

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 Handbook for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom.

The Draft Handbook 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 Handbook 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 Draft Handbook is primarily written to inform three Framework Development Teams, who will work over the next 18 months to apply the NSE and the Handbook guidance to their own contexts. During this process, the Draft Handbook 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 the Draft Handbook here:

www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/

This is a next step towards a worldviews approach in our subject. How might SACRE consider this and its implications for our local syllabus?

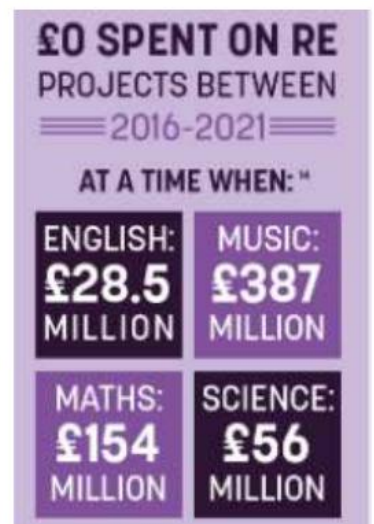
RE report card 2022

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).

Below are two of the cards. The full set can be found here:

www.rethinkre.org/re-report-card

How can SACRE 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 can we use the data?



A REVIEW OF THE PERFORMANCE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



VALUE
OF THE QUALIFICATION

IN THE LAST DECADE THE NUMBER OF PUPILS IN ENGLAND ENTERING A FULL GCSE RS COURSE **INCREASED BY 29.7%**

49.5th
INCREASE IN A-LEVEL ENTRIES FOR RS
— SINCE 2003 —
BEATING GEOGRAPHY, LAW AND HISTORY

RE IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ENABLES PUPILS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE WITHIN A DIVERSE MULTI-RELIGIOUS AND MULTI-SECULAR SOCIETY. AT ITS BEST, IT IS INTELLECTUALLY CHALLENGING AND PERSONALLY ENRICHING.

HIGHER ATTAINMENT **8 SCORES ON AVERAGE** IN SCHOOLS WITH HIGHER RATES OF ENTRY FOR GCSE RS

95% of teachers say that the subject is more or equally relevant than ten years ago

ACADEMICALLY RIGOROUS AND CHALLENGING, RE STUDENTS GO ON TO STUDY AT THE UK'S TOP UNIVERSITIES AND ENTER CAREERS IN LAW, MEDICINE, POLITICS AND JOURNALISM



School and government performance on RE is failing a record number of students, says landmark data review.

More comment here:

www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/school-and-government-performance-on-religious-education-failing-record-number-of-students-says-landmark-data-review/

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Time spent on the subject is improving in some areas:
OVER 95% of primary teachers report time spent on teaching RE has increased or stayed the same
46% of academies without a religious character have reported an increase in time to teach RE



The 2021 Ofsted Research Review identified barriers to high-quality RE teaching in schools including:

Insufficient time to teach an ambitious RE curriculum

A lack of a 'scholarly approach'

Insufficient professional development for teachers of RE

Some teachers embedding unhelpful misconceptions



Gaps in teacher subject knowledge



However, too many schools are breaking the law by not teaching RE

34% of academies report no directed RE



Around 500 secondary schools still report zero hours of RE provision in Year 11

RE also continues to be neglected on the school timetable in favour of EBacc subjects: On average 5 hours of RE are allocated to each teacher of RE of Key Stage 3 (as opposed to 7 for History)



SCHOOLS MUST DO MORE TO ENSURE THEY PROVIDE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF HIGH-QUALITY RE PROVISION FOR ALL STUDENTS ACROSS THE YEAR GROUPS



NATRE's annual primary survey 2022 – let schools have their say!

NATRE is conducting this survey to obtain information about the current state of RE in all types of schools for Primary age children so that it can continue to support the teacher in the classroom by raising awareness of the impact of government policy on RE.

NATRE is asking for schools to take a few minutes to answer as many of the questions as they can. It is offering a 'thank you' to schools for completing the survey: they will receive £5 off RE Today publications, training or NATRE membership, *and* enter schools into a free prize draw, for a chance to win a FREE platinum NATRE membership for one year!

NATRE will treat responses with complete and absolute confidentiality; no schools or teachers will be identified in any use NATRE makes of the information provided.

Complete the survey here: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NATREprimarysurvey2022

How can SACRE encourage schools to fill in the survey? This kind of data is so useful when lobbying the government for support for our subject.

NASACRE's SACRE Self-evaluation tool

The NASACRE development group has worked hard on reviewing, updating, and improving the SACRE self-evaluation tool. This tool will enable SACREs to consider their effectiveness in all areas of its work in order to produce a targeted and costed Development Plan in partnership with your LA.

The SEF is available [here](#) for use at SACRE meetings.

NASACRE's new online training programme

NASACRE members can access these recorded sessions [here](#) along with the slide shows and resources. The programme for 2021-22 can be accessed [here](#).

Can anyone from SACRE attend any of these? Which might be useful?

NATRE Spirited Arts 2022

Will schools from our area 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. God's good earth? ("Beautiful World, wonderful God?")
3. Searching for God
4. A view of the world.
5. Celebrations: Big days and big ideas

Find out more details here www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2022/

How can SACRE encourage schools take part in this competition? Can this link in with anything going on locally? Some SACREs have held local Spirited arts competitions and worked to display entries in a local museum. Is this something this SACRE might consider?

RE Council and NATRE at the Party Conferences

RE's interests will be represented at the Autumn Party Conferences of the Conservative and Labour Parties, where primary and secondary teachers of RE will be working with NATRE to take every opportunity to meet with parliamentarians and gain their support for our work towards a national plan for RE. The RE Community has had some success in gaining recognition of the needs of the subject in this way, but not much success yet in persuading the Ministry to plan to improve RE.

Can local MPs help? Are they willing to support us?

The international ministerial conference on freedom of religion and belief is being hosted by the government in London in July.

The conference has 5 objectives, which are interestingly connected to RE:

- To raise awareness of:
 - the current challenges to FoRB across the world
 - the relevance of FoRB to other human rights
 - best practice in preventing violations and abuses and protecting and promoting FoRB
- use UK leadership and experience in addressing human rights issues and our convening power to improve FoRB for all
- galvanise partner countries and stakeholders to work more closely together to promote and protect FoRB, including by working together to address FoRB violations and abuses
- encourage collective action by governments, human rights experts, civil society, academia and faith and belief actors to address FoRB challenges, exchange best practice, and build shared commitments
- to strengthen the voices of and build the capacity of defenders of FoRB, including religion and belief groups, inspiring future leaders and young people, and building and reinforcing global coalitions for collective action.

Could SACRE make use of the publicity and resources of the conference to further our own agenda of free thinking about religion and belief?

Details: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-ministerial-conference-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-london-2022-aims-and-objectives/international-ministerial-conference-on-freedom-of-religion-or-belief-london-2022-aims-and-objectives>

New resources for BBC RE in Key Stage 1 Bitesize: places of worship and examples of caring.

Lat Blaylock writes: "I worked on these resources last year, and they are now free and available for all. Ready to use animations, information and graphics to enable children aged 5-7 to understand places of worship and different ways that faith communities put their values into action are all ready for you to use." Start here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zwv8q6f/articles/z8c22v4>

New Resources for addressing anti-semitism in schools

In 2021, there were 124,091 hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales with the instances of hate crimes rising at almost 10% a year. The instances are now more than double what they were a decade ago. Race and religion features as a main reason behind many of these crimes.

Teachers have been asking for materials to support them in raising awareness and providing opportunity for discussion and exploration of prejudice. In response, Judith Hayman, a former teacher and Holocaust Educator has created a free presentation and teacher guide exploring the to give teachers something to hang the conversation onto. The resource is pitched to KS2/3 and explores different types of prejudice. It is flexible enough to be used either in assemblies or collective worship as well as cross curricular engagement in PSHCE, Religious Education and History.

The resource is constantly being updated with up to date examples and references. The teacher guide and presentation are available to download for free through the website www.antisemitism.org/teachers There are versions for the various settings, non-denominational, Catholic and Church of England.



Can we encourage our schools to use these resources and tackle this kind of prejudice more effectively?

Thanks to Terry Hart for this item – he is the Adviser for Religious Education & Christian Distinctiveness at the Diocese of Manchester

New offer from ‘Good News for Everyone’: free Bible magazine to pupils and primary classrooms

The charity ‘Good News for Everyone’ – which used to be known as ‘The Gideons’ – have produced a 48-page magazine which provides children aged 7-11 with extracts from Bible stories, texts and teachings. The extracts include all the major Bible texts used in the ‘Understanding Christianity’ resources. There are questions for discussion and thinking, and quizzes, all illustrated in an age-appropriate style. Good News for Everyone exists to give Christian scriptures away, and this new educational collection of Bible texts is available through schools to pupils – for example Good News for Everyone will be happy to send a visitor to schools to give a class set of copies for teachers to use and a personal copy to all school pupils for them to keep. The charity still visits secondary schools to distribute copies of the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs free to pupils.

Contact: <https://goodnewsuk.com/bibles-for/education>

Visits, videos and other resources for the classroom

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. Details here: <https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartsociety.org/>

RE:Quest – online Christianity resources from Youth for Christ

The **RE:Quest** website has refreshed and relaunched with a series of new resources on key Christian concepts such as Salvation, resources for pupils with additional needs and a series of new films. You can also create boards of resources for particular units or topics for pupils and teachers to access. Resources on the key concepts provide sample lesson plans too.

<https://request.org.uk>

Understanding Humanism

The **Understanding Humanism** website has relaunched with over 100 new FREE resources to support teaching about humanism and non-religious worldviews.

Resources for ages 5-18 organised into several core areas of knowledge to support young people's understanding of a humanist approach to life, humanist history, and the influence of humanism on the modern world. '

<https://understandinghumanism.org.uk>

True Tube

The **Truetube** website has also had a refresh with a series of new films added for teachers in Primary and secondary schools.

www.truetube.co.uk

Online training

Webinar series from University of Edinburgh

<https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/teachingbuddhism/2021/11/29/who-is-the-buddha-new-webinar-series-for-teachers-jan-march-2022/>

A series of webinars on the life of the Buddha – excellent for KS3 and KS4. The series has already started, but sessions are uploaded afterwards, so you can catch up later.

Register [here on Eventbrite](#)

Online seminar series from University of Chester

The Chester Uni A level webinar series have started. Look [here](#) to find out about the programme. Is Pure Land Buddhism Buddhism?

- Can God suffer and does it help?
- Love poetry in the Sufi Tradition.
- Self and Non-Self in Hinduism and Buddhism.
- Is Christianity irredeemably sexist?

Just some of the sessions on offer!

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