

## **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

Wednesday, 8 July 2015

**2.00 pm**

Entrust, Riverway Centre, Riverway, Stafford. ST16 3TH

John Tradewell  
Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation  
30 June 2015

---

### **A G E N D A**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Welcome to New Members**
3. **Declaration of Any other Business**
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2015** (Pages 1 - 4)
5. **An Update on Key Issues** (Pages 5 - 8)  
  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People
6. **Agreed Syllabus Conference** (Pages 9 - 24)  
  
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People
  - a) Convening of the Agreed Syllabus Conference
  - b) Minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 9 February 2015
  - c) Update on the review
7. **NASACRE Update** (Pages 25 - 26)  
  
Oral Update by the Chairman
8. **Application for Variation of Practice** (Pages 27 - 28)



Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

9. **SACRE Budget 2014-2015 end of year Current Budget 2015-2016** (Pages 29 - 34)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

10. **Monitoring Provision** (Pages 35 - 44)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

11. **Suggestions for SACREs to consider** (Pages 45 - 46)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

12. **AOB** (Pages 47 - 70)

- a) Religious Education in Schools, House of Commons Briefing  
Paper No. 07167

13. **Date of next meeting**

That the next SACRE meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 11  
November 2015, 2.00pm, Entrust HQ, Riverway, Stafford.

#### **Membership**

Sam Kirwan	Muhammad Parekh
Julie Thompson (Co-Optee)	Sam Phillips
Susan Devereux	Sue Blackmore
Mick Dwyer	Mary Gale
Sonia Andjelkovic	Colin Hopkins
Ann Hewetson	Rosemary Woodward
Diana Cutler	Peter Davies
Tajinder Singh	Terry Finn
Paul Lewis	David Williams
G Devadason	Caroline Wood
Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal (Vice- Chairman)	Bill Walley
Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf (Chairman)	Ian Lawson
Dr Laow Panyasiri	Paul Moseley

## MINUTES

### Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Meeting - 9 February 2015

Present: **Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf**

Susan Devereux, Ann Hewetson, Diana Cutler, Dr Laow Panyasiri, Muhammad Parekh, Sue Blackmore, Rosemary Woodward, Terry Finn, David Williams, Caroline Wood and Bill Walley

Apologies for absence: Sam Kirwan, Mick Dwyer, Sonia Andjelkovic, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal, Colin Hopkins and Peter Davies

Also in attendance - Helen Phillips, Emma Jardine and Mary Gale

## PART ONE

### 13. Declaration of Any other Business

There were none on this occasion.

### 14. Minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 12 November 2014

**RESOLVED** – That, with the inclusion of Cllr Caroline Wood in the list of apologies for absence, the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 12 November 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

Members noted that Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal had been contacted after the 12 November meeting and had agreed to stand as the SACRE Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

### 15. An Update on Key Issues

SACRE received an update on key issues that had occurred since their last meeting, including:

- a) Emma Jardine, Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE, would be going on maternity leave from April 2015. Mary Gale would be covering this role in Emma's absence. Mary had previously been a member of Staffordshire SACRE;
- b) Lord Nash, Minister responsible for faith schools, had sent a letter to all SACRE Chairmen, Clerks and Directors of Education emphasising the importance of good teaching of RE and Members received a copy of this letter;
- c) NASACRE had issued a statement in response to the Charlie Hebdo murders in Paris, Members received a copy of the statement;
- d) The Department for Education (DfE) had released official guidance on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development in schools; and,
- e) Following attendance at the spirited arts course led by Emma Jardine, schools within the Biddulph Schools Partnership Trust were embarking on a spirited arts

week starting on 9 February 2015. SACRE Members were pleased to note this initiative.

**RESOLVED** – That the update on key issues be noted.

## **16. Agreed Syllabus Review**

SACRE noted the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 12 November 2014.

It was proposed that SACRE convene a meeting of their Agreed Syllabus Conference.

**RESOLVED** – That SACRE convene the second meeting of their Agreed Syllabus Conference.

[Note by Clerk: The SACRE meeting was formally closed whilst the Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened. Once the Agreed Syllabus Conference had concluded the SACRE meeting formally re-opened.]

## **17. DfE Guidance on Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools**

On 27 November 2014 the DfE published guidance on promoting British values in schools to ensure young people left school prepared for life in modern Britain. The guidance aimed to help both independent and state-maintained schools understand their responsibilities on this issue, having a duty to “actively promote” the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values had first been set out by the Government in the “Prevent” strategy in 2011. Previously schools had been required to “respect” these values, but must now have a clear strategy for embedding these values and show how their work with pupils had been effective. The changes were designed to tighten up standards on pupil welfare to improve safeguarding whilst strengthening barriers to extremism through the standards on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Members received a copy of the guidance. The guidance was useful and Members felt that further discussion around this issue would be helpful, proposing that Chris Sharkey, Senior Teacher Consultant Minority Ethnic Achievement, be invited to their next SACRE meeting to contribute to these discussions.

**RESOLVED** – That: a) SACRE note with interest the guidance given by the Government; and  
b) Chris Sharkey be invited to attend the next SACRE meeting to discuss the work being undertaken in Staffordshire on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMCS in schools.

## **18. An Analysis of Examination Results 2014**

SACRE received a statistical analysis of their standards achieved in GCSE (full course), Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary GCE Religious Studies by pupils examined in the summer of 2014. The key issues identified from the analysis were:

- a) In 2014 entries for GCSE Full Course rose sharply, whilst there were no entries for the GCSE Short Course. Since 2012 there had been an increase of 2233 entries for full course GCSE, which reflected the national changes in the examination system and the de-valuing of the short course;
- b) It was positive that entries overall had not declined and that examination and accreditation was still favoured at Key Stage 4 (KS4). The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus recommended that students at KS4 study an approved examination syllabus, and these findings showed that the majority of schools were compliant;
- c) Standards achieved at GCSE in Staffordshire had declined. This decline may reflect the change to the full course from the short course, with some schools taking the full course for the first time. There may also be staffing pressures in schools and teaching time may be another pressure;
- d) Overall 58 students across 19 schools were entered for AS level and 162 students across 23 schools were entered for A level at the end of KS5. There was a small drop in the number of entries at both AS and A level; and,
- e) This year Staffordshire attainment at the higher grades A-B was slightly below the national average for GCSE, As and A level.

SACRE felt that this year they wished to congratulate those schools who had a high percentage of pupils gaining above national average grades whilst also having a large number of pupils taking the course.

**RESOLVED** – That Emma Jardine, on SACRE’s behalf, writes a letter of congratulations to those schools with high exam pupil entries and above national average results.

## **19. NASACRE Update**

The Chairman gave an update on recent NASACRE events, including:

- NASACRE and AREIAC had held a joint conference in Birmingham on the Trojan Horse incident. This had been fully subscribed and very useful. This approach may set the pattern for future conference support;
- NASACRE had responded to the letter from Lord Nash. The response was expected to be included on the next SACRE briefing, circulated to Members;
- It seemed likely that the Government would find the funding to enable an analysis of SACRE Annual Reports to be undertaken;
- NASACRE were producing guidance for SACRE annual reports, including a standard template, which would be available on the public section of their website;
- NASACRE had produced a prompt statement in response to the Charlie Hebdo incident, which had been widely appreciated;
- A survey of SACREs had been carried out recently by David Hampshire. This had received a good response. Part of the issue for SACREs now was a level of uncertainty over how local authorities continue to support them;
- The NASACRE AGM would be held on 21 May 2015, in Birmingham, and Members were asked to inform the Chairman and /or Clerk if they would like to attend;

- NASACRE were reviewing their constitution to try and rationalise it to avoid duplication; and
- Further work would be available to SACREs on line for reviewing training to ensure SACREs are effective.

**RESOLVED** – That the oral update by the Chairman be noted.

## **20. Application for Variation of Practice**

There were none on this occasion.

## **21. SACRE Budget**

SACRE received a breakdown of their budget for the financial year 2014-2015.

**RESOLVED** – That the budget breakdown be noted.

## **22. AOB**

Dr Laow Panyasiri informed SACRE Members that they were organising a Children's Day at the Buddhist Temple in Kings Bromley on 1 August 2015 and SACRE Members were welcome. The Chairman asked that details of this event be sent to the Chairman or Clerk for circulation to all SACRE Members.

**Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf  
Chairman**

---

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.

## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### An Update on Key Issues

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief update on key issues that have developed or arisen since the last meeting of SACRE.

##### **2 Summary**

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on a number of key issues. These are matters which have either been raised at previous SACRE meetings and which have moved forward, or matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

##### **3 Recommendation**

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and note the contents

##### **4 Background**

4.1 Since the spring term meeting of the SACRE there have been developments in a number of areas which had previously been agenda items for SACRE or which have local or national importance for RE.

4.2 Members will be briefed on these key developments.

##### **5 Equal Opportunities**

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

##### **6 Financial implications**

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere, or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

**Contact Officer**

**Mary Gale Telephone number: 07816374873**

## **Cover for RE Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE**

Maternity cover for Emma Jardine commenced in April 2015. This is being carried out by Mary Gale. Mary has experience of SACRE having been a member for several years and is also a SIAMs inspector. Prior to her retirement in 2014 Mary was a headteacher for 20 years and led a successful Church of England school with three outstanding SIAMS inspection results and a Silver RE quality mark award- the first in Staffordshire . She has a good understanding of the relationship between SCC and Entrust giving her the insight and ability to guide the SACRE going forward in the interim period.

Mary met with Emma Jardine and Michael Metcalf prior to taking on this role and again before Emma Jardine took maternity leave.

Congratulations to Emma. Her daughter was born on April 20th. She has named her baby Mia.

## **Guidance on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools**

Mary Gale has attended AREIAC and Entrust training on fundamental British values and SMSC in schools. This training explored the messages in the official guidance from the DFE on promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (see agenda item 6). Mary has continued to share this guidance with headteachers, school governors, and school/agency clerks via governor updates, bespoke training and the Entrust Governor Information Pack. This will continue into the autumn term through the Entrust Governor Information Pack and further headteacher updates.

A continued series of briefings will be using this information further to up-date schools. These briefings will be led by the MEAS team. (Minority Ethnic Achievement Service)

### **Guidance for Governors in general**

Guidance for Governors on RE has been provided. The two briefing papers based on the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group has been shared through the Governor Information pack. It was confirmed that there was no legal requirement for Governors to review RE in schools or for schools to undertake the recommendations but schools had a legal responsibility to provide RE.

In the next survey for schools on RE and collective worship (Autumn Term 2015 onwards) all schools will be asked when they last reviewed RE in the school as per the recommendations of SACRE in 2014.



## **SACRE lecture**

Mary Gale contacted Entrust regarding a SACRE lecture in 2015-2016. Entrust have agreed to sponsor this lecture as in previous years on the condition that we make available promotional material for their forthcoming courses. This lecture will be open to SACRE members and all schools. This will be held in the conference room at Riverway at a date to be arranged in late Autumn 2015 or early Spring 2016. Research is underway regarding a suitable key note speaker. The proposed timings include arrival and refreshments 5.30-6pm with the lecture from 6-7pm.

## **Further Good news story:**

Following attendance at the spirited Arts course led by Emma Jardine, a variety of schools have embarked on spirited arts projects throughout the term. The aims are to:

- Increase pupil awareness and understanding of faith and culture, including Christianity.
- Increase knowledge of the main faiths through story, dance, art and music
- Develop practical skills in art, music and dance
- Showcase the products of the learning within the community
- Evidence Spiritual, moral, social and culture in schools.

This has been evidenced through link governor reports in governing body minutes.



### Minutes of the SACRE - Agreed Syllabus Conference Meeting held on 9 February 2015

Present:

Diana Cutler	Muhammad Parekh
Susan Devereux	Bill Walley
Terry Finn	David Williams
Ann Hewetson	Rosemary Woodward
Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf	Caroline Wood
Dr Laow Panyasiri	

**Also in attendance:** Mary Gale, Helen Phillips and Emma Jardine

**Apologies:** Sonia Andjelkovic, Sue Blackmore, Peter Davies, Mick Dwyer, Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal, Colin Hopkins and Sam Kirwan

#### **PART ONE**

##### **1. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Agreed Syllabus Conference held on 12 November 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

##### **2. ASC Option Choices**

Although it had been proposed that a SACRE working group be established to consider the Agreed Syllabus review, this had not been necessary as a meeting between the SACRE Chairman, Emma Jardine (Education Consultant), Trudy Pyatt (Senior Commissioning Lead for School Improvement) and Matt Prisk (Relationship Manager, Education and Wellbeing, Commissioning Delivery Hub) on 27 October 2014 had moved the issue forward. At this meeting the possibility of commissioning days from Entrust to complete the Agreed Syllabus review had been agreed in principle, with a request for a “gold, silver and bronze” style set of options, including costings, to be produced by Emma and forwarded to officers for discussion and consideration by the Cabinet Member.

Members received a paper that was sent to Matt Prisk on 12 December setting out the three options as requested.

There had been no response to the paper as yet. Unfortunately Matt Prisk had now left the Authority and the Chairman agreed to contact Trudy Pyatt to establish whether any progress had been made in addressing this issue.

Members felt that Option A was their preferred option. They expressed concern that there remained no resolution to how this would be funded or to the thoroughness of review possible. They were particularly concerned at the difficulties this may be creating for teachers in their preparation and planning. They requested that schools be informed

as soon as a decision had been made on the level of review and the likely timescales involved.

**RESOLVED** - That: a) the Chairman contact Trudy Pyatt, Senior Commissioning Lead for School Improvement, to establish what progress has been made to address this issue; and,  
b) as soon as the level and timescale of the review has been established schools be informed.

**Chairman**

---

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.

# **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

**8<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

## **Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People**

### **Agreed Syllabus Review 2014/15**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To continue the process to review the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

#### **2 Summary**

2.1 The Education Act 1993 requires the Local Authority to institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years after the completion of its last review.

2.2 The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was last reviewed and issued to school in 2009. A review therefore falls due in 2014.

2.3 It is for the Local Authority to convene an agreed syllabus conference for the purpose of reviewing a syllabus. However the SACRE can, in writing, request that the LA reconsider its agreed syllabus.

#### **3 Recommendation**

3.1 This is the fourth meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. At previous meetings members decided to formally begin the Agreed Syllabus review process with the support of Cllr. Adams.

3.2 Members also began the process of sourcing funding for a radical review of the Agreed Syllabus.

This included letters and meetings. Entrust will be unable to fund any Agreed Syllabus review. The Chair of SACRE will update on responses from Staffordshire County Council. .

3.3 The Agreed Syllabus Conference may wish to discuss ways forward.

#### **4 Background**

4.1 The last revision of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus was issued to schools in 2009.

4.2 Since the revision a number of major changes have taken place in education which have a direct impact on religious education:

- September 2014 a new curriculum was introduced to all schools, except for Year 2 and Year 6 and KS3 and 4 (Key Stages 1-4), with a clear focus on slimming down the curriculum to allow for more cross curriculum dimensions and inter-disciplinary studies and the removal of levels of attainment. Religious education

needs to take account of these changes in order to play a full and active role in the new curriculum.

- September 2015 the new curriculum applies to all pupils at KS 1 and KS 2.
- In 2012 the REC completed a review of the current National Non-Statutory Framework for Religious Education. This is the document that SACRE's must take account of and is referred to in all national documentation relating to RE, including examination syllabuses and the SACRE self-evaluation materials produced by Ofsted.

4.3 It was originally proposed that should any revisions required to the revised Staffordshire agreed syllabus should be in place for September 2014 in order to make best use of the momentum generated by the implementation of the changes in the curriculum. In reality, however, the review process is a 12 month process from start to finish.

4.4 SACRE has had a number of options available to it. SACRE may choose to make radical changes to the syllabus. SACRE may choose to make small changes to the syllabus. SACRE may choose to make no changes to the syllabus.

4.5 These decisions were placed on hold pending further communication from Entrust and SCC regarding costings.

## **5 Equal Opportunities**

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

## **6 Financial implications**

6.1 Expenses incurred will be met from the SACRE budget.

**Contact Officer**  
**07816374873**

**Mary Gale Telephone number:**

## **Update**

Since the November 2014 meeting an agreement in principle to a review of the Agreed syllabus was given the go-ahead by SCC via the commissioning process. SACRE were asked to forward a more detailed breakdown of the costs involved in the different types of review that had previously been outlined. This was sent in December 2014. It was compiled with input from RE Today and was approved by Sharon Kelly prior to sending. A further response from SCC is yet to be received.

Mary Gale and Michael Metcalf have been in contact with Sharon Kelly. The message continues to be that this is in the hands of SCC. Mary Gale emailed SCC to ask for a progress report in early June 2015 and is still waiting for a reply.

## **Staffordshire SACRE options for Agreed Syllabus Review**

### **Requirements:**

**SACRE must consider reviewing its RE Agreed Syllabus after five years. An Agreed Syllabus Conference can be set up to conduct the review.**

*An agreed syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.*

Education Act (1996 Section 375 (3)) / School Standards and Framework Act (1998, Schedule 19, para.5)

The development of a clear, well-structured agreed syllabus is probably the single most important function of SACRE. Combined with on-going implementation training and resources, a new syllabus offers the possibility of raising achievement in RE in all local schools.

Ofsted RE subject reports 2010 and 2013 highlight the need for syllabuses to:

- be clear about expected knowledge and understanding about religion(s) and belief(s)
- support and empower teachers to plan effectively
- offer coherent progression across the ages and key stages
- support clear and focused assessment
- encourage enquiry-based RE

The RE Council (REC) Review of RE produced the National Curriculum Framework for RE (NCFRE) in October 2013, to run in parallel with National Curriculum changes, with a foreword by the Secretary of State. The links will enable RE programmes of study to be easily understood and implemented alongside the new orders for National Curriculum subjects such as Science or History. To this end, the NCFRE should be taken into account when revising the agreed syllabus, as well as building on what is good in the current agreed syllabus.

### **Feedback from Staffordshire SACRE Agreed Syllabus Conference meeting 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

SACRE strategy group had a long discussion about the value of the current syllabus, the changes to national education policy and their implications for a review. The detailed discussion is available, but here are the options set out by the Group:

The options for SACRE include:

- a) **Complete re-write**, based on new Framework. This is probably unfeasible due to cost, unless the LA finds substantial extra funding
- b) **Keep the current syllabus and offer a supplement** to update it a little. This is a possibility – there will be costs for producing the new supplement. One advantage of this is the continuity it will bring. The disadvantage is that it does not reflect the new Framework directly. The basic structure of the Staffordshire syllabus dates back into the 1990s.
- c) **Buy into the RE Today ‘model’ syllabus**. There will be some draft material on this if the LA wish to see it, although that will be commercially sensitive as far as RE Today are concerned. Four LAs are currently further along with this than Staffordshire in buying into this process.

Staffordshire SACRE are not opposed to adopting an agreed syllabus which has been produced by a different SACRE. Members have explored syllabus currently in use in Luton and Bedfordshire, Derbyshire, Sandwell and... Members would, however, prefer this to be modified to suit Staffordshire e.g. new front cover.

Staffordshire SACRE have expressed a preference for an online syllabus/online materials which could be updated. Staffordshire maintained schools could gain free access, academies or other schools e.g. VA, could purchase that access.

*NB all of the review and rewrite options detailed are based on additional funding/days to be commissioned through the School Intervention SDA*

### **Option A: Bespoke Staffordshire review**

The LA could fulfil its statutory duty by requiring a local review of the agreed syllabus.

This would involve:

- an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) over-seeing the review (already established through SACRE);
- a survey of teachers;
- initial drafts by the adviser;
- teacher working groups to feed into the process of reviewing the drafts;
- re-writing by adviser;
- approval from ASC, SACRE and the Local Authority;
- design and production of text and/or online version.



This would need to be launched with either a county conference day or a series of regional CPD sessions, to provide training and resources to enable teachers to implement the syllabus in their schools. A syllabus with strong implementation training support will be far more effective than one with no training.

The production of support materials can extend the value of the revised syllabus.

***Relevant recent examples:***

RE today Services are our preferred partner for option A. RE Today Services have had recent involvement with LAs in Leicester, Sheffield, Wakefield, Oldham, Cambridge, Peterborough, North Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Kensington and Chelsea, Brighton and others in their Agreed Syllabus reviews; all of these LAs published a new syllabus in the last couple of years. They are currently working with Redbridge and Havering, Nottinghamshire and others. RE Today has a unique breadth of involvement in this work, which enables us to offer cutting edge nationally informed advice.

***Advantages:***

- Involvement of local teachers strengthens the commitment to the syllabus, resulting in greater buy-in for the revised syllabus
- The process is a form of professional development for those involved, who can then support local schools in the implementation process.
- The syllabus can reflect the local area closely.

***Disadvantages:***

- Costs are probably greater than a joint syllabus
- Duplication of work with other local SACREs.

***Likely cost:***

£11500 (establishing, managing and supporting the review process, writing time, draft and redraft services and production supervision; run teacher consultations: setting the parameters for writing review materials, and developing local applications of national materials; teachers to represent different phases/key stages) plus cost of teacher days c£1000 plus cost of production c£1000

***Total: c£13,500***

	What is involved	opportunities	risks
<p>Option A</p> <p>10 days additional funding through the School Intervention SDA at £575 a day total £5750</p> <p>10 days additional LA funding outside of SDA for RE Today consultant at £400 a day £4000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for both Entrust consultant (10 days) via 10 days SDA funding and further funding for an external consultant e.g. RE Today (10 days at £400 per day) via additional LA funding</li> <li>Day 1: Thorough review of the syllabus to identify information which is no longer in date</li> <li>Day 2-4: Creation of new inclusions e.g. reference to the census, a statement on British values, new initial statement of purpose of RE, new information about what is required in different schools, links to EYFS, new requirements for KS4 and 5</li> <li>Day 4-6: Creation of a new approach to assessment without levels</li> <li>Day 7-9: Creation of outline long term plans to support the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive rewrite of the syllabus</li> <li>Involvement of local teachers strengthens the commitment to the syllabus, resulting in greater buy-in for the revised syllabus</li> <li>The process is a form of professional development for those involved, who can then support local schools in the implementation process.</li> <li>The syllabus can reflect the local area closely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Costs are much greater than a joint syllabus or an additional supplement</i></li> <li><i>Duplication of work with other local SACREs.</i></li> <li><i>No individual lesson by lesson plans (these could be produced later for a supplement)</i></li> <li><i>This doesn't include the cost of printing and production</i></li> <li><i>This doesn't include any costs associated with holding focus groups e.g. supply/transport costs</i></li> </ul>

	<p>implementation of the syllabus effectively in the classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day 10-12: Focus groups held with SACRE, headteachers, teachers, students in order to account for their views in the creation of the syllabus</li> <li>• Day 13-15: re-draft of syllabus materials taking account of focus groups</li> <li>• Day 16 SACRE validation day as all updates subject to SACRE approval, members can adapt the new materials and a final version approved</li> <li>• Day 17 Final redraft then submission to print</li> <li>• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i></li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--

## **Option B: Staffordshire supplement**

In 2011, Gloucestershire added a 24-page supplement updating its 2006-2011 syllabus. This model could be applied to the Staffordshire syllabus.

This process would be the same as for the full re-write but would take less time, and cost less in terms of development and production, and involve the Strategy Group rather than teacher groups.

This would need to be launched with either a county conference day or a series of regional CPD sessions, to provide training and resources to enable teachers to implement the syllabus in their schools.

### ***Advantages:***

- This builds on the strengths of the current syllabus, and allows for continuity at a time of great change.
- The syllabus can reflect the local area closely.
- It is a cheaper option than a full review.

### ***Disadvantages:***

- The current syllabus does not easily allow for an insert, so it would be a separate document, leading to some confusion about the syllabus, perhaps.
- The master copy of the current syllabus is currently held by members of the Central Print team due to the advanced programmes that they have on their computer. It may be possible to commission them to update our master copy as opposed to a supplement.
- It won't be possible to reflect the new Framework fully, or RE in the post-levels new National Curriculum context: danger: half baked RE
- Some changes (e.g. use of levels for assessment) are significant changes with implications throughout the 2011-2016 syllabus, so a supplement may not be feasible.
- Duplication of work with other local SACREs.

### **Likely cost:**

£2,875 (as with full review, just fewer words and less time: establishing, managing and supporting the review process, writing time, draft and redraft services and production supervision; setting the parameters for writing review materials, and developing local applications of national materials) plus cost of

production/distribution c£1000 dependent on whether you supply schools with a paper copy or opt for an online only version.

**Total: c£3,875**

	What is involved	opportunities	risks
<p>Bronze</p> <p>5 days additional funding through the School</p> <p>Intervention SDA at £575 per day total £2,875</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 days funded via SDA for Entrust consultant to review the syllabus</li> <li>• Day 1: Thorough review the syllabus to identify information which is no longer in date</li> <li>• Day 2-4: Creation of new inclusions e.g. reference to the census, a statement on British values, new initial statement of purpose of RE, new information about what is required in different schools, links to EYFS, new requirements for KS4 and 5</li> <li>• Day 5: SACRE validation day as all updates subject to SACRE approval, members can adapt the new materials and a final version approved</li> </ul>	<p>A statutory and updated offering to schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The current syllabus does not easily allow for an insert, so it would be a separate document, leading to some confusion about the syllabus, perhaps.</i></li> <li>• <i>The master copy of the current syllabus is currently held by members of the Central Print team due to the advanced programmes that they have on their computer. It may be possible to commission them to update our master copy as opposed to a supplement.</i></li> <li>• <i>It won't be possible to reflect the new Framework fully, or RE in the</i></li> </ul>

			<p><i>post-levels new National Curriculum context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Some changes (e.g. use of levels for assessment) are significant changes with implications throughout the 2011-2016 syllabus, so a supplement may not be feasible.</i></li>   <li>• <i>This doesn't include the time/cost needed for further writing, drafting and production following day 5. Further days may be needed.</i></li>   <li>• <i>NO new approach to assessment</i></li>   <li>• <i>NO teacher focus groups</i></li>   <li>• <i>NO Planning and resources for use within the classroom</i></li> </ul>
--	--	--	--

### **Option C: Purchase an RE Today Syllabus plus schemes of work.**

RE Today is currently writing a model agreed syllabus, based on the NCFRE and NSNF, and building on all of the experience in syllabus writing that the charity has developed over the last three decades.

A syllabus would provide the minimum for a SACRE / LA to fulfil its legal requirement.

To make a positive impact on raising standards in RE in the county, additional resources will be available for purchase (by individual schools or by LA).

Costs are set out below.

#### ***Advantages:***

- Full syllabus available with minimal effort from LA/SACRE
- Up to date, informed by very latest best practice
- Flexibility built in to allow schools to adapt to their particular situation
- Support materials available
- On-going support from RE Today with potential upgrades within the 5-year review period if necessary.
- Worcestershire is buying into this syllabus, which would make cross-county support and co-operation much easier for future savings.

#### ***Disadvantages:***

- Little involvement from local teachers or SACRE on the content and style.

### **Details and likely costs**

Syllabus licensed for adoption by SACREs.

Syllabus includes:

- Aim/purpose of RE
- Legal requirements
- Contribution of RE to whole-school: SMSC, well-being, literacy, PSHE, citizenship
- Breadth of study: which religions/beliefs and when

- Programmes of study EYFS-KS5
- Core knowledge outline
- Assessment processes
- Planning processes
- Inclusion
- Creative curriculum and cross-curriculum outlines
- Application of syllabus requirements to special school contexts

Flexibility and freedom will be built in to requirements, to encourage creative development and adaptation within a school.

**Scale of costs as at November 2014:**

	<b>Individual school</b>	<b>2-20 schools</b>	<b>21-50 schools</b>	<b>51-100 schools</b>	<b>101-300 schools</b>
Syllabus	£150	£100	£60	£45	£35

In Staffordshire the number of schools which would need a statutory copy of the syllabus (i.e. schools that are not academies or voluntary aided) is 294 (correct as of cop 20.11.14) so our initial purchase price would be **c.£10,290 to be fully funded by the LA outside of SDA**. This will change should more schools become academies between this date and the purchase date.

In addition, RE Today will be developing schemes of work, 28 units for primary and 12 for secondary, to support the model syllabus. These will be available to buy, with discounts for schools if ordering through the LA.

SACRE / the LA could purchase exemplar SoW for all schools as a way of demonstrating its on-going support for RE provision. If schools wanted more support in terms of units of work, they could purchase these from RE Today.

	<b>Individual school price</b>	<b>If bought through the LA</b>	<b>RRP</b>



Exemplar SoWs (1 each EYFS-Y9)	£58	£48	£85.50
Primary Full SoW (28 units)	£180	£150	£238
Secondary Full SoW (12 units)	£75	£65	£102
Full primary + secondary SoW (40 units)	£255	£215	£340
On-going support	E.g. updates to syllabus within the 5 year cycle.		
Annual NATRE membership	E.g. discounted rate negotiated for your schools, if purchased through LA		

### **On-going support**

On-going support would be negotiated with RE Today. Minor updates within the 5 years of adopting the syllabus would be included in the price; major revisions would be chargeable.

### **Launch events**

In conjunction with the local RE advisor RE Today would set up and run a series of launch events to introduce the syllabus to schools, for which schools would pay. These costs will be confirmed by RE Today before agreement. Up to 2 additional days would need to be commissioned annually through the School Intervention SDA to enable the Entrust RE Consultant to launch the syllabus and support/maintain it locally. .

### **FAQs/ Legalities:**

If we were to buy into the RE Today syllabus what are the terms and conditions for that? T&C are currently in development. The offer at the moment is that all Staffordshire schools get a disc and a print copy of the syllabus, and it is customised to Staffordshire SACRE with a front cover and introduction – RE today have a print on demand service. This means we can have the syllabus on the LA / SACRE /Entrust website as part of our license agreement with them.

The agreement lasts for 5 years, what happens if RE Today stops trading in that time? This is unlikely of course, but RE today would deposit assets with us in this eventuality.

Where would the syllabus be held...within the Staffordshire/Entrust computer system...or would it be held by RE Today with Staffordshire schools having a log-in to your system? The main syllabus held in within Staffordshire and within RE today. Exemplar and / or full schemes of work, if purchased, RE today aren't quite committed to the detail of this yet.

**Costings report produced by Emma Jardine RE Consultant to Staffordshire SACRE**

**[Emma.jardine@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:Emma.jardine@entrust-ed.co.uk)**

**Any current queries to be sent to [mary.gale55@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mary.gale55@yahoo.co.uk) (maternity cover for Emma Jardine April 15-April 16.**

## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### An Update NASACRE

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To present members of SACRE with a brief update on key issues that have developed or arisen since the last meeting of SACRE.

#### **2 Summary**

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on a number of key issues. These are matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

#### **3 Recommendation**

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and note the contents

#### **4 Background**

4.1 NASACRE is the national body of SACRE's. National meetings are held to which members of SACRE are invited and encouraged to attend. Issues are discussed which have local or national importance for RE.

4.2 Members will be briefed on any key developments.

#### **5 Equal Opportunities**

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

#### **6 Financial implications**

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere, or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

**Contact Officer:**  
**Telephone number:**

**Mary Gale**  
**07816374873**



## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### Applications for variation of practice

#### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider any applications for variation of practice to religious education and or collective worship.

#### 2 Summary

- 2.1 Upon receipt of a written application from a headteacher of a county school SACRE should determine whether it is appropriate to dis-apply the requirement for broadly Christian collective worship and/or make amendments to the way the Agreed Syllabus is followed in the case of that school.

#### 3 Recommendation

- 3.1 That members of SACRE are updated on any new developments in this area.

#### 4 Background

- 4.1 No applications have been received at this time.

#### 5 Equal Opportunities

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

#### 6 Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications

**Contact Officer :** Mary Gale  
**Telephone number:** 07816374873



## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### SACRE Budget 2014 – 2015 end of year. Current budget 2015-16

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise members of SACRE of the end of year budget position for 2014-2015 and a current budget position for 2015-2016.

#### **2 Summary**

- 2.1 A breakdown of the end of year SACRE budget for the financial year 2014 - 2015 will be presented at the meeting.
- 2.2 A breakdown of the current SACRE budget for the financial year 2015-2016 to date will be presented at the meeting

#### **3 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report

#### **4 Background**

- 4.1 A budget had been made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2014 – 2015 as approved by the Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning). The outturn statement is provided below.
- 4.2 The 2015-2016 budget will continue to be monitored in terms of the number of days that the RE consultant is permitted to support the SACRE. This is required to reflect the funding. See proposed budget.

#### **5 Equal Opportunities**

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

#### **6 Financial implications**

- 6.1 Financial implications are indicated in the budget account.

**Contact Officer**  
**Telephone number:**

**Mary Gale**  
**07816374873**

<b><u>SACRE Budget 2014/2015</u></b>	
<b>Cost Centre EM1100</b>	
<b>Expenditure from 01/04/14 to 31/03/15</b>	
<b>Allocation</b>	<b>12,150.00</b>
	<b>12,150.00</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>	<b>£</b>
<b>E Jardine Time - SDA 11 days</b>	<b>6,500.00</b>
<b>E Jardine Time - SDA 6 days</b>	<b>3,450.00</b>
<b>Other</b>	
<b>RMB018097 09/07/14 SACRE Meeting</b>	<b>75.00</b>
<b>RMB018099 12/11/14 SACRE Meeting</b>	<b>75.00</b>
<b>RMB026304 09/02/15 SACRE Meeting</b>	<b>28.00</b>
<b>Printing - Job No 76319 Brochures &amp; Pamphlets</b>	<b>18.37</b>
<b>77513 Brochures &amp; Pamphlets - Emma Jardine</b>	<b>563.78</b>
<b>National Assoc of SACRES</b>	<b>90.00</b>
<b>Dilwyn Hunt</b>	<b>337.80</b>
<b>NASACRE Subscription</b>	<b>95.00</b>
<b>AREIAC</b>	<b>70.00</b>
<b>Insurance recharge</b>	<b>44.13</b>
<b>Emma Jardine/Mary Gale Days (Accrual) To be carried fw</b>	<b>800.00</b>
	<b>12,147.08</b>
<b>Balance Remaining</b>	<b>2.92</b>
<b>Updated 09/04/15</b>	

This budget for 2014-2015 was formulated on the following.



<b>SACRE non negotiables</b>	<b>Consultant Days</b>	<b>Income from EM1100 £12030</b>	<b>Work against budget</b>
Annual Membership of NASACRE		95	X
Annual Membership of AREIAC		70	X
Membership of NATRE		100	
Attendance at NASACRE AGM (Chair of SACRE)		90	X
Attendance at AREIAC 1 day conference (Consultant to SACRE) Fee:		90	X
Consultant time to attend conference	1	575	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1020</b>	
<b>Minimum Required Consultant Support for SACRE</b>			
3xhalf day meetings including 3 days prep	3	1725	X
Monitoring RE provision including creating, distributing and collating surveys	2	1150	1 DAY
Liaison with Chair/Clerk	1	575	X
Budget	0.5	300	X
Annual report	2	1725	X
Printing and distribution of annual report		878	X
Strategic information and advice via phone/email to schools	2.5	1450	2 DAYS
Admin and research	1	575	X
Responding to SACRE instructions	1	575	X
Analysis and reporting of data	2	1150	X

Familiarisation and Liaison with related organisations e.g. NATRE, AREIAC, NASACRE	1.5	875	X
refreshments at meetings x3		81	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>12079</b>	

**The 2015/16 budget is based upon the following -**

<b>SACRE non negotiables</b>	<b>Consultant Days</b>	<b>Income from EM1100 £12370 Plus £800 C/F</b>	<b>Work against budget</b>
Annual Membership of NASACRE		95	
Annual Membership of AREIAC		70	
Membership of NATRE		100	
Attendance at NASACRE AGM (Chair of SACRE)		90	
Attendance at AREIAC 1 day conference (Consultant to SACRE) Fee:		90	
Consultant time to attend conference	1	575	
Attendance at AREIAC conference X2 days		390	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1410</b>	
<b>Minimum Required Consultant Support for SACRE</b>			
3xhalf day meetings including 3 days prep	3	1725	
Monitoring RE provision including creating, distributing and collating surveys	2	1150	
Liaison with Chair/Clerk	1	575	

Budget	0.5	300	
Annual report	2	1150	
Printing and distribution of annual report		878	
Strategic information and advice via phone/email to schools	1	575	
Admin and research		575	
Responding to SACRE instructions	1	575	
Analysis and reporting of data	1	575	
Familiarisation and Liaison with related organisations e.g. NATRE, AREIAC, NASACRE	1.5	875	
refreshments at meetings x3		81	
Plus room costs?		386?	
Additional consultant support as required	4	2,340	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 =4</b>	<b>13,170</b>	



## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### Monitoring Provision

##### 1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present members of SACRE with the results of a monitoring provision survey sent to all schools 2014-2015.

##### 2 Summary

2.1 Members of SACRE will receive a brief report on the results. These are matters on which it is appropriate to brief members of SACRE.

##### 3 Recommendation

3.1 That members of SACRE receive the report and note the contents

##### 4 Background

4.1 All monitoring took place via Survey Monkey. All Staffordshire schools were invited to respond to SACRE monitoring surveys via email and the E Newsletter.

4.2 The number of schools taking part in the Primary Collective worship survey was disappointing, but numbers taking part in the Primary RE provision survey were greater and in line with last year's survey. The numbers taking part in the Secondary surveys for both Collective worship and RE provision were disappointing.

##### 5 Equal Opportunities

5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

##### 6 Financial implications

6.1 Financial implications may be raised by individual items. These have been dealt with elsewhere, or will be raised at future meetings of SACRE.

**Contact Officer:**

**Mary Gale**

**Telephone number:**

**07816374873**

# Monitoring of RE provision-Compliance and time allocation for RE

Monitoring took place via Survey Monkey and also from the scrutiny of SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection reports that took place during the academic year 2014-2015. All Staffordshire schools were invited to respond to SACRE monitoring surveys via email and the E Newsletter. See Appendix ?

## Primary Monitoring headlines:

- Collective worship takes many forms including whole school and classroom based collective worship.
- Respondents stated that faith/community visitors contributed to collective worship in their schools.
- Very small numbers of pupils are withdrawn from collective worship.
- Respondents provide RE for pupils with 66% of KS1 classes allocated one hour or more a week and 66% of KS2 classes allocated one hour or more a week. This meets the recommendations of the SACRE. Some schools comment that they are now delivering block weeks of religious education teaching as an alternative delivery model.
- Teaching assistants are employed in the delivery of RE in 25 schools. This included TAs deliver RE in PPA time, supporting individual pupils and in 12 schools planning and delivering the RE Curriculum.
- In 94% of schools planning was based on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.
- In 77% of the schools that responded teachers had had access to CPD for RE. This figure is a slight increase from last year.
- This survey has provided SACRE with an up to date picture of RE provision

Opportunities should be found in the next academic year to remind and assist schools to make the best use of the CPD that is available via Entrust to support the use of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.

## Secondary Monitoring headlines:

- Collective worship is typically led by the leadership team within schools.
- In all but one school the whole school meets together for collective worship at least once each week.
- No schools reported withdrawals from collective worship.
- All schools responding had either 1, 2 or 3 RE specialists employed to teach RE. This sets an excellent precedent. However in all but one school these subject specialists were assisted by non- specialists who taught some classes. In one school the number of non-specialists assisting totalled 11.
- All schools that responded had at least one specialist RE room available.
- In the majority of schools RE was taught for at least one hour a week and in some cases more. This was true in both KS3 and 4.
- In one school RE is taught in community studies.
- In all schools some or all pupils study towards a qualification in RE.
- In sixth form in the main the only RE provision in place was linked to examination. There was general RE in one school that responded. They commented that this would not continue in the next academic year.
- For all respondents capitation had decreased.

It is pleasing that the responding schools are still employing subject specialists and that examination still has an important place. Opportunities should be found to share ideas for supporting schools where a large number of non-specialists are employed in the delivery of religious education. Access to appropriate CPD is particularly important for teachers in this position

## Monitoring Provision

### Collective Worship in Staffordshire Primary Schools

RESPONDENTS: 3 of 3

Q1 Who has responsibility for the organisation of Collective Worship within school?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Headteacher	0
– Deputy	0
– Teaching staff	100% 3
<b>Total Respondents: 3</b>	
<a href="#">Comments</a> 0	

Q2 Does your school operate a system of Year Group/Key Stage collective worship?

Answer Choices –1	Responses –
– No, it always takes place as a whole school event	33.33% 1
– Yes 1-3 days a week	66.67% 2
– Yes 4-5 days a week	
<b>Total Respondents: 3</b>	
<a href="#">Comments</a> 0	

Q3 Does your school operate a system of classroom worship e.g. thought for the day

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– No	33.33% 1
– Yes occasionally	33.33% 1
– Yes daily	33.33% 1
<b>Total Respondents:3</b>	

**Q4 Do faith/community visitors contribute to your collective worship?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– No	66.66% 2
– Yes, occasionally	33.33% 1
– Yes, daily	0.00% 0
Total Respondents:3	

**Q5 Do you have any pupils withdrawn from collective worship?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– No	33.33% 1
– One	66.66% 2
– Two	0
– Three	0
– Four	0
– More	0
Total Respondents: 3	

**Monitoring RE Provision Primary Survey**

**RESPONDENTS: 38 of 38**

**Q1 How much time is allocated to RE in KS1 per class each week?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– one hour a week	65.79% 25
– more than one hour a week	2.63% 1
– less than one hour a week	34.21% 13
Total Respondents: 38	

**Comments(4)**

- A new plan we are trying is to have a school RE week each half term. We are approaching our second RE week.
- N/A We are a Middle school
- We do RE days not weekly
- We don't have KS1



**Q2 How much time is allocated to RE in KS2 per class per week?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– One hour a week	65.79% 25
– more than one hour a week	2.63% 1
– less than one hour a week	31.58% 12
<b>Total Respondents: 38</b>	
<b>Comments(3)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new plan we are trying is to have a school RE week each half term. We are approaching our second RE week.</li> <li>• As above</li> <li>• only have KS1 children</li> </ul>	

**Q3 Is your RE planning based on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus guidance?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Yes	93.75% 35
– No	9.38% 3
<b>Total Respondents: 38</b>	

**Q4 Have teaching staff received access to RE CPD to support planning e.g. networks, RE Conference?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Yes	76.32% 29
– No	23.68% 9
<b>Total Respondents: 38</b>	

**Q5 Are TA's employed in the delivery of RE?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Yes	65.79% 25
– No	34.21% 13
<b>Total Respondents: 32</b>	

**Q6 Where TA's are employed in the delivery of RE please state how:**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
–	19.23%

Answer Choices –	Responses –
Supporting specific groups of pupils	5
–	53.85%
Delivering lessons during PPA time	14
–	46.15%
Planning and delivering the RE Curriculum	12
Total Respondents: 26	
<b>Comments(2)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not applicable - all qualified RE teachers</li> <li>• HLTA's not TA's</li> </ul>	

### Collective Worship in Staffordshire secondary Schools

Q1 Who has responsibility for the organisation of collective worship within school?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
–	37.50%
Head teacher / Principal	3
–	50.00%
Senior Leadership Team	4
–	12.50%
RE teacher/department	1
Total Respondents: 8	
<b>Comments(1)</b>	
Delivery and organisation is delegated to staff within the school	

Q2 How often does the whole school meet together for collective worship?

Answer Choices –	Responses
–	–
–	37.50%
Never	3
–	12.50%
1-3 times a week	1
–	12.50%
4-5 times a week	1
–	75.00%
We have a system of Year Group/House/Key Stage collective worship	6
–	25.00%
Collective worship takes place in tutor time	2
Total Respondents: 8	
<b>Comments(0)</b>	

Q3 Do you have pupils withdrawn from collective worship?

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– None	100.00% 8
– One	0.00% 0
– Two	0.00% 0
– Three	0.00% 0
– Four	0.00% 0
– More	0.00% 0
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	

**Monitoring RE Provision Staffordshire Secondary Schools**  
**Q1 How much time is allocated to RE per class per week in KS3?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– One hour	37.50% 3
– Less than one hour	50.00% 4
– More than one hour	25.00% 2
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	

**Comments(3)**

3 hours a fortnight in Year 9  
Y7 and 8 have 6 days of RE per year.  
Y9 have some RE in Community Studies.

**Q2 How much time is allocated to RE per class per week in KS4?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– One hour	37.50% 3
– Less than one hour	25.00% 2
– More than one hour	37.50% 3
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	

**Q3 How many RE specialists will be teaching RE in this academic year?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– None	12.50% 1
– One	37.50% 3
– Two	12.50% 1
– Three	37.50% 3
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	
<a href="#">Comments(1)</a> Four	

**Q4 How many non-specialists will be teaching RE in this academic year?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– None	25.00% 2
– One	12.50% 1
– Two	25.00% 2
– Three	12.50% 1
– More	25.00% 2
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	
<a href="#">Comments(2)</a> Eleven RE days are delivered by non specialists with material produced by T in C of RE	

**Q5 Do some or all of your pupils study towards a qualification in RE?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Yes	100.00% 8
– No	0.00% 0
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	

**Q6 What qualification in RE does your school offer to its pupils?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Full Course GCSE	100.00% 7

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Integrated Humanities GCSE	14.29% 1
Total Respondents: 8	
<a href="#">Comments</a>	

**Q7 Do you provide RE provision post 16?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– No	37.50% 3
– Yes Examination group only	37.50% 3
– Yes Core RE only	0.00% 0
– Yes both Examination and Core RE	25.00% 2
Total Respondents: 8	
<a href="#">Comments</a> (1) Core will not run next year	

**Q8 How many specialist RE teaching rooms do you have within school?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– None	0.00% 0
– One	50.00% 4
– Two	12.50% 1
– Three	37.50% 3
– More	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 8	

**Q9 Has your capitation increased or decreased this academic year?**

Answer Choices –	Responses –
– Increased	0.00% 0
– Decreased	25.00% 2
– Stayed the same	75.00% 6

<b>Answer Choices –</b>	<b>Responses –</b>
<b>Total Respondents: 8</b>	

## Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of People

#### Suggestions for SACRES to consider

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present SACRE members with a selection of suggestions as a result of the NASACRE conference.

#### **2 Summary**

- 2.1 Throughout the 2015 NASACRE conference, keynote speakers and NASACRE executive committee members made suggestions that SACREs might consider adopting in their meetings:.

#### **3 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That members of SACRE receive the suggestions. That members use this as an opportunity to reflect on good practice.

#### **4 Background**

- 4.1 It is good practice for SACRE's to self-review and consider suggestions for future actions. This is reported on annually in the annual report.

#### **5 Equal Opportunities**

- 5.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the County Council's policies on equal opportunities.

#### **6 Financial implications**

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications

**Contact Officer :** Mary Gale

**Telephone number:** 07816374873

Suggestion to be considered

1. Take note of the information in the booklet "Relationship between RE and schools" due to be published in Summer 2015 written by Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke former Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2002-200 and Linda Woodhead.
2. Ensure that teacher unions are properly represented on all SACREs.
3. Engage with a "What is Religious Education?" survey- "a thought-provoking survey which forces you to think through what your views are and to focus on what is important in RE". Follow the link [bishopg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/sacre-what-is-re-for-2](http://bishopg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/sacre-what-is-re-for-2)
4. Consider what are the successful ways in which you engage with local schools, including Academies, to support their RE?
5. How do you raise the profile of RE with local partners and communities?
6. How do you know what schools are providing in RE when there is now such a range of types of school?
7. Encourage schools to sign up for the RE Quality Mark (REQM)
8. Develop youth SACREs and encourage young people's contributions.
9. Ensure your annual report is shared with NASACRE
10. Report schools which do not include RE or do it properly to the local authority
11. Make links with post 16 RE to raise the status of RE at this level.
12. Celebrate good practice and encourage the use of high quality resources.
13. Reflect on the British values agenda.
14. Work to support faith group visitors into schools
17. Engage governors.
18. Engage teachers in working parties when developing a locally agreed syllabus. Process is important not just the end product and this involves and develops teachers.
19. Encourage schools to apply for bursaries to develop RE
20. Ensure whatever you do has a positive impact on teaching and learning in classrooms.
21. Contact your local MPs and provide them with information about the work of SACRE.





**BRIEFING PAPER**

Number 07167, 16 June 2015

# Religious Education in schools

By Robert Long

**Inside:**

1. What is taught in Religious Education
2. Inspection and teaching
3. Other relevant issues and reports



# Contents

<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. What is taught in Religious Education</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Introduction	4
Uptake of RE at GCSE level	4
1.2 RE in local authority maintained schools	4
1.3 RE in academies and free schools	6
1.4 RE in faith schools	6
1.5 GCSE and A Level RE	7
1.6 Religious Education Council of England and Wales review and non-statutory programme of study (October 2013)	9
<b>2. Inspection and teaching</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Reserved teachers	11
2.2 How well is RE taught?	12
Ofsted report (October 2013)	12
Ofsted report (June 2010)	13
2.3 Training and support for RE teachers	14
Statistical information on RE teachers' qualifications	15
Government comment on teacher training	15
Organisations providing resources for RE teachers	16
<b>3. Other relevant issues and reports</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 Right to withdraw a child from Religious Education	17
3.2 Collective worship	18
3.3 RE in performance tables and the English Baccalaureate	19
3.4 Teaching of Creationism	21
3.5 A new settlement? Clarke and Woodhead report on religion in schools	21

Contributing Authors:

Sue Hubble, Social Policy Section, teachers' bursaries  
Paul Bolton, Social and General Statistics, statistical information

**Page 48**

Cover page image copyright: [Haddington Infant School Classroom](#) by [David Gilmour](#).  
Licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#) / image cropped.

## Summary

Religious Education (RE) must be taught by all state-funded schools. However, it has an unusual position on the curriculum: it is part of the basic curriculum but not the National Curriculum, and is one of two subjects (along with sex and relationship education) where parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from class.

This briefing introduces the rules around RE in state-funded schools, whether they are academies or free schools, or maintained by a local authority. It also introduces concerns that have been raised about the quality of RE teaching, including the number of RE teachers with qualifications relevant to the subject. It also provides information on other related issues, such as the parental right of withdrawal from RE, and the rules on collective worship in schools.

As schools policy is a devolved topic, this briefing provides information on the position in England. Information on the teaching of RE in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), and [Northern Ireland](#) is available on the website of the respective countries' governments.

# 1. What is taught in Religious Education

## 1.1 Introduction

All state-funded schools must teach religious education (RE). Maintained schools without a religious character must follow the syllabus agreed by the local agreed syllabus conference (ASC), an occasional body which local authorities are required to establish and support.<sup>1</sup>

The Department for Education's [Governors' Handbook](#) provides information on the teaching of RE in other schools:

Voluntary aided schools with a religious character should provide RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school, unless parents request the locally agreed syllabus.

Foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character should follow the locally agreed syllabus, unless parents request RE in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school.

RE is also compulsory in faith and non-faith academies and free schools as set out in their funding agreements.<sup>2</sup>

## Uptake of RE at GCSE level<sup>3</sup>

The total number of pupils entering RE GCSE has increased substantially in recent years from 164,000 in 2008 to almost 260,000 in 2014; an rise from 25% to 42% of pupils.

[Source: [Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England: 2013 to 2014](#), DfE]

## 1.2 RE in local authority maintained schools

Religious Education is a component of the basic curriculum (but not the National Curriculum) and is compulsory for all pupils in local authority maintained schools aged 5 to 18 years unless they are withdrawn from these lessons by their parents, or by their own choice after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. (The provision applies to school sixth forms, therefore, whereas no equivalent is in place for 16-18 year olds in sixth form colleges or other further education institutions.) They are not obliged to give a reason, and the school is expected to comply with the request. The statutory provisions relating to religious education are contained in sections 69 and 71 and schedule 19 of the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*, as amended.

Non-statutory [guidance](#) for maintained schools provides further background on the position of the RE curriculum for maintained schools:

<sup>1</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families, [Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010](#), p10 and p14

<sup>2</sup> Department for Education, [Governors' Handbook](#), September 2014, p51

<sup>3</sup> Section by Paul Bolton, Social and General Statistics

## 5 Religious Education in schools

The key document in determining the teaching of RE is the locally agreed syllabus within the LA concerned (see 'Agreed syllabus', p.14). Schools designated as having a religious character are free to make their own decisions in preparing their syllabuses. LAs must, however, ensure that the agreed syllabus for their area is consistent with Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996, which requires the syllabus to reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.<sup>4</sup>

The guidance sets out the following on the agreed syllabus:

The locally agreed syllabus is a statutory syllabus of RE prepared under Schedule 31 to the Education Act 1996 and adopted by the LA under that schedule. It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination.

Once adopted by the LA, the agreed syllabus sets out what pupils should be taught and can include the expected standards of pupils' performance at different stages.

Every locally agreed syllabus must reflect that the religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

The law does not define what the principal religions represented in Great Britain are. ASCs [agreed syllabus conferences] can decide which are the principal religions represented in Great Britain, other than Christianity, to be included in their agreed syllabus.

Agreed syllabuses in any community school and any foundation, voluntary-aided or voluntary-controlled school without a religious character cannot require RE to be provided by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination.

This prohibition does not extend to the study of catechisms and formularies.<sup>5</sup>

Owing to its position on the basic curriculum, but not as part of the National Curriculum, Religious Education was not included in the Government's National Curriculum review. When the review was [announced](#) in January 2011, the Government stated that:

[...] it is essential to distinguish between the national curriculum and the wider school curriculum. There are a number of important components of a broad and balanced school curriculum for which, as is currently the case, it would be inappropriate to prescribe national programmes of study. This applies, for example, in the case of religious education (RE), where what is taught needs to reflect local circumstances. Religious education will not, therefore, be considered as part of the review of the national curriculum. The government does not intend to make any changes to the statutory basis for religious education.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families, [Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010](#), p10

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p14

<sup>6</sup> Department for Education, [National curriculum review launched](#), 20 January 2011

## 1.3 RE in academies and free schools

Academies and free schools are state funded schools that are independent of the local authority. They operate in accordance with the funding agreement between the individual academy trust and the secretary of State.

Requirements for academies and free schools broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The requirements, including the type of RE that an academy provides, will be set out in their funding agreement. For schools without a faith designation, this will usually mirror the requirements for local authority maintained schools without a religious character. For example, the [model funding agreement](#) for mainstream academies and free schools states:

2.51. Subject to clause 2.49, where the Academy **has not been designated with a religious character** (in accordance with section 124B of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 or further to section 6(8) of the Academies Act 2010):

a) provision must be made for religious education to be given to all pupils at the Academy in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998;

b) the Academy must comply with section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if it were a community, foundation or voluntary school which does not have a religious character, except that paragraph 4 of that Schedule does not apply. The Academy may apply to the Secretary of State for consent to be relieved of the requirement imposed by paragraph 3(2) of that Schedule.

## 1.4 RE in faith schools

Schools with a religious character (often referred to as 'faith schools'), in the state sector can be different kinds of schools, local authority maintained or academies, but are associated with a particular religion. They will follow a similar position in relation to the curriculum to other schools of their type, except, as the gov.uk website notes, "for religious studies, where they are free to only teach about their own religion."<sup>7</sup>

RE in schools with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the school's trust deed or, where provision is not made by a trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the order that designates the school as having a religious character. RE in a foundation or voluntary controlled school with a religious character must be provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus for the area. However, where parents request it, provision may be made in accordance with the school's trust deed or, where provision is not made by trust deed, in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified in the order.

---

<sup>7</sup> Gov.uk, [Faith schools](#) [accessed 29 January 2015]

Requirements for academies broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The requirements including the type of RE that an academy provides will be set out in the funding agreement between the individual academy trust and the Secretary of State.

### 1.5 GCSE and A Level RE

Alongside its broader curriculum reforms, the Coalition Government undertook reforms of subject content at GCSE, AS and A level. The Library briefing on [GCSE, AS, and A level reform](#), SN/SP/6962, provides details.

As the Library briefing notes, on 7 November 2014 the previous Government launched a [consultation](#) on revised content for GCSE, AS and A level religious studies, to be introduced from September 2016. The consultation was open until 29 December 2014.

The [consultation document](#) noted that:

The religious studies GCSE and A level content has undergone an extensive period of informal consultation with subject experts, religious groups, higher education experts, awarding organisations and Ofqual in the run up to formal consultation. This consultation builds on the informal engagement, which included detailed discussions about the proposals and draft content, since the religious studies content development process began.<sup>8</sup>

The [draft subject content](#) for GCSE religious studies proposes that the subject's specifications would require students to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of **two religions**
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key sources of wisdom and authority including texts which support contemporary religious faith
- understand the impact of religion on individuals, communities and societies
- understand significant common and divergent views between and within religions and beliefs
- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values set out in the subject content [...]<sup>9</sup>

The [proposed subject content](#) for religious studies at AS and A level state that those qualifications must require students to demonstrate

---

<sup>8</sup> Department for Education, [Reformed GCSE and A level subject content consultation](#), November 2014, p7

<sup>9</sup> Department for Education, [Religious Studies: GCSE subject content](#), November 2014, p3-4

knowledge, understanding and skills through two of the following approaches, with each requiring an equal amount of teaching, learning and assessment: systematic study of one religion; philosophical, Ethical and Social Scientific Studies of Religion; Textual Studies (one religion, not necessarily a religion studied for the other two approaches).<sup>10</sup>

The proposals were welcomed by many religious leaders, although concerns were raised about diminishing space on the curriculum, and about the possible impact on faith schools in teaching their own faith.<sup>11</sup> The absence of humanism from the curriculum was also criticised. In February 2015, a letter was published in the *Times*, signed by religious leaders including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Baron Williams of Oystermouth, calling for humanism to be provided as an option at GCSE, AS and A level study.<sup>12</sup>

The [Government response](#) to the consultation was published in February 2015.<sup>13</sup> An [analysis of the responses](#) was published on the same day.<sup>14</sup>

The Government [response](#) stated that, at GCSE level, it had decided that the study of two religions was “the right approach for GCSE as it will ensure students acquire both breadth and depth of knowledge, providing them with a broad and rigorous study of religions.”<sup>15</sup> The Government further stated that it had decided not to make humanism or other non-religious beliefs an option for study:

We believe this would not be a suitable addition to the content, given the nature and purpose of a qualification in religious studies. Students already have the opportunity to learn about non-religious worldviews, such as humanism and atheism, alongside religious beliefs and we have emphasised this opportunity in the content. However, as these are qualifications in Religious Studies, it is right that the content primarily focuses on developing students’ understanding of different religious beliefs. This is to stop current practice whereby students are rewarded for engaging in topical debates with virtually no understanding of religious teachings, beliefs or texts. A simultaneous focus on humanism would detract from an in-depth treatment of religion and the comparative study of two religions, and thus on the overall rigour and standard of the qualification. Introducing a systematic study of humanism at GCSE and A level could potentially lead to qualifications that are predominantly focused on the study of humanism at the expense of religion. Thus, whilst the subject content provides for the study of non-religious world

<sup>10</sup> Department for Education, [GCE AS and A level subject content for Religious studies](#), November 2014

<sup>11</sup> See TES, [Religious Studies: pupils must study two faiths for new GCSE](#), 7 November 2014; Telegraph, [Nicky Morgan’s Trojan Horse curriculum ‘could lead to collapse of Religious studies’](#), 1 February 2015; Jewish Chronicle, [Faith lacking in religious studies plan](#), 2 October 2014

<sup>12</sup> *Times*, *Pupils should have the option for the systematic study of humanism in GCSE, AS and A level religious studies, these religious leaders say*, 5 February 2015

<sup>13</sup> Department for Education, [Reformed GCSE and A level subject content](#), February 2015

<sup>14</sup> Ofqual, [An analysis of consultation responses: developing new GCSE, A level and AS qualifications for first teaching in 2016 \(parts two and three\)](#), February 2015

<sup>15</sup> Department for Education, [Reformed GCSE and A level subject content: Government Consultation Response](#), February 2015, p23



views, it is intended that this should not form the focus for the majority of study.<sup>16</sup>

At AS and A level, the previous Government provided similar arguments for not including humanism or non-religious beliefs on the course.<sup>17</sup> Some adjustments were made to the original proposals, notably that the option to study 'Philosophical, Ethical and Social Scientific Studies of Religion' would be split into two separate areas of study: 'Philosophy of Religion' and 'Religion and Ethics'. Students will now choose 3 out of 4 areas of study (rather than 2 out of 3 previously) from the following:

- Systematic study of one religion;
- Philosophy of religion,
- Religion and Ethics, and
- Textual studies.

The previous Government noted:

The fields of philosophy and ethics can therefore now form up to 66% of A level study, rather than 50% of study previously, which allows for greater focus in these areas, whilst ensuring at least a third of time is spent engaging with the study of a religion or religious texts.

At the same time, we have strengthened the religious content and reference to primary texts so that students develop a solid grounding of religion whilst studying philosophy and ethics.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.6 Religious Education Council of England and Wales review and non-statutory programme of study (October 2013)

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales' [A Review of Religious Education in England](#), published in October 2013, provided a new non-statutory national curriculum framework for RE (NCFRE), and an analysis of the context and challenges facing RE.

The non-statutory framework provides a structure for RE education from early years through to Key Stage 4, designed to complement the previous Government's National Curriculum reviews of which RE was not a part. The document states that the framework was designed to:

- I. Complement the government's National Curriculum Review, the aims of which are:
  - to ensure that the new curriculum embodies rigour and high standards and creates coherence in what is taught in schools
  - to ensure that all children are taught essential knowledge in the key subject disciplines
  - beyond that core, to allow teachers greater freedom to use their professionalism and expertise

---

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p29

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

to help all children realise their potential.

II. Promote high-quality RE, which will inspire young people in the years ahead.

III. Provide a basis for developing locally agreed syllabuses and RE syllabuses in academies and free schools.

IV. Support RE provided in schools with a religious character.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Religious Education Council of England and Wales, [Review of Religious Education in England](#), p11

## 2. Inspection and teaching

### 2.1 Reserved teachers

Certain types of faith schools are required to have teachers who have been chosen because of their suitability for teaching RE; these are known as 'reserved teachers'. Other teachers cannot be required to teach RE. Non-statutory [guidance on religious education](#) provides details:

#### **Foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character**

Foundation or voluntary-controlled schools designated as having a religious character must have teachers who have been selected for their suitability to teach RE ('reserved teachers'), but no more than one-fifth can be selected on that basis. No-one who is not a 'reserved teacher' can be disqualified from employment on the grounds of their religious opinions or practices. No teacher who is not a reserved teacher can be discriminated against in terms of pay or promotion on the grounds of their religious opinions or practices or on the basis of whether or not they teach RE. In dealing with reserved teachers, preference may be given when appointing or promoting teachers, or deciding about their remuneration, to teachers whose religious opinions or practices are in accordance with the tenets of that religious character or who are willing to teach RE at the school in accordance with those tenets.

In appointing a headteacher for such a school (where the head is not also to be a reserved teacher), the person's ability and suitability to preserve and develop the religious character of the school may be taken into account.

#### **Voluntary-aided schools with a religious character**

In voluntary-aided schools designated as having a religious character preference may be given when appointing or promoting teachers, or deciding about their remuneration, to teachers whose religious opinions or practices are in accordance with the tenets of that religious character or who are willing to teach RE at the school in accordance with those tenets.

Certain teachers cannot be required to teach RE. The category extends to teachers in community and foundation and voluntary schools without a religious character, and teachers in foundation and voluntary-controlled schools with a religious character who are not 'reserved teachers'.<sup>20</sup>

The Department for Education's [Equality Act Guidance](#), which is non-statutory advice, includes the following further information on reserved teachers, and other teachers and non-teaching staff in Voluntary Controlled and Foundation Schools with a religious character:

8.12 VC [Voluntary Controlled] and foundation schools must include reserved teachers where the number of teaching staff is more than two. Reserved teachers are selected according to their competence to teach RE according to the tenets of the school's

<sup>20</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families, [Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010](#), p17

faith and are specifically appointed to do so. This may include the headteacher.

8.13 The number of reserved teachers must not exceed one-fifth of the teaching staff (including the headteacher). For these purposes, where the total number of teaching staff is not a multiple of five, it will be deemed to be the next higher multiple of five. For example, if there were eight teachers at a school, for this purpose the total number would be deemed to be ten and the maximum number of reserved teachers would be two.

8.14 These teachers must not be appointed unless the foundation governors are satisfied that they are suitable and competent to give religious education. The foundation governors can insist on dismissing a reserved teacher who fails to give suitable and efficient religious education.

#### *Other Teachers and Non-teaching Staff*

8.15 Non-teaching staff and teachers other than those appointed as reserved teachers must not be treated unfavourably in any way because of their religion. This means they cannot be dismissed because of their religious opinions or attendance at religious worship, they cannot be required to deliver RE and cannot be subjected to a detriment for not giving RE or attending worship.<sup>21</sup>

In respect of "Voluntary Aided schools, Independent schools, Academies and Free Schools with a religious character", the guidance notes that "A teacher appointed to teach RE may be dismissed by the governing body without the consent of the local authority if he fails to give such education efficiently and suitably."<sup>22</sup>

## 2.2 How well is RE taught?

### Ofsted report (October 2013)

In October 2013, Ofsted published [Religious education: realising the potential](#), a report which was critical of the quality of teaching of RE in English schools. The announcement of the report stated that:

While inspectors identified examples of good practice they found that six out of ten schools examined in this report failed to realise the subject's full potential.

The report finds low standards; weak teaching; a confused sense of purpose of what religious education is about; training gaps; and weaknesses in the way religious education is examined.<sup>23</sup>

The quality of teaching of RE at both primary and secondary levels was criticised in the report:

7. RE teaching in primary schools was less than good in six in 10 schools visited because of:

- weaknesses in teachers' understanding of the subject
- poor and fragmented curriculum planning
- weak assessment

<sup>21</sup> Department for Education, [Equality Act Guidance](#), May 2014, p43

<sup>22</sup> As above, p44, para 8.18

<sup>23</sup> Ofsted, [More than half of schools failing pupils on religious education](#), 6 October 2013

- ineffective monitoring
- limited access to effective training.

8. In the secondary schools visited, the quality of teaching was rarely outstanding and, at Key Stage 3, was less than good in around half of the lessons observed. Common weaknesses included:

- an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies, which focused mainly on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations
- limited opportunities for pupils to reflect and work independently
- over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with insufficient stress on promoting effective learning.<sup>24</sup>

The then schools Minister, Elizabeth Truss, commented on the report in a response to a Parliamentary Question in March 2014:

**Elizabeth Truss:** Religious education (RE) remains very important for pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of faiths and communities in the UK and their part in shaping the values and traditions of this country. Since the publication of Ofsted's report the Department for Education has announced that we are establishing a subject expert group for RE, chaired by David Francis from RE:ONLINE. By working with schools to clarify the key challenges for them, the group will help make sure that teachers have the support and resources to deliver high quality RE teaching.

As part of reforms to non-EBacc subjects, Ofqual is considering how it could work with others to improve the content and rigour of the Religious Studies GCSE and A-level. Taken together, these represent significant steps towards improvements in the subject. In addition, we are working closely with the Religious Education Council (REC) in its efforts to improve the quality of teaching in the subject, in particular by highlighting best practice and helping teachers to strengthen their own approaches.

[\[HC Deb 18 Mar 2014 c559W\]](#)

### Ofsted report (June 2010)

A previous report, published by Ofsted in June 2010 and covering the years 2006-09, [Transforming religious education](#), reported the following amongst its [key findings](#):

- Pupils' achievement in RE in the 94 primary schools visited was broadly similar to that reported in 2007. It was good or outstanding in four out of 10 schools and was inadequate in only one school.
- Students' achievement in RE in the secondary schools visited showed a very mixed picture. It was good or outstanding in 40 of the 89 schools visited but was inadequate in 14 schools.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Ofsted, [Religious education: realising the potential](#), October 2013, p9-10

<sup>25</sup> Ofsted, [Transforming religious education: report summary](#), June 2010, p3

## 2.3 Training and support for RE teachers

The 2013 Ofsted report, [Religious education: realising the potential](#), highlighted concerns that RE teaching suffered from a lack of teachers with specialist qualifications in the subject:

The high proportion of non-specialist teaching of RE in secondary schools remains a problem. In around a third of the schools visited, a lack of subject expertise limited the effectiveness of the teaching of RE.

[...]

The evidence indicates a link between access to training in RE and the overall effectiveness of the subject, particularly in primary schools. In the majority of cases, this was directly linked to the capacity of the local authority to provide such training and support. In nearly every case where such support was not available, it had a direct and negative impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and subject leadership. RE was generally better where the locally agreed syllabus was well conceived with clear accompanying guidance, but too often the capacity of local authorities to provide this support was diminishing.<sup>26</sup>

An earlier report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on RE, [RE: The Truth Unmasked](#), published in March 2013, had picked up strongly on this theme. It stated that “about a half” of primary school teachers and trainee teachers lacked confidence in teaching RE, and that more than 50% of RE teachers in secondary schools had “no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject.”<sup>27</sup> It further stated that:

The inclusion of non specialists in the total number of RE teachers given by the DfE gives the false impression that we have enough RE teachers and skews the statistics regarding the need to train more RE specialists.<sup>28</sup>

The APPG report also raised the issue of continuing professional development (CPD) for RE teachers, particularly those in schools without a religious character, who were the “poor relations” of their counterparts in faith schools regarding CPD opportunities.<sup>29</sup> It argued that this was a particular concern considering the lack of subject training many RE teachers possessed:

Many young people in this country are for some of the time taught by teachers with no relevant qualifications or training, and there is more non specialist teaching in RE than in any other subject. This makes teachers' access to CPD even more important in RE, yet opportunities for this are fewer and are diminishing. This reflects the absence of any obligation on schools to match staff deployment to new subject areas with appropriate training.

<sup>30</sup>

The report also noted the withdrawal of bursaries for RE, and “a radical reduction in applicant numbers for 2013/14.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ofsted, [Religious education: realising the potential](#), p18-19

<sup>27</sup> APPG on RE, [RE: The Truth Unmasked, one-page summary document](#), March 2013

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> APPG on RE, [RE: The Truth Unmasked](#), March 2013, p29

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* p33-34

<sup>31</sup> APPG on RE, [RE teachers lack training and support, concludes Parliamentary inquiry](#), 18 March 2013

### **Bursaries for RE teachers<sup>32</sup>**

The previous Government allocated bursaries to students taking initial teacher training courses in priority subject areas. Priority areas are subjects considered to be of national importance or where there is an under supply of teachers. Priority subjects and the level of bursary awards were reviewed annually. In 2012/13 RE was classified as an 'other priority' subject and trainee teachers who met specified eligibility requirements could access bursaries of £9,000 pa if they had a 1st class degree or £5,000 pa for a 2:1 degree – students with a 2:2 degree or less were ineligible for a bursary. The RE bursary was withdrawn in 2013/14 and in 2014/15. An article in SecEd, [Charities step in to fund RE teacher training after DfE rejects bursary plea](#), discussed the withdrawal of the bursary.

The recent guide to teaching bursaries, [The Initial Teacher Training bursary guide Academic year 2015/16, September 2014](#), shows that the RE bursary is being reinstated in 2015/16 and eligible students will be able to access £9,000 with a 1st class degree or a PhD and £4,000 with a 2:1 or a masters degree (as in 2012/13 students with a 2:2 degree are ineligible for a bursary). The re-introduction of the RE bursary has been [welcomed](#) by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE).<sup>33</sup>

### **Statistical information on RE teachers' qualifications<sup>34</sup>**

In November 2013 47% of teachers taking RE classes in English state secondary schools had some form of relevant post A-level qualification in the subject, either a degree or higher qualification or B. Ed or PGCE specialising in RE. This was one of the lowest rates of any of the 'major' subjects; well below rates in maths (78%), English (80%), the sciences (66-91%), History (73%), Geography (67%) and French (67%). Among the subjects with similar numbers of teachers only drama (54%) and ICT (45%) had similar rates to RE.

The situation is somewhat different when the data is based on the proportion of hours taught in the subject by qualification of the teacher. In this case 72% of hours taught in RE in these schools were by a teacher with a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject. In other words RE teachers with these qualifications tends to teach the subject more than those without such qualifications. While this rate was still below the levels for maths, English, the sciences and humanities (all in the 75-90% range), the gap was smaller. It was only just below the figures for French and German and well above ICT (61%).

[Source: [School workforce in England: November 2013](#), DfE]

### **Government comment on teacher training**

The following Parliamentary Questions from March 2014 set out the previous Government's position on the training of RE teachers:

---

<sup>32</sup> Section by Sue Hubble, Social Policy Section

<sup>33</sup> Independent Catholic News, [Government offers new funding for trainee RE teachers](#), 1 October 2014

<sup>34</sup> Section by Paul Bolton, Social and General Statistics

**Mrs Glendon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to ensure that a higher proportion of religious education lessons are taught by fully qualified subject specialists. [191441]

**Elizabeth Truss:** The Department for Education does not stipulate what qualifies as a fully qualified subject specialist for religious education (RE). It is for head teachers and governing bodies to decide whom they choose to employ and in what capacity.

The Government are committed to ensuring sufficient supply of new teachers for schools. This year, we have over-allocated places for initial teacher training (ITT) in RE. RE is also supported by the National College for Teaching and Leadership's Teaching Line, which provides information and advice for anyone who wants to apply for ITT. In addition, officials have met the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) to identify further ways of supporting recruitment to RE ITT.

**Mrs Glendon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps his Department is taking to implement the recommendations of the Ofsted report RE: Realising the Potential, published in October 2013; and if he will make a statement.<sup>35</sup> [191527]

## Organisations providing resources for RE teachers

An earlier response, given by Lord Nash, provides information on the establishment of [RE:ONLINE](#), a subject expert group on RE:

### Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to maintain the status of religious education teaching in schools; and what assessment they have made of the role of religious education in fostering inter-community relations.[HL6200]

### The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools

**(Lord Nash) (Con):** The Government firmly believes in the importance of Religious Education (RE). To help maintain progress in improving RE teaching, we are establishing a subject expert group on RE chaired by Dave Francis from RE:ONLINE. By working with schools to clarify the key challenges in teaching RE, the expert group will help to ensure that support and resources are available for high quality RE teaching. In addition, as part of reforms to non-EBacc subjects, Ofqual is considering how it could improve the content and rigour of the Religious Studies GCSE.<sup>36</sup>

The [National Association of Teachers of Religious Education](#) (NATRE) provides resources and training for RE teachers.

<sup>35</sup> [HC Deb 18 Mar 2014 c559W](#)

<sup>36</sup> [HL Deb 2 Apr 2013 cWA213](#)



## 3. Other relevant issues and reports

### 3.1 Right to withdraw a child from Religious Education

Section 71 of the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*, as amended, provides for the right of withdrawal from religious education or collective worship in local authority maintained schools. They do not have to provide a reason and the school must comply with their request. Academies and free schools are bound by their funding agreements. Generally speaking, the DfE's model funding agreements include clauses that reflect the statutory provisions relating to religious education and collective worship. In independent schools, the school's policy on such issues would determine if parents or pupils had a similar opt-out.

The [guidance on RE](#) provided by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2010, which remains in force, includes some additional information:

[...] the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient. If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and

the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.<sup>37</sup>

## 3.2 Collective worship

The general position on collective worship in English schools is set out in the Department for Education's [Governors' Handbook](#):

All maintained schools without a religious character must provide a daily act of broadly Christian collective worship for their pupils. In community schools and non-faith foundation schools, the headteacher is responsible for arranging this after consulting the governing body. In voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools and foundation schools with a religious character, the governing body is responsible for arranging collective worship in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school after consulting the headteacher.

In some maintained schools without a religious character, the family backgrounds of some or all pupils may lead the headteacher and governing body to conclude that broadly Christian collective worship is not appropriate. The headteacher can apply to the local SACRE to have the broadly Christian requirement disapplied and replaced by collective worship distinctive of another faith and should consult the governing body before doing so.

Academies and free schools without a religious character must also provide a daily act of broadly Christian collective worship by virtue of their funding agreement. An academy or free school wishing to have the broadly Christian requirement disapplied and replaced by collective worship distinctive of another faith should apply to the Secretary of State via the EFA.

With regard to academies (and also free schools) the exact requirements for collective worship will be detailed in the school's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education. Generally speaking, the current model funding agreements contain clauses that reflect the statutory provisions relating to religious education and collective worship in maintained schools.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from collective worship at a maintained school in accordance with Section 71 of the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*, as amended. Sixth-form students can withdraw themselves.

[Government guidance](#) on this issue provides more detail on what worship of a 'broadly Christian character' is taken to mean:

60. In the light of the Christian traditions of Great Britain, section 7(1) of the Education Reform Act (and the corresponding section of the Education Act 1993) says that collective worship organised by a county or equivalent grant-maintained school is to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.

61. The [relevant legislation] then further defines collective worship of a 'broadly Christian character' as being worship which reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief. Any such worship

<sup>37</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families, [Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010](#), p28

should not, however, be distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.

62 It is open to a school to have acts of worship that are wholly of a broadly Christian character, acts of worship that are broadly in the tradition of another religion, and acts of worship which contain elements drawn from a number of different faiths. Section 7(3) of the Act qualifies section 7(1) by providing that within each school term the majority of acts of worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, but it is not necessary for every act of worship to be so (see also paragraph 124). Thus, whatever the decision on individual acts of worship, the majority of acts of worship over a term must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

63 Provided that, taken as a whole, an act of worship which is broadly Christian reflects the traditions of Christian belief, it need not contain only Christian material. Section 7(1) is regarded as permitting some non-Christian elements in the collective worship without thus depriving it of its broadly Christian character. Nor would the inclusion of elements common to Christianity and one or more other religions deprive it of that character. It must, however, contain some elements which relate specifically to the traditions of Christian belief and which accord a special status to Jesus Christ.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.3 RE in performance tables and the English Baccalaureate

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance measure for schools in England. It measures the achievement of pupils who have gained Key Stage 4 qualifications in 'core' academic subjects:

- English
- mathematics
- history or geography
- the sciences
- a language

The English Baccalaureate was introduced in the 2010 performance tables. Full information is available in a Library briefing, [SN/SP/6045](#).

The previous Government stressed that although the English Baccalaureate does not include RE, the teaching of RE in schools remains compulsory. The following response to a Parliamentary Question sets out the then Government's position on the inclusion of RE in the English Baccalaureate:

**Elizabeth Truss** [holding answer 22 January 2013]: The Department for Education has received correspondence from and had a number of discussions with representatives of faith groups and faith based education establishments, including the Church of England, on the inclusion of religious studies in the English Baccalaureate.

The Government fully recognise the importance of RE, both to pupils' wider knowledge and to society as a whole, and its value as a demanding subject. We know pupils themselves find that RE offers them opportunities to engage with real world issues and to

---

<sup>38</sup> Department for Education, [Collective worship in schools](#), 31 January 1994, p21

develop their understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and views of others. The teaching of RE remains compulsory throughout a pupil's schooling. There is time in the curriculum for pupils to take a GCSE in other subjects alongside an English Baccalaureate if they wish to do so, including Religious Studies GCSE, which has shown an increase in uptake in recent years.

As RE is a compulsory subject, including it alongside other humanities subjects in the EBacc could reverse the recent increases in the take up of history and geography, which survey evidence suggests has been one of the positive impacts of the EBacc's introduction.<sup>39</sup>

However, concerns have been raised that exclusion from the English Baccalaureate is adversely affecting RE provision. A *Times Educational Supplement* report on a National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) survey reported that:

One in four schools is cutting back on specialist RE teachers after the subject was excluded from the English Baccalaureate portfolio of desirable GCSEs, new research shows.

The poll of 625 schools by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) shows the reduction in staff from the beginning of this term compared with one year ago. More than 80 per cent put the cut down to the EBacc, awarded to pupils achieving grades A\*-C in five traditional core subjects.<sup>40</sup>

An [analysis of the survey](#) of teachers by NATRE, published in July 2013, discussed the impact of the EBacc on the take-up of RE at GCSE level, as well as the position of RE courses on school league tables:

Religious Studies in the curriculum continues to decline since the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, especially at key stage 4 where the impact of the EBacc is at its greatest. The problem has become even more acute since the announcement that GCSE short courses would no longer count towards a school's average point score. This impact is seen in the reduction of specialist teaching staff, the reduction of past and planned examination entries, but also in the time provided on the timetable where schools report that even though the subject is legally compulsory for all students unless withdrawn by their parents, students, are not always receiving their entitlement to a religious education.<sup>41</sup>

The 2013 Ofsted report on RE, [Realising the potential](#), also drew attention to the absence of RE from the EBacc as one of the causes of decline in RE in schools:

other changes to education policy, such as the introduction in 2010 of the English Baccalaureate (the EBacc), have led to a decline in RE provision in some schools. (p4)

[...]

In relation to the exclusion of RE from the list of EBacc subjects and the removal of short courses from the headline measures of school performance, it is too early to come to a definitive conclusion about their impact on GCSE entries. Ofsted's survey

<sup>39</sup> [HC Deb 23 Jan 2013 c327W](#)

<sup>40</sup> ["RE doesn't have a prayer after EBacc omission"](#), *Times Educational Supplement*, 28 September 2012

<sup>41</sup> NATRE, [An analysis of a Survey of teachers on the impact of the EBacc on student opportunity to study GCSE RS: A Fifth Survey](#), July 2013, p2

evidence is inconclusive. However, the overall numbers entered for a GCSE qualification in religious studies in England fell from around 427,000 in 2012 to 390,000 in 2013. There has also been a significant shift away from short-course to full-course GCSE. In 2013 full-course GCSE numbers in England rose by around 10% to nearly 240,000, but short-course numbers fell by almost 30% to 150,000.

There is evidence, however, of a more significant reduction in the provision for RE in some schools. The headteachers of these schools cited decisions about the EBacc and short-course GCSEs as reasons for the changes they were making.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.4 Teaching of Creationism

The following PQ provides the previous Government's position:

**Mr Godsiff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education what penalties would be incurred by a free school, academy or other educational establishment which was found to be teaching or otherwise supporting creationism. [202221]

**Mr Timpson:** State-funded schools, including free schools and academies, should not teach creationism as an evidence-based scientific theory. Outside of science lessons, it is permissible for schools to cover creationism as part of religious education lessons, providing that this does not undermine the teaching of established scientific theory. Academies and free schools are required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum and the model funding agreement now prohibits the teaching of creationism as an evidence-based theory. Independent schools must comply with the independent school standards, and are subject to inspections by Ofsted or an alternative inspectorate.

All state-funded schools are subject to Ofsted inspections and a range of intervention powers are in place if required. In addition, any breach of academy or free school funding agreements in relation to creationism would be swiftly dealt with by the Department for Education and could result in the termination of the funding agreement.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.5 A new settlement? Clarke and Woodhead report on religion in schools

In June 2015, a [report](#) by the former Education Secretary, Charles Clarke, and Linda Woodhead, professor of sociology of religion at Lancaster University, called for a 'new settlement' for religion in schools, both in the teaching of RE and more broadly.

The report argued that the changes in society that have taken place in relation to religion since the Second World War have not been reflected by change in schools, and that the settlement in place between church and state in education no longer serves its purpose.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, it raised concerns about the practical application of the structures in place:

For example there can be a 'nod and wink' culture around the nature of the act of collective worship in school. The requirement

<sup>42</sup> Ofsted, [Religious education: realising the potential](#), October 2013, p20

<sup>43</sup> [HC Deb 30 Jun 2014 c351W](#)

<sup>44</sup> Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead, [A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools](#), June 2015, p7

that the act should be predominantly Christian, and possibly even promote a sense of 'awe and wonder', is sometimes honoured in form rather than substance. The status and quality of education about religion within schools is highly variable, and this, together with under-resourcing and controversy about the place of RE in the curriculum, have led to low morale. Some worry that aspects of the admissions procedures to some faith schools promote dishonesty in religious observance by families and children in a way that is distasteful at best.<sup>45</sup>

The report made 18 recommendations for reform, including the abolition of the requirement for an act of collective worship, and the creation of an agreed national syllabus for RE similar to the requirements for other subjects in the National Curriculum, determined by the Secretary of State and a proposed 'National Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (NASACRE)'.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p63-64. Recommendations in full can be read on pages 63-66 of the [report](#).

The House of Commons Library research service provides MPs and their staff with the impartial briefing and evidence base they need to do their work in scrutinising Government, proposing legislation, and supporting constituents.

As well as providing MPs with a confidential service we publish open briefing papers, which are available on the Parliament website.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publically available research briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email [papers@parliament.uk](mailto:papers@parliament.uk). Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing only with Members and their staff.

If you have any general questions about the work of the House of Commons you can email [hcinfo@parliament.uk](mailto:hcinfo@parliament.uk).

Disclaimer - This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties. It is a general briefing only and should not be relied on as a substitute for specific advice. The House of Commons or the author(s) shall not be liable for any errors or omissions, or for any loss or damage of any kind arising from its use, and may remove, vary or amend any information at any time without prior notice.

The House of Commons accepts no responsibility for any references or links to, or the content of, information maintained by third parties. This information is provided subject to the [conditions of the Open Parliament Licence](#).

