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To: The Chair and Members
of the Standing Advisory
Council on Religious
Education

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

Date: 7 November 2023

Contact: Yvette Welsh, 01392 382406

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Wednesday, 15th November, 2023

A meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education is to be held on the above date at 10.00 am in the Daw Room, Committee Suite - County Hall to consider the following matters.

Donna Manson
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE

- 1 Election of Chair
- 2 Election of Vice Chair
- 3 Apologies for Absence
- 4 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2023.

5 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which in the opinion of the Chair should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

6 Learn Teach Lead RE: Update (Pages 7 - 8)

The **RECOMMENDATION** is:

Devon SACRE is requested to make a £1,000 payment to LTLRE for the academic year 2023/4, as has been practice in recent years.

7 Devon and Torbay SACRE - Agreed Syllabus Review (Pages 9 - 10)

The **RECOMMENDATION** is:

The cost of the new syllabus will be in the region of £35 per school (yet to be fully agreed). SACRE requests that the Local Authority commits to pay for the syllabus for every school in Devon (including academies). The aim will be for this investment to be recouped through the launch events.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

8 Devon SACRE Membership

Membership updates:

Group A - Dr Pat Hannam

Group B - Jo Hunter

9 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Devon schools

Lorna Legg, Head Teacher, Offwell Church of England Primary School will give a presentation relating to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Devon schools.

10 Standards in Schools: Monitoring and Ofsted (Pages 11 - 18)

11 Regional and National Developments - RE Hubs, National Content Standard in RE (Pages 19 - 22)

12 Devon SACRE Annual report

The Devon SACRE annual report to follow.

13 Letter from Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister for Schools (Pages 23 - 24)

14 Young Ambassadors Project

15 Advice for Schools in Times of Conflict

Information has already been sent to schools regarding this subject. Mr Pawson will update the Committee.

16 Holocaust Memorial Day - Planning for 2024 (Pages 25 - 26)

17 SACRE Training (Pages 27 - 28)

Attached for information is the NASCRE training programme for 2023-2024.

The South West SACRE conference is to be held on Monday 4 March 2024.

STANDING ITEMS

18 Future SACRE Meetings

The Committee will meet on the following dates:

Thursday 8th February 2024

Thursday 13th June 2024

Monday 4th November 2024

Please use link below for the County Council Calendar of Meetings:

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPT INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED

NIL

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Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair. Filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible without additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of others present who may not wish to be filmed. Anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance.

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Induction Loop available



STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

23 June 2023

Present:-

Group A: Christian and Other Religion and Belief Communities (with the exception of the Church of England)

J Carpenter, K Denby, W Houghton, M Miller, R Nathwani

Group B: The Church of England

J Roberts (Chair) S Gill, C Hulbert, K Keatley, E Underwood, T Wilson

Group C: Teachers Associations

C Cornwell, R Flanagan, P Hammett, W Harrison, J Matthews, E Mihas, P Randall, B Twiggs, G Winnall

Group D: Devon County Councillors

Cllr Adams, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Squires

Co-opted Members

R Northcott, S Spence,

Also

N Alam, S Bissett

Apologies:-

W Becher, M Hext, J Taylorson, J Goody, Cllr Bradford, Cllr Channon and Cllr Sellis

24 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2023 were signed as correct record subject to an amendment that Sandra Gill gave her apologies for absence.

25 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Notification of forthcoming session

Satish Kumar is to speak at Devon Faith and Belief Forum annual meeting on Thursday 6 July 6pm – 7.45pm at the Mint Methodist Church, Fore Street, Exeter. The session is free of charge and open to all members of the public.

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

23/06/23

Booking available https://devonfaiths.org.uk/event/satish-kumar-ecology-and-spirituality/?instance_id=236

26 **Devon SACRE Constitution**

The Committee noted and agreed the amendments to the constitution originally put before them on the 17 February 2022.

Group C – additional representative to Group C to represent Multi Academy trusts (13 in total)

Group D – 7 representatives in total from Devon County Council.

Resolved:

- 1) That Devon SACRE agree the changes to the constitution
- 2) That the constitution be put forward to Cabinet for approval at their July 2023 meeting.

27 **Devon SACRE Membership**

It was noted that the following representatives have joined the Committee:

Warren Houghton (Group A - Baha'i)

David Tollerton (Group C - Exeter University)

Neomi Alam (attendance at meeting in visitor capacity)

28 **Standards: Monitoring and Ofsted Reports**

Members received an update on the findings published in the recent Ofsted reports. It was considered that it would be useful that SACRE officers contact specific schools to either congratulate them on their outstanding practice or to offer curriculum support in specific areas.

29 **Agreed Syllabus Review**

It was noted that an 'Agreed Syllabus conference (ASC) was to be convened following the last SACRE meeting to co-ordinate the process review. The ASC met on the 11 May 2023, all groups were represented and made the following conclusions:

- Introduction of the new syllabus in Sept 2024
- That there is a minimal shift from the current syllabus (which is valued by teachers)
- That more 'lesson-ready' resources be made available
- That units embody more diversity

- That units reflect the local lived experience of people's religious and non-religious worldviews
- That units take a more fully worldviews approach
- Launch events be planned for June 2024
- That teachers be offered follow-up training

During general discussion, Members referred to more input on Humanism. It was also suggested that this should be brought into the curriculum throughout primary years rather than at the end of KS2. Keith Denby welcomed the support of SACRE members and commented that he visited many settings to discuss Humanism and considered that a number of students were able to identify with it.

Other members made reference to teachers offering more depth to the subject and 'how religion is captured' in the teaching of the curriculum. It was about the importance of marketing and ensuring teachers felt confident in teaching the subject in an engaging manner.

Members noted the survey results 2023 where the vast majority of settings used the Devon and Torbay RE Syllabus and that advantage had been taken of the RE CPD offered by SACRE/the Diocese/LTLRE Hub groups/RE Today. In response to key ways in which the syllabus could be improved, the survey showed the top 3 points were:

- More lesson ready power point presentations
- More detail on assessments
- More materials on 'how to'

It was anticipated that a draft document would be ready for the next SACRE meeting in November 2023 for consideration

30 Learn Teach Lead RE: Update

- The annual LTLRE conference is to be held at the St Mellion Conference Centre in October 2023.
- Hub Leaders training is planned for 7 July 2023
- New hub leaders have been appointed in Exeter and Plymouth.
- A recent survey showed that engagement with a local hub had given greater confidence in leading RE and Hub leaders were reported as approachable and supportive.

31 Regional and National Developments: RE Hubs, Census data, Bloom Review, anti-Hindu hate report, SACREs and the law

During general discussion it was noted:

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

23/06/23

- That a RE Hubs website had been recently been launched at <https://www.re-hubs.uk>
- That the percentage of the population in England and Wales reporting 'no religion' had increased from 14.1million in 2011 to 22.2 million in 2021
- That there are three types of 'nones' (those who state they have 'no religion')
 - campaigning 'nones' are self-consciously atheistic and hostile to religion
 - tolerant 'nones' are broadly atheistic but accepting/ warm towards religion
 - spiritual 'nones' embrace a range of spiritual beliefs and practices
- That recommendation 7 (chapter 3) of the Bloom Review states 'Government should look again at why RE in schools has become the 'Cinderella subject' and should consider methods for improving the teaching of faith literacy and RE, with a view to cultivating a more inclusive society where people of all backgrounds are able to engage in debate about the different faiths and beliefs that shape society.
- 51% of parents of Hindu pupils surveyed report that their child had experienced anti-Hindu hate in schools, whilst fewer than 1% of schools with Indian pupils queried by FOI reported any anti-Hindu-related incidents in the last five years.
- Humanist Steve Bowen had successfully challenged his local authority's refusal to admit him to his local SACRE. It had been deemed unlawful for Kent County Council to refuse his membership.

32 **NASACRE Conference Report**

Keynote Address: The role of SACREs in the emerging educational landscape.

Ed Pawson invited members of Devon SACRE to consider standing to be on the NASACRE executive.

33 **Quality Mark: Seeking Funding for Schools?**

SACRE heard about an initiative suggesting that schools make more use of the RE Quality mark criteria statements.

Devon SACRE aims:

- To raise the standard of RE in schools
- To encourage more schools to use the REQM standards criteria as a tool to develop their RE curriculum provision
- To support schools in applying for the RE Quality Mark award

Funding suggestions were as follows:

- To apply for trust funding to enable SACRE to jointly support schools in their application for REQM assessment (cost is £495)

- to offer a financial support to 2 primary and 2 secondary schools in a year
- to offer £250 per school (£125 from SACRE, £125 from Trust funding)
the total cost to SACRE: £500 per year

The SACRE Adviser to report back to a future meeting about the quality mark.

34 **Holocaust Memorial Day - Planning for 2024**

The Holocaust Memorial Day theme for 2023 is Fragility of Freedom

35 **SACRE Training**

Lorna Legg will attend the next SACRE meeting on the 15 November to explore Diversity in Devon Schools

36 **Future SACRE Meetings**

Future meetings to be held on the following dates commencing at 10am

Wednesday 15 November 2023

Tuesday 6 February 2024

Thursday 20 June 2024

Monday 4 November 2024

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12:30



Title: **Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) report**

This report relates to the SACRE supported initiative now in its twelfth year, which seeks to support RE through local hubs.

To: **Devon SACRE** On: 15/11/23

Contact Officer: **Ed Pawson**
Telephone: **07895175852**
E.mail: **efpawson@gmail.com**

1. Key points and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update SACRE members on the progress of the Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) hub network.
- 1.2 The annual conference took place on 13th October 2023, at the St Mellion Conference Centre. This conference was addressed by Lat Blaylock, RE Today. The evaluations are very strong showing that delegates found it a very worthwhile training event.
- 1.3 Hub leaders training took place on 7th July and 12th October, planning for the conference and for future hub meetings. Two further days of training are planned for this academic year.
- 1.4 Many hubs have been meeting in person over the last year, with others continuing to offer their meetings virtually. The new SWIFT hub continues to be very successful.
- 1.5 Devon SACRE is requested to make a £1,000 payment to LTLRE for the academic year 2023/4, as has been practice in recent years. This figure has been set out in the SACRE development plan.

Jeremy Roberts
Chair of SACRE



Title: **Agreed Syllabus Review**

This report relates to the review of the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus for RE, due to be implemented in 2024

To: **Devon SACRE** On: 15/11/23

Contact Officer: **Ed Pawson**
Telephone: **07895175852**
E.mail: **efpawson@gmail.com**

1. Key points and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update SACRE members on the progress of the review of the Devon and Torbay Agreed Syllabus.
- 1.2 The new syllabus will be introduced for teaching from Sept 2024
- 1.3 Syllabus launch events are planned to take place across Devon, Torbay and Plymouth on Mon 17th, Tues 18th, Wed 19th June 2024, led by syllabus-writers Fiona Moss and Stephen Pett (RE Today).
- 1.4 Following a number of surveys and focus group sessions a consensus has been arrived at around how the Agreed Syllabus needs to be updated. This has been worked with in consultation with Stephen Pett, from RE Today, and these changes are currently being enacted. They include the following:
Key features of the reviewed syllabus:
 - Minimal shift from current syllabus which is perceived to be working well
 - Syllabus to give more clarity about a worldviews approach to RE
 - Units to embody more diversity within and across worldviews
 - Units to reflect the local 'lived experience' of people's religious and non-religious worldviews
 - More 'lesson-ready' resources
 - More specific input on Humanism and non-religious worldviews
- 1.5 The cost of the new syllabus will be in the region of £35 per school (yet to be fully agreed). SACRE requests that the Local Authority commits to pay for the syllabus for every school in Devon (including academies). The aim will be for this investment to be recouped through the launch events.

Agenda Item 7

1.6 There will need to be ongoing training for teachers as a follow-up to the introduction of this new syllabus, partly via the LTLRE conference and hub meetings.

2 Devon SACRE syllabus costings

Outgoings:

		£
Syllabus costs (£35/school)	£35 x 360	12,600
Launch conference RE Today consultants	2 x £2,000	1,500
Conference venue fee (£30/delegate)	£30 x 200 delegates	6,000
	Total	20,100

Income:

200 teachers paying £100 conference delegate fee = **£20,000**

Jeremy Roberts
Chair of SACRE



Title: Ofsted monitoring

This report relates to the monitoring of Ofsted reports for Devon schools

To: Devon SACRE **On: 15/11/23**

Contact Officer: Ed Pawson
Telephone: 07895175852
E.mail: efpawson@gmail.com

1. Key points and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update SACRE members on the findings published in recent Ofsted reports, particularly where comments relate to Religious Education (RE), collective worship or Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) of pupils. Where appropriate, the report may recommend that SACRE officers should contact specified schools to either congratulate them on their outstanding practice, or to offer curriculum support in specified areas.
- 1.2 Reports from 4 primary schools make reference to issues relating to RE/CW/SMSC. These have been followed up with schools, Trusts and Exeter Diocese where appropriate, to offer training or other input.

Jeremy Roberts
Chair of SACRE

Ofsted reports May- Oct 2023

Devon schools

This report shows the comments which have been made in Ofsted reports in areas that relate to the work of SACRE.

Primary School	Grading	Published Date	Ofsted report comments relevant to SACRE monitoring	Comments for SACRE
Gt Torrington	Good	24/10/23	They are respectful of those with different beliefs and cultures. However, pupils' understanding of different religions is not as well developed. Pupils have the opportunity to become pupil councillors, peer mediators or collective worship ambassadors. Pupils appreciate the responsibility associated with these roles.	
South Molton	RI	20/10/23	Pupils benefit from visiting different places of worship. However, this learning is not linked effectively to the curriculum. As a result, pupils are not able to recall important knowledge about different faiths and cultures. Furthermore, pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and protected characteristics is not fully developed. They are not well prepared for life in modern Britain.	
Langtree	Good	27/09/23		
Morchard Bishop	Good	26/09/23	They are respectful and show interest and friendship towards people with different backgrounds and lifestyles.	
Dartington	Good	22/09/23	Pupils are passionate about equality. They are tolerant and respectful of difference.	
Appledore	Good	22/09/23	This promotes pupils to be responsible, respectful and active citizens. They talk confidently about equality.	
Clyst Heath	Good	21/09/23	They talk knowledgeably about different religions. They understand the importance of equity over equality.	
Ugborough	Good	20/09/23	Pupils can confidently talk about and show respect for different religions and different types of families.	
Cheriton Bishop	RI	20/09/23	They talk confidently about equality and that everyone should be treated equally. They know about different faiths, and they are able to reflect on their own beliefs.	
Whipton Barton Inf	Good	19/09/23	Pupils learn about other cultures that are different to their own.	

Whipton Barton Jnr	Good	19/09/23	They learn about a range of cultures and religions. Pupils demonstrate respect and tolerance for others. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.	
Stowford	Good	15/09/23	The school curriculum, along with assemblies and wider opportunities, ensures that pupils develop a strong moral code. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They do not tolerate prejudice or inequality. Staff provide pupils with regular opportunities to discuss and debate important global issues.	
Kingsbridge	RI	15/09/23	Pupils understand the importance of democracy, tolerance and respect. Pupils talk about different cultures and religions. They passionately believe that everyone should be treated equally, regardless of difference. They are developing into kind and caring citizens.	
Our Lady and St Patrick	Good	15/09/23	They learn the importance of humility. Pupils are taught religious thinking and they understand morals and values well.	
North Molton	Good	15/09/23		
Clyst Hydon	Good	14/09/23	Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. They say that 'everyone is equal.'	
Glendinning Special sch	Good	14/09/23		
Littleham	Inadequate	13/09/23	Pupils' knowledge of other cultures and fundamental British values is not well developed by the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are not being sufficiently well prepared for life in modern Britain.	Contact school/ FFT Trust/Diocese of Exeter
Yealmpton	Good	31/07/23	Leaders teach pupils about equality through assemblies, visitors to the school and carefully selected texts. Through activities such as these, pupils understand how discrimination and prejudice can affect others. They discuss and debate complex issues confidently. However, leaders have not yet fully developed their approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) and religious education. As a result, pupils find it difficult to talk about different religions or how other people might live beyond their local community.	Contact school/ WeST Trust
Monkleigh	Good	28/07/23	Pupils learn about other cultures. Books are chosen across subjects to support pupils' understanding of equality and diversity.	

Monkerton	Good	28/07/23		
Roundswell	Good	28/07/23		
Low Trenchard	Good	27/07/23	Pupils understand the importance of equality of opportunity. They show tolerance and respect each other's differences.	
Otterton	Good	25/07/23	Pupils learn about world issues. However, they are less secure on some aspects of life in modern Britain, including world faiths and different types of family relationships.	Contact school/Link Trust/ Diocese of Exeter
Woodbury Salterton	Good	21/07/23		
Bidwell Brook	Good	20/07/23		
Southbrook Special	Good	19/07/23		
East Worlington	Good	19/07/23	Pupils know what it means to respect others regardless of their background. They value and celebrate differences. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the world beyond the school's rural location.	
Drakes	Good	19/07/23	All of this supports pupils' spiritual, cultural and social development.	
Iplepen	Good	10/07/23	Visitors from a range of different ethnic and religious backgrounds are invited to speak to pupils. This helps pupils to know about and to understand cultural diversity.	
Ashburton	Good	05/07/23	Pupils are encouraged to debate and discuss important issues. For example, they talk with maturity in their regular 'oracy assemblies'.	
Barley Lane	Good	04/07/23		
Bishopsteignton	Good	04/07/23		
Brayford	Good	03/07/23	Parents enthuse about the variety of clubs, visits and trips. These opportunities give the pupils practical skills. Leaders learn about life in other countries, including India and Japan. This helps pupils to understand the diversity of cultures, faiths and backgrounds. Pupils learn about respect and are developing into kind and caring citizens. Pupils understand the importance of democracy, tolerance and justice. They passionately believe that everyone should be treated equally.	

Lynton	Good	27/06/23	This ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain as responsible, respectful and active citizens. Pupils treat everyone equally.	
Yeo Valley	Good	27/06/23		
East the Water	Good	27/07/23	Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect for differences between people. They learn about different faiths and cultures through religious education and personal, social and health education.	
Umberleigh	Good	27/06/23	Pupils take part in community events that support their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For example, pupils help to prepare soup for the annual 'harvest supper', where money is raised to support a local charity. Pupils talk confidently about equality and their respect for others. They know that everyone should be included and treated fairly.	
Orchard Vale	Good	26/06/23	Despite this, pupils do not have a secure knowledge of different cultures around the world. This means pupils do not understand cultural and religious differences.	Contact school/ Ventrus Trust
Instow	Good	26/06/23	Pupils learn about a wide range of religions. They also read books that reflect a diverse society.	
Ilington	Good	23/06/23	There are opportunities for pupils to learn about different religions. They explore spirituality through the ethos council, which leads assemblies. 'Virtual visits' help develop pupils' knowledge about different world cultures. However, the curriculum is less well established for teaching pupils about cultural diversity in the UK. As a result, pupils lack knowledge of the experiences of others across modern Britain.	
Kingskerswell	Good	22/06/23	Pupils enjoy debating different ideas, and they appreciate the views of others. Pupils understand different religions and know the freedoms that British democracy offers.	
Lady Sewards	O/S	20/06/23	Pupils visit places of worship from a range of religions. They sponsor a child from another country, which has allowed them to learn about a different culture.	
St John's	Good	19/06/23		
Kenn	Good	16/06/23	Well-considered trips and residential visits provide opportunities for pupils to experience different cultures and participate in challenging activities.	
Upottery	Good	16/06/23		
Doddiscombleigh	Good	16/06/23		

Woodbury	Good	15/06/23		
Ellen Tinkham	Good	15/06/23		
Dartmouth Academy	Good	15/06/23	Pupils learn about difference and respect in an age-appropriate way.	
St Martins	Good	26/05/23	Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have beyond the classroom, in particular the forest area, which supports their social and spiritual development. They learn to respect differences between people.	

Secondary School	Grading	Published Date	Ofsted report comments relevant to SACRE monitoring	Comments for SACRE
Axe Valley	Good	20/10/23		
Ilfracombe	30/06/23	RI	Leaders have carefully mapped spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes so that these are taught throughout the curriculum. This supports the development of pupils' characters.	
Okehampton	29/06/23	RI		



Title: **National updates**

This report relates to the national updates for the Devon SACRE meeting (November 2023)

To: **Devon SACRE** On: 15/11/23

Contact Officer: **Ed Pawson**
Telephone: **07895175852**
E.mail: **efpawson@gmail.com**

1. Key points and Summary

1.1 Introducing the RE Hubs project

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>

The 2021 [Ofsted RE Research Review](#) stated the need for: good subject leadership in RE; access to high-quality sources of training on policy, subject content, pedagogy and RE research; better access to information platforms to share evidence-based practices; increased levels of confidence for primary teachers etc.

The RE Hubs project has set out to meet these needs through the provision of a networking website, co-ordinated by experienced leaders of RE, serving each region across England. Hub leads have been mapping their areas for RE and Religion and Worldviews contacts. This includes SACRE, LA, Dioceses, Advisors, Research schools, ITT & ITE provision; University providers; training school hubs; local networks for primary & secondary RE teachers (NATRE, Diocesan, LA groups); RE leads across MATs; Places of Interest for RE (Museums, education centres, places of worship) & school speakers; RE centres and interfaith organisations for RE/RVE/R&W). This provides the team the ability to facilitate greater collaboration and communication.

2

2.1 National Content Standard for RE (NCS)

<https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/rec/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/National-Content-Standard-for-Religious-Education-1st-Edition-September-2023.pdf>

The National Content Standard for RE is needed to provide clarification, bring consistency and to raise standards.

For too many years, the level and quality of provision for RE around England has been reported as inconsistent at best. This means thousands of pupils in our schools are denied their entitlement, established in law, to high-quality religious education. Instead, they receive either no RE, especially in key stage 4, or a single lesson combining the content of a range of subject areas, usually doing a disservice to all of them and often taught by teachers who are ill-equipped to do so.

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One major barrier to improving this situation is the lack of an agreement about what is meant by 'a high-quality religious education'. Unlike a subject included in the National Curriculum, RE has no national programme of study document to act as a benchmark. Consequently, it can be difficult to set targets for improvement in provision such as when Ofsted describe an RE curriculum as lacking breadth, depth and/or ambition.

- 2.2 The RE Council's National Content Standard provides a non-statutory benchmark for syllabus providers and other bodies to evaluate their work. It is not a curriculum, and it does not determine precisely what content schools should teach. Rather it is a standard by which different RE curricula, content, pedagogy, and provision can be benchmarked.

Jeremy Roberts
Chair of SACRE

National Content Standard for Religious Education in England

For too many years, the level and quality of provision for RE around England has been reported as inconsistent at best. This means 1000s of pupils in our schools are denied their entitlement, established in law, to high-quality religious education.

The NCS provides clarification about excellence of approach to RE and exemplifies how schools and academies can fulfil current legal and contractual requirements effectively.

Why?

One major barrier to improving this situation is the lack of an agreement about what is meant by 'a high-quality religious education'. Unlike a subject included in the National Curriculum, RE has no national programme of study document to act as a benchmark

The NCS aims to embed a common standard for RE in all types of state funded schools in England to meet the REC's vision for all pupils in all schools to receive high quality provision for the subject..

Aims?

The REC hopes that by establishing the NCS as a benchmark, the document will support a range of stakeholders in RE including:

- SACREs and Academy Trusts
- Initial Teacher Trainers and providers of CPD
- Those making judgements about what constitutes a high-quality curriculum for RE
- Resource providers including Oak National Academy and publishers

Who?

The NCS was developed around extracts from a draft resource for syllabus writers. This resource has been the focus of extensive consultation and scrutiny for the last 12 months and is due to be published in its final form in Spring 2024. It draws upon relevant publications including the Ofsted Research Review.

Origins?

Frequently asked questions



Religious Education Council
of England and Wales

Indicative

The NCS uses the familiar style of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Unlike the National Curriculum Programmes of study however, it does not prescribe content but instead provides an exemplar for the sort of breadth, depth and ambition in a high-quality RE curriculum.

It does not recommend a particular approach to the subject.

What RE is

The exemplar content should be read within the context of the legal framework including the primary legislation cited for different types of school, and case law which together set an expectation that pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of the matters of central importance for the religious and non-religious worldviews studied.

...What it is not

The standard builds on the legal framework in its assumption that the content of a curriculum in this subject will be age appropriate and focus on religious and non-religious worldviews rather than on content which is the focus of a different curriculum subject

Criteria

- Legal Framework, Intention
- Inclusive Principle, Contextual Factors
- Collectively enough principle
- Coherency

For all pupils to have equal access to high quality education in religion and worldviews, the subject must be given adequate time and resources commensurate with its place as a core component of the basic curriculum.



2023-0027822NGPO

The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister for Schools

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

Rt Hon Sir Ben Bradshaw MP
By email: bradshawb@parliament.uk

Your ref: BB96496

16 August 2023

Dear Ben,

Thank you for your letter of 1 August, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, regarding religious education (RE).

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. However, there are currently no plans to amend the composition of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). 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. This was the main reason for not including it in the EBacc.

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.

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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,



The Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister for Schools

Events for Holocaust Memorial Day Exeter 2024



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY 27/1

Theme: The Fragility of Freedom

Events for Schools and the General Public

Friday 26th January 2024

Place	Times	Details
Cathedral	10.00 - 10.35am	Opening ceremony: Lord Mayor of Exeter, Chairman of DCC, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Dean of Exeter Cathedral, Imam of Exeter Mosque, President of Exeter Synagogue, Chair of Devon SACRE, Student Ambassadors, Primary school choirs
	10.35-10.45	The Fragility of Freedom in today's world
	10.45-11.10	Rosemary Schonfeld: Finding Relly
Southernhay URC	11.30-12.15pm	Talk: a Kindertransport Child, the story of Otto Deutsch (Stewart Raine, Jewish community) (Y5 upwards)
	12.15 - 12.40pm	Lunch break
	12.40-1.20pm	Film and talk: showing of 'Porrajmos', the Nazi genocide of the Gypsy, Roma and Sinti peoples (Lizzie Small, Romany community) (Y8 upwards)
	1.20-2.10pm	Talk: the roots of the holocaust (David Tollerton, University of Exeter) (Y8 upwards)
Guildhall	3.00 - 3.30pm	Closing ceremony: Reflections & Candle Lighting led by the Jewish Community
		Human rights trail: Self-Guided Tour through Exeter's Multi-Coloured History
Exeter Synagogue	12.00-12.30pm	Guided visits for schools
	1.15-1.45pm	
	2.00-2.30pm	

NASACRE 2023-24 virtual training programme

We are delighted to announce that NASACRE is running another year of webinars to support SACREs in their practice. NASACRE-subscribed SACREs have unlimited access for all their members to each and every webinar for £50 annually which represents incredible value for professional development. SACREs may also book for individual sessions – prices are below.

- 1. Thursday 21st September 2023, 6:30-8pm: *So, you've joined your local SACRE...***
Led by Denise Chaplin, Catherine Hughes & Claire Clinton
Description: This session will help new SACRE members to understand their role, how SACRE works, its statutory responsibilities and how members make their contribution to this work.
Free session.
- 2. Monday 16th October 2023, 7-8:30pm: *Applying for and gaining a Westhill/NASACRE award***
Led by Linda Rudge & Anne Andrews
Description: This session will help SACREs to consider the opportunity afforded by applying for and gaining an award. Hear from successful SACREs sharing what the award has enabled their SACRE to do.
Free session.
- 3. November 2023 – dates TBC in each region, 6:30-8pm: *Regional meetings - for SACRE Chairs/Vice chairs, LA officers and professional support officers, working with their RE Hub lead and a NASACRE Exec member***
Description: This session taking place in regions will allow for a smaller number of SACREs to come together; it continues NASACRE's conversation with our membership, to share good practice, national and local news and giving time for SACRE leadership teams to raise, discuss and help to support each other.
Free session.
- 4. Tuesday 5th December 2023, 7-8pm: *How may SACREs effectively monitor schools?***
Led by David Levien, Catherine Hughes and Claire Clinton
Description: A chance for SACREs to come together and hear about a range of strategies and practices that build relationships with schools and enable SACREs to monitor RE and CW.
*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*
- 5. Thursday 18th January 2024, 6:30-8pm: *Using data effectively as a SACRE***
Special guest: Deborah Weston
Description: This session will help SACRE Chairs/Vice chairs and professional support officers to make effective use of the data that NATRE, NASACRE and the DfE provides, ensuring local data can be drawn upon.
*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*
- 6. Thursday 22nd February 2024, 4-5:30pm: *Being an effective SACRE clerk, part 2***
Led by David Levien, Catherine Hughes and Claire Clinton
Description: This session will help SACRE clerks to reflect on their present practice and share with other clerks around the country some top tips for fulfilling the SACRE clerk's role; it will focus on minute-taking, SACRE's constitution/terms of reference and composition.
*Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.*

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7. **Monday 26th February 2024 7-8pm: *Dealing with beliefs and practices about loss & death in your Agreed Syllabus***

Led by: Denise Chaplin and Paul Smalley

Description: This session will help SACREs to reflect on what they do a present to cover this aspect of the curriculum in schools. It will provide input from the national body of funeral directors, as well as examples from 2 different SACREs of their support work around these issues within their Agreed Syllabus.

Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.

£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

8. **Tuesday 12th March 2024, 7-8pm: *Convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference – legalities and processes***

Led by: Paul Smalley with Linda Rudge

Description: This session will share the legal process and best practice suggestions for convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) for your SACRE.

Free to SACREs who have bought an annual webinar package.

£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.

9. **Wednesday 26th June 2024, 6:30-8pm: *So, you've joined your local SACRE...***

Hosted by Exec members

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

Free session.