is reviewed and revised to give greater detail about the knowledge to be taught and learned. They should also ensure that teachers are provided with the training needed for them to teach RE knowledgeably and with confidence.

Examples of recent statements on RE in OFSTED reports: Secondary

Requires improvement: Most teachers are now teaching pupils the subject content that matters the most, apart from religious education, which is limited.

Currently, some pupils in key stage 3 do not cover subject content sufficiently well to be able to draw upon their learning in the future. This is because subjects such as religious education lack prominence in the curriculum. Additionally, the time pupils spend learning new content is limited in some subjects as teachers attempt to teach a broad and balanced curriculum that is commensurate with the national curriculum. However, time is limited, and teachers sometimes gloss over important learning points. This leads to gaps in pupils' understanding. Leaders must ensure that pupils are afforded sufficient time to learn important subject content in detail for as long as possible, including in religious education.

Good: Most leaders ensure that subjects are planned in a logical sequence. For example, in Year 7 religious studies, pupils learn about how communities develop, through a well-sequenced series of learning activities. However, in some subjects, such as geography and design technology, learning is not yet sequenced as well.

Good: In many subjects, teachers know what content to teach and when to teach it. This is helping pupils to build on their previous knowledge and to know and remember more. For example, in English, religious education, music and science, content is demanding and teachers make sure that they give pupils the chance to recall prior learning. In these subjects, pupils said that teachers explain work clearly and help them to fill gaps in their knowledge.

Requires improvement: Pupils start too many GCSE courses at the beginning of Year 9. Often, they study their GCSE courses over three years rather than the recommended two. Where this occurs, pupils do not have Year 9 as a preparation year for GCSE. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This makes it harder for pupils to comprehend the more advanced GCSE content. It also limits the connections pupils make to prior learning. Leaders have also stopped the practice of pupils unnecessarily sitting GCSE exams a year early in religious education (RE) and citizenship.

Requires improvement: In key stage 3, pupils have too few opportunities to learn about some subjects, such as geography, history, and religious education (RE), in detail. Also, the range of subjects offered by the school at key stage 3 is narrow. For example, pupils in Years 7 and 8 do not currently get the chance to study technology. The curriculum at key stage 3 does not stay as broad as possible for as long as possible. It is not as ambitious as the national curriculum. In key stage 4, pupils can choose to study from a wide range of subjects. However, older pupils do not have enough opportunity to study RE. Few pupils choose to continue to study a modern foreign language. Leaders have put plans in place to improve pupils' enjoyment of this subject so that more pupils choose this as an option.

Leaders and governors need to ensure that pupils follow a broad curriculum which is similar in breadth and ambition to the national curriculum. They should further improve the curriculum by increasing the depth of learning for pupils in different subjects in key stage 3. Leaders should also increase the opportunities for key stage 4 pupils to study RE in greater depth.

Herefordshire SACRE Ofsted round-up March 2020

10 reports, from 14 Sept 2019-28 Feb 2020

7 primary, 1 secondary, 2 special schools.

Community Primary Good	Pupils get lots of opportunities to grow and develop their confidence. These include involvement in school plays, community events and taking on additional jobs. Memorable visits, visitors and clubs all make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils know about different religions and other cultures. They are respectful and friendly towards new pupils.
CE Primary Good (old Ofsted Framework)	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the work of the school. It informs the calm, welcoming and diligent approach pupils take to their lessons. Pupils understand diversity and see difference as positive.
Secondary (Monitoring inspection)	[Since Special Measures judgement in Nov 2018] The humanities faculty has been restructured into separate history, geography and religious education (RE) departments. Each has its own curriculum leader. From September 2020, key stage 3 will include Year 9, in addition to Years 7 and 8. Pupils will then study a wide range of subjects for their first three years in school, rather than the current two. In all years, pupils now study RE and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Weekly house assemblies complement the PSHE education programme and help pupils to reflect on issues such as equality and diversity.

Increase in Secondary RE ITE trainees

Recruitment for secondary trainees of RE has seen a dramatic boost this year after the DfE accepted our argument that it needed to do more to encourage and support applicants. Bursaries were increased from £4,000 to £9,000 and subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) courses were funded such as the [TeachRE 200 hours course](#) which is endorsed and certified by NATRE.

The end result is we have a bumper crop of trainees for 2019-20 and we reached 93% of our target. This will make it easier for schools ensure more pupils in all schools to have access to high quality teaching. In 2018-19, we reached only 58% of the target, so this is a significant step forward.

Timing of SATs tests in 2021: Adaptations available for Muslim pupils

In 2021, Eid-ul-Fitr is likely to begin on the evening of Wednesday 12th May. Given the significance of RE the DfE are aware that pupils are likely to be absent from school and so have given advice to schools on how to rearrange tests for some or all pupils if deemed necessary.

Withdrawal from RE

NATRE offers a guidance document for schools needing to know more about the legal and practical details of parental withdrawal of their child from RE.

www.natre.org.uk/membership/guidance-on-withdrawal/

Updated guidance on RE and collective worship in academies and free schools

NATRE worked with the DfE to update their guidance from 2012. Available for free here:

www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/updated-guidance-on-re-and-collective-worship/

Resources for schools:

British Library *Discovering Sacred Texts* resource free online

www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/discovering-sacred-texts-highlights-from-the-british-library-is-now-online/

www.bl.uk/sacred-texts

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