

Agenda

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday, 9 October 2023, 2.00 pm

**Kidderminster Room,
County Hall, Worcester**

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DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests** **OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Monday, 9 October 2023, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester

Membership:

Group A (Representatives of Christian and other faiths)

Mr G Bounds (Free Church Representative), Ade Couper (Quaker Representative), Sheila Hicks (Catholic Diocesan Education Service), Mrs T Khawaja (Muslim Representative), Jenny Lockwood (Worcestershire Baha'i Community), Mr J Loyal (Sikh Representative), Mrs C Parker (Methodist Representative), Aimee Parsons (Catholic Diocesan Education Service) and Dr Y Stollard (Jewish Representative)

Group B (Church of England Representatives)

Danielle Evans (Church of England) and Rev Duncan Hutchison (Diocese of Worcester)

Group C (Representatives of Recognised Teachers Associations)

Charlotte Betteridge (NASUWT) and Mr C Giles (Teacher Representative)

Group D (Elected representatives of the Local Authority)

Cllr Mel Allcott (Worcestershire County Council), Cllr Matt Jenkins (Worcestershire County Council) and Cllr Emma Marshall (Worcestershire County Council)

Co-opted Representatives

Ms E Hill (University of Worcester)

Agenda

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To obtain further information or a copy of this agenda contact Kate Griffiths, Committee Officer on 01905 846630, KGriffiths@Worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website.

Date of Issue: Thursday, 28 September 2023

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8	Planning for Primary and Secondary Conferences for 2024	17 - 24
9	Update from Local Groups	
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11	Feedback from Members / Any other business	
12	Future Meeting Dates Proposed dates for 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 March 2024• 6 June 2024• 7 October 2024	

Minutes of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious

Education

County Hall, Worcester

Thursday, 8 June 2023, 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr. Mel Allcott (Chair), Cllr. Matthew Jenkins (Vice -Chairman), Mr Graham Bounds, Mr Chris Giles, Rev. Duncan Hutchison, Mrs Jenny Lockwood, Cllr. Emma Marshall, Ms Aimee Parsons and Dr Yvonne Stollard.

Also attended:

Kristy Passmore, Stephen Pett, Kate Griffiths, Lisa Bradbury and Cllr Tracey Onslow

770 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies had been received from Danielle Evans, Sheila Hicks, Tasnim Khawaja, Jatinder Loyal and Christine Parker.

771 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

772 RE at Norton Juxta Kempsey School

SACRE received a presentation from Kristy Pasmore, RE Co-ordinator from Norton Juxta Kempsey Primary School, who explained how RE was seen as a core subject and had a very high profile at the school. There was a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the subject and the skills which were taught as a basis for RE were transferable to most other subjects.

Cartoon characters were used who had different methodology and methods for example Have a go Hugo and Ask it all Ava, allowing pupils to engage in the interactive and inquiry-led approach. The School also held RE special days with topics such as Holy Communion and RE Big Bible Day.

Feedback was gathered from pupils and showed that 100% enjoyed RE, and they got to ask questions while taking part in a range of activities such as art, music, listening to stories and taking part in visits.

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education Thursday, 8 June 2023

Date of Issue: 25 September 2023

Date of Implementation:

SACRE was also told about activities which took place to celebrate Interfaith Week, with topics including 'how does your faith inspire you to care for our world' and 'how do special texts guide you in your life'. In 2022 the school registered their week with the Inter Faith Network, the only one in the area.

In the ensuing discussion the following comments were made:

- The school could consider entering artwork completed by the pupils in the Spirited Arts
- The encouragement of critical thinking showed an interesting link between RE and science. The focus on questioning and critical skills could spread to other subjects and highlighted the benefit of RE
- Generally parents had been supportive and none had requested that their child should be removed from RE lessons. Parents were invited to the school for a messy Church event
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility suggested that SACRE should encourage other schools to register with the Interfaith Network when holding Interfaith Week events
- It was agreed that success for older students came from a good grounding in early years so it was felt that High Schools would be lucky when the students from Norton Juxta Kempsey progressed to them
- It was hoped that other schools would be able to visit Norton Juxta Kempsey and learn from its high level of religious literacy. It was suggested that the RE Hub website could help teachers to access centres of excellence. The Diocese could also help to organise such visits.

773 RE Hubs

Chris Giles, the West Midlands Hubs Lead, demonstrated the new RE Hubs website which was a resource for SACRE members as well as RE Teachers. By sharing information such as school speakers or places to visit the website would become an invaluable resource. Local groups, speakers and places of worship were being encouraged to register. Speakers could take part in the training course and register to get the kitemark so that schools can have confidence in those who visit and speak in their schools. The Calendar would be populated with events as they become known.

The following comments were made:

- Members agreed to tell their networks about the website.
- It was agreed that as well as people being registered as willing to speak in schools, organisations could agree to refer schools to suitable people who were not on the website.
- One Member explained that the training for school visitors was aimed at quite a basic level and was appropriate for those with little or no experience. It the course was completed, visitors could be referred to further courses if necessary.
- The suggestion that teachers or SACRE Members, should be able to register for updates such as when events within a particular area were added to the calendar, or to receive a regular newsletter, was welcomed

- It was suggested that recommendations for places to visit could be added to the website.

774 SACRE Support Request Letter

The letter written by the Chairman and sent to Nigel Huddleston, Harriet Baldwin and Robin Walker was included in the agenda papers. Nigel Huddleston had forwarded the response he had received from Nick Gibb. The RE Policy Group were looking at the data included in the response and wished to challenge it as despite what was claimed in the response, there was clear evidence of a shortage of RE Trainees. Recruitment figures had been good in 2020/21 due to COVID but had been poor in the previous 10 years. It was important that a bursary was made available to encourage more RE Trainees.

RESOVED that responses from Harriet Baldwin and Robin Walker be chased up and a letter was sent back to Nick Gibb challenging the figures in his response.

775 Additional Support to schools - SACRE Finance

In the past year SACRE funding had been used for two day-long courses and SACRE was asked what they wished to spend the funding on this year.

Two proposals were put forward:

- 1) A practical resource which would be available for all schools. This could include cut away boards of 'What happens in ? 'There would be a bulk deal for 200 schools,
- 2) Pupil Course days. A Secondary School could be a host school and invite 6-8 other schools to bring teachers and up to 10 pupils each. A Primary school could act as host for Primary Schools and invite other teachers and pupils to attend. The pupils who attend the conference would then be able to take their knowledge back to their school and cascade it to other pupils.

There were some concerns that the Pupil days may only interest schools who were already engaged, and also that a Primary School may not be big enough to host such an event. Suggestions were made that a Secondary school could host the Primary event or perhaps a North and South version was necessary.

It was agreed that posting out a resource would be easier and in return for the resource, schools would be asked to send the details of their RE Contact at the school.

RESOLVED that for 2022/23 the resource would be delivered to schools and the Pupil Course day could be considered for next year.

776 Monitoring RE - Responses to the Primary Survey

There had been limited feedback from the survey but it was decided there was little merit in asking again for feedback as it was unlikely to produce a

response. It was agreed that it was difficult to reach the correct person in each school and no one had the time to phone schools to ask for contact names.

RESOLVED that it was decided to leave further follow ups and schools would be asked to give a contact name in return for free resources.

777 Feedback from the Primary Conference - 23 May 2023

Stephen Pett explained that the Primary Conference had taken place on-line and 18 people from 15 schools had attended.

It was appreciated that online training for a full day was difficult and tiring.

RESOLVED that ideas for the next Primary Conference be discussed at the next meeting and would concentrate on what would be helpful for teachers.

778 Update from Local RE Groups

- Meetings had been held by the Rivers Group and their meeting on 22 June, being held at St Clements, would be attended by Catherine Atkinson.
- There would be a Diocese meeting held the following week
- On 20 June Becky Davidge was hosting a meeting at the University of Worcester
- On 22 June would be a Three Counties Secondary Conference at Puckrup Hall, which would cover World Views, Global Christianity and Non-religious Worldviews. No schools from Worcestershire had registered to attend.
- On 26 June the Worcester Hub were holding an on-line meeting which would be attended by Zameer Hussein and Becky Davidge

779 National RE News

Members noted the National RE News. The information would be sent to Worcestershire Schools. It gave details of free resources and training.

780 Feedback from Members

None

781 Any Other Business

The Spirited Arts Exhibition would be held at South Bromsgrove High School on Friday 23 June for First, Middle and High schools.

Worcester Interfaith Forum were planning a Pilgrimage event at Worcester Cathedral for Interfaith Week 2023.

782 Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting would be held on Monday 9 October 2023, at 2pm, at County Hall.

Chairman

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Dear MP Nigel Huddleston

Worcestershire SACRE calls for support for the provision of high-quality Religious Education in modern Britain

As you know, SACREs have a responsibility to support Religious Education in the local area. At Worcestershire SACRE we are writing to you to show our support for Religious Education as a crucial part of the school curriculum in a modern UK, and of great importance to the children and young people of Worcestershire. A broad and inclusive education in Religion and Worldviews should be a vital part of our young people's schooling, to ensure that they can engage well with the multitude of religious beliefs in the world around them.

The Department for Education has missed its recruitment targets for secondary teachers of Religious Education in 9 out of the last 10 years which has led to 25% of RE lessons in secondary schools being taught by non-specialist teachers and 23% of secondary schools reporting zero hours of RE teaching for year 11 pupils. The Schools Minister admitted in a recent written answer (6 Jan 2023) that 51% of teachers of RE mainly teach another subject. This compares unfavourably with teachers of Geography (28%), History (27%) and English (13%). RE teacher numbers have fallen by 1800 since 2011 – a fall of -10.9%.

The Government regularly restates its support for the subject and the need for schools to fulfil their legal requirement. However, in reality, there has been no concrete support. We note that for 2016-2021 the Government spent £154 million on curricular projects on Maths and £387 million on Music – but nothing on RE.

Mel Allcott
County Councillor

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Despite this, recent surveys have shown that equal access to quality Religious Education is highly valued by the British public. Nearly two thirds (64%) of the UK adult population think that an education in religion and worldviews (or RE) is an important part of the school curriculum today and 65% agree that the subject has an impact on people's ability to understand each other in wider society.

With the above in mind, we would be grateful if you could urge the Department for Education to outline what steps are being taken to improve the provision of Religious Education across the UK through ensuring that high quality teaching and resources in Religious Education is available to all children going forward. The provision of a bursary for PGCE RE teachers would be an essential starting point.

We would be delighted if you would be able to meet with Worcestershire SACRE to discuss this matter further.

Kind regards,
 Cllr Mel Allcott

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2023-0015017NGPO

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister for Schools

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tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/contactus/dfes

Mr Nigel Huddleston MP
By email: nigel.huddleston.mp@parliament.uk

9 May 2023

Dear Nigel,

Thank you for your email of 6 April, enclosing correspondence from Councillor Mel Allcott of Worcestershire SACRE, regarding religious education (RE) in schools.

The Department recognises the importance of providing high quality RE to pupils. This develops children and young people's knowledge of the value and traditions of Britain and other countries, and fosters understanding among different faiths and cultures. RE remains a compulsory subject for all state funded schools in England, including academies, for all pupils up to the age of 18, unless they are withdrawn.

The bursaries the Department provides are designed to incentivise more applications to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses. A review is conducted each year before deciding which bursaries will be offered for trainees starting ITT the following academic year. In doing this, the Department takes account of a number of factors, including historic recruitment, forecast economic conditions, and teacher supply need in each subject.

We continue to focus bursaries on English Baccalaureate subjects, particularly those experiencing teacher shortages, to secure as many applicants as possible in the subjects where schools are likely to devote the most teaching time. This ensures the Department is spending money where it is needed most.

In the 2020/21 academic year, the Department exceeded the postgraduate ITT target for RE, recruiting 128 per cent of the trainees required. ITT recruitment has become more challenging in the last two academic years due to the current highly competitive labour market. This has affected recruitment in all subjects.

RE postgraduate ITT targets fell between 2017/18 and 2022/23 by a similar amount, in percentage terms, as those for mathematics, biology, geography, and history. The fall in RE targets during this period was largely driven by improvements in teacher retention. Overall, teacher leaver rates fell from 10.6 per cent in 2016/17, to 9.4 per cent in 2018/19, and down to 8.1 per cent in 2020/21. As fewer teachers leave service, fewer new teachers are needed to replace them. Although recruitment targets have fallen, RE trainee recruitment has been unlimited in recent years. As a result, recruitment has not been limited by a fall in targets.

RE trainee teachers on tuition fee funded ITT routes are able to apply for a tuition fee loan and maintenance loan to support their living costs. Additional student finance is also available depending on individual circumstances, such as the Childcare Grant. More information is available at: tinyurl.com/4wn5b93P.

To support high standards of RE teaching in all schools, the Department provides eight week subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) courses for candidates who have the potential to become outstanding teachers but need to increase their subject knowledge. The SKE course can be undertaken on a full or part time basis, but must be completed before qualified teacher status can be recommended and awarded. Eligible candidates could be entitled to a SKE bursary of £175 per week to support them financially whilst completing their SKE course. Further information on these courses is available at: tinyurl.com/2s3PscJn.

In addition, to support high quality teaching, RE resources will be procured by Oak National Academy during the second tranche of its work. The Department recognises the unique nature of RE as a subject and a decision was made that, by taking more time on its procurement, it would allow us to successfully navigate through these complexities. Oak will work closely with the sector and utilise sector experience when producing new materials, including for RE. This will ensure that high quality lessons and resources are available nationwide, benefitting both teachers and pupils.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Gibb', written in a cursive style.

**The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister for Schools**



Robin Walker MP
Member of Parliament for Worcester
The Guildhall
Worcester
WR1 2EY

Cllr. Mel Allcott
Cherry Lea
9 Bevere Close
Worcester
WR3 7QH

25 September 2023

Dear Cllr. Allcott

Thank you for contacting me regarding the provision of religious education (RE) in the UK. Please let me apologise for the significant delay in responding to you as, due to a filing error, this response was not sent when it was first put together.

I agree that we must recognise the importance of RE for developing pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of faiths and communities in Britain and other countries, in order to ensure our young people are able to understand each other in wider society. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why RE is a statutory part of the curriculum. Crucially, we remain committed to continuing support for providing RE to pupils.

To support high standards of RE teaching in all schools, the Department for Education is continuing offer eight-week subject knowledge enhancement (SKE) courses. Candidates have the option to access an SKE bursary of £175 per week for supporting candidates whilst completing their courses. Currently for RE, there are 19 institutions providing short-term courses of 8 to 12 weeks covering the required subject knowledge to provide excellent teaching to our children.

Additionally, the Department welcomed the publication of OFSTED's research review into RE in May 2021, particularly given that it sought to identify factors that contribute to high quality RE curricula and teaching in schools. It noted that UK teachers were able to access the professional development tools to build their knowledge, and that nationally adequate time is given to RE to allow leaders to deliver an ambitious curriculum. As you know, RE curricula are designed and delivered at a local level, including in decisions about how much time a school devotes to RE or another other given subject.

In recognition of the importance of RE provision, I would be happy to write to the Department for Education to share your proposal for a PGCE bursary for RE teachers, and further to that I would be happy to meet with you to discuss the topic further.

Yours sincerely

Robin Walker MP

LONDON OFFICE **CONSTITUENCY OFFICE**
Telephone: 020 7219 7196 Telephone: 01905 22401
Email address: robin.walker.mp@parliament.uk

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Dear

Thank you for your reply of.....

We are disappointed in the reply from the minister quoting the recruitment figures for ITT for religious education in the exceptional pandemic year, as in that year most subjects over recruited. As the minister knows, the recruitment target has been missed for 9 out of the last 10 years and will be missed by a long way again this year.

The minister states that bursaries are focused on English Baccalaureate subjects as they command most teaching time, without acknowledging the shortage of qualified teachers in RE, which is a statutory subject. The minister himself said in an answer to a Parliamentary question that 51% of those teaching RE spend most of their time teaching another subject.

The target for RE trainees has been increased to 655 for 2023-24, but the NFER predict that we are unlikely to attract 200 for this year. We would like to ask what his department plans to do differently to hit this new target, especially as bursaries for other subjects will continue to draw people away from RE. It is clear to us that restoring bursaries is one measure that should be taken immediately in an attempt to recruit more teachers. The Education Select Committee, who as you know are holding an enquiry into teacher recruitment and retention, recently heard from Deborah Weston, National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) in oral session who explained the issues and suggested some solutions.

We also note that Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education, received an open letter signed by over 30 parliamentarians from across the house expressing similar concerns to those in our initial letter and adding that

‘pupils are now three times more likely to be taught Religious Education by someone with no qualification in the subject. The latest report on the working lives of teachers lists **RE as one of the subjects most affected by the lack of confidence in teachers.**’

In the light of the above we continue to ask that the minister ensures the department takes proactive steps by offering funding for teacher training bursaries for those wishing to pursue a career in RE. We would also like to see funding to support those already teaching the subject to build their confidence, which we do not believe is the role of the Oak national academy. We look forward to hearing from you and would be very happy for you to come and meet with SACRE to discuss this further. Alternatively do please meet with representatives from the religious education teaching community who will be at the Conservative Party conference. Email ceo@natre.org.uk to arrange to meet at conference.

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Worcestershire LA - school workforce data Nov 2022

School name	Religious character	School type	% year 7 hours - RE	% year 7 hours - philosophy	% year 8 hours - RE	% year 8 hours - philosophy	% year 9 hours - RE	% year 9 hours - philosophy	% year 10 hours - RE	% year 10 hours - philosophy	% year 11 hours - RE	% year 11 hours - philosophy	% year 12 hours - RE	% year 12 hours - philosophy	% year 13 hours - RE	% year 13 hours - philosophy	Total Mixed hours taught	% mixed hours - RE	% mixed hours - philosophy
Arrow Vale School	None	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Birchensale Middle School	Does not apply	Academies	4.5	z	4.5	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Bishop Perowne CoFe College	Church of England	Academies	5.0	z	5.0	z	4.7	z	4.6	z	4.9	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Bredon Hill Academy	Does not apply	Academies	4.0	z	4.0	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Christopher Whitehead Language College	None	Academies	4.0	z	4.3	z	3.5	z	2.4	z	3.5	z	2.8	z	2.5	z	0.0	z	z
Church Hill Middle School	Does not apply	Academies	3.3	z	3.3	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Droitwich Spa High School and Sixth Form Centre	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	3.8	0.0	4.6	0.0	3.6	0.0	2.6	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	z	z
Dyson Perrins CoFe Academy	Church of England	Academies	6.0	z	6.0	z	5.9	z	5.7	z	3.5	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Hanley Castle High School	None	Academies	4.0	z	4.0	z	4.9	z	3.1	z	1.2	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	z
Haybridge High School and Sixth Form	None	Academies	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	1.5	z	1.4	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	z
Ipsley CoFe Middle School	Church of England	Academies	3.2	z	3.2	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
King Charles I School	None	Academies	6.0	z	6.1	z	3.7	z	3.3	z	3.1	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	z
Nunnery Wood High School	Does not apply	Academies	3.9	z	4.1	z	3.5	z	7.9	z	7.7	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Pershore High School	Does not apply	Academies	4.4	z	4.3	z	4.2	z	1.2	z	2.3	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	z
Prince Henry's High School	None	Academies	z	z	z	z	3.8	z	1.4	z	1.4	z	0.0	z	2.1	z	0.0	z	z
Ridgeway Academy	Does not apply	Academies	4.4	z	1.5	z	4.2	z	1.7	z	2.2	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
South Bromsgrove High	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	z	z	3.9	z	2.0	z	2.3	z	2.1	z	2.4	z	0.0	z	z
St Augustine's Catholic High School	Roman Catholic	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	5.7	z	8.3	z	z	z	4.8	z	0.0	z	z
St Bede's Catholic Middle School	Roman Catholic	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
St John's Church of England Middle School Acaden	Church of England	Academies	3.6	z	3.9	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
The Chantry School	Does not apply	Academies	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	1.5	z	0.0	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
The Chase	Does not apply	Academies	2.6	z	3.1	z	3.0	z	2.2	z	2.4	z	2.9	z	2.8	z	16.6	0.0	z
The De Montfort School	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Trinity High School and Sixth Form Centre	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Tudor Grange Academy Redditch	None	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Tudor Grange Academy Worcester	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Walkwood Church of England Middle School	Church of England	Academies	14.2	z	12.8	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Waseley Hills High School	Does not apply	Academies	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Woodfield Academy	Does not apply	Academies	5.1	z	6.9	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	z	0.0	z	z
Woodrush High School	None	Academies	2.5	z	2.5	z	2.6	z	2.3	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	0.0	z	z

Please find attached the RE Teaching hours analysis for schools in your local authority from the school workforce census that took place in November 2022. At NATRE we are committed to supporting SACREs, schools, local authorities and Academy Trusts in monitoring provision for RE. Please mention NATRE if you choose to use this data with your SACRE. The DfE have confirmed that you are free to publish the data for your LA in your annual report if you choose to do so.

If you have any questions regarding this or would like to discuss the data further, please do contact me by email below. As you know from previous discussions about this data, errors are sometimes made by the school inputting the data, especially if the subject is called something else such as PRE or Worldviews. For this reason we have included the philosophy data again this year and schools need to be encouraged to report their RE data accurately under the name Religious education. Also please note that schools where the data is recorded as a z have reported their teaching hours for other subjects, but have not reported RE. It should not be assumed that these schools teach or do not teach RE, but a conversation with them would be useful.

Regards

Deborah Weston, NATRE research officer

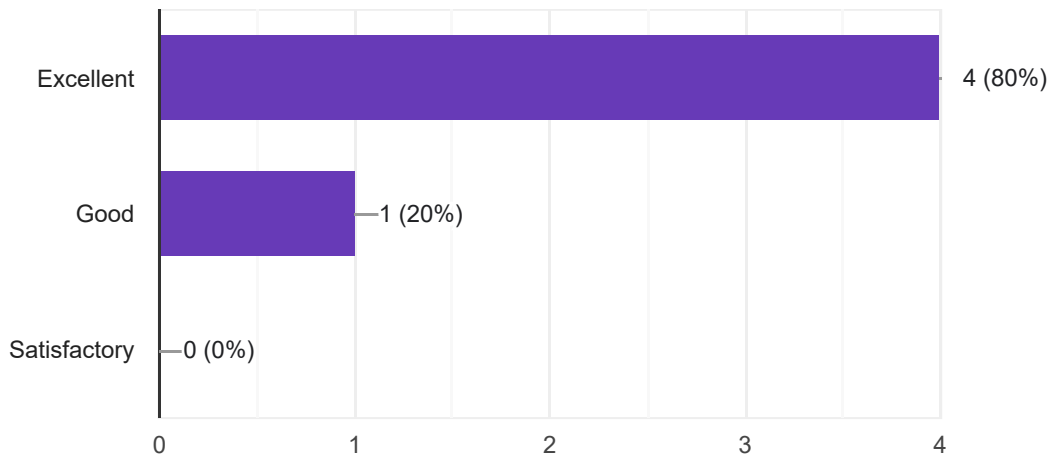
Worcestershire Primary RE conference 2023

5 responses; 18 delegates from 15 schools

Session 1: Building knowledge and progression in primary RE Adam

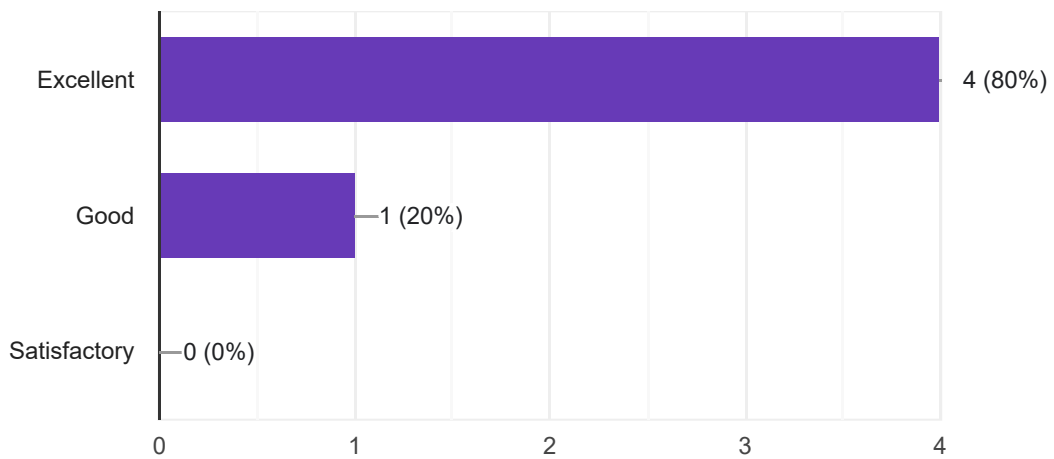
Robertson

5 responses



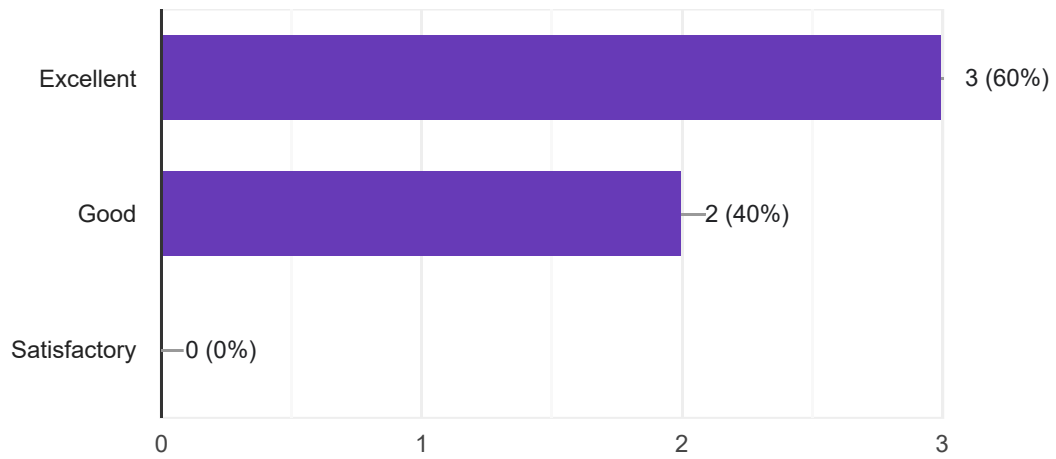
Session 2: 'Ways of knowing' in RE Stephen Pett

5 responses



Session 3: Helping pupils to write well in upper KS2 RE Adam Robertson

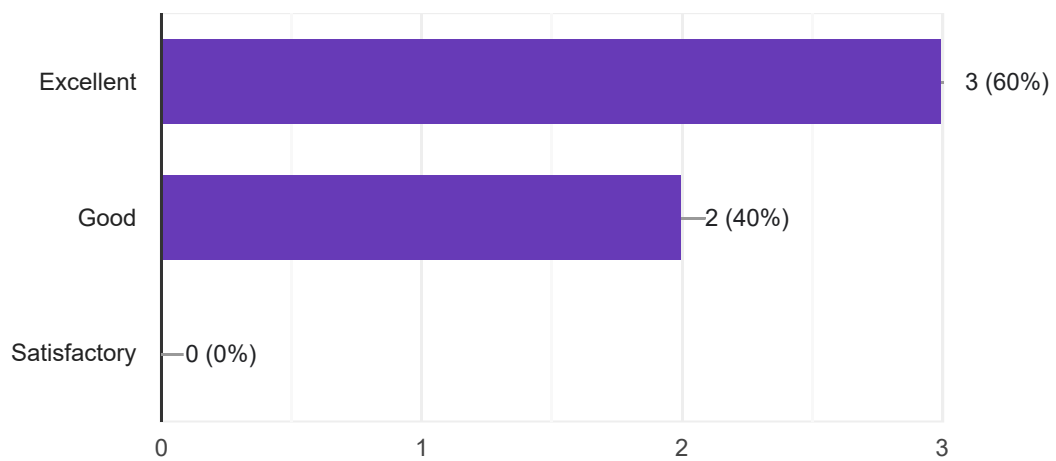
5 responses



Session 4: Data on religion and non-religion: what is really going on?

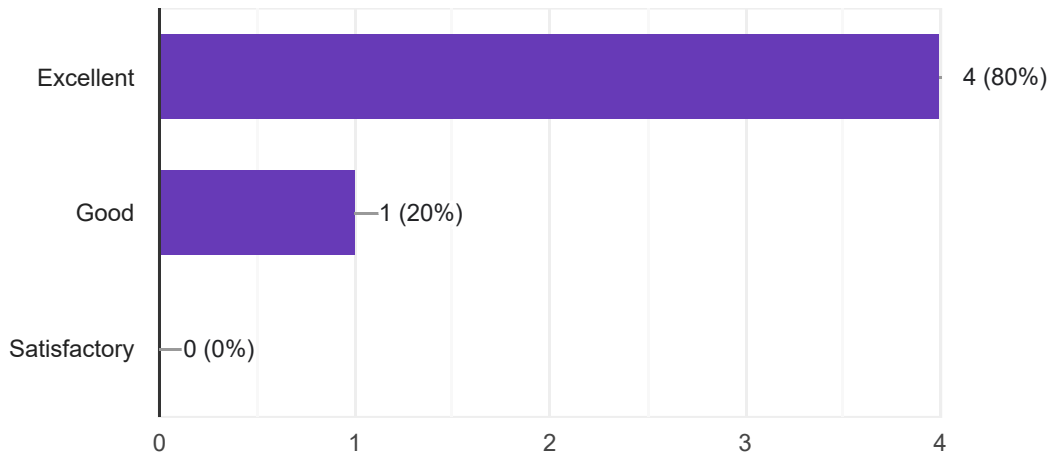
Stephen Pett

5 responses



Overall value of the conference

5 responses



Any comments on the conference?

3 responses

Very informative and engaging

Super conference! Really informative and useful

Helpful and informative

Actions you will take to follow up from this conference:

4 responses

Looking into structured writing.

Speak to UKS2 about some ideas for writing successfully.

Look in to joining Natre

Using more up to date data to give context and help explain the 'fluidity' of religions .More use of poetry to encourage writing in RE with cross over links to literacy

Suggestions for future training/support in Worcestershire:

4 responses

How to embed Understanding Christianity.

Maybe a shorter lunch?

Maybe more information on non-religious beliefs around the world?

Face to face rather than online

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Three Counties secondary RE conference 22 June 2023
EVALUATIONS 30 delegates, 22 responses
Glos (18 teachers + 3 ITE) Herefordshire (4 teachers) Worcs (5 teachers)

	excellent	good	satisfactory
Worldviews, diversity etc Stephen Pett	91%	9%	
Progressed learning about Muslim worldviews Y7 to GCSE Lat Blaylock	95%	5%	
Decolonising RE? Interpretation, context and power Becky Davidge	68%	27%	5%
Global RE, global Christianity Lat Blaylock	86%	9%	5%
Non-religious worldviews Stephen Pett	91%	9%	
Venue: how do you rate it?	95%	5%	
Overall value of the conference	100%		

Comments on the conference:

- a. An excellent opportunity to consider and develop practice as usual!!
- b. Great ideas, great refresher, great to network just great! Thank you so much
- c. The variety of discussion and practical advice was stimulating and thought provoking. It has provided me with much to take back to both department and school. 'Letters and papers from prison' (Bonhoeffer) - the reason I have done this job for nearly 30 years!!
- d. Excellent resource ideas - great presenters - all very engaging and enthusiastic
- e. As always a great conference, jam packed with ideas and practical strategies for the classroom.
- f. Just excellent, so many points made throughout that I hadn't thought of before.
- g. Really good talks, resource is, and discussion. Huge value. Decolonizing talk still great, and very valuable, although I didn't feel marginalised/POC voices were centralised, rather being spoken for. Just something to consider.
- h. As always, a great day! I always learn so much at the conference and this year is no different. Especially the practical help with lesson ideas.
- i. Really good to be at a conference and to engage with other RE teachers.
- j. Great! Lots of good resources and ideas that can inform future planning. Very engaging classroom ideas.
- k. Thought provoking and appropriate for the global context.
- l. Excellent, really thought provoking, lots of practical ideas, takeaways.
- m. Some really interesting and practical ideas on how to bring diversity and world views into the classroom! Already planning mentally how I am going to add the resource is used into our curriculum!
- n. Thank you lots of ideas to embed into our SOW
- o. I found today very helpful. I have so many ideas to take away with me. I loved having tasks to go with examples.
- p. More on the changes to locally agreed syllabus and practical application in prep for its intro in 2025.
- q. Really useful ideas of different approaches for the classroom especially the session on Rais and connection to Hajj - good way of showing students impact and importance of belief.

As we undertake the review of the current syllabuses, to reflect a worldviews approach, do you have any comments, suggestions or requests?

- a. Allow for depictions of worldview that find existential /religious questions meaningless, or those who are indifferent to them, ie recognising that worldview is not just about substantive content, but underlying orientations, and 'strength' of inhabitation of one's worldviews
- b. Loved the personal responses diagram. A great way to open class discussions at the start and end of units. The images are brilliant for student engagement.

- c. Something for KS 5 there isn't much in relation to worldviews in the KS 5A level syllabus
- d. Keen to be involved in Herefordshire review.
- e. I really like the spidergram idea to use at the start and end of a topic to see how beliefs have changed, and infographic ideas. Use of art to engage students into justifying their choices and sharing different views usually of religious ideas.
- f. Really like spider diagram approach visually and for classroom purposes. I think this will be really useful as we develop our intro unit in Y7 and we can revisit throughout the curriculum. Some fantastic resources for Islam - we already use the three art examples (excellent!) and look forward to trying some new ones. Use of data on Nones - more of this please for religious worldviews also
- g. I would be interested in supporting the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus update
- h. perhaps more guidance on lengths of units, What age do you think it would work with best etc.
- i. How to cater to differing levels of existing knowledge. Some Y 7 pupils will have strong religious literacy from primary, and may take two reflections on worldviews quickly. Would other pupils need pre-teaching of religious / spiritual / moral concepts before ability to reflect on personal worldviews? Perhaps not! I'm just curious!
- j. I would love to see a lesson by lesson approach linked to session one. I do think this is very interesting and engaging for RE teachers but concern how this would fully translate into the classroom and some disengaged pupils. Islam - new approach definitely needed.
- k. Allow for deep inclusion and intersectionality.
- l. Help us with practical ideas on how to connect substantive with worldviews. Often I find I teach a topic and then it is undermined by me saying "but not all Christians/ Muslims think like that" or "it depends on who you ask."
- m. Happy to be involved please. I am fully committed to the process - we are rebranding as 'religion and worldviews'. I love the messiness of religion /NRWV
- n. More KS differentiated resources to demonstrate application KS 3 to 5

Actions you will take to follow up from this conference

- a. Review SOW's for inclusion of ideas/ strategies/ resources into existing topics, related to diversity of worldviews. Utilise resources/embed relevant images from the Picturing Islam Picturing Muslims pack
- b. Using more 'judgement' pictures → nature of Brahman, nature of God, D-style qs. Using Rais' story in themes paper. A lot of food for thought to help develop awareness as a whole school brackets decolonizing close brackets. Case studies. Using non-religious views resources. RE Today/NATRE membership.
- c. Review KS4 SOW!
- d. Embedding some resource is in units. Thinking about my curriculum, sequencing and diversity - Big topics but so important.
- e. Decolonizing the RE curriculum. Introducing more diversity (images). Challenging students more - higher level thinking.
- f. Feedback to HOD to implement some changes.
- g. Feedback to HOD to discuss changes
- h. Every session has given me at least one idea I will implement into my schemes of work in the following twelve months - more if I get the time!
- i. Continuing to refine the curriculum. Feeling like we are on the right track.
- j. Develop how we portray the diversity within the Nones. Reassess Islam units.
- k. Discuss a new version of RS through the lens of worldview/EDI/ more focus on 'stories' and real people
- l. Review of SOW - additions to certain lessons - increase SOW on Christianity even thoughtful 60% just better / deeper quality.
- m. Incorporating more diverse worldviews into the curriculum.
- n. Look for further ways to decolonise our curriculum, and to enable students to consider more worldviews. I have found it especially valuable to be reminded of the power of art.
- o. Will make use of the links suggested resources, will look at SOWS to update re diversity and also decolonization
- p. So much! Thank you. Using art to represent all nationalities within school. Changing Y7 intro to religion.
- q. I have many ideas to include in my curriculum.

- r. Contact and visit other local schools to look at whole cohort delivery at KS 4 / 5 outside of GCSE and A level to meet statutory requirement
- s. Looking at what is taught to integrate into SOW

Suggestions/requests for future support in Three Counties

- a. N/A - more of the same, it's always a great event, so just keeping these conferences going
- b. Hinduism please! Good resources, case studies, activities etc. GCSE help. Use of music in RE.
- c. Something on Sikhi scheme of work
- d. Opportunity to collaborate with schemes of work and share resources
- e. Essay writing - tips for getting students to write extended answers - leading to confident essay writers
- f. Information and help for schools that are predominantly white and non religious but caught up in 'our religion' comments.
- g. Ways to make aspects of a level and GCSE specs more diverse.
- h. Assessment? Science and religion?
- i. Support with teaching GCSE Rs. I feel our KS3 curriculum is progressive but I have to strip this back for the GCSE that isn't as progressive.
- j. Looking at how to deliver and modelling ESO WS for non-examined teaching at KS4 and 5

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Worcestershire SACRE News – Autumn Term 2023

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

National RE news for teachers and SACRE members

This paper is a short digest of some useful items of interest about RE in the autumn term 2023. Wherever possible we have provided hotlinks to additional web-based resources.

Open letter from over 30 Parliamentarians

An Open Letter was published on the 18th September by the Daily Telegraph. More than 30 MPs and peers have written to the Education Secretary, highlighting that school pupils receive tokenistic religious education or none. The MPs are blaming this on a lack of trained teachers and funding for the poor quality of religious education. They argue that this lack of education leaves children ill-prepared to understand their own and others' worldviews, hindering their ability to participate in society. Link to the [letter](#)

NATRE provide evidence at Education Select committee enquiry session

NATRE, along with 3 other subject associations, were invited to speak to a session of the Education Select Committee to support their enquiry into Recruitment and retention of teachers. Deborah Weston, NATRE Research Officer and Chair of the RE policy unit (Joint group made up of NATRE, REC, RE Today), gave evidence in the two hour session.

The session can be viewed [here](#)

The TES wrote about the session in which [D&T teachers 'rummage in skips' for materials, MPs told | Tes](#) Deborah Weston is quoted:

'Deborah Weston, research officer at the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, told MPs that "schools are very inflexible places". She said that the "pressures on headteachers are so significant in terms of accountability...that there's a nervousness about taking people on part time". Ms Weston also argued for an increase in the provision of part-time training to become a teacher, arguing that this could boost recruitment and retention.'

Recruitment crisis in teaching and especially in secondary RE

London, 6th March, 2023: A campaign to attract a new generation of RE teachers has kicked off with teaching groups, religious organisations and parliamentarians stressing the importance of the subject for preparing students for life in modern Britain.

As of January, UCAS data show that teacher recruitment for all subjects is down 22% from last year. However RE stands out, being down a third of applicants from the last recruitment cycle.

Government inaction over recruiting teachers to RE has been blamed. The Department for Education (DfE) has so far missed its target for the recruitment of RE teachers in nine of the last ten years.

Despite this year's fall in applicants, the subject continues to grow in popularity. Over the last five years entries to the GCSE have stood around an average of 250,000 with entries to the full course GCSE rising by 30% over the last decade.

The recruitment campaign – entitled 'Beyond the Ordinary' - draws attention to the academic and knowledge rich approach of the subject to life's big questions, and will seek to attract a set of talented graduates up to the task of getting young people to grips with the complex nature of modern belief.

Kathryn Wright, Chief Executive Officer of Culham St Gabriel’s Trust, which is supporting the campaign, said: “Religious education is an important curriculum subject enabling children and young people to navigate our complex multi religious, multi secular society. Everyone has a worldview, and it’s important we prepare young people to become free thinking, critical participants in public discourse, who can make informed judgements about matters of religion or belief and reflect meaningfully on the big questions in life.”

We are looking for ambitious graduates from a range of humanities and social science subjects who can deliver an academic and rigorous curriculum aimed at getting young people to think critically about their own beliefs and those of others.”

Anyone looking for more information about training to be a RE teacher should visit <https://www.cstg.org.uk/campaigns/teacher-recruitment/becoming-a-teacher>

NATRE analysis of GCSE and A level Religious Studies data: National and regional variations

The reports linked to below cover GCSE and A level RS in both England and Wales and reveal many similarities and some differences between the two nations in relation to trends over time. It is clear that the removal of the short course from performance tables has had a devastating impact on the number of children leaving school with a qualification in Religious Studies. In many cases, the loss of the short course has coincided with an increase in the number of schools reporting zero hours of timetable time for RE in year 11 in the school workforce data. At A level, entries have remained fairly stable over recent years in England but in Wales, there is a step decline, of around 33% since 2020. The reasons for this need further investigation.

- A level West Midlands % A*-C 2023 76.7 % (Nat 79%)
- Uptake in West Midlands 2.4% (Nat 1.88%)
- GCSE West Midlands % Grade 9-4 2023 69.9% (Nat 72.2%)
- GCSE Uptake West Midlands 27.2% (National Average 25.7%)



Table 2

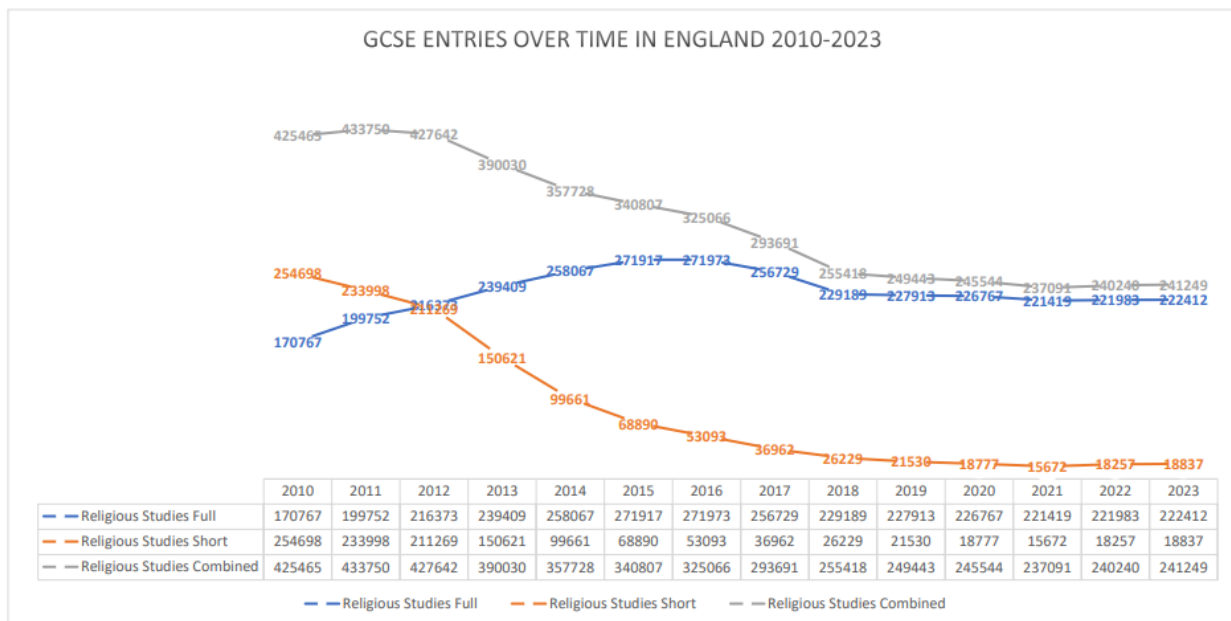
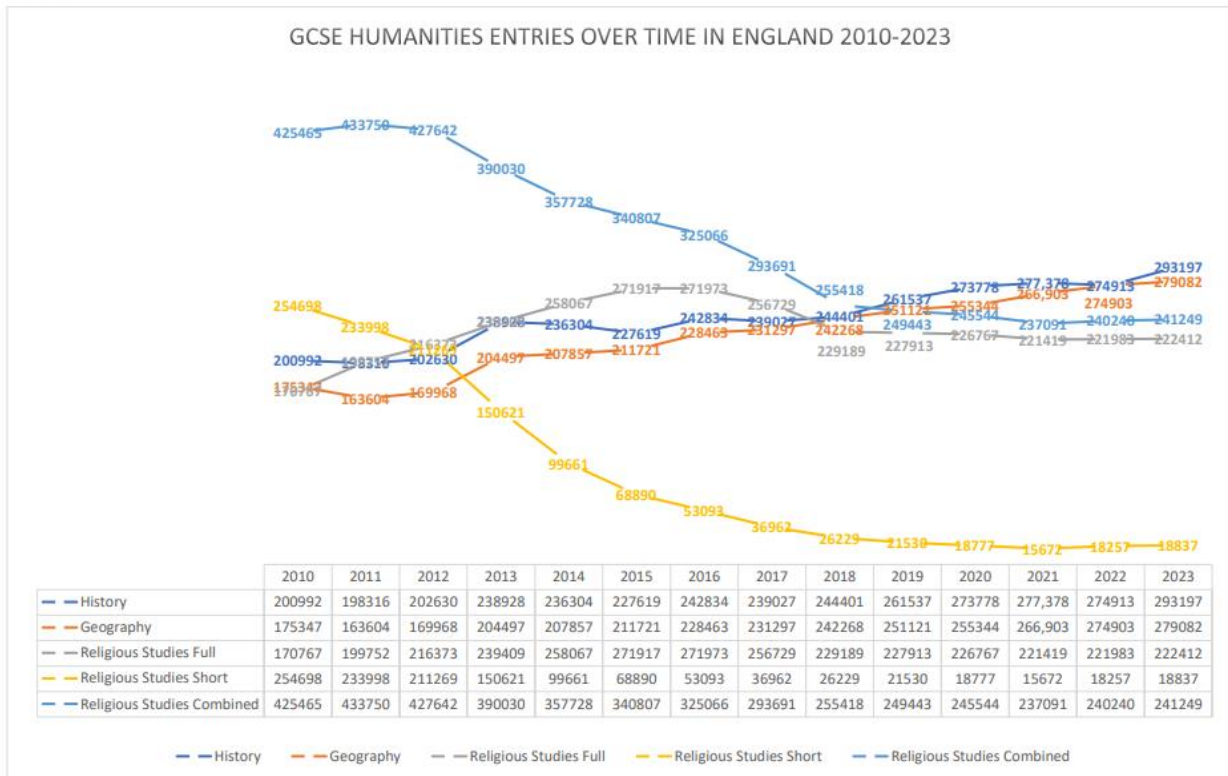




Table 3 :



[NATRE analysis of GCSE and A level examination data for Religious Studies reveals interesting variations between nations and regions](#)

RE at the Party Political conferences

In late September and Early October, teams of teachers from NATRE will be joining representatives from the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC), Culham St Gabriel's and RE Today to attend the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat party conferences.

This lobbying work that NATRE do on your behalf is really important because it enables us to take the voices of teachers and pupils to policy makers. At the party conferences, we will be sharing the importance of high-quality RE for all pupils in all schools, talking about the need for a national standard in the subject, sharing constituency data related to RE with MPs, SACRE members, local councillors and party members and talking about what high-quality RE looks like in Primary and Secondary classrooms.

As an election comes round. Please talk to your candidates when they come to your door and write to them about supporting RE. [Your Voice Matters: NATRE's Call to Action to ask your MP to meet us now!](#)

Westhill Awards 2024-25

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

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

Training, networking, and other support

Global Neighbours: school awards from Christian Aid

The Global Neighbours accreditation scheme is an award scheme for schools run by the charity Christian Aid, in partnership with the Church of England Education Office. It is open to all primary schools and has recently expanded into secondary schools too. The scheme has been running for five years and celebrates the development of global citizenship and courageous advocacy in schools. Its aim is to encourage a deeper understanding of the world and for young people to be empowered to engage with and respond to global issues.

Schools can apply for a bronze, silver or gold award. To achieve accreditation, schools must demonstrate how they are fulfilling criteria relating to:

- Leadership, vision and values
- Teaching and learning
- Collective worship and spiritual development
- Pupil participation in active global citizenship
- Community engagement

For more information please contact Alison Brown (Global Neighbours Schools Programme Officer): abrown@christian-aid.org

NATRE Membership- direct support for teaching

NATRE is the largest membership organisation which promotes, defends and supports RE teachers and RE teaching. It does this through producing high-quality resources and CPD, lobbying government, being involved in conversations with the DfE and Ofsted, LAs and SACREs, telling teachers' stories and experiences and being a voice for all teachers.



Membership packages for students, ECTs, teachers, schools, RE professionals and RE enthusiasts!

Details: www.natre.org.uk/membership

RE Hubs – Website now live!



RE Hubs website is now live at www.re-hubs.uk. RE Hubs aim to connect those who can provide resources with those who need them and create a neutral platform being RE professionals together.

Many organisations serve RE/RVE/R&W education in the UK, from places of worship and school speakers to CPD partnerships and resource providers. However, until now, there hasn't been a single place to equip, enable, and signpost everyone within the community.

The West Midlands hub is led by Chris Giles.

Culham St Gabriel's launch FREE new self-study course

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

Understanding Humanism launches new animation and free resources

Understanding Humanism has launched a **NEW animation** 'One Life, live it well' voiced by author and presenter, Alice Roberts. Accompanied by classroom activities, this simple but beautiful animation illustrates how humanists try to approach life: [One Life, Live It Well: watch our new animation narrated by Alice Roberts » Understanding Humanism](#)

They also have available new FREE resources for children in early years, and the stories of four amazing humanist women who changed the world.

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

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

Date – All Mondays 4.00-5.30pm	Speaker	Topic
11 September 2023	Deborah Weston plus an expert panel	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge: Hindu Dharma
9 October 2023	Lat Blaylock	Progressive teaching about Islam and Muslims
13 November 2023	Deborah Weston plus an expert panel	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge Humanism
11 December 2023	Stephen Pett	Exploring Buddhist worldviews
8 January 2024	Lat Blaylock	Teaching Sikh worldviews
5 February 2024	Deborah Weston plus an expert panel	Café NATRE: Curriculum Design
11 March 2024	Stephen Pett	Exploring Jewish worldviews
8 April 2024	Deborah Weston plus an expert panel	Café NATRE: Pagan traditions
13 May 2024	Lat Blaylock	Using film to deepen learning in RE
10 June 2024	Fiona Moss	Café NATRE: Getting the most from your NATRE membership
8 July 2024	Stephen Pett	Using a worldviews approach in RE

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

NATRE: new membership packages!

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BBC expands early years RE resources

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

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

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

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

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

*News update curated by RE Today Services
September 2023*