



Agenda Item 7

Appendix 1

Dear Headteacher

Walsall SACRE would like to thank you for the amazing work you, your senior leadership team and staff are doing in these difficult circumstances.

Religious Education in Walsall schools contributes dynamically to young people's education in schools, provoking challenging questions about human life, beliefs, communities and ideas. In RE pupils learn from religions and world views about different ways of life in local, national and global contexts. They discover, explore and consider many different answers to questions about human identity, meaning and value. They learn to weigh up for themselves the value of wisdom from different communities, to disagree respectfully, to be reasonable in their responses to religions and world views and to respond by expressing insights into their own and others' lives. They think rigorously, creatively, imaginatively and respectfully about their ideas in relation to religions and world views. All absolutely essential as part of the preparation for adulthood, members of the local community and the workforce.

We are sure that you are aware that the DFE have stated that RE must form part of the ambitious and broad curriculum that schools are providing for pupils at this time.

[www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/schools-minister-reiterates-schools-duty-to-teach-re-to-all-pupils-aged-5-18/](http://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/schools-minister-reiterates-schools-duty-to-teach-re-to-all-pupils-aged-5-18/)

As you know pupils in all key stages need to be taught RE even if they do not opt to study it as an examination subject at Key Stage 4. It has been very positive to see the focus on a broad and balanced curriculum in the OFSTED Education Inspection Framework and the part that RE plays in that curriculum. The framework provides additional accountability for the provision of RE through the following inspection guidelines.

- All pupils in maintained schools are required to study the basic curriculum which includes the National Curriculum Religious Education and age-appropriate relationship and Sex Education.
- Academies must include English, Mathematics, Science and Religious Education in their curriculum. This curriculum must be of similar breadth and ambition to that provided in a maintained school.
- Spiritual development for pupils must include their ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life as well as knowledge of and respect for different people's faiths feelings and values.
- Provision is needed for the cultural development of pupils including their ability to recognise and value the things we have in common across cultural, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic communities.
- Inspectors will consider how the curriculum is taught to the extent to which teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach and are supported to address gaps in their knowledge
- Further requirements relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

As you are also aware schools must publish this on their website.

- **The content of your school curriculum in each academic year for every subject including Religious Education even if it is taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else.**

[www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online)

Last year the Department for Education wrote to the Chair of the National Association of SACREs pointing out the statutory requirement of schools, academies and free schools to deliver Religious Education.

**'SACRE members will be familiar with the requirements on maintained schools, including the duty on those without a religious designation and voluntary controlled schools to follow the local Agreed Syllabus. Under the terms of their Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State, all academies (including free schools) must provide RE for all their registered pupils from age 5 to 18, except for those whose parents exercise the right of withdrawal. We would expect that all schools provide pupils with a curriculum that is high quality and promotes progression through the key stages, including in RE. The non- statutory guidance for RE (2010) also states that head teachers should ensure that 'the subject is well led and effectively managed, and that standards and achievement in RE, and the quality of the provision, are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.'**

[www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-97-item-2.pdf](http://www.nasacre.org.uk/file/nasacre/1-97-item-2.pdf)

Part of the remit of Walsall SACRE is to monitor RE in all schools within the local authority and to this end we would be grateful if you could provide the following information.

- 1) A link to the page or pages on your website that details RE provision
- 2) The percentage of pupils on your school roll that were entered for GCSE RS in 2020
- 3) Information about the RE that is offered to pupils in KS4 not entered for GCSE RS (e.g. where this fits within the curriculum offer, the amount of RE teaching they receive)
- 4) Whether you follow the Walsall Agreed syllabus and if not a link to the syllabus that you do follow.

We would be grateful to receive this information by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February so we can look at it during our termly SACRE meeting.

Thank you very much for your continuing support of this essential subject in the education of our young people.

Best Wishes



Dave Lomax  
Chair of SACRE



Nick Perks  
Quality Assurance Team Manager - Walsall Council