



**Doncaster  
Council**

## Agenda

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To all Members of the

# **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)**

Notice is given that a Meeting of the above Committee is to be held as follows:

**Venue:** Council Chamber, Civic Building, Waterdale, Doncaster

**Date:** Thursday, 10th November, 2022

**Time:** 4.30 pm

Item	Page No.
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Declarations of Interest, if any	
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June, 2022	1 - 6
<b>A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.</b>	
4. Welcome to our new clerk - Stephanie Douglas	
5. SACRE Appointments and Membership Update	7 - 14
6. NASACRE	15 - 16

**Damian Allen  
Chief Executive**

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Issued on: Friday, 4 November, 2022

**Governance Services Officer for this meeting**

Sarah Maxfield  
Tel: 01302 736723

**Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council**  
**[www.doncaster.gov.uk](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk)**

7.	RE Today National Report	17 - 22
8.	SEND Training for Teachers	
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12.	Communication	
13.	Our short, medium and longer term priorities	
14.	Date and time of next meeting	

### **Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

Chair – Mr Bob Kiddle (Humanist)

Vice-Chair – Councillor Glynis Smith

Councillors Jane Cox, Sue Knowles and Tracey Moran

Mrs P Kaur, Sikh

Mr S Syed, Muslim

Mr B Teimoori, Baha’i

Lucy Saxton, Roman Catholic

Mary Sivaanbu, Hindu

Mr Joel Ward, Baptist

Mr Harvey Kasin, Jewish

Ms J Gelder, Church of England

Mr Andy Wright, Church of England

Vanessa Gregory, Church of England representative

Amy Roddam, Methodist representative

Sally Faulkener, Christian denominations and other religions representative

Ms Tara Moxon, National Education Union

Ms Danielle Heath - National Education Union

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

THURSDAY, 30TH JUNE, 2022

A HYBRID MEETING of the STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICE, WATERDALE, DONCASTER DN1 3BU on THURSDAY, 30TH JUNE, 2022, at 4.30 pm.

#### PRESENT:

Chair - Mr Bob Kiddle

Vice-Chair - Councillor Glynis Smith

Councillors Sue Knowles, Tracey Moran, Mr S Syed, Mr B Teimoori, Tara Moxon, Wright and Kasin

#### Also in attendance

Lat Blaylock, RE Today (support to SACRE)  
Paul Ruane, Head of Learning Provision  
Amber Torrington, Governance Officer

#### APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jane Cox, Danielle Heath, Mrs P Kaur, Ms L Saxton, Mrs M Sivaanbu, Sally Faulkner, Mr J Ward, Mrs J Gelder and Sameena Choudry.

#### 30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

No declarations were reported at the meeting.

#### 31 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH APRIL, 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th April, 2022 be approved as correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 32 REPORT FROM THE 2022 NASACRE CONFERENCE

The Chair presented a report to Committee on the 2022 NASACRE Conference that took place on-line on 23rd May. He stated that there were about 140 people who attended. The main conference consisted of three sessions each with a keynote speaker and discussion in break-out groups. He stated that he had also attended two workshops. The topics covered were as follows:-

- The RE Council
- The substance of the curriculum: high-quality RE and Ofsted's inspection frameworks
- National analysis of SACRE annual reports
- Reviewing Your SACRE Membership; and

- Interfaith Encounters

In terms of the Annual Report for SACRE, it was suggested that this should be completed annually to coincide with the academic year. It was also noted that a lot of SACRE's have problems with inquorate meetings.

Discussion took place with regard RE teaching and whether people thought there were encouraging signs of children's understanding of faiths. Some Members noted that 7-8 years olds have understanding of what religion is however, younger children may find this difficult. Similarities between faiths such as Christianity and Islam were also discussed, and those similarities would make it easier for children to understand which is encouraging.

With regard to the reviewing of SACRE Membership, the Chair pointed out that Doncaster SACRE had no Buddhist representative. Paul Ruane stated that there was a Buddhist Community with the Hatfield area of the Borough but a response had not been forthcoming. He agreed he would follow this up. It was also suggested that Paul liaise with the Shia Community to seek representation within Group A membership.

In relation to using the Westhill Grant for setting up dialogue between teachers and faith leaders, Lat Blaylock reported that 3 projects had been suggested as follows:-

- Anti-racism
- Climate Justice; and
- Proposal for a project as seen in Nottingham involving 9 year olds on social action projects.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The update be noted;
- (2) Paul Ruane liaise with the Buddhist and Shia Communities to identify further representation of faiths on Group A of SACRE.

### 33 MEMBERSHIP OF NASACRE (BUDGET AND TRAINING FOR SACRE MEMBERS)

The Chair sought Members views with regard to joining NASACRE. It was advised that whilst there was a small budget set of which the majority goes towards the wealth of knowledge provided by Lat from RE Today, there would be a small amount left for Doncaster SACRE to join NASACRE and it was felt this would be beneficial to the Committee as they would have access and benefits provided by the National Association.

RESOLVED that Doncaster SACRE agreed to seek membership to NASACRE.

### 34 REPORT OF PROGRESS BY THE SCHOOL VISITS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chair reported that a number of Members had put their selves forward to sit on the Sub-Committee and whilst they had not been much progress with regard to this issue, he wished to advise that a meeting would be taking place on Monday 4th July, 2022 at 3pm at his house. An invite for the meeting would also be forward to those who are accessing the meeting on-line.

RESOLVED that an update report be submitted to the next meeting of SACRE scheduled to take place on Thursday 10th November 2022.

35 IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SACRE MEMBERS - DISCUSSION.

The Chair made a proposal to Committee on introducing a Whatsapp Group for SACRE Members to enable the sharing of information. The Committee welcomed the suggestion. Members were not obliged to partake but those wishing to could forward their details to the Chair outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that any members wishing to be part of the Whatsapp Group forward their mobile telephone number to the Chair in order for the group to be established.

36 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FOR TEACHERS) (CPD),  
REPORT ON RECENT MEETINGS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE, INCLUDING  
DISCUSSION ON ENGAGEMENT FOR SECONDARY CPD GROUP.

Lat Blaylock reported to Members that training had taken place this morning of which the Chair had observed. He stated that whilst the numbers of Teachers was low, there were a number of new attendees, which was pleasing to see. The topics of the training which were cross curricular in nature were well received.

He went on to advise that it was the hope that on the day of the next meeting on 10 November, 2 visits could be arranged to visit places of worship. Lat stated that as well as teachers and himself, he was keen to invite all Members of SACRE. He would liaise with Sameena Choudry on the arrangements.

In terms of the summer term, Lat advised that sequencing/progress in the curriculum would be a topic to look at. However, he stated that more reading was required prior to delivering the training. He commented that not every SACRE manage to do what Doncaster does which is all credit to the enthusiastic teachers. Tara Moxon reported that there were lots of new teachers attending training and felt it would be beneficial to new attendees to go back to basics. It was suggested that this could be a topic at the Summer term training.

In conclusion, it was hoped that with the addition of the 2 visits to places of worship will attract more Primary and Secondary Teachers as well as SACRE Members.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The update be noted;
- (2) 'Back to basics' be added as a topic to the Summer Term training;
- (3) Lat to liaise with Sameena regarding arrangements for the visits to places of worship on 10 November, 2022.

37 AN INTER-AUTHORITY SEND EVENT WITH ANNA KRISMANN AND DISCUSSION ON HOW TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVELY.

Following on from the last meeting, Lat Blaylock advised that he had been in touch with Anne Krismann and she was willing to provide this training on Special Needs. He stated that the date proposed was Thursday 2nd March 2023, however a local venue was still to be confirmed. Lat advised that there had been some dialogue with other local authorities to provide a combined authority approach and so far Rotherham have confirmed their interest and Sheffield were considering the proposal, whilst Barnsley have yet to reply. He stated that it could be wider spread if there was willingness to do so.

Lat reported that once all arrangements were confirmed, the event would be advertised widely. He suggested that there could be a charging fee, which should be set at different levels. Paul Ruane suggested that it would be beneficial to include SENCOs which will generate a good audience.

In terms of a venue, it was advised that the Legacy Church at Armthorpe or Castle Park Rugby Club were possibilities and have been used in the past for many events.

In conclusion, Lat also sought a representative to attend from SACRE to observe the event. The Vice-Chair, Councillor Glynis Smith also asked that mainstream schools also been included as there are a number of special needs teachers working in these schools.

The following members wished to be involved with the event:-

Vice-Chair, Councillor Glynis Smith  
Tara Moxon  
Andy Wright

RESOLVED that the update be noted and Lat to lead on arrangements and advertise when confirmed.

38 NATIONAL UPDATES (RE TODAY) - LAT BLAYLOCK

Lat Blaylock reported that the newsletter and update had been produced which contains new items and details regarding training which Teachers will find helpful. He advised that this would be forwarding this to Paul Ruane who could then disseminate to all schools.

RESOLVED that the newsletter and update be forwarded to all schools following the receipt of the information.

39 PLANNING A WALKING TOUR OF PLACES OF WORSHIP IN DONCASTER FOR SACRE MEMBERS AND PRIMARY TEACHERS - FEBRUARY 2023

This item was discussed at Agenda Item 8

40 REVIEW OF SACRE CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE.

The Committee were presented with the Constitution and Terms of Reference which was last reviewed in 2017.

Discussion took place with regard to the 4 Groups that make up the membership of SACRE and a query was made in relation to the word denomination in Group A and whether this was the right form of wording to be used. It was advised that this was the legal phrase that should be used. However it was felt that there could be a form of wording used in brackets after it, for example (religious communities or world view communities).

In terms of substitutes highlighted in paragraph 13 of the Terms of Reference, the Chair asked whether this could be added to future agendas, to advise members if they were unable to attend there was the option to send a substitute on their behalf. He also stated that this would avoid inquorate meetings. In response, it was noted that these would need to be named substitutes and an Officer Decision would need to be taken and signed by the relevant Director prior to substitutes being able to attend.

The Chair stated that he would look at his responsibilities which were outlined in Paragraph 19

In terms of voting, Committee were assured that decisions that were contentious were very rare, SACREs tend to be consensual in most of their decisions and there was unlikely to be any issues regarding voting.

In terms of Group A, a query was raised with regard to Muslim/Islam, stating that these were the same and one should only be listed.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The words ( (religious communities or world view communities) be added after denominations within Group A;
- (2) An Officer Decision be undertaken and approved to nominate named substitutes to attend SACRE meetings in the absence of the representative;
- (3) An advisory note be added to future agendas regarding attendance if required; and
- (4) The Constitution and Terms of Reference be brought back to the November SACRE meeting for formal approval.

41 PLANNING FOR THE COMING YEAR.

The Committee had a discussion in relation to Planning for the coming year and what SACRE should be looking at in terms of agenda items.

Following a discussion, it was suggested that the following items be added to SACREs work programme:-

- Annual Report (to coincide with the academic year
- Discussion on maintaining good practice in schools

- Suggestions for involving children and young people on what their concerns would be i.e topics such as Racism, Climate Change through development of a competition or a survey
- Teachers invited to attend SACRE to provide overview and views on their roles
- Cross curricular projects

The Chair informed Committee that prior to today's meeting, he along with Lat and Paul met to discuss agenda items and he advised that this would continue for all meetings and would like to extend that invitation to the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The items listed above be added into the work programme;
- (2) The Chair, Vice-Chair, Paul Ruane and Lat Blaylock meet prior to each SACRE Meeting to discuss agenda items for consideration; and
- (3) Any further suggestions were welcomed and should be forwarded to the Chair and Paul Ruane for discussion.

CHAIR:\_\_\_\_\_

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_





## Doncaster Council

### Report

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10 November 2022

**To: The Chair and Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Report Title: Appointments and Membership Update**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The purpose of the report is to note the appointment of New Members on to the Doncaster Council Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. (1) To note the appointment of the following representatives onto Doncaster Council's Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE):-
  - Vanessa Gregory – Church of England representative
  - Amy Roddam – Methodist representative
  - Sally Faulkener – Christian denominations and other religions representative
- (2) To note the current Membership and vacancies attached at Appendix 1

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

4. Local Councils play a key role in helping to shape and drive forward improvement in education settings and it is important that they are involved in shaping the quality of provision in their area.

## BACKGROUND

5. SACRE is the statutory body responsible for advising the local authority on Religious Education (RE) and collective worship and is composed of four groups, which represent:
  - Christian denominations and other religions (and their denominations)
  - The Church of England
  - Teacher Associations
  - the Local Authority (Elected Members)
6. In order for a SACRE meeting to be quorate, there must be at least one Member from each of the above groups, and without this, no formal decisions can be taken.
7. The main function of SACRE is to agree and review the syllabus for teaching religious education in Doncaster schools. It must also produce an annual report of its work and consider any requests from a head teacher to be released from the requirement for collective worship to be broadly of a Christian character. Members of SACRE have responsibility for supporting and encouraging high standards in RE and collective worship across schools in the Borough.
8. There have been a number of occasions over the past few years where SACRE meetings have been inquorate due to inadequate representation from the four groups. Following a recent recruitment exercise, a number of individuals have now been identified to fill these vacancies.
9. The Education Act 1996 Section 392 (2) states that “before appointing a person to represent any religion, denomination or associations as a members of the council, the authority shall take all responsible steps to assure themselves that he is representative of the religion, denomination or associations put in question.” These assurances have been given for each of the individuals named below, e.g. from the Bishop of Doncaster, Yorkshire Baptist Association
  - Vanessa Gregory – Church of England representative
  - Amy Roddam – Methodist representative
  - Sally Faulkener – Christian denominations and other religions representative
10. An officer decision has been submitted to Leanne Hornsby, Assistant Director, Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage to approve the appointments detailed within paragraphs 3 and 9 above.
11. Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the current Membership and the Vacancies on the Committee.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

12. There are no other options considered.





## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

13. To ensure that SACRE meetings remains quorate and able to effectively undertake its role.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

- 14.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 <b>Tackling Climate Change</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Building opportunities for</b>				✓

<b>healthier, happier and longer lives for all</b>				
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
 <b>Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				
<b>Fair &amp; Inclusive</b>				✓
Comments: This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Outcomes				

## **Legal Implications [Officer Initials SF Date .....]**

15. The Local Authority has a duty to establish a permanent body known as the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) in accordance with Chapter 3 of the Education Act 1996. The purpose of SACRE includes advising the Local Authority on matters connected with religious worship and education and to publish an annual report on the exercise of its functions.

The 1996 Act specifies particular groups of persons that are required to be appointed by the Authority as representative Members making up the Membership of SACRE, as identified in paragraphs 3 and 9 above.

## **Financial Implications**

16. There are no financial implications associated with this report

## **Human Resources Implications**

17. There are no HR Implications associate with this report

## **Technology Implications**

18. There are no HR Implications associate with this report

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

19. There are no identified risks or assumptions relevant to this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

20. None

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

21. Officer Decision Record

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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01302 737810 | [Stephanie.Douglas@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Stephanie.Douglas@doncaster.gov.uk)

**SACRE MEMBERSHIP 2022/23**

**Group A: Christian Denominations (12 members)** and such other religions and religious denominations as, in the authority's opinion, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.

1. Amy Roddam, Methodist
2. Mrs P Kaur, Sikh
3. Mr S Syed, Muslim
4. Mr B Teimoori, Baha'i
5. Lucy Saxton, Roman Catholic
6. Mary Sivaanbu, Hindu
7. Mr Joel Ward, Baptist
8. Mr Bob Kiddle, Humanist (Chair)
9. Ms Sally Faulkener
- 10. *Vacancy - Buddhist***
- 11. *Vacancy - Doncaster Society of Friends***
- 12. *Vacancy – Doncaster Interfaith***

**Group B: The Church of England (4)**

1. Mr Andy Wright
2. Vanessa Gregory
- 3. *Vacancy***
- 4. *Vacancy***

**Group C: Teacher Associations (5 Members)**

1. Ms Tara Moxon, NEU
2. Ms Danielle Heath, NEU
- 3. *Vacancy, NASUWT***
- 4. *Vacancy - National Union of Teachers***

**5.     *Vacancy - National Association of Head Teachers***

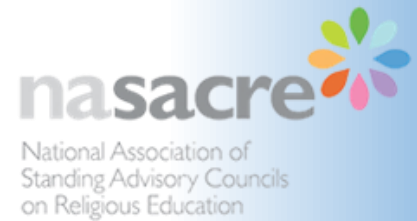
**Group D: The Local Authority (4 Members) \***

1.     Councillor Jane Cox
2.     Councillor Sue Knowles
3.     Councillor Tracey Moran
4.     Councillor Glynis Smith (Vice-Chair)

\*Local authority Members are appointed annually by Doncaster Council to reflect the political make-up of the Council.



## NASACRE 2022-23 virtual training programme



**22 September 2022, 7-8:30pm:** *So, you've joined your local SACRE...*

Hosted by Denise Chaplin & Claire Clinton  
Free online session

**13 October 2022, 7-8:30pm:** *Applying for and gaining a Westhill/NASACRE award*

Chaired by Linda Rudge & Anne Andrews  
Free online session

**17 November 2022, 7-8pm:** *SACREs – a way forward...?*

Chaired by Linda Rudge and Paul Smalley  
Special guest: Charles Clarke  
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

Subscribed member SACREs can get unlimited access for their entire SACRE membership to each and every webinar for an annual one off £50 fee!

**6 December 2022, 7-8pm:** *How to effectively use pupil and teacher voice in your SACRE?*

Hosted by Sukaina Manji and Claire Clinton  
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

**19 January 2023, 7-8:30pm:** *Being an effective Chair part 2*

Chaired by Linda Rudge  
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

**21 February 2023, 4-5:30pm:** *Being an effective SACRE Clerk*

Hosted by Exec members  
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

**14 March 2023, 7-8pm:** *What's happening to Collective Worship beyond determinations?*

Hosted by Lesley Prior  
£20 for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE

**26 June 2023, 7-8:30pm:** *So, you've joined your local SACRE...*

Hosted by Exec members  
Free online session

Feedback from last year's training:

*"Great way to see and be part of the bigger picture."*

*"I think the programme has been excellent this year, relevant and well paced. Circulating materials afterwards has been productive and a useful aide memoire."*

**To book a place on any session, or to purchase our training package, please email [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk)**

Visit our training and support page on the NASACRE website for more information  
[www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk)

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## RE Today's RE Updates Autumn 2022

SACRE receives updates on what is happening in the world of RE. We thought you might like to have this information – about resources and events, and other news updates. Please pass this on to your RE subject lead!

### Resources

#### Inclusive Judaism: resources from the Jewish Museum of London

Classroom resources, including an extensive image library, open up the diversity of Jewish communities. Developers, Shereen Hunte and Eliana Mendelsohn, say: *The teaching of Inclusive Judaism is important for many reasons and ensures that:*

- *The Jewish community is represented authentically.*
- *Students truly understand what it means to be Jewish, in all its diversity.*
- *We are able to connect to each other's experiences with empathy and compassion.*

See: [Inclusive Judaism - The Jewish Museum London](#)



#### Visits, videos and other resources for the classroom

#### THE ARTS SOCIETY BIRMINGHAM

##### Birmingham faith visits

The Arts Society Birmingham has worked with six faith communities to provide guidance and materials on six places of worship. Teachers can find a 4-page booklet, three videos introducing the building and community, and a related quiz for each place of worship.

Supported by a generous grant from Westhill Endowment Trust, The Arts Society Birmingham has collaborated with six different places of worship, Birmingham Faith Leaders and other organisations to produce resources designed to enhance a school visit, or to support a virtual visit, to a place of worship for children 8 to 13 years.

Actual visits to the places of worship may be arranged by contacting them directly. Contact details are provided on the Illustrated Guides. <https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartsociety.org/>

#### £600 grants for teaching Christianity

The Jerusalem Trust's

##### Small Grants to Schools Scheme

Resourcing the teaching of Christianity within Religious Education

The Jerusalem Trust's Small Grants to Schools Scheme supports the teaching of Christianity within Religious Education. The scheme operates by providing schools with grants of up to £600 to purchase resources for use in RE lessons.

The scheme is open to state funded schools in England and Wales, with 60% awarded to secondary schools and 40% to primary schools.

Details and application information: [www.regrants.org.uk](http://www.regrants.org.uk)

## NATRE Spirited Arts 2022 WINNERS!

Over 30,000 young people from around the world took part in the Spirited Arts competition last year, with entries from Australia, Bahrain and Thailand. 523 schools took part, selecting their pupils' best artworks, and sending 3196 entries for judging. 27 winners have been selected and are now in the [Spirited Arts online gallery](#).

Categories in the 2022 competition included:

- ‘God’s Good Earth?’, which invited pupils to explore the threat of climate change and the beauty of the earth
- ‘Searching for God’, where pupils considered their personal search for God, regardless of whether they are atheist, agnostic, or believers in God, and
- ‘A view of the world’, where pupils were encouraged to explore their own worldview.



Mollie (13) - Winner

The competition is supported by the Jo Cox Foundation. This year entrants were invited to develop a creative response to the 2015 quote from the late Jo Cox MP:

**“we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us”.**

[www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-gallery/2022/](http://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-gallery/2022/)

## NATRE Spirited Arts 2023 – new themes announced

Will your school join hundreds of schools from around the world taking part in this year's Spirited Arts competition? Entries are welcomed in (almost!) any art form pupils can think of. Winning entries will provide a good response to one of the 5 themes, and judges will be asking is it original? Is it well-crafted? And (most importantly!) is it excellent RE?

## The 5 themes

1. "We have more in common than that which divides us."
2. Green faith, green future? ['God's good earth?']
3. Where is God today?
4. Faith in action, values in action.
5. Sacred space and holy buildings
6. Religion and animals



More details here [www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2023/](http://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2023/)

## Training and CPD opportunities and other support

NATRE's annual Strictly RE conference returns on 28-29<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Taking place online for the third year, the conference themes explore: **depth, diversity and Abrahamic worldviews**

*Before the weekend:* 13 weekday seminars

*On the weekend:* 3 keynotes, 21 workshops, seven virtual staffrooms

Workshops include:

- Thinking out loud- joining the dots to help children think more critically (Primary)
- Introducing Philosophy and Philosophers to the Primary Classroom (Primary)
- Dharmic Lenses on the Climate Crisis (Secondary)
- Creating a core RE Programme for KS4 (Secondary)



- Interfaith conversations - exploring creative projects that deepen pupils' understanding in RE (Crossphase)
- Special RE (Crossphase)
- Championing and advocating for RE with parents (for SLTs)

Pay for the weekend, get access to recordings and downloads for ALL sessions!

Details and booking information, including Early Bird deals:

[www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/strictlyRE-2023/](http://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/strictlyRE-2023/)

## 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	Topic
10 Oct	Café NATRE – Subject knowledge Islam
14 Nov	Taught session: Focus on Disciplinary RE
12 Dec	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge Buddhism
9 Jan	Taught session: Focus on Non-religious worldviews
13 Feb	Taught session: Focus on Hindu Dharma
13 Mar	Café NATRE – Subject knowledge Judaism
8 May	Taught session: Focus on Worldviews
12 June	Taught session: Focus on Sikhi
10 July	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge Christianity

ECT webinars booking link <http://ow.ly/VupG50KG3cP>

## Culham St Gabriel's 'In conversation' series

Extend your understanding of religion and worldviews, subject knowledge and pedagogy by listening in on conversations among teachers, researchers and other experts.

Three conversations are programmed for the autumn:

- 17 Oct: Christian ethics, animal welfare and the religion and worldview classroom (Prof David Clough and Scarlett Hayward)
- 21 Nov: Understanding understanding! What do we mean by understanding? (Prof Trevor Cooling and Dr Kate Christopher)
- 19 Dec: Conceptualising religion and worldviews for the school (Dr Kevin O'Grady)

Details and booking info here: [www.cstg.org.uk/activities/events/in-conversation/](http://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/events/in-conversation/)

Extensive back catalogue here: [www.reonline.org.uk/research/in-conversation/](http://www.reonline.org.uk/research/in-conversation/)

## Regional RE Hub leads in place and ready to go!

Under the leadership of Claire Clinton, Lead Director, a fantastic team of Regional Leads will be supporting ten regions of England and Wales. They have been recruited to build relationships with advisers, dioceses, universities, SACREs, LAs, governors, MATs, teaching school hubs and more.



The Regional Leads will also act as conduits between the regional providers of research, CPD, resources, places of worship and so on for the benefit of all RE/Religion and Worldview stakeholders.

The Regional Hub structure aims to increase accessibility for all teachers to local and regional professional development and research, and to enable teachers to teach with greater confidence through their access to the support, knowledge, training and resources available in their region. Details and the list of Regional Leads:

[www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/the-regional-re-hubs-team-is-ready-to-go/](http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/the-regional-re-hubs-team-is-ready-to-go/)

West Midlands Regional Lead is Chris Giles from South Bromsgrove High School

## NATRE: new membership packages!

NATRE is the largest membership organisation that 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, Local Authorities 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](http://www.natre.org.uk/membership)

## Farmington Scholarships 2023-2024

Would you like to spend a term researching an aspect of RE, developing your thinking and creating ideas and resources for your school and others? Would you like the time out of school to do this? The Farmington Trust supports teachers for 30 days in a year. It could be you next year!

Applications for the 2022/23 Farmington Scholarships are now open. These are Scholarships available to teachers of RE and associated subjects in UK secondary, primary, and special needs schools. Headteachers who wish to undertake research into either RE or values education are also welcome to apply.

Scholarships cover the cost of tuition, essential local travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale. Scholarships last for a maximum of 30 days and can either be taken at a local university or can be home-based with a local tutor.

Closing date for applications is **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2023**.

Further information and application form: [www.farmington.ac.uk/index.php/farmington-scholarships/](http://www.farmington.ac.uk/index.php/farmington-scholarships/)

## Other information

### A level Religious Studies numbers drop for first time in 20 years

After two decades of growth, numbers of students taking an A level in RS dropped by 2.7% in 2021. The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) have warned this period of growth is now under threat after a five-year funding gap that has impacted current and future young people taking the subject.

[www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/a-level-religious-studies-results-prompt-call-for-government-support/](http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/a-level-religious-studies-results-prompt-call-for-government-support/)

This comes as research demonstrates that, in state schools in England, RS A level is one of the most likely subjects to be taken by disadvantaged students (fourth after sociology, psychology and English Lit), and that it is more accessible to students with lower prior attainment than many (11<sup>th</sup> out of 31). See <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2022/04/do-disadvantaged-students-choose-different-subjects-from-their-peers-at-key-stage-5/> and [www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/](http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/)

## GCSE numbers

- The number of students in England and Wales taking a GCSE course in Religious Studies GCSE has risen to 253,225, an increase of 0.6% from last year.
- The increase was largely driven by a surprise rise in the short course in England, up 16.5% from 15,672 to 18,257.
- In Wales, amid an overall 5% drop in pupils taking GCSEs, the number of entries to RS courses fell by 11%.

The strong entry results in England saw the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) reiterate their call for a National Plan for the subject. They warn that an ongoing funding crisis and lack of a specialist teacher recruitment strategy now seriously threatens the provision of high-quality learning for the quarter of a million students who take the subject annually.

Joining the call for a National Plan was Lord Karan Bilimoria, CBE, DL, Vice President of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Chancellor of the University of Birmingham who pointed to the number of disadvantaged students going on to take the subject at A level. A study in April (see above) found they were twice as likely to take the subject than their peers, favouring it over history and geography:

"When it comes to levelling up education, the latest data shows that giving more support to religious education students at GCSE is an easy win. If RS is the humanity that disadvantaged young people are most likely to take, then backing this up with a properly funded National Plan is a must. The subject will provide those young people with the crucial skills of analysis, curiosity and intellectual confidence as part of a broad, balanced education and give them a head start in the global workplace."

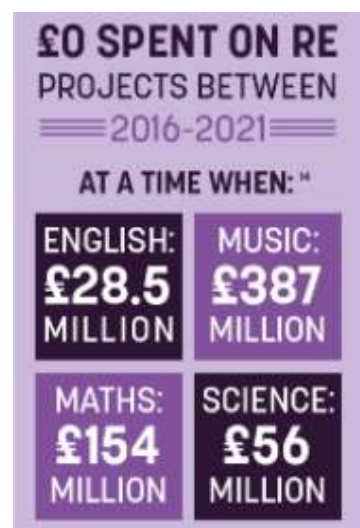
[www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/take-action-on-re-say-leading-politicians-as-more-students-take-the-subject-at-gcse/](http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/take-action-on-re-say-leading-politicians-as-more-students-take-the-subject-at-gcse/)

## RE report card 2022

The reactions to the above information on examination numbers draw on the report cards mentioned in previous news updates. The RE Policy Unit from the RE Council has gathered together data on RE from the last five years and written a report card on the state of RE. There is some excellent news (such as how schools with higher rates of GCSE RS entry get higher Attainment 8 scores!) but far too much bad news (34% of academies report no timetabled RE).

The full set can be found here: [www.rethinkre.org/re-report-card](http://www.rethinkre.org/re-report-card)

How can schools respond? One way is to alert local MPs to the information here, with particular reference to the lack of Government funding given to the subject in the last 5 years (see graphic on the right). How else could you use the data?



## Draft Handbook for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom

As part of a three-year Worldviews project, the RE Council of England and Wales (REC) has published a draft resource for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom.

The resource sets out a rationale for a religion and worldviews approach, building on the developments since the 2018 Commission report. It incorporates a revised **National Statement of Entitlement** (NSE), which gives a clear description of an education in religion and worldviews, and sets a benchmark for high-quality teaching and learning. The resource then offers practical guidance, including how to use the NSE to develop a syllabus or curriculum, applying ways of knowing, developing pupils' personal worldviews, and what progress looks like in a worldviews approach.

Sections include:

- What do people mean by 'religion'?
- What do people mean by 'worldview'?
- The value of worldviews
- Purposes for RE in a religion and worldviews approach
- Revised National Statement of Entitlement
- Developing pupils' personal worldviews
- Making good progress
- Applying disciplinary methods
- How to use the NSE to develop a syllabus
- How to use the NSE to develop questions and construct units of work
- Making good progress: three models



The resource is primarily written to inform three Framework Development Teams, who are currently working to apply the NSE and the guidance to their own contexts. During this process, the draft resource will be tested and revised as necessary, before the publication of a final Handbook, three example frameworks, sample units of work and pupil responses, in 2024.

You can download copies of here: [www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/)

**News updates created for SACRE by RE Today Services, Nov 2022**



## Doncaster SACRE – REsources Directory

Help for teachers of RE, Ethics and Philosophy in Schools

**Name of Religion/Worldview:** .....

**Person teachers should contact:**

**Name** .....

**E-mail** .....

**Telephone** .....

**Website** .....

### **1. Visits to places of worship by parties of school children with their teachers**

Would your community welcome visits by groups of children with their teachers in these age groups:

*Circle all that apply*

Age 5 – 7	Age 11 – 14
Age 7- 11	Age 14- 16
	Age 16 - 19

### **2. Would your community**

**welcome**

Address(es) of places, limitations, facilities, minimum and maximum numbers, experiences that might be included in the visit, websites, virtual visits etc

**invitations for a representative to visit schools in person to:**

*Circle all that apply*

Take an assembly      Talk to a class      Be part of a Q & A panel

Take part in a debate      Talk to teaching staff

To which age groups?

*Circle all that apply*

Age 5 – 7	Age 11 – 14
Age 7- 11	Age 14- 16
	Age 16 - 19

**Would your community be happy for a representative to visit a school via video conferencing?**

*Circle all that apply*

Zoom      Teams      Facetime      Skype      Google Meet

Any issues schools should be aware of: eg relevant training undertaken by potential visitors

3. Does your community provide materials – eg on paper, online or the loan of artefacts that might be of help to teachers of RE, ethics or philosophy? If so, please give brief details.

4. Would your community be happy to answer any questions from pupils e-mailed via their teachers?

From which age groups?

*Circle all that apply*

Age 5 – 7	Age 11 – 14
Age 7- 11	Age 14- 16
	Age 16 - 19

Anything else that schools should know including, perhaps, about the nature and size of your community in Doncaster, a brief local history, the main languages used, the origins of the community and so on.

- 5. Does the School Contact commit to ensuring that all adults engaging with children will have read “Voices of Faith and Belief in Schools” and commit to following the code of conduct set out on page 4 of that document.**

*Circle whichever applies:*    **Yes**    **No**

# Voices of faith and belief in schools

Guidance and a Code of Conduct

## Introduction

Schools do well to welcome believers from different communities of religion and belief to make a contribution to learning. Religious believers and people who have non-religious worldviews such as Humanists can make a powerful impact in RE and collective worship in schools when they visit. Spiritual and moral development and religious learning can be stimulated most effectively through encounters with people of faith and school children of all ages. Teachers have good reason to be grateful to these people, often volunteers, and usually unpaid, who are willing to play a part in school life. This guidance and Code of Conduct is offered to give help to schools and religious visitors to make the most of the opportunities available, and to avoid some of the pitfalls that may be encountered.

The guidance is offered by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and concentrates on the interface between education and communities of religion and belief. NATRE is the subject teacher association for teachers of RE. It is envisaged that this guidance will be useful to senior leaders, governors, teachers of RE and visitors to schools. Some schools may wish to invite potential visitors to read the code and indicate their acceptance of it, or to write a school policy based upon it. Standing Advisory Councils for RE might consider issuing it to schools as part of their official guidance on RE and collective worship.

## Principles and good practice

Schools should welcome visitors from communities of religion and belief and respect their contribution to pupils' learning. It is good practice to plan visits jointly, to pay travel and other expenses, to welcome visitors with refreshments and to evaluate the visit together.

Schools are educational communities. Religious visitors are guests of the school community, and whether they are frequent guests ('almost members of the family') or one-off visitors, it is helpful to bear in mind the ethos, purpose and aims of the school. For example, for a Christian, visiting a church school may be a different kind of opportunity from visiting a local authority maintained school or academy.

Schools are committed to the needs and interests of all their pupils, and they are plural communities. The school may include members of different faith groups, pupils from non-religious or secular families and (within Christianity or other faiths) different denominational allegiances. Visitors from communities of religion and belief need to think through what they have to offer to all pupils. The sharing of insight, experience, belief and practice is appropriate. It is not appropriate to impose a view on members of the audience, whether you are speaking in a community school or a school with a religious character.

Parents have the right to know what is happening in school. Parents from different faith backgrounds, different denominations or groups and of no faith may, quite reasonably, be concerned about the religious input their children receive in school, and clarity of information from school to home needs to be maintained all the time.

Children have their own integrity too. It is a fundamental principle that religious education work and collective worship experiences should demonstrate respect for the attitude and perspective of each child.

It is also important that the school ensures current legislation relating to child protection procedures is covered and implemented with regard to visitors to the classroom, collective worship or assembly venue.

The Code of Conduct offered here is elaborated in the notes that follow.

## The Code of Conduct

The most effective way for visitors to engage with the school community and deepen understanding of their religious beliefs and practice is to take part in the regular programme of teaching and learning, rather than make an isolated or one-off contribution to the curriculum. Consider whether you could do this; but if not, there is still enormous value to be gained from a single visit.

The most common problems for pupils when visitors make a classroom visit or in collective worship are: that they listen to a lengthy monologue, with more or less attention, that they can't understand; that the material presented is pitched at an inappropriate level (too complicated or too simple for the age group); and that the language used is either over the pupils' heads or thoughtlessly patronising. Visitors who avoid these pitfalls will be more effective.

Visitors from communities of religion and belief taking part in the life of a school should therefore:

- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid criticising the experience and insights of others and imposing their views upon pupils in any way
- be familiar with the school's aims, ethos and policies, and plan their involvement in the light of the aims of the curriculum at the school
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods that involve the pupils actively, plan their presentation to fit with the aspect of religion or worldviews pupils are learning about, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned
- make clear to pupils who they are, who they represent, and what their aims are
- be willing to respect the right of the pupils and adults in the school to hold views that may be different from their own
- develop ways of speaking to pupils that communicate their open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to 'convert' or proselytise.

A key question to help visitors reflect on their approach:

If a member of another religion or belief visited my child's school and contributed in the same way as I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?



## Schools' responsibilities

As already stated, schools have responsibilities to brief visitors in advance, to plan and evaluate jointly, to meet agreed expenses, and to make visitors welcome.

Schools should take responsibility for the curriculum and the school's collective worship at all times: it is inappropriate for this responsibility to be handed over to religious visitors. Thus activities such as interviews, question-and-answer sessions, sharing experience, or talks introduced by the teacher, are obviously appropriate, while activities in which the teacher takes a merely observational role are not appropriate. Generally, visitors from communities of religion and belief should work alongside teachers at all times: the responsibility for the pupils, including their protection and health and safety, rests with the school.

Schools should be clear in guiding and helping visitors to make an appropriate contribution to the curriculum or the programme of collective worship.

Schools should support pupils from a particular community of religion and belief who wish to practise their faith in non-curriculum time at school. Outside visitors to such groups have a special importance, and a special responsibility. A Bible study and prayer group for Christians, a Satsung group for young Hindus, a room set aside for Muslim prayer or a Shabad Kirtan for Sikhs, are all appropriate ways for schools to show the value they place on pupils' commitment, and appropriate contexts in which to welcome visiting believers.

## Appropriate contexts and activities

There are three main contexts in which visitors from communities of religion and belief might participate in school life:

- the curriculum (including RE)
- collective worship
- voluntary groups, such as a lunchtime or after school Christian Union, or Muslim salah or jummah.

Each context is distinct, and requires a suitable approach.

**In collective worship** pupils are offered opportunities for spiritual and moral development, including opportunities to join in with worship. Visitors might present ideas and experience from their faith, making clear the value of these ideas and experiences within the community, and asking pupils to think about them from their own point of view. In leading prayer, no assumptions should be made about the commitments of the pupils: no religion advocates compulsory worship! Some teachers introduce prayer by offering pupils a choice between the role of participant and the role of observer.

**In lessons, including RE**, pupils are engaged in the task of learning. Visitors from communities of religion and belief are valuable because they bring an authentic voice of belief into the classroom. This may be informative, help develop understanding, and may also challenge pupils to reflect on their own commitment. Visitors will want to think carefully about the educational aims of the session(s) or contributions that they offer.

**In voluntary, extra-curricular groups**, some pupils may wish to share their belief through a regular meeting or club outside curriculum time. Pupils, teachers, parents or visitors may take a lead in organising this. If such groups are clear in their purpose and open in their agenda and their invitation to all to participate, then they have the function of enabling believing pupils to share their belief in school. Visitors to such groups are participating in the life of the community of religion or belief, on school premises. This special opportunity should be taken seriously, and should be arranged with appropriate liaison between visitors, voluntary pupils' groups and senior staff in the school. In primary schools it would be good practice to ask parents for permission for their children to take part in these activities.

## Communicating effectively with children and young people

When believers who visit schools are ineffective it is usually because their presentations are too difficult or too easy for the children they address. To be an effective visitor, believers need to set the level of their presentations to match carefully the aptitudes and age of the group they work with. Going ‘over the pupils’ heads’ or ‘talking down’ to them is all too easy. Effective communicators will:

- plan carefully
- discuss the input with teachers in advance, and be open to teachers’ suggestions
- take account of the different abilities of the pupils
- use a variety of teaching methods and styles, including those which elicit a response from all the pupils
- select content carefully, avoiding the temptation to try and get the whole of their tradition across (for example, teaching six-year-olds all there is to know about Jesus Christ in a 35-minute session!)
- ensure the information and insight they are delivering fits with the planned programme of learning.

## Issues for discussion

Visitors to school are often welcomed and shown around the physical environment. It is just as important to 'show them round' the educational environment; the potential problems that they face are then more easily avoided.

These are issues which need special discussion and attention:

- If a religious group is evangelistic or has missionary objectives, how will these objectives be kept separate from collective worship and curricular RE?
- How will parents get to know about the religious and spiritual life of the school? What contribution will they make to shaping the experiences offered to their children?
- What steps can be taken to enable pupils to know what is being offered in voluntary activities supported by communities of religion and belief? How can hidden agendas be avoided?
- What can schools do to offer balanced opportunities for pupils to meet and share the lives of believers?

## Conclusion

The guidance and suggestions given in this short leaflet need to be applied with care in each school. The guidance often takes a note of caution, but it should not be forgotten that visitors from communities of religion and belief are a rich and exciting resource for schools. Much wonderful RE, and many inspiring acts of collective worship or assemblies, result from the visit of a person willing to share his or her faith or belief. From the point of view of NATRE, schools are encouraged to welcome these visitors whenever possible, and communities of faith and belief are encouraged to contribute to the curriculum and collective worship some of the treasures of their living beliefs.

Correspondence is welcomed at: NATRE, 1020 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LB, tel: 0121 472 4242; fax 0121 472 7575; email: [admin@natre.org.uk](mailto:admin@natre.org.uk)

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