

Agenda

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Date: **Friday 15 March 2024**

Time: **2.30 pm**

Place: **Conference Room 2, Herefordshire Council Offices,
Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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

For any further information please contact:

Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd, Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01432 260239

Email: Henry.Merricks-Murgatroyd@herefordshire.gov.uk

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd, Democratic Services Officer on 01432 260239 or e-mail Henry.Merricks-Murgatroyd@herefordshire.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

Agenda for the Meeting of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Membership

Chairperson	Geoff Sallis	Humanism
Vice-Chairperson	Lou Barker	Secondary school teacher representative
	Mrs Carolyn Ault	Bahai faith
	Mrs L Barker	Secondary school teacher representative
	Peter Fawcett	Roman Catholic, Archdiocese of Cardiff
	Mark Harrington	Church of England representative
	Jonathan Nicholas	Church of England representative
	Councillor Rob Owens	Herefordshire Council
	Councillor Justine Peberdy	
	Ruth Stanier	The Quaker Faith
	Barry Stevens	Church of England representative
	Councillor John Stone	Herefordshire Council
	Tracy Westlake	Primary school teacher representative

Agenda

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THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES		5 - 6
1.	WELCOME AND THOUGHT FOR THE DAY To welcome members to SACRE and receive a thought for the day.	
2.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
3.	NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY) To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
4.	MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 th November 2023. Any matters arising.	7 - 12
5.	RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY) To answer any pre-received written questions from members of the public.	
6.	ELECTION OF CHAIR To elect the chairperson of SACRE.	
7.	FOLLOW UP ON FINANCES To follow up on SACRE finances from last meeting.	
8.	SCHOOL WORKFORCE DATA An update and discussion on Herefordshire School Workforce data.	13 - 14
9.	SACRE CONSTITUTION To discuss the SACRE constitution.	
10.	NATIONAL SACRE NEWS UPDATE An update on National SACRE news.	15 - 20
11.	OUTLINE ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONFERENCES 2024 To receive details of the 2024 Primary and Secondary RE conferences.	21 - 24
12.	HOW TO SUPPORT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS To consider how primary and secondary schools can be supported.	
13.	TEACHER SUPPORT (NETWORK MEETINGS) To be presented by Tracy Westlake.	
14.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next scheduled meeting is 5 th July 2024, 14:00-17:00.	

**The Seven Principles of Public Life
(Nolan Principles)**

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Minutes of the meeting of Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) held in Conference Room 1, Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Friday 17 November 2023 at 2.00 pm

Board members present in person, voting:

Lou Barker (Vice-Chairperson)	Secondary school teacher representative
Venerable Tsultrim Tenzin Choesang (Chairperson)	Buddhist
Peter Fawcett	Roman Catholic, Archdiocese of Cardiff
Councillor Justine Peberdy	
Ruth Stanier	The Quaker Faith
Councillor John Stone	
Tracy Westlake	Primary school teacher representative

Others present in person:

Jatinderpal Loyal	Sikh representative	
Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	Democratic Services Officer	
Stephen Pett	Consultant to SACRE	
Ian Sockett	Business Intelligence Officer	Children and Young People
	Education Analysis	

66. WELCOME AND THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Lama Choesang welcomed members and attendees to the meeting and presented the thought for the day.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Jonathan Nicholas, Mark Harrington, Alison Naylor, and Geoff Sallis.

68. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Ian Sockett substituted for Alison Naylor.

69. MINUTES

The Chair noted that the application process for the West Hill awards opens in Autumn 2024 and requested that this be added to the November 2024 meeting's agenda.

The Chair expressed her disappointment by the lack of support from the council with regard to the running of SACRE.

Ian Sockett said he would follow up on the 'National SACRE updates' action that was assigned at the last meeting.

Ruth Stanier proposed that the minutes be approved. Cllr John Stone seconded.

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2023 were unanimously approved.

70. RESPONSE TO WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

No questions were received from members of the public.

71. FINANCES

The Chair noted that the contract with RE Today was renewed and that each term Stephen Pett (RE Today advisor) must have a meeting each term regarding the contract arrangements.

Councillor Justine Peberdy suggested that this could be because there needs to be a minimum level of accountability behind the allocation of funding to RE Today.

The Chair added that she felt sidelined, and that the chairperson should be involved in the discussion with RE Today and the council.

Councillor Stone agreed that the chairperson should be involved in the discussion so that they can put forward the SACRE point of view.

Councillor Peberdy noted that she would look to find out more information about this situation.

The Chair suggested that there could be a regular item added to the SACRE meeting agendas to assess the performance of RE Today with the wider membership of the committee.

With regard to the SACRE budget, the Chair stated that the budget is £1,000 less than it was previously and there needs to be enough money to pay for the RE syllabus. In order to be allocated more funding, the Chair added that a business case would need to be submitted.

Stephen Pett requested that an agreed syllabus conference be scheduled for before the next meeting SACRE in March.

The Chair added that Malcolm Green needs to be approached soon about the fact that the March meeting is going to be the start of the syllabus update.

Peter Fawcett asked whether it was possible to apply for a one-off amount of money for the syllabus specifically rather than an extra £1,000 per year.

The Chair clarified that it was the council's preference to have an amount of funding per year rather than one larger amount of money.

The Chair added that the current license runs out in Summer 2025 and there will not be a syllabus in place thereafter. It is a national requirement that the syllabus is reviewed every five years.

Action: Councillor Peberdy to contact Malcolm Green about for the funding for SACRE and the RE syllabus.

72. ANNUAL SACRE REPORT DISCUSSION

Stephen Pett noted that it is a statutory requirement to produce an annual report and is traditionally done by the local authority. It is a collection of information that is recorded in the minutes of previous SACRE meetings. There are some gaps that need to be

addressed before final publication including, for example, GCSE and A-Level results which are provided by the local authority.

Ian Sockett noted that he was able to get 2022 results and the 2023 results when they become available.

Stephen Pett asked when the 2023 results will be available.

Ian Sockett responded that they should be available within the next month.

The Chair asked for an item to be added to the next agenda in March on how we can support our schools in RE including a discussion on primary and secondary, in particular, and special schools if there is an opportunity to do so.

73. SCHOOL WORKFORCE DATA

Stephen Pett referred to the school workforce data in the agenda pack and noted that the information is provided by NATRE who put in a FOI request to the DfE who provide the data about what RE/philosophy is taught in schools. The data provides awareness about RE in schools for Herefordshire SACRE and more action needs to be done by some schools to input data to increase awareness further.

Lou Barker asked if there was any possibility of sending out a questionnaire to schools to fill in workforce data.

The Chair asked Lou Barker if she could look into the prospect of sending a questionnaire to do this. Lou Barker said she would look to do this.

Stephen Pett added that he would be happy to assist Lou Barker.

The Chair asked for the questionnaire to be brought to the committee in March to be agreed and then sent out.

Action: Lou Barker to work on a questionnaire to bring back to the committee in March for review and approval before being sent out to secondary schools.

74. SACRE CONSTITUTION

The Chair asked the clerk to follow up with John Coleman on the status of SACRE in the Herefordshire Council constitution.

Councillor Peberdy asked about the quoracy rules of SACRE and referred to the fact that all representative groups need to be represented for business to be transacted or be ratified at the following SACRE meeting.

The Chair clarified that this applied to this meeting as the vote on the new Chair could not go ahead because of no Church of England representatives being present.

75. EVALUATIONS ON PRIMARY CONFERENCE 2023

Stephen Pett gave a brief overview of the Herefordshire Primary RE conference evaluations held in 2023.

The Chair asked Lou Barker if she could thank the head teacher of Bishop's Bluecoat School for hosting the conference on behalf of SACRE.

Stephen Pett expressed his thanks to Tracy Westlake and Adam Robertson (RE Today) for their support in presenting at the conference.

76. PROPOSED OUTLINE ON SECONDARY CONFERENCE 2024

Stephen Pett presented a brief overview of the proposed Secondary RE Conference to be held on Tuesday 25th June 2024.

The Chair commented that it is important to ensure that faiths other than Christianity and Islam are represented.

Lou Barker expressed her support for the Secondary Conference at this stage in its draft form.

Stephen Pett asked the Chair if she wanted Buddhism to be represented at the next conference in 2024.

The Chair responded that she was happy for Buddhism to be represented in 2025 if that helps.

Stephen Pett confirmed that this would be helpful as he does not have data on young Buddhists as opposed to other faiths. It was requested that if there could be a reminder at the SACRE meeting around November 2024 for the addition of Buddhism to the 2025 Secondary Conference agenda.

Action: To remind Stephen Pett to add Buddhism to the proposed agenda for the 2025 Secondary Conference agenda at the SACRE meeting in November 2024.

77. PROPOSED OUTLINE ON PRIMARY CONFERENCE 2024

Stephen Pett stated the prospect of holding another Primary RE conference in July 2024 and added that a date and venue would need to be agreed, in addition to themes and topics for various sessions including something on planning a curriculum for mixed-age classes and more on multi-disciplinary approaches as well as a request from the Chair on something on Buddhism. Stephen Pett also suggested the possibility of presenting the next syllabus, after the following SACRE meeting in March, at the conference.

The Chair raised potential venues for the conference including potentially Whitecross High School, Hereford Academy, or the Bluecoat School.

Tracy Westlake mentioned that the Hereford Academy is a viable option after GCSEs are finished.

The Chair asked who from SACRE would be happy to approach the Hereford Academy.

Tracy Westlake confirmed that she would be willing to do this.

Jatinderpal Loyal noted that for primary level students, it would be worth having a thematic approach covering issues such as climate change and family units and having a number of people from different faiths to discuss these issues and how they impact them. 'Faith in action' was referenced as an example in which real life experiences were covered by different faith representatives.

The Chair suggested Buddhism, Bahai and Sikhs and asked who else should be covered.

The committee suggested Islam should also be included.

The Chair asked members for their thoughts on dates to hold the conference. Lou Barker responded that the end of June/early July would be ideal after GCSEs are held.

Stephen Pett proposed Monday 1st July or Thursday 4th July 2024 would be the most suitable dates, at this stage, to hold the conference, subject to venue.

78. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Chair told the committee that, in the absence of Church of England representatives, someone can be voted in for the next meeting in March. Geoff Sallis is happy to chair the next meeting in March.

Lou Barker added that she is happy to put herself forward to be vice-chair.

The Board approved unanimously for Geoff Sallis to be acting Chair at the next meeting in March.

Action: To decide at the next meeting in March the position of Chair.

79. NATIONAL SACRE NEWS UPDATE

Stephen Pett presented a brief overview of the National SACRE news.

80. AOB

Tracy Westlake added that at primary level, at the last network meeting with 32 schools present, there was a focus on multi-disciplinary lenses and what this means at a primary and early-years level, and 11 different schools requested further support. In addition, Tracy Westlake requested that if anyone wants to support this work then they should approach her.

Action: To include an item on teacher support (network meetings) to be presented by Tracy Westlake on the SACRE meeting agenda in March.

81. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is 15th March 2024, 14:00-17:00.

The meeting ended at 4.24 pm

Chairperson

Herefordshire secondary school: RE provision 2024

1. Name:	
2. School:	
3. Do you use the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus?	
4. What is RE called in your school?	
5. Time for RE at KS3 per 2 weeks	
6. Do you offer Short Course Religious Studies at Key stage 4?	
7. If the answer to 6 was yes, what time is allocated per two weeks?	
8. Do you offer Full Course GCSE Religious studies?	
9. If the answer to 8 was yes, what time is allocated per two weeks?	
10. GCSE exam board	
11. Any options groups at A level?	
12. A level Exam board	
13. If SACRE could help you, what would you like SACRE to do?	
14. Any suggestions/requests for the revised syllabus?	
15. Any other comments?	

Thanks – please email to stephen@retoday.org.uk

Herefordshire SACRE News – Spring Term 2024

The role of SACRE is to create and monitor the agreed syllabus for RE in our local area, and to advise the local authority on matters relating to the provision and quality of RE and school collective worship. SACRE is keen to respond to teachers' needs and school requests for RE help.

National RE news for teachers and SACRE members

This paper is a short digest of some useful items of interest about RE in the spring term 2024. Wherever possible we have provided hotlinks to additional web-based resources.

Religious Education in the HMCI Annual report

The [Ofsted Annual Report](#) published at the end of November 2023 presents the organisation's findings for the areas they inspect including schools. NATRE is pleased to see the recognition of the challenges faced by teachers of RE and the impact on children.

Ofsted found the following issues in many schools:

- schools failing to meet the statutory requirement to teach RE to all pupils in all year groups;
- pupils not being taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society,
- non-examination provision typically not being of high quality;
- schools not teaching topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter;

Ofsted recommends a coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools including:

- the provision of high-quality professional development
- curriculum publishers identifying clearly what pupils will learn and when
- the government proving clear expectations about RE provision in schools
- non-statutory guidance for RE needing to be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach

These findings add further weight to the call from NATRE and others for a National Plan for RE and for government support for the National Content Standard published by the RE Council last month.

Extracts from the report relating to RE are quoted in full below:

From the Curriculum Section of the report as follows.

However, some subjects still do not receive the attention they deserve:

- *in many secondary schools, pupils do not benefit from a broad and ambitious music curriculum. In physical education (PE), pupils typically experience a broad range of activities. However, schools do not always ensure that these contribute enough to developing pupils' knowledge and skills.*
- *in too many primary and secondary schools, the religious education (RE) that pupils receive is of a poor quality and not fit for purpose, leaving pupils ill-equipped for some of the complexities of contemporary society.*

Religious education

RE in schools is generally of poor quality. Although it is a statutory subject, schools often consider RE as an afterthought. As a subject on the curriculum, it is under-valued. RE is a complex subject, and the lack of clarity and support from government makes schools' job harder.

Some schools steer through these challenges well, but most do not. We found that:

- *many schools do not meet the statutory requirement to teach RE at all stages*
- *pupils are rarely taught enough substance to prepare them to engage in a complex, multi-religious and multi-secular society (where religion and non-religion play different parts in different people's lives)*
- *too often, schools do not teach topics in the RE curriculum deeply enough for pupils to develop a substantial understanding of the subject matter*

- *non-examined RE is typically not high quality.*

All pupils should develop a broad and secure knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions. It will take coordinated effort by stakeholders to improve the quality of RE in schools:

- *schools need high-quality professional development to teach RE well*
- *curriculum publishers need to identify clearly what pupils will learn and when, building on knowledge over time, so that pupils develop a deep knowledge of the chosen religious and non-religious traditions*
- *the government should provide clear expectations about RE provision in schools. Schools should follow these. Current non-statutory guidance for RE should be updated and include clear information for schools about the breadth and depth of the syllabus they are expected to teach*

National Content Standard for Religious Education

The RE Council of England and Wales has launched its [National Content Standard](#) for Religious Education in England. This newsletter has previously reported on the postcode lottery of RE provision in England, as found in the Ofsted [Research Review](#), the [primary](#) and [secondary](#) surveys from NATRE, and [analysis of the DfE's own data](#). However, until now, there has been no national benchmark to cite when we are asked, "What exactly does high-quality RE look like?"

The purpose is to give a national benchmark that applies to all types of school in England. The NCS is set out in the style of National Curriculum documents, and at the heart of it is the standard, based on the [National Statement of Entitlement](#) from the RE Council's religion and worldviews project.

You can read the National Content Standard [here](#) and a blog about it by Deborah Weston [here](#).

NATRE Secondary survey on RE: results

This is an analysis of the data gathered from a questionnaire on impact of political policies on Religious Education in England, RME in Scotland and RVE in Wales. It relates particularly to the level of provision in different types of school, the experience of teachers in relation to initial teacher training and continuing professional development and the type of examination and non-examination courses offered at key stages 4 and 5. Through publicising this survey, NATRE hopes it can be used widely seeks to make the case for more attention to be paid to the level of provision and quality of our subject in all schools and, in England for there to be a National Plan for RE as recommended by the Commission on RE in 2018.

This tenth survey was conducted during the summer term of 2023 via a number of teacher networks supported by NATRE, and RE Today Services. 241 teachers from different parts of the UK responded.

The report discusses teacher workload, provision at KS3 and KS4, leadership, timetabling and time for GCSE RS, whether RE is taught by specialists and if teachers have had any RE CPD, and the destinations of A level RS students. Access the full report: [NATRE Secondary Survey 2023](#)

Advanced British Standard Consultation

The DfE are currently consulting on the Advanced British Standard, a potential new qualification framework for 16-19 year olds. NATRE have pointed that current plans have not included the statutory position of RE for those studying 16-19 within a school setting, nor is Religious Studies A level – one of the most popular subjects, used as an example in the literature around the proposal. The closing date for the consultation is 20th March 2024. You can respond [here](#).

Parliamentary question on RE: Supporting and funding RE

[Ofsted describes](#) “the lack of clarity and support from the government makes schools’ job harder” in relation to delivering high-quality RE. An example of this can be found in the answer from Minister of State for Education; Damian Hinds, MP [to this written question](#) from Jim Shannon MP:

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to take steps to fund network hubs for Religious Education; and if she will make a statement.

Damian Hinds MP, Minister of State for Education responded

“Religious education (RE) is an essential part of a school’s curriculum and remains a compulsory subject in all state-funded schools, including academies, to all pupils up to the age of 18. RE develops an individual’s knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society, as well as serving to inform their own values and behaviour.

Although the Department has not been involved in the establishment of the RE Hubs project, the Department welcomes its work to support teachers and practitioners. The Department currently has no plans to provide funding for the project. The Department does, however, provide support for RE in other ways.”

The answer then goes on to cite spending on the new bursary which was finally reinstated this year but is still very small in comparison to other shortage subjects such as geography and languages including Latin, the Oak National Academy materials which will eventually be rolled out to all subjects and the eight-week funded subject knowledge enhancement courses for potential trainee teachers of RE – again offered to many other subjects.

DfE’s annual report and accounts set out government policy:

“Our main levers to support schools are our Curriculum Hub programmes (music, computing, languages, English and mathematics), the Behaviour Hubs programme and our model curricula guidance ...” (page 72)

It is important to note that music hubs will receive £79m a year until at least 2025 and there is money available for other subject support too. For example, Schools Week [reported](#) on 1st December 2023 that the £320 million PE and sports premium for primary schools will be extended for at least another year from September.

NATRE and others in the RE community ask, if “Religious education (RE) is an essential part of a school’s curriculum and remains a compulsory subject in all state funded schools” and in relation to the RE Hubs project, “the Department welcomes its work to support teachers and practitioners”, why does the government not back up these words with action by funding the subject on a par with other subjects in the curriculum – including [RE Hubs](#)?

Is this a question SACRE should pose to local MPs and prospective candidates?

House of Lords debate quality Religious Education

Religious Education was in the spotlight on January 18th 2024, as the Lords debated standards in RE in the Grand Committee. NATRE worked with the RE Policy Unit to help brief several peers who offered to speak in this debate proposed by Lord Harries of Pentregarth.

In his contribution, Lord Harries of Pentregarth raised concerns about schools' poor quality of religious education (RE) and quoted data collected by NATRE. He also referenced the damning 2023 HMCI Annual Ofsted report from Amanda Spielman, where RE was described as "poor quality" and "not fit for purpose".

Ofsted suggested, he said, that RE was "undervalued" and often considered as an "afterthought" by schools and the "lack of clarity and support" from the Government made schools' job "harder".

The peer criticized the lack of government support, citing the survey conducted by NASACRE in August 2023, which found that five authorities declared no spending on RE at all, and a further 34—39 in all, or 31%—stated they did not spend any money supporting RE in schools.

Lord Harries closed his remarks by calling for a National Plan for RE, including a benchmark for the curriculum. He made a list of matters for inclusion in this National Plan.

1. it should include a budgetary provision at least comparable to that received for other subjects such as music;

- the plan should include a benchmark for what is expected from the syllabus,
- that what happens locally should be judged by this benchmark;
- that RE should be taught by people who have qualifications in the subject and who are given regular opportunities to enhance their professional skills,
- that more bursaries and more money for enhanced professional training should be made available to this end.

Various speakers contributed to the debate which can be read in full here: [Religious Education in Schools - Hansard - UK Parliament](#)

Listen via Parliament TV [Parliamentlive.tv - Lords Grand Committee](#)

Training, networking, resources and other support

Bayt al Fann: exploring art and culture inspired by Islamic tradition

'Bayt al Fann' is Arabic for 'Art House'. It was launched in November 2021 and welcomes all to explore the past, present and future of Islamic art, culture and heritage. Its [website](#) is a huge treasure trove of information and examples of art and culture linked to Islam from ancient scriptures to modern 'calligrafitti' and architecture.

For those who want more, there are events and workshops and a new quarterly periodical with the first edition centred around Islamic pattern. There are regular, detailed social media posts across many platforms including Instagram (baytal.fann), Threads (baytal.fann), TikTok (@baytalfann) and X (@BaytAlFann).

List of Resources to Support Schools with Contentious Topics

Together is a coalition of some of the UK's best known organisations that aim to build a kinder, closer and more connected society. As one of its campaigns, 'Together for Humanity' is building a movement to stand against rising antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate in the UK amidst the conflict in the Middle East. The campaign is working to support schools, universities and councils to build bridges in their communities.

It has created a document containing links and information to offer guidance that schools and teachers may find helpful. There are also some resources that could potentially be used with pupils on this document.

[Access resource](#)

Westhill Awards 2024-25

NASACRE is once again joining with Westhill to offer awards of up to £4000 for innovative and enduring projects. Any project should offer young people meaningful opportunities to engage in compelling learning experiences in RE (or Collective Worship), within the broad theme of “education into diversity”.

Any SACRE wishing to submit an application is strongly advised to review the briefing notes which accompany the application form. There is a webinar on **16th October** which will look at the application process and give interested SACREs an opportunity to hear from past winners. The application form and the notes can be found and downloaded [here](#).

NASACRE Training for SACRE members

Wednesday 26th June 6.30-8.30 So, you've joined your local SACRE...

Description: A rerun of the September session, to help new SACRE members to understand their role, how SACRE works, its statutory responsibilities and how members make their contribution to SACRE's work.

Free. Other training and resources available on the NASACRE site. [Welcome to NASACRE - NASACRE](#)

New RE Today Learning Zone

RE Today Services are delighted to have launched a new e-learning platform that puts teachers in control of their CPD. Courses already available on the Learning Zone include subject knowledge webinars for both primary and secondary teachers on Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Islam, Judaism, Sikhi and Non-Religious Worldviews alongside the ever-popular Understanding Christianity course for primary colleagues. Teachers of RE can select those courses and webinars most relevant to them – each can be accessed and used at times convenient for the participants, or even accessed in short bursts over a few weeks or months. More will be added to the Learning Zone over the coming months.

To find out more, please go to [RE Today Learning Zone](#). [Login](#)

RE Hubs – website growing!



RE Hubs website www.re-hubs.uk aims to connect those who can provide resources with those who need them, and create a neutral platform bringing RE professionals together.

Many organisations serve RE/RVE/R&W education in the UK, from places of worship and school speakers to CPD partnerships and resource providers. The website helps teachers to find local places of interest to visit, as well as people who will visit schools. Local training opportunities are listed.

The West Midlands hub is led by Chris Giles.

Culham St Gabriel's FREE self-study course

Digging Deeper: Subject Knowledge, this short, self-study course builds on the introduction level course and is available for FREE. Find out more here: [Culham St Gabriel's Trust Moodle \(cstg.org.uk\)](http://cstg.org.uk)

Free webinars for primary and secondary ECTs – a taster for NATRE ECT membership

Early Career Teachers have access to a range of free support through a series of online sessions. 'Café' sessions give you a chance to talk with experienced teachers and experts from different worldview backgrounds. The taught sessions offer expert input with a focus on practical classroom strategies.

Date – All Mondays 4.00-5.30pm	Speaker	Topic
11 March 2024	Stephen Pett	Exploring Jewish worldviews
8 April 2024	Deborah Weston plus an expert panel	Café NATRE: Pagan traditions
13 May 2024	Lat Blaylock	Using film to deepen learning in RE
10 June 2024	Fiona Moss	Café NATRE: Getting the most from your NATRE membership
8 July 2024	Stephen Pett	Using a religion and worldviews approach in RE

ECT webinars booking link <https://www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teachers/ect-free-monthly-webinar/>

BBC expands early years RE resources

There are new resources for 4- and 5-year-olds for RE / RME and RVE from BBC Bitesize Reception. These include some simple craft activities and some recipes for festive food with clear and simple ideas to bring the world of religion alive for small children.

The subject is connected to work in the fields of expressive arts and design, helping pupils with their understanding of the world particularly in the field of religion and belief.

These new materials cover Christmas, Easter, Eid Al Adha, Vaisakhi, Divali and more and have now gone live. They include video clips made for the age group, activity sheets and information for teacher-use.

Lat Blaylock, who contributed to the work says: 'I'm really pleased to see that BBC have made such a diverse and well thought out contribution to Early Years learning about religion and belief. Teachers will find this is a little treasure trove.'

Here is a link: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z24kqyc [Religions, festivals and celebrations](#)

*News update curated by RE Today Services
March 2024*

Three Counties Secondary RE Conference

Tuesday 25 June 2024

Puckrup Hall Hotel, Tewkesbury, GL20 6EL

This will be a practical conference to explore theory and practice, from enriching provision at KS3 to enhance GCSE results, through to research on worldviews and being non-religious.

8.30	Registration and refreshments
9.00-10.00	Explaining atheism: getting to grips with non-religion <i>Stephen Pett, RE Today</i> Research scientists are examining 29 possible causes of atheism – you’ll be amazed at no. 7..! Using the latest, cutting-edge research to explore non-religion at KS3
10.15-11.15	Rich study of Islam at KS3 for exam excellence at GCSE and beyond... <i>Ian Nicholson, RE Today</i> Loosening the straitjacket of the GCSE specs on your KS3! Lay the foundation for exam success by planning wide-ranging encounters with Muslims and Islam, including developing sophisticated interpretive skills, at KS3.
11.30-12.30	Worldviews: current research, excellent practice <i>Chris Hancock, Wycliff School</i> Drawing on his PhD research, Chris will set out the current picture of worldviews research and offer practical ideas for handling them in the classroom, particularly looking at students’ personal worldviews.
	Lunch
1.15-2.15	Beyond the spec: developing a coherent GCSE curriculum <i>Ian Nicholson</i> Instead of using the specification as a curriculum – walking through each module and unit a line at a time – take an overview and find engaging ways for students to understand the field of study <i>and</i> be able to write great exam answers.
2.20-3.20	Encountering Jews, Hindus, Christians and Sikhs at KS3: real lives, real living <i>Stephen Pett</i> Getting beyond the text book, hear from a wide range of adherents to enrich your students’ encounters, appreciating and appraising a range of voices from within religious communities.
3.20-3.30	Evaluations

You will receive an electronic copy of all resources used on the day to take away, with additional material available to download afterwards. A wide range of resources from RE Today Services will be available to purchase or order on the day at discounted prices.

Fee: £105 per delegate; £175 for two delegates from the same school.

Booking details attached. Please email to mark@retoday.org.uk or post to **RE Today Services, 5/6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH**

Why should I attend this conference?

- An opportunity to meet colleagues and share ideas
- Receive a rich variety of resources for classroom use
- Receive up-to-date, creative and inspiring training on things that matter in RE

But don't just take our word for it!

100% of attendees in 2023 rated the conference excellent!

- An excellent opportunity to consider and develop practice as usual!!
- Great ideas, great refresher, great to network just great! Thank you so much
- The variety of discussion and practical advice was stimulating and thought provoking. It has provided me with much to take back to both department and school. 'Letters and papers from prison' (Bonhoeffer) - the reason I have done this job for nearly 30 years!!
- Excellent resource ideas - great presenters - all very engaging and enthusiastic
- As always a great conference, jam packed with ideas and practical strategies for the classroom.
- Just excellent, so many points made throughout that I hadn't thought of before.
- As always, a great day! I always learn so much at the conference and this year is no different. Especially the practical help with lesson ideas.
- Excellent, really thought provoking, lots of practical ideas, takeaways.
- Some really interesting and practical ideas on how to bring diversity and world views into the classroom! Already planning mentally how I am going to add the resources used into our curriculum!

100% of attendees in 2022 rated the conference excellent!

- Thank you so much for giving up your time. Really enjoy/interested in research behind worldviews and how to explore worldviews. Practical examples modelled by Lat - thank you! Loved how we explored ideas and turned methods upside down.
- This is my annual 'plugin'! I love meeting other RE teachers and gaining such amazing knowledge and understanding.
- Excellent day with amazing resource is that can be adapted and taken into the classroom. Great to see some different approaches to how to deliver resources to students.
- Superb as usual. Inspirational and directly relevant to RE now. Lovely update on current dialogue and looking ahead.
- Excellent day full of useful ideas and links to learning. Good to be able to plan in some more up to date ideas. Good to share with others, making links.
- Fantastic day to really 'hone in' on key skills. Great content on both pedagogy and faith / worldview. World views was great to get to grips with. I liked the practical suggestions for use in the classroom.
- So good to be able to work collectively and in the real world again. I met some stimulating and supportive colleagues which is vital.
- Really enjoyed the segment on world views and excited to see how this develops. The venue was excellent! Really enjoyed the depth of the content on Sikhi.

90% of 2021 online attendees rated the day as excellent!

- Although very different - zoom! - still a fantastic day. As always I feel refreshed and positive about the future of RE. The ideas and topics were excellent and I will definitely be using many of the activities.
- I was surprised how close it came to the joy of attending a face to face conference. Lots of fantastic and inspiring ideas. Thank you both.
- As always, fantastic resources, ideas and new perspectives to explore. This conference reinvigorates me and at the end of this year, that has been especially needed! I particularly enjoyed the Anti-racist RS session. Thanks to all involved, brilliant.
- I can actually use all the ideas and resources in the classroom!
- Inspiring- it made me rethink my plans and critically examine my thinking on Islam

**Booking form:
Three Counties Secondary RE Conference
Thursday 25 June 2024
Puckrup Hall Hotel, GL20 2EL**

Fee: £105 per delegate; £175 for two delegates from the same school

Full Name(s):			
School Name:			
School Address:			
	Postcode:		
Telephone:			
Admin email address:			
Attending teacher emails:			
Payment details:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Please invoice the school		
Invoice/ Credit Card billing address:			
	Postcode:		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I enclose a cheque, payable to RE Today Services		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I will pay by Visa, Mastercard or Switch		
Card number:			
Expiry Date:		Start Date:	
Security code <small>(last 3 numbers on signature strip)</small>		Issue no. (Switch)	
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