

National RE Updates for SACRE from RE Today Summer 2024

Ofsted publishes its subject report on Religious Education

The long-awaited Ofsted subject report into Religious Education entitled *Deep and Meaningful?* was published on 17th April 2024. OFSTED notes the importance of government action in the body of this report and in its recommendations. This follows the 2021 Ofsted Research Review into RE and the HMCI's Annual Report which made specific mention of RE and which was published in November 2023.

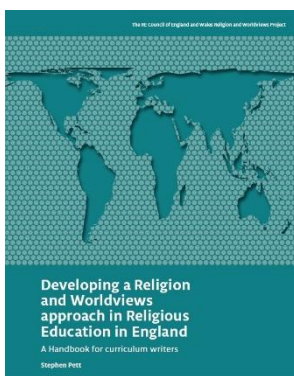
The latest report sums up findings from Ofsted reports into RE in the primary and secondary phases. In response to the report, Sir Martyn Oliver, the Chief Inspector said:

'A strong RE curriculum is not only important for pupils' cultural development, it is a requirement of law and too many schools are not meeting that obligation. I hope that the examples of good RE curriculum in our report help schools develop their own practice and support the development of a strong RE curriculum for all.'

The report discusses how RE is delivered in schools and the impact on pupils' learning. The importance of appropriate timetabling was highlighted as key to developing schema and for pupils to encounter ever more challenging RE: *"Long gaps between lessons hindered pupils' recall. When the timetable was organised so that pupils had regular RE lessons, they remembered more."* Note was also made that schools were not enabling pupils to understand the diverse nature of religion and non-religious views. *"Given the quality of curriculums found in the majority of schools sampled, it is unlikely that their pupils would build up an overall diverse and rich conception of religion and non-religion. This is because most curriculums lacked collectively enough content to achieve it. Most lacked depth of study in specific religious traditions, which meant that there was a weak conceptual basis for pupils to make links with other traditions."* It states that many secondary schools are failing to ensure that RE is taught at Key Stage 4 and 5 for those not undertaking a recognised qualification.

Professional development of teachers was also commented on throughout the report with reference made to the fact that, through the inspections used as the basis for this report, more than half of secondary RE teachers had no qualification in the subject and in the majority of cases they had received no training in how to deliver RE. The report refers to 90% of teachers not having received professional development in RE to keep up to date with subject developments.

Read the full report, as well as responses from NATRE and the RE Policy Unit here: [OFSTED: 'Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report' April 2024 \(natre.org.uk\)](https://natre.org.uk)



Religious Education Council launches new Handbook and toolkit for curriculum development

The RE Council of England and Wales launched a new curriculum toolkit on 2nd May 2024 to help schools in England develop a high quality RE curriculum using a religion and worldviews approach. The toolkit contains a handbook for curriculum developers, three curriculum frameworks, and the National Content Standard (NCS) for RE in England. This is the culmination of a three-year Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom project, with authors drawing on academic research, classroom experience, and further consultation on the landmark 2018 report from

the Commission on RE, which recommended steps to both adopt an academically rigorous approach to the subject and reflect the nature of belief and practice in contemporary Britain. The resources are available for all teachers, senior leadership teams, and curriculum developers. They build on existing best practice and were developed in partnership with teachers in different communities from multi-academy trusts to schools with a religious character.

Central to all these resources is a National Statement of Entitlement (NSE) that sets out what all state school pupils up to the end of year 11 are entitled to be taught. It provides a set of principles for content selection and pedagogical tools to help them deliver a more scholarly approach to the teaching of religious education. In addition, the NCS sets a benchmark for RE to help clarify expectations for schools. The need for this sort of guidance was one of the key recommendations of the Ofsted subject report published in April 2024. The NCS has been recommended by all major school providers in England including the Church of England, the Catholic Education Service, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

REC Chair, Sarah Lane Cawte, said:

“This is a major project that reflects a broad consensus across the RE community to help all schools deliver a personally enriching and academically challenging religious education. A religion and worldviews approach, already in use in many schools around the country, will help all teachers improve their existing practice by placing students at the heart of the subject, providing clarity and guidance for teachers in a variety of different contexts about what constitutes high quality RE.”

Access the resources and read commentary on them here: [Religious Education Council launches new curriculum toolkit to help teachers deliver high quality RE \(natre.org.uk\)](https://natre.org.uk)

NATRE Primary Teachers' Survey now open!

NATRE takes the voices of teachers to stakeholders such as OFSTED and the DFE through its biannual Primary survey. NATRE calls upon SACREs to proactively encourage teachers to participate. The survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete. As a token of gratitude for completing the survey, teachers will receive a complimentary NATRE resource and will be entered into a draw for two free Primary School Enhanced memberships.

[Complete survey →](#)

'REady for Work' Campaign

Former President of the Confederation of British Industry launches call to action, highlighting the importance of high quality RE in schools.

In his open letter, Lord Karan Bilimoria, former President of the Confederation of British Industry and Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, says that he has 'always been keen to highlight the importance of high-quality Religious Education in schools'. Lord Bilimoria is positive about how RE has evolved over the past decade, and the passion of RE teachers, but expresses concerns with the standard of RE in many schools across the country, launching a [Call to Action](#) for employers and business leaders, imploring them to stand by students interested in a high quality education in religion and worldviews as preparation for the future workplace.

Read Lord Karan Bilimoria's letter here: [REady for Work campaign - ReThinkRE](#) . Do you know of business leaders who would sign this call to action?

NASACRE News

Webinar Programme

The next in NASACRE's series of webinars, entitled '*So, you've joined your local SACRE...*' is hosted by Executive members for those who are new to SACRE. It will take place on **Wednesday 26th June 2024, 6:30-8pm**. This is a re-run 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 session - for details contact admin@nasacre.org.uk

NASACRE Website Update

Work has been underway to reorganise and streamline the [NASACRE website](#). There is a new [Noticeboard](#) feature, and subscribing SACREs can now [share their documents](#).

Upcoming NATRE Courses for the Summer Term

For more details on any of these courses, click here: www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/upcoming-courses-events/?page=1

Introducing a Religion and Worldviews approach 11/07/2024

What is a religion and worldviews approach? How is it different from current RE practice? What are the benefits to teachers and pupils? A practical introduction, drawing on the new RE Council Handbook and Frameworks, including resources and strategies, to show how to enrich and deepen pupils' understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews.