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Northumberland
County Council

Your ref:
Our ref:
Enquiries to: Rebecca Little
Email: Rebecca.Little@northumberland.gov.uk
Tel direct: 01670 622611
Date: Tuesday, 7 February 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)** to be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL** on **WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2023** at **4.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Rick O'Farrell
Interim Chief Executive

To Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) members as follows:-

AGENDA

PART I

It is expected that the matters included in this part of the agenda will be dealt with in public.

1.   **INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2.   **MINUTES**   (Pages 1 - 8)

Minutes of the meeting of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), Agreed Syllabus Conference, held on Wednesday, 9 November 2022, as circulated, to be confirmed as a true record, and signed by the chair.

3.   **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required where a matter arises at a meeting;

a. Which **directly relates to** Disclosable Pecuniary Interest ('DPI') as set out in Appendix B, Table 1 of the Code of Conduct, to disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote and not to remain in room. Where members have a DPI or if the matter concerns an executive function and is being considered by a Cabinet Member with a DPI they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with the matter.

b. Which **directly relates to** the financial interest or well being of a Other Registrable Interest as set out in Appendix B, Table 2 of the Code of Conduct to disclose the interest and only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain the room.

c. Which **directly relates to** their financial interest or well-being (and is not DPI) or the financial well being of a relative or close associate, to declare the interest and members may only speak on the matter if members of the public are also allowed to speak. Otherwise, the member must not take part in discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

d. Which **affects** the financial well-being of the member, a relative or close associate or a body included under the Other Registrable Interests column in Table 2, to disclose the interest and apply the test set out at paragraph 9 of Appendix B before deciding whether they may remain in the meeting.

e. Where Members have or a Cabinet Member has an Other Registerable Interest or Non Registerable Interest in a matter being considered in exercise of their executive function, they must notify the Monitoring Officer and arrange for somebody else to deal with it.

NB Any member needing clarification must contact monitoringofficer@northumberland.gov.uk. Members are referred to the Code of Conduct which contains the matters above in full. Please refer to the guidance on disclosures at the rear of this agenda letter.

4. **AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION**

To receive an update from Caroline Weir, Part-time RE Consultant about the provision of RE in-service training and contacts with schools since the last related meeting.

5. **RELIGIOUS CENSUS DATA** (Pages 9 - 12)

To receive and discuss the Census data on Religion.

6. **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

To discuss the Holocaust Memorial Day event on Thursday, 26 January 2023.

7. **GOOD PRACTICE IN RE** (Pages 13 - 18)

To receive a presentation on what is good practice in RE.

8. **SACRE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL** (Pages 19 - 48)

To receive and discuss the SACRE Self-Evaluation tool.

9. **DRAFT REC HANDBOOK** (Pages 49 - 100)

To receive and discuss the Draft REC Handbook

10. **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER**

Reminder of web site link: https://sway.office.com/lHUgZDzd2JS9kc1E

11. **TRAINING AVAILABLE TO SACRE**

For members to note training available and discuss completed training sessions.

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

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

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

    To receive the latest newsletter– for information.

    Reminder of web site link: **www.nasacre.org.uk** for other interesting articles which Members may wish to view.

    To monitor the Northumberland SACRE Action Plan September 2022 – August 2023

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

    The next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will be held on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

    Further Dates:

    Wednesday, 8 November 2023
    Wednesday, 7 February 2024

15. **URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

    To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair, should, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST AT THIS MEETING, PLEASE:

- Declare it and give details of its nature before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- Complete this sheet and pass it to the Democratic Services Officer.

Name:		Date of meeting:	
Meeting:			

Item to which your interest relates:

Nature of Interest i.e. either disclosable pecuniary interest (as defined by Table 1 of Appendix B to the Code of Conduct, Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest (as defined by Appendix B to Code of Conduct) (please give details):

Are you intending to withdraw from the meeting?	Yes - ☐ No - ☐

Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.

3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.

   Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **_directly relates_** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in **Table 1**) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***affects*** –

    a. your own financial interest or well-being;

    b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or

    c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2** you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) ***affects*** the financial interest or well- being:

    a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;

    b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

       You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

       If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—

	(a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.

Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—
	 (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and
	 (b) either—
	    i. the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
	   ii. if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

b) any body

     i. exercising functions of a public nature
    ii. any body directed to charitable purposes or
   iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

At the meeting of the **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** held at Conference Room 2, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF on Wednesday, 9 November 2022 at 4.00 pm.

PRESENT

D. Van Der Velde
Vice-Chair, in the Chair.

COUNCILLORS

L. Bowman   N. Morphet

TEACHER'S ASSOCIATIONS/UNIONS REPRESENTATIVES

R. Cant

CHURCH OF ENGLAND REPRESENTATIVES

P. Rusby

REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES & FAITHS

S. Dearlove   Rev. E.H. Marley
Dr. J. Miller

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

C. Dixon

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

D. Cookson	Head of School Improvement
R. Little	Assistant Democratic Services Officer
C. Weir	RE Consultant

16 INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Renner-Thompson, A. Duffield, C. Hudson and C. Curtis.

Concerns were raised about the Chair's recent absence from SACRE. D. Cookson informed SACRE that he was arranging a meeting to discuss this with Cllr Renner-Thompson and would feed back to members.

17 MINUTES

D. Cookson informed the committee that every maintained school had received a copy of the new syllabus, and there were still hard copies left for Academy schools who would like to adopt the new syllabus.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Northumberland Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), held on Wednesday, 6 July 2022 as circulated, were confirmed as a true record.

18 AN UPDATE OF CONTACTS WITH SCHOOLS AND TRAINING PROVISION

C. Weir explained to the committee that since September, she had been preparing and delivering training revolving around the new syllabus. There had been training sessions on using the Understanding Christianity resources completed with the RE leads from 20 first and primary schools as well as 7 middle and secondary schools. These sessions supported colleagues with subject knowledge on Christianity and how to use the Understanding Christianity resource to help embed the syllabus in their own schools.

Members noted that future training on other world views was in development and would be rolled out to schools, to assist with the new syllabus.

C. Weir had also been supporting individual schools off the back of the Understanding Christianity training that was completed.

D. Cookson explained that they had been developing a page on the Northumberland Education website where teachers could go for subject support, guidance, and resources. Members noted that the SACRE newsletter was also online and was updated with new information and resources when they become available.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

19 SCHOOL WORKFORCE DATA

D. Cookson explained to members that the workforce data was taken from the November 2021 census and was out of date. The data did not reflect what was

Ch.'s Initials………

happening in schools, as he had visited three of the four Local Authority secondary schools to discuss their RE provision to gain a better understanding of the accuracy of the data, and found that it was not in line with the data gathered from the census.

Members requested that D. Cookson contact all schools and ask for similar, up to date, data for SACRE members to use and interpret in the future. The data should be ready for discussion at the next SACRE meeting. It was;

AGREED that D. Cookson should contact all schools to collect updated workforce data.

20   **HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

D. Cookson explained that he had spoken to the officer that would normally organise the Holocaust Memorial Day event for Northumberland County Council; however, the officer had gone on leave before being able to handover a detailed rundown of the planned events. Once the information has been passed on, D. Cookson would email members.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

21   **ANALYSIS OF SACRE ANNUAL REPORTS 2020-2021 FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STANDING COUNCILS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (NASACRE)**

D. Cookson explained that the report was an analysis of all the SACRE reports that were received by NASACRE. Members were invited to discuss some of the findings from the report.

Following discussion from members, further information was provided:
- Northumberland SACRE were using the standard pro-forma for reports to NASACRE.
- The "Religious Education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010" and "Circular 1/94" were in need of updating as they were still on the government's website as current advice and the legislation did not reflect what was happening in schools.
- If there was a request for a child to withdraw from Collective Worship, SACRE should be informed.
- There was a member of the School Improvement Service who provided support to schools around RSE and Health Education. If SACRE wished to support with that, it could be arranged.
- Northumberland County Council had relaunched its Collective Worship Policy in 2021.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

22   **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE NEWSLETTER**

D. Cookson explained that the Northumberland SACRE Newsletter had received

61 views and asked members if they could continue to publicise the newsletter as well as D. Cookson mentioning the newsletter during meetings with schools.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

23   **SACRE MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

R. Little explained that enquires had been made to the National Bodies for various religions to find new SACRE members in February 2022, with follow up emails in June 2022 and in October 2022, but had only had a response from Free Churches who were still looking for new members for Northumberland SACRE.

D. Cookson raised to the committee that there were a number of committee members who had not attended meetings for a long time and asked members how to go forward. It was suggested that those members should be called but ultimately SACRE members would need to follow the constitution.

S. Dearlove asked if the committee members could use their personal networks to find new members, as that may produce further results.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

24   **TRAINING AVAILABLE TO SACRE**

D. Van Der Velde notified the committee that members of SACRE could complete a Kitemark accreditation, which would train members to go into schools to discuss world views.

C. Weir encouraged the committee members to attend the NASACRE virtual training sessions that had been organised. It was noted by members that Northumberland SACRE had paid for every SACRE member to join the training events.

J. Miller enquired whether Northumberland SACRE would be represented at the AGM in March. It was agreed, in principle, that a member of the committee would represent Northumberland SACRE.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

25   **NASACRE ISSUES**

Members noted that the new NASACRE Newsletter, Issue 33 had been released after the agenda was published and had been circulated electronically prior to the meeting.

Members enquired whether the SACRE self-evaluation tool could be added to the next agenda as well as the draft REC Handbook.

Councillor Morphet explained that he was interested in the project that Bristol

SACRE had completed using their Westhill Award and building on Leister's engagement with peacebuilding and that he would be happy to support Northumberland SACRE to apply for a Westhill Award to complete something similar in Northumberland. Members agreed to add it onto the action plan for the next academic year.

RESOLVED that this was noted and the SACRE self-evaluation tool and the draft REC Handbook would be added to the next agenda.

26 **NORTHUMBERLAND SACRE ACTION PLAN SEPTEMBER 2022 - AUGUST 2023**

D. Cookson explained to members that the action plan was created in conjunction with the work completed by the SACRE sub-committee. Members were encouraged to check over the action plan and agree points and also to agree who would be accountable for actions.

1. *Meetings should be held in a space that is more conductive to conversation between members.*

   This had been achieved by the Clerk for the meeting as the meeting was held in the Conference Room.

2. *Every SACRE meeting should include a time for discussion between members. It would be planned, led and would model good practice in discussion.*

   This was not on the agenda for the November meeting but would be added on the February agenda.

3. *Teachers from schools where there is good practice in RE should be invited to present their work at one meeting each year.*

   D. Cookson explained that the Spring agenda has been suggested for action 3.

4. *All meetings should have a key agenda item (which would include points 2 and 3)*

   D. Cookson explained to the committee that having both points 2 and 3 in every meeting may end up with a lengthy meeting, but the Spring agenda would include a discussion on "What is good practice in RE?".

5. *SACRE should consider having hybrid meetings in an attempt to increase attendance and involvement by more members.*

   This action would fall under point 16, which J. Miller had taken responsibility for.

6. *The Chair should serve for a four-year period of office.*

J. Miller explained that the committee required clarity on the role of the chair and that it may require a change to the constitution, and she was seeking to find the best way forward.

It was agreed that J. Miller would oversee this action.

7. *A list of the CPD events held, their key topics, evaluation scores and attendance should be included in future annual reports, along with details of attendance at SACRE meetings by committee/individual members.*

D. Cookson explained that this was possible for the committee to complete this year.

8. *SACRE should meet its constitutional requirement to have a member to represent the NAHT to enable better communication with head teachers, and to consider inviting a lecturer from higher education to represent their organisation.*

It was agreed that D. Cookson and R. Little would oversee this action.

9. *SACRE should support the roll-out of the new Agreed Syllabus and should consider ways in which this can be achieved.*

D. Cookson explained that his team were looking into creating an event after Easter to bring the new syllabus back into focus in schools. This would remind Local Authority schools that they must be using the new syllabus and provide an opportunity for schools to discuss the new syllabus with each other and enable SACRE to gather feedback on how it had landed in schools.

10. *SACRE members, where appropriate, should support schools by visits to classrooms, accompanying teachers and pupils on visits to places of worship or other sacred spaces, and by offering Q and A Zoom sessions. A list of volunteers with their topics and special interests should be made available to teachers.*

D. Van Der Velde to update the list of places of worship in Northumberland, Tyneside and Newcastle and to verify that those places were allowing schools to visit for educational purposes.

It was agreed that D. Van Der Velde would oversee this action.

11. *SACRE should urgently investigate how it can support schools in relation to the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition in Newcastle.*

C. Weir had previously investigated how SACRE could support schools however the information was received too late for members to support schools; however a number of schools had been visited by the pilgrims walking to Lindisfarne and some had visited the exhibition in Newcastle. The exhibition was expected to be in Newcastle until 3rd December 2022.

C. Dixon explained that the children from Slaley First School would be attending Slaley Church to view the Slaley Sheep as part of the Illuminated Sheep Project.

D. Cookson spoke to members to advise that promotion of the event did go ahead as it was on the SACRE Newsletter.

12. *SACRE should keep ways in which is can play a greater role in Holocaust Memorial Day.*

   It was agreed that D. Van Der Velde would oversee this action.

13. *SACRE should advise the Council on the need for support from school improvement services to gather data on how far schools meet their statutory duties, particularly with regard to the implementation of the new agreed syllabus.*

   It was agreed that D. Cookson would collect data from schools to allow committee members to discuss at later meetings.

14. *The Chair of SACRE and consultant/officer should have an annual meeting with the Director of Children's Services.*

   D. Cookson explained that the committee would need to decide when the most appropriate time for a meeting with the Director of Children's Services would be, it was decided that the meeting should take place in March 2023 after the verified exam results were released.

15. *Analysis of workforce data and examination results should be presented annually, along with any evidence from Ofsted reports on Northumberland schools.*

   It was agreed that D. Cookson would oversee this action.

16. *SACRE should continue to pursue the question of its status in relation to the Local Authority through further discussion with NASACRE and other national bodies.*

   It was agreed that J. Miller would oversee this action.

   RESOLVED that the ownership of each task was agreed and a new Action Plan would be drafted and sent out to members.

27   **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

   Members asked if the date of the next meeting could be changed to Wednesday, 15 February 2023. This was checked by the Clerk and agreed as a new date.

   RESOLVED that the date of the next meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education was Wednesday, 15 February 2023.

28   **URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

D. Cookson advised the committee that the Census data on population and religion would be released on 28 December 2022 and it would be an item on the next agenda for the members to discuss.

N. Morphet explained to the committee that he had attended a meeting with some archaeologists who may be able to assist with writing the Localised Units for the new Agreed Syllabus. C. Weir explained that they would have to select specified units in the syllabus; however, she was concerned regarding the potential lack of diversity in the localised units, and it was vital that pupils in schools learn about different religions and communities.

RESOLVED that this was noted.

CHAIR…………………………………..

DATE………………………………….

Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021

A national perspective:

- The religion question is voluntary; 94.0% (56.0 million) of usual residents answered the question in 2021, an increase from 92.9% (52.1 million) in 2011.

- For the first time in a census of England and Wales, less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as "Christian", a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011; despite this decrease, "Christian" remained the most common response to the religion question.

- "No religion" was the second most common response, increasing by 12.0 percentage points to 37.2% (22.2 million) from 25.2% (14.1 million) in 2011.

- London remains the most religiously diverse region of England in 2021, with over a quarter (25.3%) of all usual residents reporting a religion other than "Christian"; the North East and South West are the least religiously diverse regions, with 4.2% and 3.2%, respectively, selecting a religion other than "Christian".

Religious Composition 2011 and 2021 (England and Wales)

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Northumberland EDUCATION

Delivering on behalf of

Northumberland County Council

Other Religions in 2021 (England and Wales)

The groups above correspond to the tick-box responses for the religion question. A person could also identify their religion through the "Any other religion, write in" response option. This write-in functionality providing insights for 58 religious groups.

Among the 405,000 (0.7% of the overall population in England and Wales) who chose to write-in a response through the "Any other religion" option were the following religions:

- Pagan (74,000)

- Alevi (26,000)

- Jain (25,000)

- Wicca (13,000)

- Ravidassia (10,000)

- Shamanism (8,000)

- Rastafarian (6,000)

- Zoroastrian (4,000)

The largest increase was seen in those describing their religion as "Shamanism", increasing more than tenfold to 8,000 from 650 in 2011.

Of those who wrote-in a non-religious group to "Any other religion", the largest numbers were:

- Agnostic (32,000)

- Atheist (14,000)

- Humanist (10,000)

(source – here)

A Northumberland Perspective:

Northumberland			National
Religion	Number	%	%
No religion	128703	40.1	37.2
Christian	170668	53.2	46.2
Buddhist	752	0.2	0.5
Hindu	446	0.1	1.7
Jewish	172	0.1	0.5
Muslim	1635	0.5	6.5
Sikh	654	0.2	0.9
Other religion	1353	0.4	0.6
Not answered	16181	5	6
Total	320564	99.8	100.1

You can find the Northumberland data here -

https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/identity/religion/religion-tb/not-answered?lad=E06000057

The data can be interrogated at different geographical areas as required.

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THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION QUALITY MARK:

*celebrating outstanding practice
in the study of religion and worldviews*

Award criteria for September 2020

Strand 1 Learning

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
1. Learners are given opportunities to respond to and to ask deep questions, and/or explore big ideas, and are beginning to shape their knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious worldviews through enquiry and discussion	1. Learners respond to deep questions and/or big ideas thoughtfully, demonstrating a willingness to go more deeply into their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews	1. Learners demonstrate the breadth and depth of their knowledge and understanding, recognising the influence that religious and non-religious worldviews have had on human development and cultures
2. Learners connect their knowledge and understanding with other curriculum areas and the local community	2. Learners connect their knowledge and understanding with national issues or current events	2. Learners link their knowledge and understanding with ethical and philosophical questions, current global issues and events
3. Learners use opportunities to explore religious and non-religious worldviews through a variety of creative sources, expression and media	3. Learners have opportunities to explore and analyse religious and non-religious worldviews, including their own, through a variety of sources and media	3. Learners express their knowledge and understanding about religious and non-religious worldviews, including their own, through a variety of media and forms of communication
4. Learners have opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through first-hand experience including people and places from a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews	4. Learners show their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development through their awareness of dialogue within and across religious and non-religious worldviews	4. Learners show spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development through their positive engagement in dialogue about diversity, within and across religious and non-religious worldviews
5. Learners make good progress in relation to their age, ability and prior learning	5. Learning is regularly reviewed and assessed, and outcomes show that learners make very good progress in relation to their age, ability and prior learning	5. Learning is regularly reviewed and assessed and outcomes for some groups and individuals are exceptional in relation to their age, ability and prior learning
6. Learners discuss next steps in their learning with each other and with their teacher	6. Learners show evidence of independent enquiry and associated learning, within or outside school	6. Learners are beginning to co-design their own learning in order to promote their progress and achievement
7. Learners are sharing what they have discovered within the class and are confident in giving and receiving feedback to each other	7. Learners are sharing what they have discovered within the wider school community	7. Learners celebrate and share what they have discovered within the wider education community

Strand 2 Teaching

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
1. Teachers have secure subject knowledge in the relevant areas of the taught curriculum	1. Teachers have effective subject knowledge across the whole subject curriculum	1. Teachers have high expectations of learners and the subject leader demonstrates exceptional subject knowledge
2. Teachers' planning builds on learners' prior knowledge and promotes deeper learning in the subject	2. Teachers' planning builds on learners' prior knowledge and enables most learners to deepen their understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews	2. Teachers build their planning on learners' prior knowledge and this enables all learners to deepen their understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews
3. The quality of teaching in most lessons is recognised as effective	3. The quality of teaching in most lessons is recognised as highly effective	3. The quality of teaching overall is recognised as exceptional
4. Different teaching strategies that promote an appropriate depth of learning are piloted and reviewed by all staff	4. Research based teaching strategies promoting an appropriate depth of learning and intellectual curiosity about learning are employed by most teachers	4. Research based teaching strategies securing an appropriate depth of learning are used by teachers to secure intellectual curiosity and scholarship
5. Teachers use agreed criteria to set age appropriate learning sequences and assessment data is well managed to track group and individual progress, and to promote future achievement for all	5. Teachers use agreed criteria to set age appropriate learning sequences and assessment data to track group and individual progress, and secure appropriate achievement for specific groups and individuals	5. Teachers use agreed criteria in planning and assessment data is well managed to track group and individual progress, and to secure exceptional achievement for specific groups and individuals
6. Teachers create appropriate respectful environments where most learners feel confident to agree, or agree to disagree	6. Teachers create respectful environments where all learners feel confident to agree, or agree to disagree	6. Teachers and learners create appropriate respectful environments where a range of controversial issues and topics are discussed and critiqued
7. Teachers plan learning that promotes high-level thinking	7. Teachers plan learning that secures high-level thinking and an appropriate depth of understanding	7. Teachers' planning secures high-level thinking and a secure depth of understanding

Strand 3 Curriculum

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
1. The curriculum and school plans fulfil the appropriate syllabus requirements for all groups of learners	1. The curriculum encompasses relevant topics and appropriate material beyond the required syllabus in order to respond to most learners' needs and enquiries	1. The curriculum is innovative and creative leading to full engagement of all groups of learners across all the age and ability ranges
2. The curriculum makes a coherent contribution to the wider school curriculum through creative planning linked to other areas of knowledge and understanding	2. The curriculum makes a significant contribution to the wider school curriculum and has a visibly high profile	2.The curriculum is understood and appreciated across the school and within the wider school community
3. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides engaging opportunities and this supports learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3. The curriculum includes opportunities to respond to issues specifically connected with religious and non-religious worldviews in the local community and this supports learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development	3.The curriculum includes space for responses to national and global issues connected with religious and non-religious worldviews and this supports pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development
4.The curriculum's aims and intentions are clearly communicated to all teachers of the subject	4. Curriculum outcomes and impact are shared with the wider school community	4. Curriculum outcomes and impact are shared with other schools and local networks/organisations
5. The curriculum uses a range of appropriate materials clearly identified and intended to develop knowledge and conceptual understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews	5. The curriculum is implemented in flexible but clearly identified ways to secure most learners' knowledge and conceptual understanding	5. The curriculum has a discernible, beneficial and lasting impact on the knowledge and understanding of all groups of learners
6. The curriculum is implemented to promote among teachers and learners an understanding of diversity in religious and non-religious world views	6. The curriculum promotes an accurate understanding of diversity within individual religions and non-religious worldviews	6. The curriculum promotes an understanding of the complexities of religious and non-religious identities
7. The curriculum contributes to whole school work to challenge prejudice and discrimination and to promote agreed and shared values	7. The curriculum helps teachers and learners to recognise stereotypes of religious and non-religious people and to challenge discrimination	7. The curriculum is innovative in its approaches to inclusivity and diversity and is effective in its impact

Strand 4 Leadership

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
1. The subject has an effective leader who has a clear intention and rationale for curriculum design, teaching, and learning, and communicates this to other subject teachers	1. The subject leader demonstrates a clear, coherent, and developed intention for the learning and teaching that is fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum design	1. The subject leader demonstrates a deep and robust intention for learning, teaching that flows throughout the planning and implementation of the curriculum design
2. The subject has robust self-evaluation and development planning that is informed by whole school priorities, the appropriate syllabus and the views of learners	2. The subject makes contributions to wider development priorities within the school's agenda and planning	2. The subject's professional leadership has led whole school improvement and development
3. The subject is well resourced in relation to other comparable subjects in the curriculum	3. Staff and pupils recognise the quality of the subject's resources and use them effectively	3. The subject leader is embedding high quality systems to ensure sustainability and succession planning for the subject and senior leaders ensure appropriate CPD for all relevant staff
4. All relevant school policies connected with the subject are articulated clearly and in place	4. All relevant school policies connected with the subject are regularly reviewed, accessed and implemented by all staff	4. Senior leaders and governors engage in innovation and creative plans for the future development of the subject in the light of national conversations
5. The work of the subject leader shows a commitment to inform themselves of practice outside their own context, and this is recognised by the senior leaders and governors.	5. The subject leader is supported by senior leaders and governors in relevant and up to date continuing professional development, participates in relevant local organisations and professional development networks	5. Governors and senior leaders ensure that the subject is secure, and has a high profile in school and in the wider school and local community
6. The subject leader recognises the contribution the subject makes to learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to other aspects of the school's development plan/priorities	6. The subject leader ensures that the subject's contribution to the school's wider priorities is monitored and reviewed	6. The subject leader provides highly effective approaches to whole staff development to support school priorities and to assist other schools locally, nationally and/or internationally
7. The subject leader knows about the standards of teaching and learning across the school and uses appropriate and agreed methods of the monitoring	7. The subject leader's monitoring is supported through the clear identification of individual and group professional development needs among the staff	7. The impact of monitoring and overall leadership is a confident and well qualified teaching team
8. Commitment to inform themselves of practice outside their own context	8. Commitment to connect with other RE professionals	8. Commitment to support local and/or regional groups

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SACRE self-assessment tool

SACRE

July 2021
SACRE self-assessment tool
http://www.nasacre.org.uk

The SACRE Self Evaluation Toolkit

Introduction

This tool has been created to help SACREs in their essential role to advise the Local Authority (LA) in meeting the entitlement of pupils across the LA to engage in high quality Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship (CW) and to support the LA to reflect on its practice. In an educational context where standards and accountability are at the top of the agenda, a SACRE's work has become increasingly challenging and diverse, but also more rewarding and stimulating. Good SACREs will therefore tackle their responsibilities as opportunities, with enthusiasm, whilst recognising the need for realistic and ongoing appraisal and self-review.

In many ways, SACREs reflect the work of governing bodies in schools, in so far as they act as critical friends to the LA on matters of RE and CW. Like school governors, members are unpaid volunteers who give up their time to support RE and CW locally.

This toolkit is an amended version of the 2015 document. It takes account of changes in inspection arrangements and in the role of LAs, and of the development of maintained schools independent of their LA. It is designed to help individual SACREs evaluate their effectiveness, including considering their impact on pupils' educational experience and learning. It also helps SACREs review their organisational patterns and structures, and their partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders.

The toolkit highlights five key dimensions of SACRE's work and provides exemplification of good practice. A SACRE that uses this self-evaluation guidance should gain a clear picture of its strengths, identify areas for further development, and establish key priorities for action.

The DCSF publication "Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance" (2010) ("the Guidance") remains the most recent official statement in this field: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010. The Guidance sets out the responsibilities of SACREs and LAs as well as those of other stakeholders in RE. Key summaries from the Guidance are included in the Annex to this document.

Rationale

The SACRE self-evaluation toolkit focuses on the following five aspects of the work of SACREs:

1. Management of the SACRE and building the partnership between the SACRE, the LA and other key stakeholders
2. Promoting improvement in the standards, the quality of teaching, and provision in RE
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
4. Promoting improvement in the provision and quality of collective worship
5. Contributing to cohesion across the community and the promotion of social and racial harmony.

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Each aspect forms a section within the toolkit and each section is divided into focus questions to help SACREs explore their provision. Descriptors for 'Requires improvement/struggling', 'Developing', 'Established' and 'Advanced' practice will enable SACREs to evaluate their standing within each focus question.

In the final column, SACREs may wish to identify any issues and action points within that focus, as appropriate. Key priorities can then be identified at the end of each section to inform the development of an action plan.

The intention is that, over time, exemplars of good practice from different SACREs will be made available on an open website, together with annual reports, as a way of adding further support to SACREs and LAs. Clearly the capacity of any SACRE to make the most of this will be dependent on the extent of the support it receives from, and the quality of its relationship with the LA.

SACREs are invited to use the format of this evaluation in conjunction with their annual report.

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Section 1: Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?

(Taken from 2010 DfE Checklist for an effective partnership between an LA and its SACRE/ASC)

- Does the LA and the SACRE/ASC carry out their statutory duties?
- Is SACRE/ASC properly resourced and well supported by subject specialist advice and training?
- Do members of the SACRE/ASC have a shared vision and understanding of their aims and purpose, seeking to sustain their positive work in the light of changing needs and priorities?
- Are SACRE/ASC meetings purposeful and focused on the major priorities of improving the quality of RE (and CW) in schools?
- Is the SACRE/ASC well informed about the quality of RE in schools and about wider LA and national priorities and developments affecting the subject?
- Has the LA adopted a high-quality agreed syllabus that provides a good grounding for planning, teaching and learning in RE and enables the schools to deliver RE as part of a coherent curriculum?
- Is there an effective process of reviewing, revising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the locally agreed syllabus?
- How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LA enable it to help teachers and schools raise standards in RE and the quality of RE teaching?
- How far does the SACRE contribute effectively to the community cohesion agenda by supporting inclusion in schools and improving engagement within the community?

LAs must adequately fund SACREs to enable them to carry out their statutory duties and to support high quality RE and collective worship in schools.[1] We consider 2% of the CSSB to be a reasonable spend to enable this. LAs must set aside sufficient money to ensure the Agreed Syllabus review can be effective every five years.
We reiterate that as a minimum expectation, LAs must provide the following:

- a clerk
- a professional officer who has expertise in RE curriculum design
- a publicly accessible place to meet
- the reasonable expenses of members
- publishing the agreed syllabus and other SACRE materials (including agendas and minutes), most usually on the LA website
- NASACRE subscription and AGM attendance.

1.   The Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb MP, included this statement in response to a parliamentary question from Stephen Timms MP: "If the Department is informed that an individual SACRE or ASC is experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its statutory duties, the Department will contact the local authority to remind them of their duty to support their activities satisfactorily . "

2021HC Deb,28 March 2018, cW https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2018-03-28/134697

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[1] *ibid.,* page 11

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The relationship between a Local Authority and its SACRE is essentially one of partnership and collaboration, with mutual obligations and statutory responsibilities. So that a SACRE can advise and act effectively for the LA in the field of Religious Education and Collective Worship, the LA must ensure not only that there is a local SACRE, but also that it is able to fulfil its functions. The extent to which a SACRE is supported by funding and personnel, will determine how well individuals and committees can work together. Where a SACRE is valued by the LA, it is more likely that members of the SACRE will be able to contribute both to SACRE's work and to the LA's wider strategic objectives.

By bringing together many local stakeholders (faith/belief communities, teachers, local politicians and co-optees such as universities and parents) into a statutory body, SACREs can act positively for LAs as a sounding board on their core business of RE and CW, and also on wider strategic educational objectives such as raising standards, narrowing the gap and promoting community cohesion, as well as community matters related to interfaith collaboration and wellbeing. Core and value-added functions work best when the SACRE is appropriately supported, resourced and managed, and when channels of communication with the LA are good.

The potential for SACREs to contribute more widely is dependent on SACRE members feeling that the meetings are outward looking, focused on pupil needs, purposeful and enjoyable. This can be achieved, for example, by meeting in different locations (schools, places of worship, cultural centres and council meeting rooms) and by ensuring that all members feel they are equal partners whose views and experiences are sought, listened to and valued.

Alongside this, SACRE has the power to develop structural relationships with academies, etc. by exploring ways in which an academy "presence" can be incorporated into SACRE, e.g., by co-options (non-voting), through additional places in Group C (teacher organisations), or by creating a non-voting notional "Group E" (as had been envisaged in the Grant Maintained era). Similar considerations apply to the ASC. Although the legal framework would currently not allow voting rights to any distinct academy representation, SACREs and ASCs would surely not wish to proceed with decisions which were clearly not acceptable to the academy sector represented in their wider membership.

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Key Area: **1a – Funding: Professional and financial support**		
How well supported and resourced is SACRE, by the LA exercising its statutory responsibilities?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have no financial or management support to help SACRE to meet and operate. Members are unable to communicate with each other. There is no professional support.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have financial and management support to allow it to exist. Representatives of the LA receive papers and/or attend meetings but there is limited subject specialist advice available. There are resources for basic SACRE functions (such as a place to meet and a minute taker) but there is no specific budget for the SACRE and little opportunity for the SACRE to take initiatives requiring funding.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	access to some subject specialist advice and is informed of local and national initiatives. The LA is represented at meetings and can provide a means of communication with the wider LA. The SACRE has a modest budget which enables it to fund some initiatives. Meetings are clerked and the clerk maintains communication with the Chair and other members between meetings as needed.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	be well supported by a subject specialist who provides effective advice and is well informed about the provision and quality of RE in the LA and about national developments. Representatives of the LA attend meetings and the SACRE is also attended by a lead officer from the LA who can provide a strong link between the work of the SACRE and the wider LA. SACRE's plans are linked to other local work and projects. SACRE has a strategic, costed development plan. The SACRE has access to funds to enable it to make decisions about its priorities and ensure these can be properly resourced.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **1b – SACRE meetings**		
How purposeful, inclusive, representative and effective are SACRE meetings?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not hold regular meetings, if they meet at all. Any meeting held is purely to demonstrate that the LA has allowed SACRE to meet.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	hold meetings regularly with: • routine administrative arrangements • appropriate distribution of agendas and papers Business is dealt with in a prompt and orderly way. There is limited opportunity for SACRE members to contribute to the work apart from attending meetings. Business tends to be focused solely on routine statutory requirements.	☐

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Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have good attendance where all four committees are well represented and meetings are quorate. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance ensuring all members have time to consider them carefully, consulting when relevant their representing/sponsoring bodies. There are some opportunities for teachers and representatives of faith and worldview communities to be invited to share their work. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members. Meetings move beyond routine matters to consider wider issues about the quality of RE and CW.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have SACRE members contributing to the development of the agenda and strategic development plan. Meetings will be lively and purposeful with a wide variety of contributions focused on the major priorities for improvement in schools. Teachers and representatives of faith and worldview communities regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience and insights. Meetings are held in a variety of venues, including council venues, local places of worship and schools. Procedures have been put in place so that meaningful contact can be made with and between members outside of SACRE meetings.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **1c – Membership and training**		
To what extent is the membership of SACRE able to fulfil SACRE's purpose?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have no membership list. SACREs constitution is not fit for purpose and needs revision. The Local Authority struggles to fill all places on SACRE, SACRE members have no regular training provided.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a membership that fulfils the basic statutory obligations. Arrangements to fill vacancies are not always pursued effectively. There are limited induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have an active membership that strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious/worldview and professional community. There is regular induction training and processes for new members. There are good opportunities for SACRE members to participate in training activities.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	make good use of co-option to ensure membership of the SACRE is well informed and is highly representative of the diversity of the local community. There is a strong and co-ordinated programme of induction, and training opportunities for SACRE members. There are robust systems in place for succession planning for members and SACRE roles.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

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Key Area: **1d – Improvement/development planning**		
How effective are the priorities and actions identified by SACRE in improving the experience of pupils in schools?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have no development plan to focus future work. There is no knowledge of areas where the priorities of the LA's development / improvement plan potentially could link to the work of the SACRE.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little overt linkage between the priorities of the LA's development / improvement plan and the work of the SACRE. SACRE has limited awareness of national projects or initiatives related to the work of SACRE and so is unable to plan any work or request funding to initiate new work.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have a costed development plan which is reviewed regularly and updated on an annual basis. This provides an effective focus for the SACRE's work. There is some attempt to link the plan to the wider LA priorities. SACRE has awareness of national projects or initiatives related to the work of SACRE and so is able to plan work or request funding to update and review their development plan. The SACRE is regularly represented at national events relevant to its work; for example, NASACRE.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a well-defined development plan with clear objectives and success criteria. Resource implications are clearly defined and funding negotiated with the LA or outside funding streams. There is a clear link between the plan and the wider objectives of the LA and also to national innovations.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **1e - Information and advice**		
How well informed is SACRE in order to be able to advise the LA appropriately?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not be supported to gather information (exam results, data, links to schools) or to link with national initiatives including membership of NASACRE.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	receive limited information about public examination data from the LA. Limited information is provided about wider national and local developments. The SACRE tends to receive information from the LA when the LA wishes to give it rather than ask questions of the LA or receive answers to its request. There is little opportunity to be a critical friend.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be regularly provided with clear information relevant to the quality and provision for RE and CW in local schools and given a context within which any school is working. The SACRE receives the information in a way that enables it to act as a critical friend and question the LA's work.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	receive detailed and well-analysed information about the quality and provision for RE and CW. As a result, SACRE uses this information effectively to give advice to the LA which leads to strategic action and/or	☐

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	partnership work to improve standards. This can include advice related to the review of the AS. The SACRE has a strong partnership with the LA and plays an active role in promoting ideas and initiatives.	
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **1f - Partnerships with key stakeholders** *What partnerships does the SACRE have with key local and national stakeholders, and what quality are these?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	be unaware of local or national agencies. SACRE has no links with sponsoring bodies in their location.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little contact with or awareness of other local agencies (e.g. interfaith groups, dioceses), and rarely hears from pupils/students.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be well informed about other key stakeholders supporting RE and have some meaningful contact with the groups involved. SACRE members are supported at a national level by their sponsoring body. SACRE members attend the annual NASACRE conference and other training opportunities. Hear from pupils/students as part of their work around high-quality RE and CW.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	build its activities effectively on local networks. Links with other bodies, such as local interfaith groups, are positive and able to support raising standards and developing community cohesion. The SACRE has opportunities to hear the views and experience of pupils about RE. Representatives of key support networks and higher education providers are regularly involved with the SACRE.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **1g – Relations with the Academies sector** *How effectively is SACRE encouraging academies etc to see themselves also as stakeholders in their local area, specifically by devising ways in which an academies presence is incorporated into SACRE itself?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have no opportunity to network with local academies.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have nothing formal in place. Little encouragement, if any, is extended to academies to relate to the SACRE's proceedings, and there are no channels through which academies can contribute.	☐

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Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have made attempts to include academies on SACRE, but these have been hampered by e.g. lack of confidence or vision on the part of SACRE, or by confusion over what is legally valid and possible, or what is possible between academies in an area.	☐
Advanced SACRE with advanced practice would:	have established the place of academies on SACRE. SACRE has considered systematically the legal and structural options, and established a permanent and sustainable academy presence on SACRE. A high proportion of academies in the area regard themselves as stakeholders and partner with SACRE.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

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Section 2. Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools?
How effective are the strategies to improve standards and the quality of provision?

In principle, every pupil is entitled to RE of the highest quality. At its best, RE will be one of the most popular, relevant, stimulating and truly educative elements in the curriculum. This potential gives SACREs both a benchmark for aspiration and a spur for action.

A core duty of a SACRE is to gain an overview of the quality of the RE provision in local authority maintained schools and to develop effective strategies to promote the highest standards. SACREs may also request information from academies, academy chains and free schools where they educate pupils from the LA which appointed SACRE. In the light of the current inspection culture of partnership and self-evaluation, SACREs will need to adopt an astute and sensitive approach to achieve this overview.

Information to assist SACRE in carrying out its role is likely to come from a range of sources, which may include:

- public examination results
- reports from School Improvement Partners
- analysing questionnaires
- sharing of information from subject self-evaluation forms as appropriate, and in agreement with schools
- feedback from professional development activities
- presentations to SACRE from local teachers

The Guidance offers analysis and advice to support SACREs in reviewing their own effectiveness, their patterns of partnership, and their strategies in relation to enhancing the quality of RE provision in local authority maintained schools. In addition, in the light of the development of academies and other non-LA maintained schools, SACREs also need to take note of and respond appropriately to this new diversified scenario. (In the ensuing pages, the phrase "academies etc" is used as shorthand to refer to all non-LA maintained schools within a particular LA area.

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Key Area: **2a - RE provision across the LA**. *How effectively does the SACRE gain information about RE provision in schools and put in place strategies to support the delivery of pupil entitlement?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have no routes by which SACRE can gain information about RE provision in schools.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little knowledge of which schools are fulfilling pupil entitlement in RE because local processes are insufficient to gather such information (e.g. a website trawl)	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some knowledge of which schools are providing adequate time for effective learning in RE and have a scheme of work that enables them to deliver the AS. SACRE's process for acquiring this information is adequate but lacks coherence. Have limited opportunities to implement strategies in support of pupil entitlement. Ofsted reports are read and any comments on RE noted and brought to SACRE.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	build upon a strong relationship with the LA, whereby the LA shares its information and from this SACRE gains an overview of RE provision within the LA. It works effectively with the LA to support and promote pupil entitlement. Examples of different models for fulfilling pupil entitlement within local schools will be shared with all schools so that schools can have a menu from which to adapt an approach that delivers pupil entitlement whilst meeting the specific needs and priorities of their schools.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **2b - Standards of achievement and public examination entries** *How does SACRE use information about standards and examinations to target support and training for schools?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not be given any data to work from, and has no professional support to investigate this at a local and national level.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited knowledge of standards in primary and secondary schools including examination entries. The SACRE has no clear strategy to address this and the local authority does not adequately invest in professional support for this. Analysis would be limited as would strategies to address issues.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some process in place to find out how well learners are doing in KS 1-3, (e.g. by meeting teachers, pupils and through the LA). SACRE will be provided with adequate information about examination entries and standards in examinations in secondary schools and how these relate to national figures.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have robust processes with the LA whereby SACRE can gain accurate information about standards in schools and examination entries in all secondary schools, with useful analysis that enables it to address issues effectively in partnership with the LA.	☐

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Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?	

Key Area: **2c - Quality of learning and teaching**. *How well does SACRE use knowledge of quality of learning and teaching to target support appropriately?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have any knowledge of quality of learning and teaching to target support from the LA and professional support/adviser.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little knowledge of the quality of learning and teaching in the LA schools and therefore is unable to provide appropriate challenge and support to the schools. The SACRE has no means to offer or recommend support to schools as there is little or no professional support in the LA working with the SACRE.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some information regarding the quality of learning and teaching from a range of sources including contact with teachers and pupils. Limited analysis of this information is undertaken; however, this means that SACRE's attempts to improve learning and teaching have limited effect. Be able to circulate information about national courses and support mechanisms to schools	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a robust relationship with schools and the LA to gather meaningful information about the quality of learning and teaching in RE. This information is analysed to identify trends, areas of strength and areas for development and SACRE draws on expertise in effective schools to support all schools in the LA. Advise the LA on the support that is needed and have access to professional support, linked to schools in need.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **2d Quality of interaction and communication with leadership and management of RE in schools** *To what extent does SACRE have and pass on information that supports high quality RE in schools*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not engage in communication with schools.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little communication with schools. It occasionally contacts schools with resources for RE and attends Headteachers meetings.	☐

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Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have RE key messages communicated regularly into schools. Sends regular updates and information to schools, headteachers and governors. SACRE discussions are used to enhance leadership and management of RE in schools.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a constructive relationship with senior leaders and subject managers in schools to develop the subject.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **2e - Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools**. *To what extent has a SACRE developed a proactive strategy in relation to academies and other non-LA maintained schools in its area?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have the mechanisms and not have the knowledge of making contact.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have haphazard information about the RE situation in local academies etc, and little or no established relationships and liaison with them. No serious attempt has been made to develop an overall strategy.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have made some effort to establish liaison with each academy etc and to keep updated SACRE's information about their RE situation and share their advice to these schools. By and large, academies co-operate with SACRE at this level. SACRE keeps under review the ongoing situation.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a proactive policy of liaison with all academies, etc. and of sustaining a wider professional RE network within the area. While the independence of academies, etc. is genuinely respected by SACRE, many academies value this network and look to SACRE for ongoing advice and leadership in RE.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

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Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

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Section 3: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, monitor the impact and evaluate the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus in raising standards?   How effectively does the Agreed Syllabus Conference in partnership with SACRE make decisions about the use of national guidance and exemplar material in a review of the agreed syllabus?

The locally agreed syllabus (AS) is the bedrock on which schools will build robust sequences of effective learning experiences in RE. A good, recent AS will support both the delivery of high quality RE in schools and RE's contribution to the schools' wider curriculum aims and impact.

The major factors to be considered in creating or revising an AS include statutory requirements, non-statutory guidance and exemplar material, developments in the school curriculum generally, and local circumstances. Key advice on producing an AS is given in the Guidance. SACREs and ASCs are recommended to take note of this advice in their work on the AS.

LAs are required to review their AS at least every five years. This cycle of reviewing, revising, re-launching and re-implementing the AS gives SACREs and ASCs opportunities for ongoing development and improvement of their effectiveness in providing schools with an AS that is truly "fit for purpose".

While the ASC holds the legal responsibility for revising the AS, in practice much of the preparatory and supplementary work will be carried by the SACRE within its routine business. Moreover, in most LAs the membership of SACRE and ASC overlap substantially or are identical. This can contribute to greater inclusivity and coherence, but good practice will ensure that it is always clear at any time which body is in place at a meeting, and that it is the ASC which is in session when decisions about the AS are considered.

Academies, etc. are, in principle, free to choose their own RE syllabus. In practice, however, many may well continue to use their local AS. There are some sound reasons for SACRE and the LA to encourage this where possible, and to enable academies, etc. to have some involvement in the process of revising the AS or of devising a new AS. Relationships between SACREs and academies will necessarily be entirely voluntary and not covered by legislation or guidance. SACREs should therefore approach such relationships in a spirit of mutual respect and collegiality. These issues have not been incorporated into the matrix below, but see Section 4.

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Key Area: **3a – The review process**		
How does the SACRE review the success of the existing agreed syllabus?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have any way of contacting schools to carry out a review of the existing syllabus. It will not be supported by the LA or professional support.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the AS, particularly in raising standards, providing little or no opportunity to review the effectiveness of the AS. Not know the views of teachers and have had no systematic evaluation of the strengths/weaknesses of the syllabus. Unclear how to proceed with the five-yearly syllabus review and there is little or no budget allocation from the LA. Have little knowledge of wider recent RE national guidance, research and developments.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have reviewed the opinions of schools and RE teachers in several ways and have a good idea of the strengths/areas of weakness of the current AS. Have devised a costed action plan in partnership with the LA, and been allocated a sufficient budget for the AS review and relaunch.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a clear and systematic process for monitoring the effectiveness of the AS built into its development plan. Reviewing the AS includes full consultation with schools and other key stakeholders, including faith communities and academics. Issues that have arisen have been discussed and addressed in planning for a review. An ASC budget has been planned and allocated in partnership with the LA to include consultation meetings, administrative support and design/distribution costs. There is a strong sense of shared ownership of the prospective AS review, with clear targets for what needs to be achieved.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **3b – The quality of the local Agreed Syllabus**		
How well does the locally Agreed Syllabus promote effective learning & teaching in RE? Is it "fit for purpose"?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have knowledge of other agreed syllabi nationally. Not have access to professional support with a national knowledge of high quality teaching and learning in RE.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	ensure that the AS sets out what is to be learnt at each Key Stage. Progression in RE is stated, but this does not link directly to the learning and there is no clear expectation of quality learning in the AS.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	ensure that the AS provides a clear framework for and expectations of learning in RE. Make clear the value of RE in school, both in terms of learning and of wider issues. Ensure that the AS development has involved teachers and meets their needs.	☐

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Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	ensure that the AS provides a thoroughly professional and inspirational framework for effective learning in RE which is proactively supported and promoted by the LA. Have set out clear expectations of the role of the LA and school leadership in ensuring adequate resources and provision in schools. References latest RE research that is relevant to help pupils make good progress in RE.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **3c – Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus** *How well does SACRE promote the AS and provide training to prepare teachers to use it effectively?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have a launch for the new syllabus. Not have any in-service training for teachers/schools for implementing the new AS. Not have the mechanisms to advertise, promote and share the syllabus with local schools.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	provide for no special launch or other publicity, so that schools are unaware of the significance of the syllabus revisions for learning and teaching in RE. Have little training provision for implementing the revised syllabus. Be prevented from providing any significant additional guidance or extended training on using the AS by a shortage of financial and human resources.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	use other forms of communication (for example the LA website) to promote the launch. Have clear arrangements for training teachers on implementing the syllabus provided by the LA; this training is well supported and managed. Provides additional guidance or extended training on using the AS over its life.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	Involve the wider community and use strong media coverage, to give the AS a high profile as an important development in the work of the LA and local community. The launch event includes high quality presentations from a range of local religious and worldviews groups, schools and professional LA officers/councillors. Provides effective training on implementing the AS, which is supported by all schools, leads to teachers being clear about standards and expectations in the AS and the implications for teaching and learning. Provides clear guidance about ways in which schools might begin the process of reviewing their own provision for RE in the light of the revised syllabus.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **3d – Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)** *To what extent is the membership of ASC able to fulfil its purpose?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have the structures in place to convene an ASC. Not have any admin and advisory support for its work.	☐

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Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a membership that fulfils basic statutory requirements. Limited induction and training opportunities; members are unclear of their roles, or how an AS can be structured. Particular faith or belief groups or teachers from different phases do not attend. Provide clerking, admin and advisory support for only a very limited amount of time or range of work. Routine admin arrangements are in place. Agendas and papers are distributed.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have a membership that strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious/worldview and professional community. Some opportunities for members' training and the purpose and action plan for the work of the ASC are clear. Ḥave all four committees well represented at meetings. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance so all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a membership that is well informed and highly representative of the diversity of the local community. Where particular faith or belief expertise is missing locally there are arrangements to work with consultants to ensure this voice is added into the process. There is a strong, co-ordinated programme of induction and training opportunities for members. Have lively and purposeful meetings with a wide variety of contributions. Members of all 4 groups regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience, expertise and insights. Provide effective admin to support the process	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **3e - Developing the revised agreed syllabus** *How robust are the processes for producing a strong educational Agreed Syllabus?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have an agreed plan linked to finance for developing their AS. Have met the five-year review deadline of revising and publishing a new AS.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have no clear structure for developing a new AS. It does not undertake a thorough revision, tending to add material rather haphazardly to the existing syllabus, leading to lack of coherence in the final outcome. There is little or no consultation during the development of a new AS with teachers, SACRE members and the local religious/worldview communities.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have clear objectives for the revision and involve a wide range of local expertise in its construction. The LA and the ASC in partnership ensure that strong direction is provided to design an AS which is coherent, clear and accessible. Working parties and consultations are reasonably managed and supported.	☐
Advanced A SCRE with advanced practice would:	ensure that high quality advice is sought to review and advise on the revisions as they develop. The ASC in partnership with the LA holds well attended consultation meetings and briefings to ensure teachers are fully involved in, and have a sense of ownership of, the revision process. The AS has a clear framework for progression and challenging learning	☐

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Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?	

Key Area: **3f - Making best use of National Guidance**		
How does the Agreed Syllabus Conference make choices relating to the use of national documentation? (See footnote*)		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not be aware of national documentation in relation to the AS review process and are therefore unable to use this guidance appropriately.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a limited awareness and understanding of national documentation in relation to the AS review process and are unable to use national guidance in a coherent way. Have members not fully understanding the broader curriculum and how this is organised and have no opportunity for training to give them the skills to understand how RE might best play a part in the holistic education of the child.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be aware of national documentation and some of its implications for the AS review process, but does not ensure its use reflects local circumstances. Have ASC members who take note of the broader curriculum picture but do not link the AS to it systematically or appreciate how teachers will be able to make use of it to link to the wider curriculum in schools.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	take full account of national documentation in the construction of the revised AS, while ensuring their work reflects local circumstances. The syllabus is devised so that RE fits appropriately with other curriculum areas at all key stages and guidance about how to make the best links is given to schools.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		
*Documentation includes: the Non-Statutory National Framework in RE; the Programmes of Learning in RE (Primary) and Programmes of Study in RE (Secondary), the new Primary and Secondary Curriculums, and "Religious Education in English schools: "Non-statutory guidance 2010"; CoRE; Big Ideas in RE publication 1 & 2; Ofsted RE literature review		

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Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

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Section 4. Collective Worship

How effectively does the SACRE fulfil its responsibilities for the provision and practice of Collective Worship?

Maintained schools are required to provide a daily act of Collective Worship for every pupil. In community schools not having a religious foundation, the acts of CW should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", without being distinctive of any particular denomination. Part of a SACRE's role is to support the effective provision of CW in community schools and to advise the LA on issues related to provision and quality.   It must also consider applications from headteachers in community schools that the requirement for CW to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character be disapplied for some or all of the pupils in that school. SACRE 'determines' the appropriateness of that application and grants a 'determination' to those schools where the application is judged to be in the best interests of the pupils. All pupils in schools with determinations continue to have an entitlement to daily CW.

CW can be a rich and rewarding element of the curriculum as a whole and SACREs have the opportunity to enhance its quality by offering appropriate guidance and support.

Key Area: **4a – Supporting pupil entitlement** *What strategies are in place to enable the SACRE to support the delivery of pupil entitlement in the LA's schools?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have any knowledge regarding the provision of CW nor have any mechanism in place to gain such knowledge.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	be unaware of the issues facing schools in providing CW as part of the pupil entitlement. Provide little advice or support towards fulfilling pupil entitlement to CW.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	understand local issues of delivering pupil entitlement and of the challenges schools face in providing CW. Provide some advice in support of delivering pupil entitlement. Seek to ensure that schools had access to, and advice on, appropriate resources for the delivery of CW.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a balanced and realistic overview of provision and its challenges across the LA. Provide or arrange for systematic support and guidance for schools experiencing difficulty in delivering pupil entitlement. Obtain feedback from schools to evaluate the impact of advice and support. Periodically review its strategies for supporting pupil entitlement.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

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Key Area: **4b – Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship** *How does SACRE seek to influence the quality of collective worship in the LA's schools?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not be able to influence the quality of CW due to lack of support either from the LA or CW/RE professional. Have no knowledge of what good quality CW in schools looks like.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	not be adequately supported by the LA / RE professional to promote quality provision of CW. Have agenda items about CW dominated by the issue of how SACRE obtains data. Have little understanding of the nature and potential of CW and of what effective provision in each school might be.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have occasional agenda items on CW, with some insight into how it is being delivered in the LA's schools. Understand what effective provision is, but SACRE members have little 'hands-on' experience of CW. Promote in-service support for teachers with responsibility for CW. Advise on enhancing quality of provision.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a good overview of quality of provision across the LA, with information from the LA and from presentations by schools. Have first-hand experience of CW in schools. Disseminate good practice in consultation with schools and teachers. Sponsor an ongoing programme of in-service development, and assist schools in evaluating and enhancing the quality of their provision.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **4c – Responding to requests for determinations** *How robust are SACRE's procedures for responding to requests from schools for a determination?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	not have any understanding of what a determination is. Have no documentation for schools to use to make application for a determination.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have had little or no experience of any requests for a determination, and have given at most only minimal attention as to how it might respond to such a request, due to a lack of support provided to SACRE by the LA via a professional officer. Found unprepared and at risk of making an unsound decision or giving erroneous advice by a request for a determination.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be aware that schools have the option of requesting a determination, and that SACRE has a major role in this process. Have provided some training to its members regarding determinations, either directly through working on earlier requests, or through specific elements in developmental sessions. Responds in an adequate but piecemeal fashion, when requested for a determination, without a systematic overview of this area of work.	☐
Advanced	be fully equipped for responding to requests for determinations, with a good understanding of SACRE's responsibilities. Have a well-established and effective framework for responding to requests, with which	☐

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A SACRE with advanced practice would:	members are familiar and comfortable. Meet a request with a judicious and well-informed appraisal of the request by SACRE, leading to a sound decision communicated clearly to the school in a context of ongoing advisory support. Periodically review all existing determinations together with keeping the guidance from the RE professional.	
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

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Date of review (3)

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Section 5: Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the Local Authority and the faith communities, contribute to the promoting of cohesion across the community?

"By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community"[2].

Schools play a major role in helping to shape the future of our society, and the duty laid on each school to promote community cohesion is a significant part of that role. One of the most obvious and effective contributors to the community cohesion agenda is Religious Education. SACREs should take every opportunity to promote the contribution of RE to the community cohesion programmes in local schools. Where properly supported by the LA, SACREs themselves can act as powerful vehicles for promoting community cohesion in schools, in education more widely, and in the local community. SACREs should exemplify good practice in their internal relations and in the ways in which they go about their business. Advice on the contribution of SACREs and RE to community cohesion is given in the Guidance.

Key Area: **5a – SACRE's membership** *How representative is SACRE's membership of the local community?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	rarely meet and its membership will include many vacancies. The LA needs to review its membership and constitution in partnership with the SACRE and fulfil its obligations to convene an appropriately diverse SACRE	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a membership that is not necessarily strongly representative of the religious diversity of the local community. Membership needs to be reviewed.	☐
Established	have membership that broadly reflects the religious diversity of the local community. This is regularly reviewed by the SACRE in partnership with the LA particularly where there is a high mobility of communities.	☐

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[2] Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, speaking in Parliament on 2 November 2006. Based on the Government and the Local Government Association's definition first published in Guidance on Community Cohesion, LGA, 2002 and resulting from the Cantle Report in 2001.

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A SACRE with established practice would:		
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have strong representation from all major local religious communities including different groups within the same religious tradition (e.g. different Muslim or Christian communities). Endeavours to include representation from small local faith communities and/or have links with national bodies that can broker advice from those communities elsewhere in the UK.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **5b SACRE's understanding of the local area**		
How much do SACRE members know and understand the local community in its religious, cultural and ethnic dimensions?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	meet rarely and this aspect of membership would not be an agenda item when they meet.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited knowledge about the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in the local area.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be provided with a detailed analysis of the religious and cultural diversity within the LA and therefore be well aware of different groups representing the diversity within the local area. Know about and have a relationship with local interfaith groups and the work that they do in the locality.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have detailed knowledge of the nature of the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in the local area. Take active steps to inform itself further about the distinctive needs and opportunities created by this diversity. SACRE would have good liaison and seek to develop initiatives with local interfaith groups. Be aware of the impact of this local context on schools and on the provision for RE and CW in those schools.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **5c – SACRE's engagement with the community cohesion agenda.**		
How much does SACRE understand the contribution which RE/CW can make to a schools' provision for community cohesion?		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	have little or no grasp of what community cohesion means and little understanding of the contribution which RE can make to the community cohesion agenda. Have no opportunity to promote RE's contribution to cohesion.	☐

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Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a basic grasp of what community cohesion means and therefore a limited understanding of the contribution which RE can make to the community cohesion agenda. Have little opportunity to promote RE's contribution to cohesion.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have an understanding of what community cohesion means and the duty on schools to promote this. Understand and have a clear commitment to the part RE can play in promoting community cohesion and seek to promote this throughout its work.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	understand what community cohesion means and be clear about the duty on schools and the LA to promote this. SACRE members appreciate their key role in promoting RE's contribution to the community cohesion offer of its schools. SACRE would ensure this is explicit in the local AS and related guidance.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: **5d – SACRE's role within wider LA initiatives on community cohesion** *How well is SACRE linked to or consulted about LA initiatives promoting community cohesion?*		
Requires improvement/struggling A SACRE in this position would:	be given no information about, or contact with, wider LA initiatives linked to the promotion of community cohesion.	☐
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	be given little information about, or contact with, wider LA initiatives linked to the promotion of community cohesion.	☐
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be aware of some LA initiatives promoting community cohesion and have opportunity to discuss and contribute to this work.	☐
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	be a key partner and stakeholder in the work of the local authority in this area. Aware of local interfaith groups and in regular communication with them to ensure opportunities to support high quality RE/CW in schools.	☐
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

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Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- For the SACRE

- For the LA

Date of review (1)

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ANNEX

The responsibilities of a Local Authority

The detailed rights and responsibilities of local authorities can be seen in full in *RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*.
This can be found at http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/re/guidance/

In brief, local authorities are legally required to:
- establish a SACRE and appoint representatives to each of the four committees
- establish an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC)
- institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years
- appoint members of the committees represented on the ASC
- ensure that membership of Group/Committee A on the SACRE and ASC is broadly representative of the local area
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that SACRE and ASC membership is representative

The responsibilities of a SACRE

The detailed rights and responsibilities of SACREs can be seen in full in *RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*.
This can be found at http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/re/guidance/

In brief, SACREs are legally required to:
- advise the local authority on RE and collective worship
- publish an annual report on their work
- send the annual report to QCDA (or its successor body)
- meet in public, unless confidential information is to be disclosed
- make their minutes available to the local authority and make provision for public access to their agenda and reports

The Guidance also indicates that SACREs should, as a matter of good practice:
- Monitor the provision for both RE and Collective Worship
- Provide advice and support on RE and Collective Worship to schools
- In partnership with the local authority, keep the locally agreed syllabus and provision in schools under review
- Offer advice to the local authority

In addition, SACREs may:
- Require their local authority to review the locally agreed syllabus
- Decide to advise their local authority
- Co-opt members who are not members of any of the four groups.

The Guidance also makes it clear that SACREs can and should make a strong contribution to the promotion of community cohesion in schools and in the local community through their promotion of good quality RE and through their operation as a SACRE.

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Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom: developing a Worldviews Approach

A Draft Resource
for curriculum developers

Stephen Pett

Religious Education Council of England and Wales

TEMPLETON WORLD CHARITY FOUNDATION

Westhill make things happen

RE Today Services

Contents

Acronyms:

ASC: Agreed Syllabus Conference

CoRE: Commission on RE

CoRE report: *Religion and Worldviews: The way forward,* report published 2018, following the two-year independent commission set up by the REC

DfE: Department for Education

MAT: Multi-academy trust

NSE: National Statement of Entitlement (see p. 20)

OFSTED: Office for Standards in Education

REC: Religious Education Council of England and Wales

SACRE: Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Foreword

This draft Handbook is the outcome of the first phase of a three-year project on behalf of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC). The aim of the project is to take the idea of a Religion and Worldviews approach, as advocated by the Commission on Religious Education's final report, and see what it looks like when applied to a syllabus or curriculum.

The Handbook is provisional in its current form. Its primary purpose is to inform three framework-writing teams over the next 18-24 months. These teams have been appointed by the REC, after an open tendering process. They comprise team leaders, teachers and others involved in education (such as members of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education [SACREs], curriculum leaders in multi-academy trusts [MATs], academics, teacher trainers and advisers). Their task is to apply the draft Handbook to the creation of a framework for RE for their own specific contexts. Using the new religion and worldviews approach, as described in the draft Handbook, the frameworks will set out, for example, choices as to content selection at each key stage to enable teachers to apply a religion and worldviews approach in their own schools.

This is a project, not a consultation. The independent Commission on RE 2016-2018 (CoRE), set up by the REC, was an extensive consultation and this project is a further step in the direction set out by the Commission's final report, *Religion and Worldviews: the way forward*. The draft Handbook will be used by the framework-development teams, but it will also be tested by that process. A final amended Handbook will be published in spring/summer 2024, along with three exemplar frameworks that illustrate how the Handbook can be interpreted and applied in different ways to suit different contexts. These frameworks will be accompanied by sample units of work and pupil responses. The project materials will be freely available to support and inform SACREs, MATs, dioceses and other parties interested in developing syllabuses and curricula for their contexts.

We are mindful of the interest in the RE community around this next step towards an education in religion and worldviews, and so are making this draft Handbook publicly available. We hope to generate interest and to learn from how it is received, so as to support the development of the best version by the end of the project. If you would like to comment, please email info@religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk.

Stephen Pett   Trevor Cooling
Project Leader   Project Director

May 2022
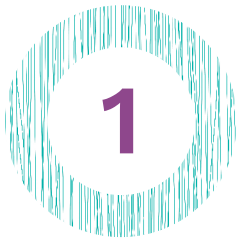
1 The purposes of this Handbook

In 2018, the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) published the report from the independent Commission on RE (CoRE), the result of a two-year consultation, which sets out a vision for a change in RE to a 'religion and worldviews' approach[1]. This report has stimulated wide interest, dialogue and debate among diverse members of the RE community and beyond[2]. Subsequently, the REC published an academic literature review into the term 'worldviews' in relation to religion in academic disciplines[3]. There followed a series of conversations between academics from different disciplinary areas, responding to the CoRE report and the literature review. These conversations were recorded, interpreted and written up as a set of discussion papers[4].

The REC is currently running a three-year project, supported by the Templeton World Charity Foundation, to develop guidance for syllabus writers and curriculum developers for implementing a religion and worldviews approach. This draft Handbook is the outcome of the first phase of this project.

- It takes forward the vision of the CoRE report, building on the rich traditions of religious education in Britain.
- It provides an updated vision of the subject which approaches it from the perspective of worldviews, to help pupils make sense of the diverse, complex world around them, in relation to religion, religions and non-religion.
- It reimagines the subject, so that it is more inclusive of and relevant to children and young people, whose worldviews may range across the secular and/or religious.
- It examines the claim from the CoRE report that 'everyone has a worldview', recognising that 'no one stands nowhere' and that everyone encounters the world from their perspective, with their assumptions, experiences and context.
- It accommodates the idea that 'worldviews' include religious and non-religious, organised and individual worldviews, plural, diverse and changing.
- Looking through this worldview 'lens' shifts the focus in the classroom from the experience of a minority of people who identify as religious in the UK to the study of a universal human experience as it encounters religion, belief and practice.

This approach means enabling all pupils to become open-minded, critical participants of public discourse, who make academically informed judgements about important matters of religion, belief and practice which shape the global landscape. It is a subject for all pupils, whatever their own family background and personal worldviews.

This reshaped subject seeks to reflect the current and future needs of pupils, such as in relation to, for example, diverse identities in a multi-religious and multi-secular world, and matters of justice (e.g. climate, race, equality). It supports the application of current developments in religious education, such as ways of knowing, multidisciplinary approaches and hermeneutics.

The purposes of this Handbook are to:

- **present a 'national statement of entitlement' (NSE):**

  At the heart of this draft Handbook is the NSE (see pp. 18–19), which sets out a clear description of an education in religion and worldviews to which all pupils have an entitlement. This NSE can be used to inspire and guide curriculum development, setting out expectations and a benchmark against which schools' quality of provision can be evaluated.

- **equip syllabus and curriculum developers:**

  This draft Handbook gives a rationale for the religion and worldviews approach, including the NSE, and then provides guidance on how to apply these to the development of a syllabus/curriculum. It recognises that there are flexible ways of doing this that will reflect the context and setting of local authorities, dioceses, multi academy trusts [MATs] and schools.

- **set out the nature of a religion and worldviews approach:**

  This draft Handbook builds on a great deal of development in the subject of RE over decades, and sets out the rationale for its ongoing development, reshaping and reorientating the subject for future decades. An education in religion and worldviews examines the field of study through a worldviews approach, supporting pupils to reflect on and develop their own worldviews, and to make sense of the diverse, complex world around them in relation to religion. It promotes understanding of the diverse and plural nature of worldviews and equips pupils to develop the skills to explore ways of knowing about religion, religions, and religious and non-religious worldviews.

[NOTE: The draft Handbook is primarily written for the framework development teams (see section 1.2 below); this section outlines the purpose of the final Handbook.]

1.1. Who is this Handbook for?

This Handbook is primarily written to assist those of us who are developing syllabuses and curricula for RE with a religion and worldviews approach, including local authorities, SACREs, agreed syllabus conferences and curriculum leaders in MATs.

It is intended to be relevant to schools in England, including community maintained, academies and free schools with, and without, religious character.

It is intended to be of use to a wide range of people involved in the subject, including those of us with responsibility for the subject in schools both with and without a religious character, school leaders and governors, subject leads and teachers in primary and secondary phases, trainee and early career teachers, their tutors and mentors, inspectors and advisers, examination boards and resource developers.

It is intended to be helpful to people with different worldviews, ranging across religious and non-religious, to understand how an education in religion and worldviews approaches and handles organised and individual worldviews.

It is hoped that it will be of interest to parents, pupils and the wider public, to inform them of the content and purposes of the subject.

1.2 Next steps from this draft Handbook

Phase 2 of the REC project will create exemplar frameworks in the form of case studies to model diverse ways of fulfilling the NSE and of approaching an education in religion and worldviews. Phase 3 will create exemplar units of work and some pupil responses to illustrate these models and how they fulfil the NSE.

The REC has appointed (May 2022) three teams of school-linked groups to take the vision and practical guidance of the NSE and the draft Handbook and apply them to their own contexts.

This will illustrate how the NSE, and its associated philosophy, translates into a syllabus and curriculum for schools in a specific context. The aim is to equip and inspire other syllabus writers and curriculum developers to use the NSE to develop their own documents for use in their own schools. The published frameworks will outline the process taken, including challenges and how these were addressed, as well as the exemplar framework for each context. Lessons learned in this process will be used by the project leader to adjust and amend the draft Handbook prior to publication of the final Handbook at the end of the project in spring/summer 2024.

1.3 Key terms

The draft Handbook will refer to **religious education (RE)** as the term that is currently in use in legislation and guidance. The Commission on RE recommendation that the subject be officially renamed "Religion and Worldviews" would require legislation, whereas this draft Handbook is encouraging a shift in approach that can happen regardless of legislative change. However, this does not prevent schools from renaming the subject as suits their context or needs.

The phrase **'religion and worldviews'** is not intended to imply a list ('examples of religions plus non-religious worldviews such as humanism, secularism, etc.'), not least because the term worldviews encompasses religious and other perspectives on life. Instead, it denotes a relationship between religion and worldviews, to be explored in the subject of RE. The **worldviews approach** presented in this draft Handbook is sometimes described as **'an education in religion and worldviews'** as a way of delineating the scope of the subject. This includes matters and questions raised by the study of religion, acknowledges that the nature of worldviews is itself explored and interrogated within the subject, and that the subject entails the study of worldviews in relation to religion and non-religion.

The draft Handbook uses the term **'worldviews'** to include **religious and non-religious worldviews,** recognising that these terms are themselves not binary: there is a fluidity and flexibility between religion and non-religion, and an individual or personal worldview may well incorporate aspects of both. 'Non-religion' is itself complex and stands in relation to religion and to secularity in different ways[5].

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2 Outline and rationale for this development

2.1 Why do we need a change?

The move towards an education in religion and worldviews is not just a change of name. It encompasses an adjustment in the way that content is selected and how it is approached within the subject.

There are many elements in play here, including:

Scholarly understandings

Academic study of religion is increasingly recognising the limitation of the 'world religions paradigm' – the idea that there are six major world religions, and lots of minor ones, and that they have a set of core beliefs and practices that we can neatly package up and present in lessons. Scholars point out the contested nature of the term 'religion'. They note the contrast between teachings of traditions and how these are experienced and lived out in people's lives.

They point to the complex reality of lived religion, which is less neat and tidy, more fluid, and always tied to particular contexts. It is time for pupils to have a more realistic encounter with the world of religion and belief.

Demographics: the rise of non-religiousness

In terms of Census data, in 2001, 15.5% of England and Wales said they had no religion. By 2011 this increased to 25%. British Social Attitudes Surveys from 2016 on have regularly indicated that this is just over 50%. The 2014 and 2016 European Social Surveys show that among young people in the UK (aged 16-29) 70% say they have no religion, and this will be the experience of many teachers of pupils under age sixteen. Recognising the wider global picture of the rise of religion, in contrast with the picture in the UK, Europe and north America, the study of 'non-religion' (by many names) is an increasingly important scholarly field and it needs to be part of the school study of religion.[i]

Content selection

The increased complexity and scope of the field of study, as set out in the above paragraphs, also increase the challenge of content overload. It is simply not possible to study everything, and so decisions have to be made on content selection. Making such decisions on the basis of numerical or cultural dominance is problematic, and a new rationale needs to be provided.

Equality of provision

Across the UK, there are many examples of excellent RE provision and practice, but also evidence of too many schools not meeting their statutory requirement, nor providing all pupils with their entitlement to high quality RE. In part, the shift to a religion and worldviews approach is to reinvigorate the subject, to reinforce its importance as part of children and young people's education in a multi-religious and multi-secular world, and to reinspire those schools currently neglecting the subject.

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[i] The final Handbook will include up to date data, such as the 2021 Census data, when available.

2.2 How does a worldviews approach address these developments?

The idea of **worldviews** offers an approach that revitalises the subject, taking account of scholarly developments and demographic changes. A worldviews approach accommodates the study of the fluidity within and between religious traditions, and the diversity of identities and ways of living and thinking among the non-religious. It also places the development of pupils' perspectives and assumptions within the academic processes of the subject. Their perspectives matter: they affect pupils' engagement and encounter with the content of the subject. Pupils need opportunities to recognise, reflect on and develop their personal worldview, and to understand how their worldview provides a lens through which they encounter those of others.

> The aims of this move towards an education in religion and worldviews, therefore, include the following:
>
> To present a reimagining of RE so that it is more inclusive of, and relevant to, children and young people, whose own worldviews may range across the secular and/or religious, by drawing on relevant scholarly insights.
>
> To provide an academically updated vision of the subject which approaches the study of religion from the perspective of worldviews – incorporating religious and non-religious worldviews, individual and organised, plural and diverse – to help pupils make sense of the diverse, complex world around them, in relation to religion.

3 What do people mean by 'religion'?

On the one hand, the term 'religion' functions quite easily – we generally know what we mean when we talk about religions, or when we say something or someone is religious. On the other hand, the term is contested, with much debate and many theories.

Some definitions:

- focus on beliefs, such as belief in a deity and a supernatural dimension to existence
- focus on the ways of thinking and living of adherents
- look at the function religions play within communities and societies
- allow for a divine origin of religion and the reality of a transcendent Being and realm
- see religion as a human construct, inextricably linked with culture

So we are not able to pin 'religion' down to a single use – nor do we want to. Any account of religion is inevitably tied to a context, and any definition of religion is likewise going to arise from a context or school of thought with its own assumptions. As with many other contested terms (such as democracy, politics, culture) the term 'religion' cannot simply be taken as a neutral description of the way the world is[6].

Part of the argument for seeing 'religion' as the focus of study for our subject is because it draws attention to the contested nature of the subject content. Instead of only studying examples of 'religions', the subject includes studying the nature and implications of the term itself. This brings into focus some of the challenges raised by scholars involved in studying religion, such as:

- the role of the European context – specifically applying a Protestant Christian worldview – in the development and categorisation of the term 'religion', such that it was seen as the norm against which all other 'religions' were classified, setting up a kind of hierarchy

- how this is embedded in the 'world religions paradigm', where religions are seen as separate entities, with a core set of common and comparable characteristics (reflecting the characteristics of Protestant Christianity)
- how the 'world religions paradigm' privileges organised or institutional religions and, in particular, those with established orthodoxies and doctrines, hierarchies and power
- how developments in (post-)secularity increasingly blur the boundaries between religion and non-religion, where 'religious' people may believe, belong or behave in 'non-religious' ways, and 'non-religious' people accommodate 'religious' aspects to their worldviews and ways of living.

The religion and worldviews approach takes account of the significant religious traditions in their changing contexts, balancing organised expressions alongside lived experiences of individuals and communities. A simple illustration might be a shift in language from a study of Islam, Buddhism and Christianity to a study of Muslims, Buddhists and Christians. This still requires rich encounters with traditions, such as their ancient roots and contemporary expressions, their core beliefs and teachings, great works of literary and artistic achievement alongside acts of service, justice, courage and resistance, and the varied impact they make on individuals, societies and the world – including some of their darker legacies. The worldviews approach allows these encounters to be selected to illuminate and illustrate how ideas, beliefs and practices arise, recognising how they are all shaped and reshaped by their contexts – including historical, geographical, social, cultural, political, and theological, for example.

4 What do people mean by 'worldview'?

There are many definitions of 'worldview'. Alongside religion, it is another term that sparks debate. Fundamental to the worldviews approach advocated in this draft Handbook is the idea that everyone has a worldview – or at least, the idea that 'no one stands nowhere' – everyone experiences the world from their own context, experience and perspective.

This does **NOT** mean:

- that everyone has a ready set of coherent responses to a set of ultimate questions about life, the universe and everything. A person's worldview may be unconsidered and even unconscious, drawing on a wide variety of influences, and containing contradictions.
- that only people with a religious worldview have a worldview. As part of a religious community's nurture, religious people may have consciously learnt about and practised their tradition, and may have a considered worldview that reflects this; or they may have unconsciously absorbed ideas and ways of living and being that have shaped and coloured their worldview, so that it is recognisably a religious worldview. Non-religious people – sometimes in transparent and deliberate ways, and sometimes unconsciously – will also have absorbed ideas and ways of living and being from their own context, which may have had secular or religious influences, to different degrees. These will shape the way non-religious people encounter, view, and live in the world.

This draft Handbook's entry-point definition is:

> **'Worldview' describes the way in which a person encounters, interprets, understands and engages with the world.**

- This encompasses a person's beliefs, attitudes, identities, assumptions, intentions, values, hopes and ways of being in the world.
- It will affect, and be affected by, a person's thoughts, emotions, experiences, encounters, desires, commitments, actions and reactions; much of this is individual, but much will be shared too – people are not islands.
- A person's worldview will be influenced by their context, in terms of time, place, language, sex, gender, the communities that surround them, ethnicity, nationality, economics, history, class, access to political power etc. (Some contextual influences will be obvious and recognised; some will not.)
- It will change as a person grows and faces new experiences, encounters new people and situations, and engages in learning new knowledge. (Some changes may be conscious and deliberate, some may not.)
- This means a person's worldview may be visible or invisible to the individual, but it will show up through their words, attitudes and actions.
- A person's worldview affects how they interpret the world around them, as they try to make sense of the world they encounter.
- A person's worldview is about more than religion, even if they are an adherent.
- It might be better to say that a person *inhabits* a worldview rather than *has* one.

4.1 Organised and institutional worldviews

The definition above applies to individuals and their personal worldviews, recognising that people are not isolated beings but connected to communities, culture and context.

The CoRE report also identified 'organised' worldviews as 'shared among particular groups and sometimes embedded in institutions', adopting the term 'institutional' worldviews for the latter.

The way a worldview might be seen as 'organised' or 'institutional' will differ. There are global institutions such as the Roman Catholic Church, and the teachings and practices of which might present a Roman Catholic 'institutional worldview'. The Ismailis might be another example of a global 'institutional worldview', with the central authority of the Imamat manifested in institutional structures across different nations. Other Muslim groups, while still 'organised' might have less tight structures, with variation in practice even within a single local community. The terms organised or institutional worldview describe the way a group or tradition or institution presents itself to the world.

A world religions approach to RE has tended to see the institutions representative of each religion as the focus of study. The religion and worldviews approach explores how communities and individuals interact with these organised or institutional worldviews – how people experience them, and their impact on people's lives. For some:

- the scope and riches of their tradition are not captured in the austerity of the term 'institutional worldview' – instead they experience it as spiritual, dynamic, creative and life-enhancing, for example
- the institution gives a sense of community and identity, without their necessarily subscribing to the institution's beliefs and practices
- an organised or institutional worldview may have negative effects, oppressing and limiting their identity and personhood

This kind of interaction is what is being explored through examination of community or individual worldviews.

4.2 Studying religion and worldviews

This draft Handbook builds on the understanding of worldviews presented in the CoRE report.

The OFSTED 2021 *Religious Education Research Review*[7] outlines three types of knowledge that pupils should make progress in:

- **substantive knowledge:** this includes knowledge about religious and non-religious traditions, e.g. core concepts, truth claims, teachings and practices, behaviour and responses of adherents, wider concepts such as spirituality and secularity, and how worldviews work in human life
- **ways of knowing:** this is where pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion, incorporating methods from academic disciplines
- **personal knowledge:** pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study, and of the lived experience of adherents.

The study of the relationship between religion and worldviews is thus a core element of the **substantive content** of the subject.

This substantive content includes **organised/ institutional/ community/ individual worldviews.** These range from precise credal expressions and central teachings to the complex fluidity of individual worldviews within wider traditions.

The methods used to explore, examine and engage with religion and worldviews form part of 'ways of knowing'.

Note that when this draft Handbook refers to **personal worldviews**, it refers to pupils' personal worldviews. This connects with OFSTED's terminology of 'personal knowledge'. This is a shift from the CoRE report, where personal worldviews referred both to the substantive content of individual worldviews within wider traditions *and* to pupils' worldviews. This adjustment in the draft Handbook is intended to ensure that when studying *individual* worldviews of adherents in relation to organised/institutional worldviews, no assumptions are implied about pupils' personal worldviews.

4.3 Points to note

Religion and worldviews

- A religion and worldviews approach examines the dynamic between these terms.
- Part of that dynamic allows for encounter with, and study of, diverse voices and the experiences of individuals within wider 'organised' worldviews. Thus, the individual worldviews of adherents within such organised worldviews come under the content to be studied.

Organised and individual worldviews

- Some organised worldviews may be expressed through widely approved doctrines and practices, set out by official hierarchies, e.g. Christian creeds and catechisms; the Rehat Maryada in Sikh traditions. Some 'organised' worldviews may be embedded in institutions, e.g. the Roman Catholic Church.
- Individuals within these traditions may have an individual worldview that reflects these widely approved teachings to a greater or lesser extent.
- Some involvement with an 'organised' worldview may take the form of devotion by a group to a particular guru or saint, e.g. A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder of ISKCON.
- Some individual worldviews may weave together influences from diverse streams (e.g. be a practising Anglican, with a preference for Celtic Christianity and interest in Zen Buddhism, married to a pagan, and integrating pagan festivals and sensibilities into their living and being).
- Some may have left their religious upbringing behind but retain at least a trace of a religious worldview (e.g. brought up a Catholic, left it all behind in teens and living as non-religious but still practising fasting during Lent).
- In a country like the UK, people may absorb Christianity *and* a secular, liberal worldview, as part of the air they breathe. Weeks and years are shaped by Christian festivals and observances; Christian ideas underpin law, morality, sanctity of life, the legislature, the monarchy. However, the media, TV, film, popular culture, education – much of this presents a secular perspective as the default worldview.

Religious worldviews

- Note that some religious worldviews incorporate the idea of divine revelation – a divine being has communicated the truth about the way the world is and how people should be. People holding these religious worldviews may believe in this kind of revelation, and part of their way of living and being involves adherence to the divine path, a participation in the deity's on-going purpose, a celebration of the goodness, wisdom and mercy of the deity, and/or fear of divine judgment.
- Other traditions may see the idea of the divine as part of a human construct, a powerful metaphor, a transformative idea that motivates and illuminates ways of living, offering wisdom from the ages, refined through experience, conversation and debate, to guide actions.
- Some people within a religious tradition may seek to live in accordance with a sense of cosmic order and truth, and to ever-deepen their sense of connectedness to all life.
- Some people within a religious tradition may say that their own worldview is beside the point – the truth of divine revelation is true regardless of whether their individual worldview lines up, or their way of living matches the moral ideals of their tradition.
- Many people will vigorously defend their worldview because they believe it to be true. The philosopher Michael Polanyi described this as holding beliefs with "universal intent". Beliefs matter to people because their identity is tied up with them.

4.3 Pupils' personal worldviews

Demographic data suggests that, across Britain, most pupils are not part of organised religious traditions, although that does not rule out echoes of religious influences upon their worldviews.

The worldviews approach brings pupils' personal worldviews into play within the study of religion. From the early days in primary school, developing pupils' personal worldviews includes a growing self-awareness of how your autobiography affects your worldview, and how it shapes your encounters in life.

In RE, a religion and worldviews approach involves helping pupils to develop their personal worldview in conversation with the content and methods of study in the subject. As they move through their education, it helps them to make judgements about the content studied, the methods used, and their own perspectives, in the light of evidence and argument. This draws pupils' attention to ideas of critical scholarly 'positionality', as practised in academic study at undergraduate level and beyond.

Intellectual virtues

The development of pupils' personal worldviews thus involves developing some intellectual virtues, such as

- intellectual curiosity
- some humility about the certainty of their own conclusions
- a willingness to learn from others
- developing the habit of careful listening before responding or making judgements, as they recognise the interplay between their own worldview and the worldview of others in interpreting content
- being prepared to change their mind and adjust their worldview in the light of new encounters, knowledge and experiences.

The development of these intellectual virtues arises (in part) from the modelling of these virtues in the way pupils are taught. The ways that questions are raised and addressed in the classroom, and how the content is handled, will exemplify the kind of openness, humility, curiosity, even-handedness, accuracy, fairness, willingness to be challenged and self-awareness, that the subject wants to promote.

Personal transformation

The subject, as with all school subjects, includes the possibility of personal transformation. The pupil engages with learning about ways of thinking, living and being that are outside of their own experience. The inclusion of pupils' personal worldviews within the educational process draws attention to the possibility that the learning experience might change them, and offers opportunities to reflect on how.

The centrality of pupils' personal worldview development is driven by the entitlement of all children and young people to understand human experience and the way things operate in their own and others' worlds. It is, therefore, part of the identify formation of pupils. They are given opportunities to examine the sources of their own worldviews, and the impact of their contexts on these.

Through the classroom encounters, pupils will develop awareness of how their own worldviews relate with the varied worldviews of others. They will have opportunities to grasp how their worldviews have a bearing on their understanding of, and engagement with, curriculum content. Recognising that this also applies to others is a valuable preparation for life in a world of diverse viewpoints.

While personal worldviews extend beyond matters of religious belief, study of religion (and non-religion) offers opportunities to examine important existential and ethical questions. These include questions around meaning, purpose and truth, identity, diversity, morality, values and commitments, and the accumulated knowledge and understanding arising from centuries of religions and philosophies addressing such questions.

5 The value of worldviews in terms of content and approach

5.1 What is a worldviews approach?

A worldviews approach focuses on how religion(s) and worldviews (religious and non-religious) work, and how we can best go about studying them. It includes all pupils in the enterprise of interrogating the sources of their own developing worldviews and how they may benefit from exploring and engaging critically with the rich and complex heritage of humanity.

The worldviews approach encourages an engagement with some of the scholarly concerns outlined in sections 3 (p. 7) and 4 (p. 8). It self-consciously explores the relationship between the teachings and doctrines of organised worldviews and the beliefs, practice and experience of adherents – what is sometimes called 'lived religion'.

Of course, any presentation of religion is going to be a limited representation – particularly within the constraints of the classroom time for the subject. But given the impossibility of teaching the totality of six major 'world religions' in their diversity, alongside the many other living traditions and the complex web of non-religious worldviews, this approach offers a way of inducting pupils into the study of religion and worldviews, to empower them to be able to handle questions around religion(s), and religious and non-religious worldviews for themselves, within and then beyond the confines of the classroom.

This approach explores the real religious landscape[8]. It is an educational project – an attempt not to stand outside the worldviews of others but to understand what being inside is all about, recognising that we do this from a particular perspective or worldview ourselves.

This approach draws on hermeneutical understandings, recognising that the encounter between every individual pupil and the subject content takes place in a context, and that is affected by the worldview of the learner. The approach therefore draws on pupils' interpretive skills and awareness of how their worldview affects these encounters. At the heart of a worldviews approach is the notion that every human being is an interpreter, and that this subject is teaching them to be 'wise interpreters' of life. Zen or humanist or Salafist or secularist approaches to being wise interpreters would be very different. As pupils grow in self-awareness of their assumptions, they are better able to identify, interpret and understand the worldviews of others.

5.2 Advantages of a worldviews approach

- It takes account of the contemporary place of religion, belief, and practice locally, nationally and globally.
- It draws on developments in, for example, academic theology, philosophy, history, education, and the study of religion.
- It addresses the increase in non-religious worldviews in the secular west, within the wider context of the global growth of religion.
- It takes account of sociological categories, such as the spiritual but not religious, and people 'believing without belonging' or 'believing in belonging', and of the questioning of the category of 'religion' across many disciplines.
- It allows for sensitivity around diversity, identity, and legacies of power, for example, while equipping pupils to be able to take part in dialogue with better understanding of the worldviews of others.
- It is inclusive, in that it is based on the idea that everyone has or inhabits a worldview – so learning about any organised or individual worldview offers scope for learning about one's own.
- It equips pupils for reflecting on, and making choices about, the development of their personal worldview in the context of a complex world.

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5.3 What a worldviews approach is *not* doing

There are some potential misunderstandings to address here.

A worldviews approach does not simply take the world religions paradigm and extend it by adding worldviews – whether smaller religious traditions such as the Bahá'í Faith or Paganism, or indigenous traditions, or a range of non-religious worldviews treated as 'religions'. In this draft Handbook, the approach is centred around the NSE. Pupils are entitled to understand worldviews as set out in that Statement, and the selection of content needs to enable that. The NSE attempts to reduce the challenge of content overload by clearly specifying the scope of the subject.

The approach is not reducing the place of religion within the subject. The dynamic relationship between religion and worldviews cannot be explored without examining religion and religions.

The approach is not arguing that, since everyone has a worldview, this leads to relativism, with all worldviews having equal value. Instead, the substantive content includes the relationship between organised and individual worldviews. This allows for a focus on the beliefs, teachings and practices of religions as well as individual responses within these broader traditions. The personal worldview of the pupil is always the perspective from which the learning is done; how this affects learning is brought into focus within the classroom.

Incorporating pupils' personal worldviews is not solely about pupils expressing opinions (of course they will have opinions, and these can become informed opinions). The subject aims to support pupils in making informed judgements based on reliable evidence and sound argument, in relation to religion and worldviews.

The statement that 'everyone has a worldview' does not mean that everyone identifies with an organised worldview. Some may, of course – and globally, statistics suggest that most people have some sort of identification with an organised worldview of one or more kinds. However, someone's rejection of, or indifference towards, such organised worldviews is part of their own worldview.

There are ways of understanding worldviews as totalising systems of thought, where to have a worldview is to be able to offer coherent answers to a set of questions that indicate a view on existence, knowledge, meaning, purpose, ethics and behaviour. Some scholars present organised worldviews as being able to offer such a set of answers to 'worldview-framing' questions, and these are legitimate areas of study[9]. The CoRE report and this draft Handbook have a wider understanding of worldviews, such that it indicates the way in which everyone experiences the world from within their own context and experience. As mentioned before, religion may or may not be influential in this way of experiencing the world.

The reframing of RE as an education in religion and worldviews does not imply that religious and non-religious worldviews are studied in equal measure. 'Worldviews' here does not function as solely representing non-religious worldviews (see Section 1.3 above).

6 Subject knowledge in school and community contexts

The Commission on RE's final report, *Religion and Worldviews: the way forward*, argued that a response was needed to the challenges faced by the subject, and teaching, of RE. For example:

- the challenge of ever-expanding content to reflect the diversity of worldviews in the UK and beyond, including the rise in non-religiousness
- the challenge of inconsistent provision, including widespread non-compliance with statutory requirements for RE
- the lack of a clear benchmark statement of what constitutes high quality provision, resulting in inequalities in the breadth and depth of pupils' study
- the lack of consistency of approach across schools either with, or without, a religious character

The draft Handbook takes the next step to address these challenges. It revises the original NSE from the CoRE report, and offers a set of organising principles to guide selection of content, to provide a basis for developing syllabuses and curricula, and indicates possible approaches for study. These include examining how worldviews work and introduce different methods to encourage pupils' critical resources for the academic study of religions and worldviews. The NSE gives the basis for mapping progression and showing how later work builds on foundations laid by earlier work.

While it seeks to set a standard across all types of schools, the NSE is flexible in its application, allowing for local creativity and local agreed syllabuses, and including guidelines for dioceses and other religious foundation settings, and curricula for MATs.

6.1 School knowledge about religion and worldviews

Teachers and other educationalists[10] acknowledge the difference between the kind of knowledge used and created by academics and professionals (e.g. laboratory researchers at the CERN Large Hadron Collider) and the knowledge transmitted and examined in the classroom (e.g. school physics). For example, 9–11-year-olds learn that gravity is a force. 14–16-year-olds learn that gravity is not a force but a force field. At university, they learn that it is a force field *theory*. This has several implications for an education in religion and worldviews:

- school knowledge about religion and worldviews is not the same as university knowledge; it necessarily involves simplification and selection, which may include teaching some ideas about religion and worldviews that are not wholly accurate but are sufficient at the stage of pupils' learning. That means teaching some ideas about religion and worldviews which are appropriate for the stage of pupils' learning and will become more complex and accurate as they mature in their thinking. For example, primary pupils might learn that karma means 'you reap what you sow'; good actions gain good karma, bad actions earn bad karma. Secondary pupils might learn that understanding of karma differs significantly by tradition, such as the Bhagavad Gita's teaching that, rather than balancing positive and negative karma, only 'desireless actions' that do not result in karma will cut the ties from the wheel of life, death and rebirth (samsara). At university, students might learn that karma may not refer to personal moral consequences, rather to a more generalised ontology of causal connections.
- an additional layer of complexity is that school knowledge about religion and worldviews is not necessarily identical with faith/worldview community knowledge either.

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6.2 The relationships between school subject and worldview communities

While it is essential that the substantive content about religious and non-religious worldviews is accurate and fair, this is not the same as presenting the content as the worldview communities would present it.

The school subject of RE – an education in religion and worldviews – is not nurture into any particular worldview. Rather, it equips pupils for an educational endeavour that enables them to understand worldviews – to understand how people engage with the content of religions, aware of a range of responses from those inside and outside the traditions themselves, including lived realities and scholarly perspectives, and how this study illuminates their own worldviews – and how their own worldviews, in turn, illuminate their studies.

This approach will include understanding some of the mainstream teachings or 'orthodoxies' of different traditions, and their varying impact on people within these traditions; input and information from faith and worldview communities will be essential for this. In addition, the subject will also include examining the nature of religion itself, different ways in which it is understood, the implications of privileged voices within these structures, and the findings of scholars within and outside these traditions. For example, adherents within religious traditions may be unaware of critical scholarly material on their traditions (such as biblical scholars questioning the authorship of letters said in the text to be by the apostle Paul; or proposed analyses of Meccan and Medinan surahs by scholars in Islamic studies).

The selection of such material is an educational decision, which needs to be transparent. The NSE offers a set of criteria upon which to base selection, for a syllabus or curriculum. A school's context gives an additional set of criteria. In the language of OFSTED in England, but applying beyond, schools need to think about the appropriate intent behind their curriculum when selecting content, as fitting their school situation.

Part of the educational purpose of a worldviews approach is for pupils to be able to consider who might legitimately represent mainstream and minority voices of a tradition, and why. Pupils will examine the relationship between a range of voices representing the tradition or community and the individual voice of the adherent. Care will need to be taken with the sensitivities of children from families whose traditions are being studied. Research shows the challenge experienced by pupils who encounter a mismatch between the characterisations of the organised worldview presented at school and their own lived experience[11].

Part of the role of the worldview communities is to be able to support this educational project, such as by providing a range of voices, with an acknowledgement of where the voices sit within the communities.

6.3 Implications

The relationship between worldviews community knowledge, the academic community and the RE community reflects the different constituencies they serve. Bearing this in mind, along with the history, tradition and modern expressions of different worldviews in England, this draft Handbook proposes that the priority of content selection and curriculum construction must be around the NSE.

The draft Handbook recognises the need for a partnership between the school subject communities and the faith/worldview communities, not least for the accurate and fair presentation of variety within traditions. However, communities' aspirations for representation, even advocacy, must be in the service of the curriculum subject, rather than the curriculum serving the communities[12].

6.4 Schools with a religious character

The NSE offers a benchmark for a high-quality education in religion and worldviews. The REC project offers this to those responsible for RE in schools with a religious character, to guide on the teaching of religion and worldviews. It does not prevent such schools from teaching their own worldview traditions in other ways, in addition to this approach.

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7 Selecting content

It is vital that syllabus writers and curriculum developers make wise decisions on the selection of knowledge for a curriculum. Time for RE is limited, and the worldviews approach is intended to avoid a proliferation of content, not least because of the impossibility of comprehensive coverage of the diversity of religious and non-religious traditions. The criteria for deciding content include the following:

1. The NSE must frame the intent behind the content selection. The treatment of that content then contributes to the progression of understanding of the elements in the NSE, and the links between them.

2. The legal requirement operates, which is that RE 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (Education Act 1996 Section 375).

3. Good practice in RE, as well as European and domestic legislation, has established the principle that RE in schools without a religious character should be inclusive of both religious and non-religious worldviews. Schools should ensure that the content and delivery of the RE curriculum are inclusive in this respect (noting that this does not imply equal time between religious and non-religious worldviews).

4. Local context is important, including school character, local community character, pupil knowledge and experience, teacher knowledge and experience. Local context also includes the history of local areas, allowing opportunities for local studies that connect teaching and learning with the geographical and historical background.

5. Pupils need to gain 'collectively enough' or 'cumulatively sufficient' knowledge (OFSTED 2021), not total coverage. In this Handbook, 'collectively enough' needs to relate to the NSE, with its three broad strands of *content, engagement* and *position*.

6. All religious and non-religious worldviews studied must have fair and accurate representation.

7. Schools should be able to give a clear account of their curriculum choices and carefully consider how they will enable the construction of a coherent curriculum for pupils.

7.1 Implications of this model

A wide range of content could be selected to enable pupils to understand religion and worldviews in the way set out in the NSE. The move to a religion and worldviews curriculum gives great flexibility and freedom in this regard.

The selection of content is no longer driven by the 'world religions paradigm'. The world religions are 'social facts', and the Education Act still requires that RE 'shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. However, an education in religion and worldviews includes these traditions as well as developing pupils' awareness of the causes and functions of that paradigm and its effects. This is part of the self-awareness of the approach – it examines the assumptions and perspectives at play.

7.2 Principles for selection

The above criteria offer some guidance to shape and limit the extent of the curriculum. Alongside that we might add 'fewer things in greater depth' as a principle. A current research project at the University of Strathclyde[13] is looking at some principles for 'pedagogical reduction', so that syllabus writers and curriculum developers can choose content wisely, in ways that illuminate and expand pupils' understanding of religion and worldviews. As that project bears fruit in the next two years, this Handbook and framework project will look to draw on its insights for the development of the example frameworks. (See sections 15 and 16 below for more on content selection.)

7.3 Curriculum planning

Content selection for a syllabus or curriculum needs to provide pupils with the foundations for learning about religion and worldviews through their schooling. Current good practice emphasises the critical focus on how early learning prepares for later learning, to create a coherent narrative across the curriculum.

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8 Purposes for RE in a religion and worldviews approach

The key purpose for RE in a religion and worldviews approach is for pupils to understand how worldviews work in human experience, including their own, through the study of religion and belief.

This incorporates several other purposes for the subject, drawn from the rich traditions of RE and the wider purposes of education. This education in religion and worldviews will help pupils to examine:

- diverse understandings of the world presented by worldviews (religious and non-religious)
- relationships between beliefs, teachings, forms of expression and lived experience
- questions of meaning, purpose and truth, how these questions may be posed, addressed and understood differently within disciplines and worldviews
- the concepts, language and ways of knowing that help organise and make sense of religion and worldviews
- how their own worldview shapes their encounters with the world, and how their context, experiences and study can shape their worldview.

The worldviews approach seeks context-appropriate expression of the key purpose statement. It is not trying to impose a one-size fits all model but recognises the need for diversity of implementation to fit the varied contexts of schools.

8.1 Purpose statements

A worldviews approach to RE will:

- introduce pupils to the rich diversity of religion and non-religion, locally and globally, as a key part of understanding how the world works and what it means to be human
- stimulate pupils' curiosity about, and interest in, this diversity of worldviews, both religious and non-religious
- expand upon how worldviews work, and how different worldviews, religious and non-religious, influence individuals, communities and society
- develop pupils' awareness that learning about worldviews involves interpreting the significance and meaning of information they study
- develop pupils' appreciation of the complexity of worldviews, and sensitivity to the problems of religious language and experience
- induct pupils into the processes and methods by which we can study religion, religions and worldviews
- enable pupils, by the end of their studies, to identify positions and presuppositions of different academic disciplines and their implications for understanding
- give pupils opportunities to explore the relationship between religious worldviews and literature, culture and the arts
- include pupils in the enterprise of interrogating the sources of their own developing worldviews and how they may benefit from exploring the rich and complex heritage of humanity
- provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the relationship between their personal worldviews and the content studied, equipping them to develop their own informed responses in the light of their learning.

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9 Revised National Statement of Entitlement

The national statement of entitlement (NSE) indicates that children and young people in schools, whatever their context, are entitled to an education in religion and worldviews that:

- reflects the changing religious and secular diversity of the UK and the world
- is inclusive of, and relevant to, children and young people, whose worldviews may range across the secular and/or religious
- approaches the subject from the perspective of worldviews (incorporating religious and non-religious worldviews, personal and communal, individual and organised, plural and diverse) to help pupils navigate the diverse, complex world around them, in relation to religion and belief

The place for this education in religion and worldviews is the subject currently called Religious Education in legislation in England.
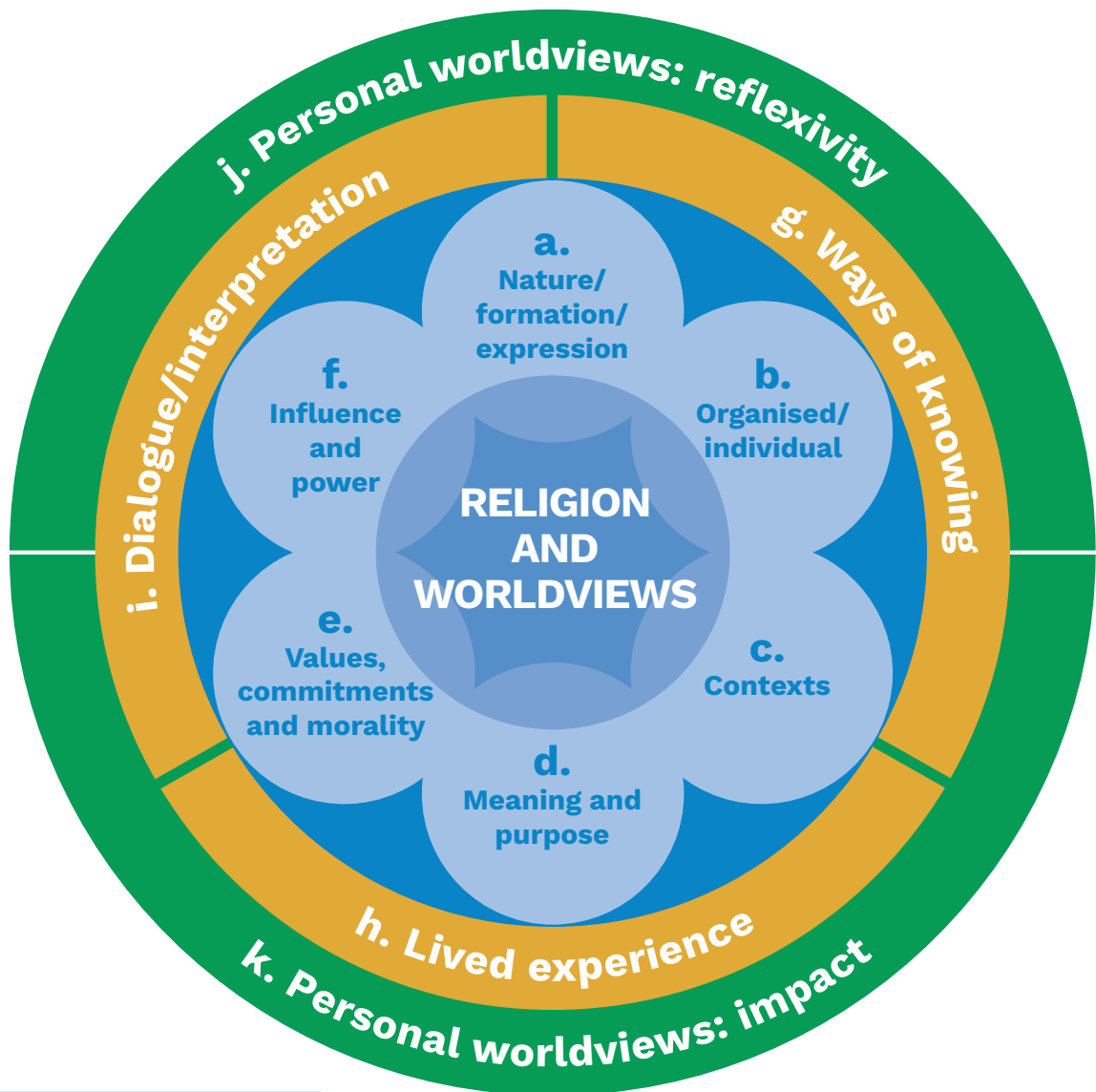
NOTE that wherever the NSE refers to worldviews, it means religious and non-religious worldviews.

Key:
Content
Engagement
Position

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To meet this entitlement, pupils must be taught to understand the nature of worldviews, in relation to religion and belief, including:

CONTENT	
Core statements	*Expanded statements*
a. Nature/formation/expression What is meant by worldview and how people's worldviews are formed and expressed through a complex mix of influences and experiences	The nature and variety of worldviews, and how people's worldviews are formed through a complex mix of influences and experiences, including (for example) rituals, practices, texts, teachings, stories, inspiring individuals, the creative arts, family, tradition, culture, and everyday experiences and actions. How these may also act as ways of expressing and communicating worldviews.
b. Organised/individual How people's individual worldviews relate to wider, organised or institutional worldviews	How people's individual worldviews relate to wider, organised or institutional worldviews (e.g. how individual worldviews may be consciously held or tacit; how individual and organised worldviews are dynamic; how individual worldviews may overlap to a greater or lesser extent with organised worldviews)
c. Contexts How worldviews have contexts, reflecting time and place, are highly diverse, and feature continuity and change.	How worldviews have contexts, reflecting their time and place, shaping and being shaped by these, maintaining continuity and also changing; how they are highly diverse and often develop in interaction with each other. (This applies to organised worldviews as well as to individual worldviews.)
d. Meaning and purpose How worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions raised by human experience	How worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions raised by human experience, such as questions of existence, meaning, purpose, knowledge, truth, identity and diversity. How worldviews may play different roles in providing people with ways of making sense of existence and/or their lives, including space for mystery, ambiguity and paradox.
e. Values, commitments and morality How worldviews may provide guidance on how to live a good life	How worldviews may provide a vision of, and guidance on, how to be a good person and live a good life, and may offer ideas of justice, right and wrong, value, beauty, truth and goodness. How individuals and communities may express their values through their commitments.
f. Influence and power How worldviews influence, and are influenced by, people and societies	How worldviews influence people (e.g. providing a 'grand narrative' or story for understanding the world) and influence the exercise of power in societies (e.g. on social norms for communities, or in relation to conflict or peace-making). How society and people can also influence and shape worldviews.
ENGAGEMENT	
Core statements	*Expanded statements*
g. Ways of knowing The field of study of worldviews is to be explored using diverse ways of knowing.	The field of study of worldviews is to be explored using diverse ways of knowing. Questions and methods should be carefully chosen, recognising that there are different understandings of what knowledge is deemed reliable, valid, credible, truthful etc.
h. Lived experience The field of study of worldviews is to include a focus on the lived experience of people.	The field of study of worldviews is to include a focus on the lived experience of people (e.g. religious, non-religious, embodied, diverse, fluid, material, experiential) in relation to local and global contexts, recognising the complex reality of worldviews as they are held, shared and expressed by people in real life.
i. Dialogue/interpretation The field of study of worldviews is to be shown as a dynamic area of debate.	The field of study of worldviews is to be encountered as a dynamic area of dialogue and debate, and one which engages with practices of interpretation and judgement within and between religious and non-religious communities.
POSITION	
Core statements	*Expanded statements*
j. Personal worldviews: reflexivity Pupils will reflect on and potentially develop their personal worldviews in the light of their study.	Pupils will come to understand their own worldview in greater depth, and how it relates to the worldviews of others, becoming more reflective and reflexive. As they develop this awareness of their positionality in relation to that of others, they will make informed judgements on how (far) this understanding prepares them for life in a diverse world
k. Personal worldviews: impact Pupils will reflect on how their worldviews affect their learning	Pupils will develop their understanding of how their encounters with the subject content of RE are affected and shaped by their worldviews, whether conscious or not, and that this is also true for everyone else. They will reflect on how (far) their learning may have an impact on their worldview.

All pupils are entitled to receive an education in religion and worldviews in every year up to, and including, year 11. Post-16 students, including those in Further Education, should have the opportunity to study religion and worldviews during their post-16 course of study.

Teaching must promote openness, respect for others, objectivity, scholarly accuracy and critical enquiry.

In line with the DfE Teachers' Standards, pupils are therefore entitled to be taught by teachers who:

i.   have a secure knowledge of the relevant curriculum area

ii. foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject

iii. can address misconceptions and misunderstandings and handle controversial issues

iv. demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the study of religion and worldviews
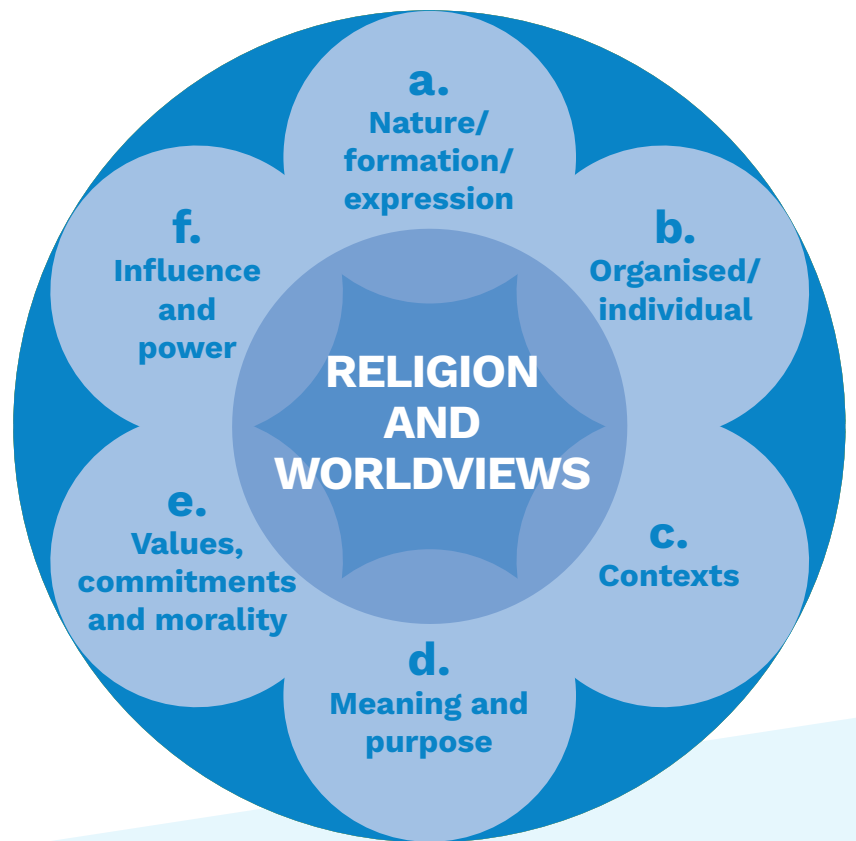
v.   promote the value of scholarship

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 the place of the subject (RE) as a core component of the curriculum.

Schools are required to publish information about their RE curriculum on their website. Schools should include a detailed statement about how they meet the NSE and ensure that every pupil has access to it through the curriculum, lessons and wider experiences they provide.

This national statement of entitlement provides a shared vision for the subject that will be interpreted for, and applied in, a variety of different contexts by syllabus writers and curriculum designers.

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Thinking it through

The NSE presents a realm of religion and worldviews to explore (content strand, NSE a-f).

RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS

a. Nature/ formation/ expression

b. Organised/ individual

c. Contexts

d. Meaning and purpose

e. Values, commitments and morality

f. Influence and power

NOTE that wherever the NSE refers to worldviews, it means religious and non-religious worldviews.

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As with any exploration, you need to prepare; you need to choose the right tools for the job and a suitable route (engagement strand, NSE g–i).

But your exploration is always going to be undertaken from your own perspective – i.e., from within your own worldview (perspective strand, NSE j–k). Awareness of how this affects your exploration, and how your journey affects your own worldview, is an integral part of the exploration, and something to draw attention to throughout the journey – not just something to reflect upon when you get back home.
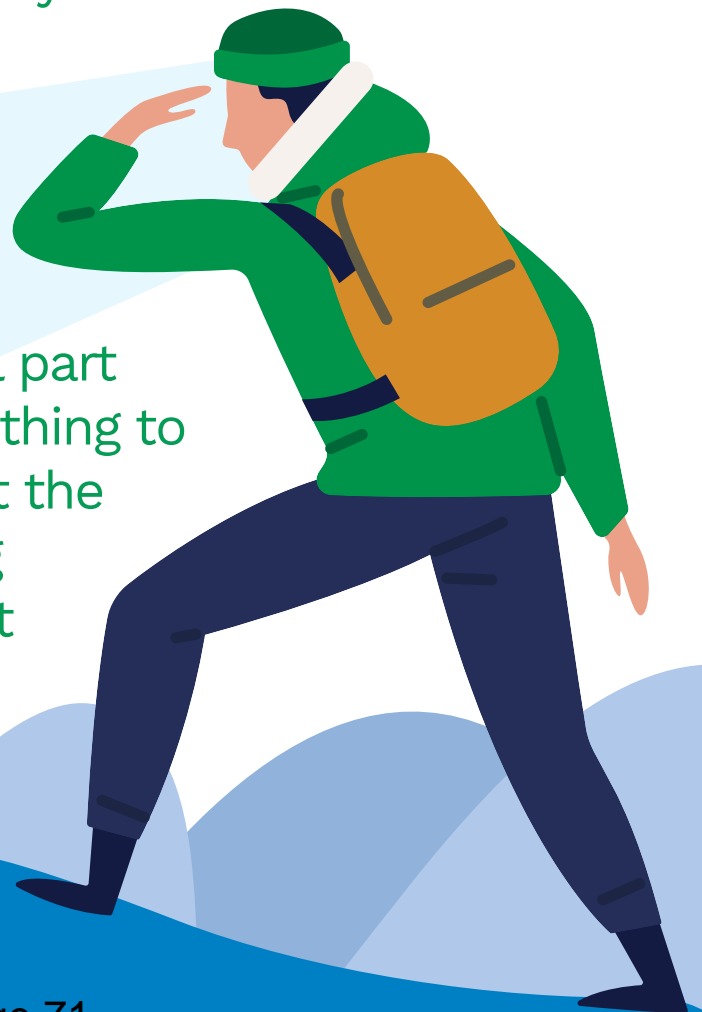
10 Developing pupils' personal worldviews

The development of pupils' personal worldviews is integral to an academic worldviews approach.

It involves:

- enabling pupils to reflect on and articulate their worldviews and the sources of these, so that they can engage in well-informed dialogue in relation to religion and worldviews (while recognising they might also do this in relation to English literature, geography, science or PE, for example)

- drawing pupils' attention to their worldviews and bringing them into well-informed dialogue with the worldviews of others

- developing their reflexivity – their reflection on and self-awareness about the learning process

- using this reflexivity to understand and explain how their personal worldviews both affect their encounter and engagement with the content of religion and worldviews, and also how these encounters may influence their worldviews

- recognising and reflecting on how other people are also influenced by their personal worldviews in how they respond to religion and worldviews

- developing their understanding of the role of interpretation in their own knowledge growth.

Developing pupils' personal worldviews may include the following:

- the ability to apply disciplinary, dialogical and hermeneutical skills

- the acquisition and creation of personal knowledge, arising through the interpretative action of engaging with the content of religion and worldviews

- the development of academic virtues, such as curiosity, intellectual humility, willingness to learn from others, and careful listening before coming to judgement.

Note that the subject will provide experiences, opportunities and encounters with diverse people and content exemplifying something of the richness of worldviews, wisdom, lived religion/nonreligion, artistic expression, human creativity and ingenuity, culture, philosophy, ethics, etc.

The encounter with the rich diversity of human experience gives pupils space and tools for reflecting on their own worldviews, and to recognise how their worldview affects their interpretation of, and engagement with, the world. Pupils can reflect on how this applies to everyone else too, and what that might mean for listening to, and living with, others.

Not all effects and impacts of this on pupils can be known or examined, and for some school contexts (such as those with a religious foundation) syllabus writers may look to identify aspects of moral and spiritual development more closely.

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10.1 How to develop pupils' personal worldviews

It is important to note that the *position* strand of the NSE (statements j-k) indicates that pupils are always encountering the content and processes of the subject from the position of their own worldview. This means that developing personal worldviews is not simply a matter of getting to the end of a unit of work and reflecting on their own ideas (see illustration on p. 21). Instead, pupils should have their attention drawn to their position in relation to their studies at different times within a unit of work. There is not a set requirement for this – and it should not become a tick-boxing exercise. Depending on the content, it might be appropriate to reflect on pupils' worldviews at the beginning, middle and end of a unit, asking pupils whether and/or how their ideas are changing or have changed.

Strategies for this include:
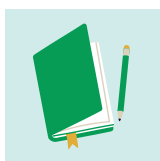
FREE-LISTING [14]

This is an ethnographic method that collects data that shows salience of terms; for example, asking pupils or interviewees to list the first words that come to mind when they think about the term 'religion' or 'non-religion' or 'God' or 'truth'; then gathering the lists and analysing for salience – that is, for rank and frequency. This can indicate personal worldview perspectives before studying religion, non-religion, God, truth etc.
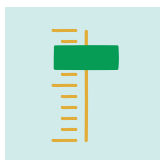
MIXING DESK ANALOGY [15]

This involves drawing up a diagram showing that elements of a person's worldview will have different relevance or importance in different contexts, such as when facing challenges, or at different times in life; see p. 37 for an example of a mixing desk applied to planning.

SNOWFLAKE [16]

This is a diagram that allows pupils to respond to different statements, according to how far they agree or disagree; this visual presentation allows them to see immediately where they agree or disagree with another pupil's responses. Pupils discuss similarities and differences and present their reasons for their responses, applying their learning. The statements can indicate aspects of a pupil's worldview and be revisited at different stages of a unit or units of work to note any changes and continuities.

EXPRESSING IDEAS

Pupils might be asked to respond to stimulus material in different ways, expressing ideas through art, poetry, reflective writing, or even through taking action. These can indicate the nature and impact of pupils' personal worldview, with opportunities to revisit and reflect at different points later in the unit of work or a subsequent one.

One research project on metacognition and worldviews from Exeter University has developed a Worldview Question Framework (see Larkin et al[17]). This works as a place for personal reflection for pupils on their own worldview. Pupils respond to a variety of questions on themes including personal identity, ultimate and existential questions, ontological and epistemological questions (i.e. about the nature of existence and of knowledge). Pupils respond to questions in the light of their learning, and reflect on how their answers might change as they learn more. The research project highlights opportunities for development of this approach.

Page 73
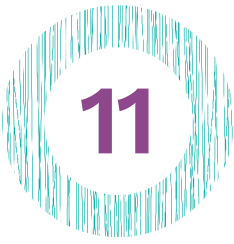
11 Making good progress: models

The NSE is intended to set a direction and a benchmark for an education in religion and worldviews, although there is no single correct way to deliver it. Appendix 1 offers three possible models, based on the NSE, for the framework development teams to consider and test.

There are a number of ways in which people understand what progression means.

- Pupils might make progress in terms of knowing more and remembering more. The precise knowledge pupils understand, handle and recall will depend on the context, and the NSE offers a set of criteria for selection, to be applied by a syllabus and a curriculum. It is not a simple case of setting out a range of generic stages of knowledge, understanding and skills.

- Progress might be shown in terms of how pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills extend, for example, from simple to more complex understanding, from local to global contexts, encountering increasing contestation and controversy, and/or making richer links between elements. The precise content selection will depend upon the syllabus and/or curriculum context.

- There is current interest in the idea of the curriculum itself as the progression model, whereby the curriculum models the progression, and pupils make progress insofar as they can understand and do what the curriculum sets out. Progress is not to a set of external criteria against which the pupils are measured. Instead, the curriculum has been written in such a way as to embody the pupil progress intended, based on the NSE. (Note that, the idea of the curriculum as a progression model could be a 'knowing more and remembering more' model as the curriculum sets out a series of knowledge building blocks. Progression will be achieved when the building blocks are known, recalled and understood.)

The examples in Appendix 1 (see pp. 42–45) offer some possible progression models that might be developed for the different frameworks initially, and syllabuses eventually. What is lacking in these examples is the kind of detail of subject content around which progression needs to be built. The frameworks, with their particular contexts, will identify content in ways that generic examples cannot.

12 Fulfilling the National Statement of Entitlement

12.1 The Law

The Law in England states that RE must be provided for all registered pupils in each school year in maintained schools and academies, including those in Reception classes and sixth forms, unless withdrawn by their parents, or, in the case of students over 18, by themselves[ii].

12.2 National guidance

The NSE sets out an entitlement for all pupils for RE in terms of an education in religion and worldviews.

This NSE aims to establish a shared vision for the subject of RE, revitalised through a worldviews approach. It is intended to guide and assist those of us responsible for developing syllabuses and curricula for RE.

Teaching must promote openness, respect for others, objectivity, scholarly accuracy and critical enquiry.

In line with the DfE Teachers' Standards, pupils are therefore entitled to be taught by teachers who:

i.   have a secure knowledge of the relevant curriculum area

ii.   foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject

iii.   can address misconceptions and misunderstandings and handle controversial issues

iv.   demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the study of religion and worldviews

v.   promote the value of scholarship.

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 the place of the subject (RE) as a core component of a 'broad and balanced curriculum'.

12.3 Good practice

The Handbook recommends that schools publish a detailed statement about how they meet the NSE and ensure that every pupil has access to it through the curriculum, lessons and wider experiences schools provide.

Schools should be clear about the level of subject knowledge and expertise required for teaching this subject and establish the level of subject expertise present among their teachers. All teachers need CPD to develop their thinking and practice. Recognising that primary initial teacher education, for example, routinely gives three hours or less of training on RE, and that much secondary RE is taught by teachers with other specialisms, underlines the imperative need for schools to have a systematic plan to enable teachers to engage in sufficient, expert led CPD. Those who are not sufficiently qualified need urgent support with extending subject and pedagogical knowledge and understanding.

Schools are required to publish information about their RE curriculum on their school website. Schools should include a detailed statement about how they meet the NSE and ensure that every pupil has access to it through the curriculum, lessons and wider experiences they provide.

[ii]Education Act 2002, sections 78 to 79; Education Act 2002, section 1A.

13 Connecting the NSE with current practice

The NSE sets out a worldviews approach to the selection of content and of teaching and learning approaches. There are resonances between this approach and current models of RE. For example:

13.1 OFSTED

In England, the OFSTED religious education research review (2021[18]) sets out three types of knowledge:

- 'substantive' knowledge: knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions
- 'ways of knowing': pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion
- 'personal knowledge': pupils build an awareness of their own presuppositions and values about the religious and non-religious traditions they study

The NSE approach reflects these three dimensions:

- Statements a-f (Content) fit with the category of substantive knowledge
- Statements g-i (Engagement) fit with the category of ways of knowing
- Statements j-k (Position) fits with the category of personal knowledge.

(Note that key to the NSE is how its three elements intertwine. It is not a list but a process of engagement between the pupil and the world via the subject content.)

13.2 Freathy et al, Exeter

The RE-searcher's model (2015) similarly sets out three elements of RE:

- Representation: the object of study; what is to be known about religion(s) and worldview(s)
- Research: learning about and applying methods and interpretations
- Reflect: the learner evaluates their own worldviews, in the context of the study of religion(s) and worldview(s)

As with the OFSTED model above, the NSE statements connect with these elements.

The work at Exeter University has included involvement in the 'Big Ideas' project (see section 13.4 below), as well as expanding on the RE-searchers model as applied to worldviews, big ideas *in* and *about* religion(s) and worldview(s), and metacognition.[19] There are strong resonances with the worldviews approach in this draft Handbook.

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13.3 Big Questions in Classrooms

A research project on multidisciplinary approaches in religious education was undertaken by RE Today Services (2019-2022) as part of the Templeton World Charity Foundation *Big Questions in Classrooms* programme.

In their research project, *Challenging Knowledge in Religious Education*[20], RE Today created a series of resources for teachers to introduce and embed disciplinary approaches in upper primary and secondary school RE. They built on the work of Freathy et al, and base their resources on three elements that connect with the NSE:

- Object of study: the substantive content of religion(s)/worldviews; factual, conceptual and theoretical knowledge
- Methods of study: learning about and applying the intellectual tools and methods used to establish that knowledge
- Subject: the learners recognise their worldviews and how these affect their understanding about religion(s)/worldviews

13.4 Big Ideas

The 'Big Ideas' approach developed by Barbara Wintersgill and colleagues establishes six 'big ideas' as criteria for the selection of content for RE.[21] It was influential in the direction of the CoRE final report, and that document's original Statement of Entitlement (2018). The Big Ideas themselves do not include the element of personal worldviews set out in the CoRE report and this draft Handbook, but while statements a-f in the revised NSE in this document are not the same as the Big Ideas, the influence of the Big Ideas project sits behind the NSE.

14 Applying disciplinary methods

The NSE requires that content should be approached in a variety of ways, including applying different 'ways of knowing' (cf. OFSTED). This allows for the application of methods, for example those from theology, philosophy and from within the academic study of religion. Such disciplinary areas are valuable in helping pupils to understand how the study of religion and worldviews can be undertaken in different ways.

For younger age groups, drawing on a variety of methods is sufficient, noting with pupils that different methods handle content in different ways and should be evaluated appropriately. The use of methods and disciplines helps pupils to learn how, for example:

- you can ask different questions about the same content
- answering these questions will require different kinds of methods
- the findings might be interpreted appropriately in different ways
- evaluation of the findings will require a set of tools appropriate to the methods and disciplines
- all the above are affected by the context of the learner/researcher and their personal worldview.

As pupils make progress through the school, they should be taught how disciplines construct different types of knowledge. This means that there are particular assumptions behind the various disciplines, and different types of question being addressed within them.

To apply a worldviews approach is not a matter simply of selecting a method; good curriculum planning entails being clear about the type of knowledge that is being constructed within any given module or unit. For example, the theistic assumptions of theology and the naturalistic assumptions of sociology and anthropology affect how scholars practise the discipline, as well as the relationship of the knowledge created in these disciplines to the worldviews of the adherents within traditions.

Within a worldviews approach, pupils should, for example:

- be helped to recognise the different authoritative weight of a 'sacred' text for adherents in that tradition, and for those outside the tradition for whom it is not 'sacred', and some implications from this
- explore how and why such texts are interpreted and applied differently, looking at a range of perspectives and contexts
- examine how a worldviews approach questions some categories within 'religion', such as, for example, how far a focus on texts is appropriate in different traditions
- learn to recognise that a single voice from a tradition will not be representative, and consider whether and how a tradition could be represented
- learn that any adherent's perspective will indicate a relationship between 'orthodox' or mainstream teachings and individual practice; for example, a theologian's perspective will differ from a sociologist's and from a layperson's
- consider whose voices are chosen within lessons, why, and what implications there may be
- have opportunities to test whether, for example, survey data is reliable, such as by investigating the questions asked, the sample size and range, who was asking whom and why, and how the data was presented.

See Making good progress II, Appendix 1, p. 44, for suggested ways of making progress in disciplinary knowledge.

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15 How to use the NSE to develop a syllabus

A syllabus construction process requires a philosophy before it requires a checklist process or set of planning steps. The NSE shapes the philosophy, setting out the nature of the engagement between pupils and the content in an education in religion and worldviews.

This section includes some provisional steps for planning, some principles to bear in mind, and a set of questions to be able to answer after planning. Note that the primary purpose of this guidance within the draft Handbook is for the framework development teams. The guidance will be revised in the light of the experience of developing frameworks and published in the final Handbook at the end of the project in 2024.

15.1 Steps for devising your syllabus

1 Whether starting a syllabus from scratch, or building on one already in place, **start with the NSE**.

2 You might want to put it in the centre of a large piece of paper/interactive whiteboard screen.

3 It would be useful to annotate the NSE to show some connections that you see across statements and strands. Note how some statements can be broken down into smaller parts. Note how some might be used to add a dimension to another (e.g. NSE b could add a dimension of comparison between organised and individual worldviews to another statement).

4 Your annotations could include examples of content/concepts from religious and non-religious worldviews that you might use to enable pupils to grasp the statements – to understand how worldviews work.

5 As you annotate, you might use concentric circles around the NSE – indicating your initial thoughts about how to go deeper into a statement/strand, giving a sense of progression across the age range, and allowing pupils to revisit content. It is important to reflect on local contexts: where do these offer rich opportunities for exploring elements of the NSE?

6 Note the gaps – what areas are left out, or are covered in less detail? Might this be because they are not part of your current RE practice, or maybe cover an unfamiliar area of subject knowledge? How might you address those?

7 It would be helpful to break down the content component of your annotated overview into segments (four or five, perhaps). These could be vertical segments – showing a way that understanding of an NSE statement or statements might be developed as pupils move up through the school. This is to ensure that earlier learning prepares for later learning, and later learning builds on earlier learning. It is also to create a structure for the syllabus, to enable breadth and balance.

8 Some segments may work across all age groups, and some may be more suited to older pupils: consider where these segments might be phased in as pupils move through the school.

9 You could devise exemplar questions that could be used for different age groups to unlock the content – or adapt examples from your current syllabus. Note that a worldviews approach will shape questions differently to a world religions approach: don't just assume questions can transfer straight from one to the other.

10 Reflect on the balance of the *engagement* strand statements from the NSE across your questions. How well do your questions indicate the kind of methods (disciplines with older pupils) that are needed to find out suitable answers?

11 It is important to draft a key stage outline or long-term plan, populated by your example questions. Check for clarity in terms of how the plan deepens pupils' engagement with the strands of the NSE, via your chosen segments, balanced across the school year and across age groups.

12 You might like to test your syllabus design by choosing a sample of key questions from different phases and drafting some units of work to see how the questions open up the strands of content, engagement and perspectives. Consider a range of case studies that give pupils an insight into the way worldviews work in different contexts.

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15.2 Principles to bear in mind when developing a syllabus

Using the NSE

- The NSE maps out the knowledge and understanding of how worldviews work in human life that students need to gain if they are both to know how to study this academic subject and to understand the relationship between religion and worldviews.

- The NSE is intended to function "less as a perimeter that restricts, but 'an aperture: a space through which the world can be seen'".[22]

- The NSE provides a structure and criteria for content selection, to avoid content overload.

- The NSE is not a list, nor is it a checklist. The statements relate to each other, and the boundaries are not fixed.

- The worldviews approach is not about studying a list of religious and non-religious worldviews in separate containers. The focus is on the human experience of interacting with the religious and non-religious domain.

- Syllabuses and schools should not simply assume that they are already doing a religion and worldviews approach as set out in this draft Handbook. Many teachers have been examining diversity and applying different disciplines. However, in a religion and worldviews *curriculum*, the focus is on the development and construction of pupils' personal knowledge, through facilitating their interaction with the content as set out in the NSE, while seeking to understand the worldviews of others.

- A syllabus should make judgements about the balance between the different elements of the NSE, according to the context. All units need to include something from each of the three elements of the NSE (content, engagement, position), balanced appropriately.

- The NSE statements are not intended to be covered separately by unit/term. The bigger picture needs to emerge across topics and across school phases, so that the curriculum develops for pupils aged 4–19.

- The different statements can be broken down and units can focus on a part. For example, NSE d could be broken down to ask ontological questions about existence or origins, such as:

   Is there a God or a higher being, force or power? Is this life it, or is there life after death? What exists and what does not exist? What is real and unreal?

   Similarly, a unit could use NSE d and focus on epistemological questions of knowledge and truth, addressing questions such as:

   What is true and false? What is fact and fiction? How do you know? What source(s) do you use to decide? What is knowledge? What is belief? What is opinion? What is faith?

Organising syllabus/curriculum content

- Systematic study of an organised worldview (a religion, for example) can be undertaken, but constructed in such a way as to illustrate and explore the elements of the NSE.

- Organised worldviews can be examined through case studies, which illuminate the elements of the NSE as well as the worldview itself. Such case studies should ideally be microcosms, where focusing on the particular reveals key characteristics or qualities of the wider worldview.[23]

- A syllabus should support teachers to select engaging material that is appropriate to the pupils in their own RE classrooms. This should make good use of creative expressions, lived experience and material religion as well as texts and teachings.

- As they make progress in the subject, it is helpful to build pupils' expertise in a variety of disciplines (NSE g), but it is not necessary to place equal emphasis on each. (See Making good progress model II, Appendix 1, p. 44.)

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Questions and contexts

- Enquiry questions are powerful ways to drive the use of the approach. Setting rich questions is one way of addressing the challenge of content overload – the questions can identify a route through the content, and different kinds of questions indicate the best methods and/or disciplines, and appropriate evaluative processes.

- Contexts can influence choices of questions. These might include how a question will contribute to future learning. This might be preparing pupils to be able to welcome some visitors or to go on some visits; or to give them a nuanced awareness of diversity in a particular worldview in preparation for GCSE, along with the critical skills to handle varied questions.

- The local context can help to shape or give a flavour to a syllabus. For example, the diversity of Tower Hamlets, within the wider diversity of London. Compare that with Norfolk and the East of England, where census data identifies Norwich as the most non-religious city, and history indicates East Anglia as a place of occasional rebellion, with notable challengers of the status quo (see, for example, 1075 and 1549 CE). And Cornwall/Kernow, with its Celtic Christian influence, Cornish language (Kernewek) and a local desire for political independence. This means that context is not just about relative size of different religions/worldviews but about the pulse of the local community.

- Comparison with national and global contexts is also important. The largely secular environment of Britain and Western Europe is not typical in global terms.

- Note how the syllabus writer or curriculum developer's own worldview will influence the choices made. It is important to ensure that you are as aware of your own position as you are expecting your pupils to be! Be reflexive about your choices. You might ask questions such as: Are you developing a curriculum in your own image? Have you overemphasised critical or uncritical perspectives? Are all your questions or case studies from your comfort zone, or are you stretching and challenging your own perspectives? Are there spaces for scholars from within and outside different worldviews? Are your sociologists or theologians or philosophers all white European men? If so, make some changes!

- Note also how a teacher's worldview will influence their choices, including choice of questions, examples and case studies used, resources selected, use of language in the classroom, and responses to pupils. It is important to raise teachers' awareness of this as part of training and implementation of the new syllabus/framework.

15.3 Questions to address when developing a syllabus

When developing a syllabus/framework from the draft Handbook, it may be useful to think through the five key areas of pedagogy, worldviews, context, content and progression. This diagram presents some important questions that should be thought through for each of the areas; there needs to be clarity in the decisions taken. The category boundaries between these areas are fluid, so you may feel that some questions fit into more than one area. These are not set out as steps, as the process is not sequential. The order of decisions may be idiosyncratic, depending on context, but they do need to be made.

PEDAGOGY

- What is the 'story' of your RE curriculum in the syllabus? How do the NSE statements run through it?
- NSE: What is the right balance of focus on *content, engagement* and *position*?
- What unit questions will the syllabus provide, or model? How will the syllabus indicate appropriate tools/methods for addressing these questions?
- How will the syllabus enable pupils to reflect on and develop their own worldviews?
- How will the syllabus support and empower teachers to develop their own curriculum in their schools?

PROGRESSION

- NSE: How are you going to ensure that pupils have opportunities to explore statements a-f (content), and statements g-i (engagement)? Will you introduce some at earlier/later stages? How will you ensure that those introduced at earlier stages are taught progressively?
- Will the use of concepts help pupils to make overall progress and, if so, how will these be included? *For example, if the syllabus has a key concept of 'sacrifice': how and when would this be studied, and which worldview case studies would be used to enable pupils to have 'collectively enough' knowledge? E.g. the concept of 'Torah' might be introduced in KS1 and then revisited at greater depth in KS2.*
- NSE: What will appropriate provision for the position statements (j-k) look like at each age?
- How will later learning build upon earlier to create a coherent narrative across the whole of a pupil's learning journey?

WORLDVIEWS

- How are pupils going to be given opportunities to explore the nature of worldviews as a concept? How will they explore the relationship between religion and worldviews?
- How will you decide the balance of religious and non-religious worldviews, ensuring pupils' understanding of both progresses throughout their learning? (NB this does not imply equal time is spent between religious and non-religious worldviews.) How does this meet the legal requirements for RE?
- How will you balance, for example, systematic and thematic approaches?

Writing a framework/ syllabus

CONTEXT

- What is the local context of your area? When and how will this explicitly affect the RE syllabus?
- How does this compare with other parts of the country, or with wider international and global contexts?
- How practical is it for this syllabus be delivered by all teachers of RE?

CONTENT

- How will you ensure what is 'collectively enough' content? How will you try to focus on 'fewer things in greater depth?' Will you stipulate substantive content that you require schools to include so that pupils have 'collectively enough' knowledge? If so, how will you decide that content?
- How will you ensure you look at a particular worldview in sufficient detail? How will you decide on an in-depth study that demonstrates how a tradition works as a worldview? What criteria will you use to choose systematic and thematic approaches?
- Will you stipulate which worldviews should be focused upon in each key stage, or across the syllabus, and why? If stipulated, what is your justification for the ones chosen?
- What guidance will you offer for the selection of case studies that illuminate aspects of religion, religions and worldviews to meet the NSE?

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16 Using the NSE to develop questions and construct units of work

16.1 Developing questions

Enquiry questions are powerful ways to drive the use of the worldviews approach. Setting rich questions can address the challenge of content overload – the questions can identify a route through the content, and different kinds of questions indicate suitable methods and/or disciplines, and appropriate evaluative processes. Such questions will increase in complexity and sophistication as pupils move through the school.

In the grid below are some examples of common questions explored in RE, in world religions paradigm mode. Following these examples are some reflections about the features of these kinds of questions, along with some suggestions for how a question might reflect a worldviews approach.

EYFS	• What happens at a wedding or when a baby is born? • What happens at a festival? • What can we learn from stories from different religions?
KS1	• Why are some stories/places sacred? • What festivals are important in Judaism and Islam?
LKS2	• What do different religions teach about God? • What is the sacred text in Islam and how is it used? • What do religious codes say about right and wrong?
UKS2	• What do Christians believe about Jesus? • Why do people go on pilgrimage and what impact does it have? • What are the key beliefs and values of Sikhism and how are these expressed in the Gurdwara?
KS3	• What does Islam/Hinduism teach about life after death? • Is there a God? What and why do people believe? • Are religions sources of peace or causes of conflict?

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Note some key features of 'world religions' questions:

- the focus tends to be on the communication of information, transmitting a form of settled knowledge ('textbook' information)
- they tend to be abstract and context-free, as if there are answers that might apply universally
- the answers may contain diversity, but the implication is that there is a form of correct answer.

A worldviews approach is looking more for questions that:

- include an interpretive element (e.g. how do these people understand and apply this?)
- offer a clear context (e.g. how do these two people/groups respond at an identified time and place, and why?)

- recognise that there are different answers that are valid (e.g. different individuals, groups, or traditions may have different responses, and that these may change across time and place)
- include an evaluative element, recognising that different answers may be acceptable in different contexts.

You might consider how in Maths, pupils learn *how* to answer questions – the emphasis is on the methods used, the working, not just the answer. For example, pupils learn to become more systematic, they choose ever more concise written methods, and they learn reasoning skills to unpick questions. The same applies in a worldviews approach: pupils learn *how* to make judgements in RE – they show the process they go through in order to find some answers, and they choose appropriate methods to evaluate the reliability, validity, truth or credibility of those answers.

Acknowledging that a question cannot do everything, some worldview-approach questions might look like the following, for example:

EYFS	• How do different people welcome a new baby into the world? • How do different people celebrate Christmas/Easter in our community? Around the world? • What stories are important in our school community?
KS1	• Why is the story of Rama and Sita special or sacred to Hindus in Britain and India, and what do they learn from it? • How do Jews/ Muslims in our area celebrate Hanukkah/Eid and why are they special times?
LKS2	• Where do Muslims/Christians find out about God, and do they all agree what God is like? • What role does the Qur'an play in the lives of at least three Muslims, and why? • What is the 'golden rule', where is it from, and how is it put into practice by people from different worldviews?
UKS2	• How and why does the life and teaching of Jesus influence the lives of Christians and their communities today? • What is the role and impact of the Gurdwara on the lives of Sikhs and on local communities in our area/Britain? Do Sikhs experience the Gurdwara differently in different cultures?
KS3	• Who believes in life after death, who doesn't, and what difference does it make? • How have different Christians understood the idea of Jesus as God? How is Jesus viewed in other worldviews? • How have Christians, Muslims and Buddhists played a role in conflict and peace in the 21st Century?

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Note that there is some value in the kinds of answers given to the 'world religion paradigm' questions set out above. There are mainstream or 'orthodox' responses that often represent an organised or institutional worldview's position, and many people's individual worldviews align with those mainstream positions. However, a worldviews approach does not stop there; it explores how worldviews work in people's lives, which may include how individuals' worldviews relate to the 'orthodox' views. As pupils progress through their schooling, they should also have opportunities to explore how and why these views become 'orthodox', and the implications in terms of power. For example, there may be an assumption that the literate and theological presentation of a worldview takes precedence over the everyday practice of individuals and communities. This is an assumption to explore in lessons.

Disciplinary questions

Enquiry questions can also indicate the kind of methods or disciplines that might appropriately be used to work out answers.

For example:

What difference does it make if Christians believe that God is holy and loving?

This theological question allows pupils to examine Christian understandings that balance biblical ideas of God as a holy, transcendent, just judge who hates sin, while also being seen as an immanent loving father (or mother). A unit could involve interpreting biblical texts and examining voices from Christian tradition, talking with Christians to find out how far they balance these contrasting views and what impact believing in this kind of God has on their lives, and reflecting on how far pupils' own worldviews tend towards love and/or justice in how they respond to people.

What is the role and impact of the Gurdwara on the lives of Sikhs and on local communities in your area/Britain?

This question might draw on sociological survey data on how many Gurdwaras there are in Britain, where, when and why they were built, and how Sikhs use and value the Gurdwara; it might examine case studies from specific local or regional Gurdwaras, with interviews with Sikhs and people who live near the Gurdwaras; it might draw on some texts from the Adi Granth as to the early importance of the langar. Pupils draw on the range of data to come up with conclusions in response to the key questions, evaluating the sources and methods as they do so.[24]

16.2 Using the NSE to shape questions

The NSE offers eleven statements, to be understood as being in relationship with each other. Units of work can focus on a particular *content* statement, alongside one each from the *engagement* and the *position* strands. However, selecting a single statement does not mean that the others are irrelevant. You might consider the metaphor of a mixing desk, below.

In music, a mixing desk takes all the inputs from a band or orchestra and balances them, fading up a particular instrumental or vocal line (or lines) so that it comes to the fore in the mix. While this happens, it does not mean that the other inputs stop – they continue, and their turn in the spotlight comes at other points.

The NSE functions in a similar way. A unit might draw attention to a particular NSE content statement, or it might fade up two or more. For example, a unit might raise a question of meaning and purpose (NSE d) and examine how this is addressed differently in mainstream doctrines and in individual ways of thinking and living (NSE b). The unit may also use examples that show different contexts (NSE c), and while teachers may point this out – and pupils may spot it too – it is not the particular focus of the unit.

Likewise with the engagement strand: emphasis may be placed on a disciplinary approach (NSE g) while also using examples from lived experience (NSE h); this element is noted but plays in the background.
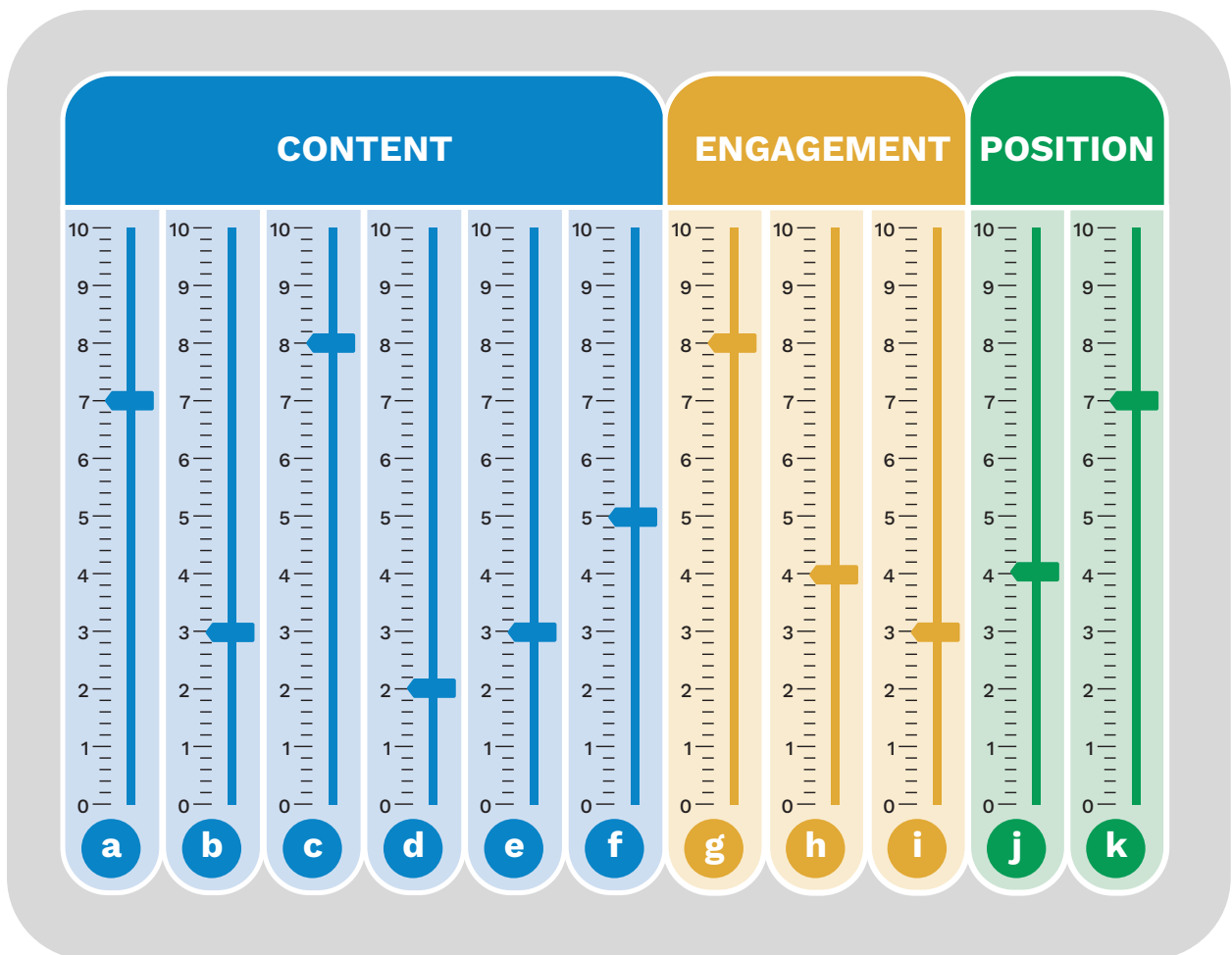
16.3 Constructing units of work

Below is a sample process that might be used to shape a unit using the worldviews approach.

Steps/components	Example 1: KS1
Age range: look at what pupils already know, and where you want them to go next	Pupils have encountered the idea that many religious adherents express their worldview through prayer and ritual (NSE a); this unit focuses on Muslims. They will later explore the relationship between individual and organised Muslim worldviews (NSE b)
Choose the particular focus from the NSE, balancing the three elements appropriately (content; engagement; position)	**NSE a: nature** **NSE h: lived experience** **NSE k: personal worldviews: impact** *Note*: these are the key statements for the unit, but NSE c (how mosques do not all look the same) and NSE d (how mosques indicate the idea of submission to God) are also part of this unit.
Identify an appropriate topic from the syllabus	The mosque for Muslims
Design a question to examine the topic and open up the NSE focus	How is a local mosque important for some Muslims? Why?
Choose the best method(s) or discipline to answer the question	Methods: use photographs of a variety of mosques; visiting a mosque; talking with some Muslims at the mosque and in the classroom.
Identify moments for bringing pupils' personal worldviews into focus, to examine the interaction with the content, its impact on pupils' worldviews and the impact of pupils' worldviews on their study.	Impact of pupils' worldview explored through looking at their expectations before the visit. Talking about what they think will be important about the mosque, and then comparing their ideas after the visit and their conversations.
Identify sources, examples, case studies and learning activities	Identify sources, examples, case studies and learning activities[25]

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Example 2: upper KS2	Example 3: KS3
Pupils have explored how a Christian worldview may be influenced by seeing a 'big story' of God's involvement with humanity (NSE f); this unit reflects on what that might mean in specific examples. They will later explore NSE c in other contexts, e.g. Christian majority/ minority countries.	Y7-8. Pupils have examined some features of religion and their influence in people's lives. They are going on to explore the relationship between religion, spirituality and secularity in the UK and India.
NSE c: contexts (focus on change and continuity) **NSE h: lived experience** **NSE j: personal worldviews: reflexivity** *Note*: these are the key statements for the unit, but NSE a (how ritual may shape and express worldviews) and NSE g (using a historical lens) are also part of this unit.	**NSE a: nature** **NSE i: dialogue/interpretation** **NSE j: personal worldviews: reflexivity** *Note*: NSE b (organised/individual) and NSE c (contexts) are also part of this unit.
Christian pilgrimage: Walsingham as England's Nazareth	The nature of religion and worldviews
Why might Christians have made pilgrimage to Walsingham in Medieval times and why might they make a pilgrimage today?	In what ways might a worldview be religious and/or non-religious?
Discipline: history Method: sources and interviews	Discipline: religious studies Methods: data from surveys and interviews; analysis of definitions of religion and their applicability and interpretation in varied countries/cultures.
Reflexivity explored through reflections on testimonies. How do Medieval and contemporary voices affect/challenge their personal worldviews? How do pupils' own worldviews affect how they encounter these voices?	Reflexivity explored through pupils' accounts of the sources and influences on their personal worldviews. How clear/blurred are the lines between religious and non-religious worldviews in data, in studies and in their own lives?
Identify sources, examples, case studies and learning activities[26]	Identify sources, examples, case studies and learning activities[27]

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17 To what extent is this new?

The worldviews approach is not entirely new. It emerges from within the rich history of religious education in the UK. These brief references to the work of some of RE's greatest recent scholars are simply designed to remind readers that the current turn to an education in religion and worldviews has its roots in the intellectual traditions of the subject.

From the **interpretive RE approach** of Robert Jackson, for example, it draws on the idea of ethnography and lived experience, identifying contextual individual and communal worldviews within wider organised/institutional worldviews, and the importance of interpretation for all learners – adherents in understanding their own tradition(s) and for outsiders looking into the tradition. The skills of attentive listening to other voices, dialogue and reflexivity in responding to the worldviews encountered are vital for the success of worldviews approaches in education.

From the **human development RE model** of Michael Grimmitt, for example, it emphasises the importance of the interaction between the 'life-worlds' of the pupil and the 'life-worlds' of the religious (or non-religious) adherent. The worldviews approach recognises the power and significance of learners identifying their own positionality in relation to the worldviews they study. A worldviews approach accepts and embraces the idea that 'everyone stands somewhere' and pupils' studies of worldviews will be deepened where they are able to learn from the worldviews they encounter.

From the **critical realist RE model** of Andrew Wright, for example, worldviews approaches connect to the emphasis on the importance of a clear understanding of the epistemic assumptions of worldviews and of learners. The critical realist emphasis on truth-seeking and on philosophical considerations about the nature of truth, knowledge, belief and evidence, draw attention to the ways in which different worldviews claim to describe the reality of the human condition. Members of different communities (including religions) may see their worldview as a shared vision of the truth about humanity.

18 How does this approach relate to GCSE?

While numbers of GCSE candidates in England for both full and short courses have declined, this qualification remains the major defined vision for a 14-16 RS / RE curriculum: nearly 300,000 candidates, around half the cohort of 16-year-olds, take these courses. In devising a syllabus, it is important to consider how far these qualifications accommodate the fresh directions of religion and worldviews, and where they may need change or possible radical development.

Current GCSE Religious Studies specifications, which date from first examinations in 2016, allow for diversity: students study two different religions and learn extensively about the internal diversities of the religions on the syllabus (e.g. a Catholic Christianity paper states: "Catholic Christianity should be studied in the context of Christianity as a whole, and common and divergent views within Catholic Christianity").

It is clear, however, that there is still a central, if not fundamental, difference in approach between the current exam specifications, which work from a world religions paradigm, and the worldviews approach set out in this draft Handbook. However, if pupils have had an education in religion and worldviews up to age 14, they would be able to examine critically the particular, contextual presentation of religion(s) within the specification and offer richly nuanced responses to questions.

It has been the practice of the Department for Education (DfE) and, under its influence, the Examination Awarding Bodies, to use contemporary academic and professional thinking in setting the specifications for RS qualifications. For example, the 2013 REC's National Curriculum Framework for the subject, which followed the National Curriculum orders for other subjects, was central in determining the Assessment Objectives in the current GCSE specifications. These specifications emphasise the acquisition of a rich knowledge of two religions, and the processes of critical thinking. Candidates learn about the internal diversity of religions, and develop reasoned responses from their own perspectives to evaluation questions.

In the light of this, it seems wise for religion and worldviews syllabus writing to balance its alertness to current structures and requirements with ambitious attention to future possibilities of a 14–16 religion and worldviews curriculum which uses the NSE as its starting point.

APPENDIX 1:
Making good progress: three models

Making good progress model I

This model offers some snapshots of the kinds of curriculum and classroom experiences that would reflect the requirements, showing how pupils might engage with religion and worldviews, and an indicator of what progression might look like using the NSE. The advantage of these is that they reflect a deepening engagement with content; the limitation is that it does not set out what happens across each year group, in order to clarify where pupils go next, and what they build upon in their learning.

4–5-year-olds	5–7-year-olds	7–9-year-olds	9–11-year-olds
might use photographs to observe home lives of some people from a religious tradition, from at least two different contexts. They notice some things that are the same in the homes and some that are different. They notice that some things in their own homes are the same and some are different, and that not everyone is the same. (**a**, c, g, **h**, j)*	might look at some religious artwork from a diverse range of contexts (such as pictures of Jesus from around the world) and connect them with some stories or texts that help to interpret the artwork (e.g. gospel accounts pictured). They notice how the different ways of expressing the stories in art are more or less familiar and think about why (e.g. according to their own contexts). They are introduced to a selection of voices to help them find out that such stories may be important in some people's lives as part of organised worldviews, and find out why (e.g. they may include important people, and ideas about how to live). They find out that all kinds of different people may see the stories as important, but not everyone, and that sometimes this is to do with belief in God. (a, b, **c**, **g**, j)	might ask questions about meaning and purpose in life, expressing their own ideas and saying where these ideas come from. They might explore how religious worldviews help some people make sense of life and affect how they live day to day. For example, they might talk to adherents about what it means to believe there is a God, or to believe in salvation, or submission, or karma and samsara – how these ideas can transform a person's life. They might examine some texts and stories that illustrate these big concepts and find out ways in which they are interpreted. They may reflect on the difference it makes to these interpretations if someone is an adherent or not, including pupils' own perspectives. (a, c, **d**, g, **h**, **j**)	might ask a question about the difference that context makes to one's worldview. For example, after thinking about their own context, they might use and interrogate data, interviews and visual images to examine the differences it makes to be a Muslim in a Muslim-majority country (e.g. Indonesia) and a Muslim-minority country (e.g. UK), including opportunities and challenges, and how these shape their lived experience – not just intellectual ideas. They might reflect on whether it is similar if someone is non-religious (e.g. Humanist) in a secular society or a religious society. They might reflect on their own context again and consider how it influences their own worldviews. (**a**, **c**, e, g, **h**, **j**, k)

* Note: the NSE statement letters here show the main focus of the units (in bold) and the background statements, reflecting the mixing desk metaphor from p. X.

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NOTE

In the final Handbook, there will be three examples for each age-group, to indicate how the NSE can be interpreted in flexible ways, and to prevent any single example from becoming normative.

11–12-year-olds	12–14-year-olds	14–16-year-olds	16–19-year-olds
might ask a question such as 'what is religion?' They might examine a range of common features of religion and carry out some research into their importance in the lives of members of the school and local community, and reflect on the role any of these features play in their own lives. By analysing these, they get an insight into the flexible role of religion in people's lives and worldviews, including their own responses. Having looked at the diversity of expression of religion in people's lives, they can then analyse and evaluate a range of contested academic definitions of religion, reflecting on the impact of a person's worldview on their understanding of 'religion'. (**a**, **b**, **c**, **g**, h, i, **j**, **k**)	might ask questions about how religions change over time. They might explore how significant concepts developed through the ages (e.g. using theological methods to understand Trinity as expressed in art, or theories of atonement in Christian traditions; or the miraculous nature of the Qur'an in Islamic traditions) and how practices develop in place (e.g. RS methods to explore how the Buddha's teaching was adapted as it spread to, for example, Sri Lanka, China, Tibet and the West, exploring how the importance of the story of the life of the Buddha varies across these contexts). They might use these studies to inform their understanding of how such ideas shape cultures and worldviews and enable them to examine questions of power and influence. They might reflect on which methods were most effective in getting to the heart of the matter, and examining why they think so, reflecting on the impact of their personal worldviews on their choices and responses. (a, **c**, **f**, **g**, j, **k**)	might examine the relationship between institutional and individual worldviews by exploring ethical issues (e.g. Roman Catholic doctrines on sanctity of life and data on Catholic people's attitudes to birth control), or by considering how religion/non-religion is presented in RE in comparison with lived realities (e.g. textbook presentations of religions alongside sociological data on the diverse adherence and practice of religions in India; data on the permeable boundary between religion and non-religion in the UK). They suggest different explanations for these relationships, reflecting on questions of tradition, continuity, change, power and culture. They select and apply appropriate disciplinary tools to evaluate the explanations, recognising the impact of context. Throughout the unit, they reflect on the sources of their own worldviews in the light of their learning. (**b**, **c**, **e**, f, **g**, **j**)	might reflect on the legal and political dimensions of worldviews, in relation to religious, ethical and social concerns. They might examine the influence of religious and non-religious traditions on attitudes to the environment, to medical advances, to justice and equality in relation to gender, sex and race, and account for the changes across different contexts, using theological and philosophical methods and applying ethical theories (e.g. changing interpretation and application of ancient texts/ teachings to accommodate technological advances and societal changes; contrasting responses between secular and religious contexts to the growth of Pentecostalism in, for example, the USA, Britain, Africa or East Asia). Students might examine their own worldview assumptions and how they affect their responses to these issues, with a growing awareness of the impact of context on their own and others' worldviews. (**b**, **c**, d, **e**, f, g, h, **i**, **j**)

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Making good progress model II

This offers an example of what progress might look like using the NSE. The focus here is on making progress in terms of the process of engagement (NSE statements g-i, how pupils examine and engage with the content – incorporating 'ways of knowing'). Syllabuses themselves will need to develop their own outcomes, dependent upon the kinds of questions and content they set out.

5–7s	• Ask questions; find things out using e.g. observation, interviews, interpreting stories and texts, using data and recognising where it comes from; recognise that sometimes people give different answers to questions
7–9s	• As above, also ask questions and consider the best ways to find answers. Use the methods above with awareness of (for example) organised teachings and individual lived experiences; historical/ contemporary contexts • weighing up how sufficient sources are (e.g. one interview or six; one quote or an extended passage; one example or several) • recognise that people disagree, and some answers leave space for mystery and wonder
9–11s	• As above, but also recognising different questions can fit with subject disciplines, including (for example) theology, philosophy, a social science • awareness of basic assumptions of these (e.g. 'insider/ outsider' perspectives) • examine beliefs, teachings, ways of living with a range of methods (e.g. experiment, interview, qualitative and quantitative data) • basic evaluative methods (e.g. reliable methods/ sources/ findings; generalisable conclusions; coherence with tradition etc.) • recognise that some important questions leave space for mystery and paradox
11–14s	• As above but also reflecting on different ways that disciplines construct knowledge, aware of assumptions • using content from different methods, or applying these appropriately to investigations, examining beliefs, teachings and lived experience (e.g. using hermeneutical approaches to texts; interpreting artistic forms of expression; case study, discourse analysis, experimental method, ethnography, surveys) • awareness of the place of dialogue, debate and disagreement in construction of knowledge • application of specific evaluative tools • awareness of non-western ways of knowing • awareness that *'even if all possible scientific questions be answered the problems of life have not been touched at all'* (Wittgenstein).

14–19s	• As above, but also selecting and applying these disciplinary ways of thinking to increasingly challenging issues, both contemporary and in the past
	  ○ **within** religious communities (e.g. how theology responds to changes in prevailing cultures, such as questions around gender and sexuality; the impact of critical realism and non-realism on debates about God in Christianity)
	  ○ **between** communities (e.g. relationships between atheism, secularism, Humanism, non-religion, and religion; religion in India or China compared with religion in UK)
	  ○ and **beyond** religious communities (e.g. dialogues and debates about the nature of religion, its place in societies and cultures, its roles in relation to prejudice, equality and justice, in politics, in colonialism and national identities etc.) recognising the roots of such debates and the range of ways of handling them
	• appreciating that many questions remain unresolved, and will themselves reflect different worldviews.

Making good progress model III

The paragraphs below offer descriptions of the kind of learning that an education in religion and worldviews as set out in the NSE might look like at each phase. It is indicative rather than restrictive: it is not intended to limit pupils' learning only to the examples described within an age range. It is a spiral process, where progress will fluctuate, and will involve building on earlier learning and experiences. It includes an element of creativity and engagement in terms of the teaching and learning strategies that are implemented.

4–5s	Children begin to hear and use the language of religion and worldviews. They experience, through all their senses, ways in which people explore and express meanings using symbols, stories, rituals and in other ways. They take part in enjoyable, creative learning experiences related to religion and worldviews, and begin to think about where and how their lives are similar and different to those they encounter in RE.
5–7s	Children gather a rich knowledge of different worldviews, including religions, and learn that we are all different. They find out lots about the varied ways human communities celebrate, share stories, understand big ideas and think about what is good and bad. They take part in enjoyable, creative, varied and challenging learning experiences related to religion and worldviews, noticing where their own experience overlaps with the worldviews they encounter, and where their worldviews are different.
7–9s	Pupils begin to identify what a worldview is and how it works. They gather, understand and deploy a rich knowledge of a range of different worldviews. Learning about diversity, they recognise that we each have a worldview, shaped by our families, communities and wider society. They find out how some key examples of religious worldviews teach their ideas and express their visions in practice. They take part in creative learning experiences that deepen their understanding of how religions and worldviews are practised in our communities today and how they draw on ideas from the past and from around the world. They begin to identify aspects of their own worldviews and how they relate to the worldviews of others.
9–11s	Pupils begin to understand what worldviews are, that they affect how we experience the world, and that we can study a range of different worldviews using varied methods, such as through sociological enquiry or textual study. Learning more about diversity, they apply ideas about how our own worldviews are shaped by our families, communities and wider society to different examples. To explain what matters in religion, they use a growing rich knowledge of the ways key examples of religious worldviews teach their ideas and express their visions in practice. They are involved (sometimes as planners) in creative learning experiences that deepen their understanding of varied ways in which religions and worldviews are practised in our communities today and how they draw on ideas from the past and from around the world. They recognise some sources of their own worldviews and identify how someone's worldview affects how they understand and experience the world, in RE as well as in wider life.
11–14s	Pupils apply the insight that all our experiences are affected by our worldview, and use different methods to research and explain different dimensions of the religion and worldviews curriculum, so that they can describe, explain and analyse religious and non-religious ideas and practice. They make skillful and insightful comparisons between a range of different perspectives on big questions about theology, philosophy and society. They learn, by methods of dialogue and listening, to navigate diversity in relation to religion and worldviews with increasing skill. They participate in challenging experiences of debate, dialogue, imagination, encounter and challenge in relation to big ideas and questions, drawing on their own worldviews and reflecting on the worldviews of others to come to informed judgements on contested matters.
14–19s	Students deepen their understanding of the role that worldviews play in how we interpret our encounters in life, and apply this as they continue to expand and deepen their growing rich knowledge of religion and worldviews. They consider, and appropriately deploy and evaluate, a range of disciplinary methods by which religions and worldviews are studied. They apply these different methods to the religions and worldviews they study in increasing depth. They respond to the challenges, dilemmas and controversies raised by religion and worldviews in contemporary society, locally and globally, drawing on their awareness of how worldviews affect and shape their encounter with the content of RE, and how the content shapes their worldviews. They research and evaluate creative insights offered by different communities into the human condition.

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Endnotes

1. *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward*, REC 2018, available **www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/worldviews**/

2. D Cox, *REC religion and worldview bibliography and reading list*, REC (2021)

3. C Benoit, T Hutchings and R Shillitoe, *Worldview: A Multidisciplinary Report*, REC (2020)

4. A Tharani, *The Worldview Project: Discussion Papers*, REC (2020)

5. See, for example, the work of the Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network, and Lois Lee, *Recognizing the Non-Religious, Reimagining the Secular*, OUP (2015)

6. See p. 31 in Hedges, P (2021) *Understanding Religion: theories and methods for studying religiously diverse societies*, University of California Press.

7. OFSTED Research review series: religious education (2021) **www.gov.uk/government/ publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education**

8. Shaw, M & Dinham, A (2015). *RE for REal: The future of teaching and learning about religion and belief. Project report.* Goldsmiths, University of London

9. See, for example, the work of James Sire (*The Universe Next Door* (IVP 2020)) and Anne Taves ('From religious studies to worldview studies', *Religion*, 50(1), 138 (2020)), offering worldview questions from religious and non-religious perspectives.

10. See, for example, Christine Counsell's blog **https://thedignityofthethingblog. wordpress.com/2018/03/27/in-search-of-senior-curriculum-leadership-introduction-a-dangerous-absence/** and Rosalind Walker on school science knowledge: **https://rosalindwalker.wordpress.com/2018/01/14/the-nature-of-school-science-knowledge/#more-357**

11. Moulin, D (2011) "Giving voice to 'the silent minority': The experience of religious students in secondary school religious education lessons", *British Journal of Religious Education* 33 (3), 313-326

12. This is a controversial point and will need further discussion and reflection. The relative role of educationalists and members of faith communities in the selection of content for RE has oscillated over the decades.

13. 'After Religious Education' is led by David Lewin, University of Strathclyde **https:// pureportal.strath.ac.uk/en/projects/after-religious-education-curricula-principles-for-education-in-r**

14. This is a method used in social science research. I encountered it in the Understanding Unbelief project, and have used it in resources supporting that project (**https:// research.kent.ac.uk/understandingunbelief/research/public-engagement-projects/ understanding-unbelief-in-the-re-classroom/**); also in resources developed for the Challenging Knowledge in RE research project from RE Today: e.g. *Investigating God* ed. Fiona Moss for primary and *Studying God* for secondary.

15. See also the examples using the mixing desk analogy for pupils' personal worldviews developed in *Investigating Worldviews* (for primary) and *Studying Worldviews* (for secondary), also part of the Challenging Knowledge in RE research project from RE Today.

16. This strategy was originally developed by Sarah Northall, formerly Head of RE at Chipping Norton Secondary School. See it in basic form in *More than 101 great ideas* ed. Rosemary Rivett, and applied to ideas of God using the discipline of psychology in *Investigating God* ed. Fiona Moss for primary and *Studying God* for secondary, all published by RE Today.

17. S Larkin, R Freathy, J Doney and G Freathy *Metacognition, Worldviews and Religious Education: A Practical Guide for Teachers*, Routledge (2020)

18. OFSTED Research review series: religious education (2021) **www.gov.uk/government/ publications/research-review-series-religious-education/research-review-series-religious-education**

19. See for example:
    Freathy, G., R. Freathy, J. Doney, K. Walshe and G. Teece (2015) *The RE-searchers: a New Approach to Primary Religious Education.* Exeter, University of Exeter.
    Freathy, R., J. Doney, G. Freathy, K. Walshe and G. Teece (2017) 'Pedagogical Bricoleurs and Bricolage Researchers: The case of Religious Education.' *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 65(4): 425-443.
    Freathy, Rob and Helen C. John (2019) 'Religious Education, Big Ideas and the study of religion(s) and worldview(s).' *British Journal of Religious Education* 41(1): 27-40.
    Freathy, Rob and Helen C John (2019) 'Worldviews and Big Ideas: A way forward for religious education?' *Nordidactica*
    See also: the work of Ruth Flanagan **https://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/education/ staff/profile/index.php?web_id=ruth_flanagan**

20. See project publications for primary schools: **www.natre.org.uk/resources/termly-mailing/bqic-primary-big-questions-big-answers/** and for secondary schools: **www. natre.org.uk/resources/termly-mailing/bqic-secondary-challenging-knowledge-in-re/**

21. See Wintersgill, B (Ed.) (2017) *Big Ideas for Religious Education*, University of Exeter; Wintersgill, B with Cush, D and Francis, D (2019) *Putting Big Ideas into Practice in Religious Education in Practice*, Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

22. See David Lewin, 'Religion, Reductionism and Pedagogical Reduction' in G Biesta and P Hannam (Eds), *Religion and education: the forgotten dimensions of religious education?* Brill 2020 David Lewin is quoting from Robert Macfarlane's *Introduction* to Nan Shepherd, *The Living Mountain* (Canons, 2014)

23. See David Lewin, as above.

24. One way of addressing this question, using this approach as outlined, can be seen in *Investigating How We Live*, ed. Fiona Moss, RE Today 2022.

25. For example, *Picturing Islam, Picturing Muslims* (2019) S Pett and L Blaylock, RE Today

26. See Adam Robertson (2022) "A journey to 'England's Nazareth'" in *REtoday*, 39:2, 26-27

27. See, for example, *Studying Religion* (2022) ed. S Pett, RE Today

Acknowledgements

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Agenda Item 12

Latest news and updates from NASACRE   View this email in your browser

SACRE BRIEFING
Issue: 34

This issue includes:

- **Welcome and Update from the Chair**
- **White Paper scrapped**
- **RExChange**
- **Freedom of Information (FOI) request**
- **2023 Conference and AGM**
- **Conference workshops**
- **SACRE teacher survey**
- **Westhill Awards**
- **NASACRE Online Training**
- **NASACRE website**
- **Other work and RE News**
- **Conceptualising Religion and Worldviews for the School by Kevin O'Grady**
- **Regional REHubs**
- **Items for your next Agenda**

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Welcome and Update from the Chair

Welcome to our first briefing of this new calendar year. The NASACRE Executive wishes you and your SACRE well, and thanks everyone for all their work to support the subject and its teachers. Let's celebrate the best of all our work together – this Briefing shows just how much is going on already and how we might share it. Top of our own celebratory committee agenda this term is the continued planning for our Conference and AGM in May. NASACRE is celebrating its 'Pearl Anniversary', and we hope to see as many of you as possible in person at the **Fishmongers' Hall, London**. All the details are below.

New Executive Committee members are always welcome, and the nomination process is described here and on the website. We are still hoping that someone will be enthusiastic enough to stand for **the role of Vice-Chair**. The VC sometimes chairs meetings, and especially subgroups, but also covers invitations to external meetings with other networks and keeps the Chair on track. Someone with the appropriate skills emerging from their work with local authorities, SACREs or national/regional groups would be very welcome on our team. Please just drop me a line on **chair@nasacre.org.uk** if you would like to know more.

Since our last Briefing in October, we have continued our **CPD programme**. Feedback shows that sessions are greatly appreciated and well attended. Thanks to all who have offered time as speakers and those who are hosting the events, and thanks to all of you who give up your time to attend. As an organisation NASACRE has a vibrant and well-informed community and these sessions demonstrate the range of experiences across England, the depth of knowledge and understanding about RE – and collective worship – that provide us with the authority to support you, and schools, and to advise others like the DfE. A particular 'thank you' at this time to anyone who has helped their local authority to respond to NASACRE's Freedom of Information request about funding.

We did say that we would report more in this Briefing on teacher recruitment and retention in RE and I expect many SACRE members have picked up the depressing news through other networks and from local schools that the current situation with regard to recruitment of secondary teachers of RE is at a crisis point. The Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE) is leading a campaign to address this issue. More to follow as the campaign progresses…

If you would like an antidote to this news, have a look at
https://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/ to

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The RE Council of England and Wales (NASACRE is a member organisation) is also engaged in political campaigns – please have a look at **https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/political-engagement/**

The REC would also appreciate any feedback on its draft resource to support the teaching of Religion and Worldviews **https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-resource/** and some SACREs will be using this, and other resources such as **https://bigideasforre.org/** as they consider agreed syllabus reviews in partnership with their LAs. Many of these resources have been presented and discussed in our CPD programme over the last two years.

And more positive news still - SACREs and local authorities form an essential part of the structure supporting the subject and all its related areas every week of the year, including during the school holidays. Please have a look at the section on sharing resources mentioned below. We need to do more to share our good practice and all that SACREs do – including work that promotes inter-faith and cross-worldview dialogue and takes account of individual patterns of belief within traditions as well.

One opportunity to bring together SACRE members, teachers of RE and those who advise them will be at the AREIAC conference in July – please see details on the **AREIAC website** as they are posted.

Another celebratory event happening around now is NATRE's **'Strictly RE'** – it would be great to hear from SACRE members who attended.
And there is still time to apply for a **NASACRE Westhill Award** to celebrate work that is happening, or that needs support to launch it.

The new panel is looking forward to meeting to consider this year's applications – there is a recording on the CPD section of our website that helps SACREs consider their projects and how to apply.

I would like to acknowledge and celebrate all the efforts individuals are making through these very difficult times. Many people in our wider community are struggling for health reasons - including two long-standing members of our committee whom we are holding in our thoughts - or for financial and other anxieties in a world that seems to need an education in religion and worldviews more than ever.

'*To teach is to learn*' – and to teach RE is one of the sharpest learning curves in education. Thank you for helping each other (and me) to negotiate the bends and the gradients.

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White Paper scrapped

You may have seen in the news that the government has decided to not proceed with the Schools Bill that was designed to enact the ideas in the 2022 Education White Paper. From speaking to DfE officials is seems clear that the intention of government is still the same - all schools are to be part of MAT by 2030. One major difference from March 2022 is that the Conservative party is no longer confident that it will be in power until 2030.

Nothing of this intention currently changes the roles or responsibilities of SACREs. Our Assistant to the Chair, Paul Smalley, has written an academic journal article suggesting a way forward, if the Government's ambitions are fulfilled. You can read that **here**.

RExChange

The RExChange conference was held online on 7–8 October 2022. There were many presentations of interest to SACRE members, including some given by SACRE Chairs and advisers. The sessions were recorded and you can view them **here**.

Freedom of Information (FOI) request

As mentioned in our last Briefing and in an email to Chairs before Christmas, the **Freedom of Information (FOI) request** was sent out by NASACRE on 10 January 2023 to all Local Authorities. This focuses again on SACRE funding following our **previous report** in 2021. Please check that your LA has received this and is preparing to respond, as there is a deadline of 20 working days, meaning that answers should have been given by **Tuesday 7 February**.

2023 Conference & AGM

Celebrating 30 years: SACREs for the Future

Date: Monday, 22 May 2023
Time: 10:30am -15:30pm
Venue: Fishmongers' Hall, London
Twitter tag: #NASACRE2023

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shall finally be able to hold our Conference in London and catch up with colleagues and friends – old and new!

We aim to bring together many RE professionals, academics and those who champion RE and support SACREs, to celebrate **30 years of NASACRE** - our **Pearl Anniversary**.

Pricing: Prices are per delegate - maximum 2 per SACRE, after which a waiting list will be offered.

Subscribed SACREs
£120 per delegate. Each delegate may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June.
Bonus deal for subscribed SACREs
For £170, one delegate at conference plus 2 additional SACRE members (not attending conference) may each choose 2 virtual workshops in June.

Non-subscribed SACREs
£160 per delegate. Each delegate may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June.

ELECTIONS
At the AGM, we hope to elect our Vice Chair, and we have vacancies for up to 5 Executive members. This is a golden opportunity for your SACRE members to offer to contribute their skills and experience to the work of NASACRE. SACREs may nominate up to 2 candidates for election. Further details of the roles and nomination forms may be found **here**. Nominations to **secretary@nasacre.org.uk** must be received by **5pm on Friday, 12 May 2023**.

AWARDS
We'll be celebrating 30 years as an organisation, and as part of that, we'd like to recognise SACRE members who have played a special part in the life of your SACRE over the last 30 years. We will share a PowerPoint at the Conference and later upload it to our website.

We're inviting SACREs to nominate, with a photo (jpeg) of the nominee and your reasons for selecting them. (Please ensure you have permission for us to display the image.)

Kindly nominate your member(s), past and present, under the 2 following categories:

- Most active SACRE member
- A SACRE member who has made a significant impact in your area

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30 YEAR MEMORY TIMELINE

To mark the 30 years celebration, we ask SACREs to send in photo/s (jpeg), so we can play a presentation during arrival and break time.

Any SACRE wishing to add their memories must send photos with a short message by **5pm on Friday, 12 May 2023**, via email to: **admin@nasacre.org.uk**.

Further details and how to book a place can be found on the **conference page** of our website.

Conference workshops

Dates: Monday 5 June to Thursday 15 June

Times: Various - please see the programme on our **website**

Venues: Online using Zoom

Details: Each member may choose 2 virtual workshops delivered in June '23.

Workshops will include SACREs who have won Westhill/NASACRE Awards sharing their projects.

Don't forget to look at the bonus deal for subscribed SACREs.

SACRE teacher survey

NASACRE wants to consider the best timing for future AGMs and Conferences, so we have created a Google form for SACRE Clerks and Chairs to send to teacher members.

https://forms.gle/Gxum6LLBNBgV6iVs5

This survey should take no longer than 5-10 mins to complete and we'd really value as many responses as possible to enable us to make a good decision on the future timing of Conference each year.

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There is still time to apply! Please have a look at the opportunities outlined in the website section. SACREs are often undertaking work already that would fit in with the award criteria.

NASACRE Online Training

Coming soon to a screen near you are the next **NASACRE training opportunities**:

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?
Host to be confirmed
£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

Last year, delegates said:

"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

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NASACRE website

Have you looked at our new SACRE **sharing page** on the website, where there are several new items that may be of use to your SACRE, e.g., a letter of congratulation to schools for gaining an REQM award.

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Other RE work and News

NASACRE reserves the right to publish news items from members of the Executive and from members of the Association that the editors judge to be of interest to the membership. These items reflect the views and aims of the individual or organisation, and not necessarily those of the Association. Unfortunately, limited editorial time and resources mean that we cannot accept all items submitted. Thank you for your understanding.

Conceptualising Religion and Worldviews for the School by Kevin O'Grady – webinar report

[2022, Routledge, available in hardback or on Kindle]

On 19 December 2022, Culham St Gabriel's ran an in-conversation webinar with Kevin O'Grady about his book, published last summer. The author gave a summary of the recommendations that he drew from his research:

1. We need to pay attention to the CoRE report if we want to follow a worldviews curriculum, but international sources, such as the European Signposts project, should not be ignored.
2. Pupils need to examine and gain conceptual fluency in different theories of religion.
3. This means that there needs to be a clear definition of what is meant by worldviews, otherwise it is potentially too broad.
4. Teachers need a good understanding of the pedagogical background to RE, which has informed current practice.
5. RE needs to be set in the context of public good and give pupils opportunities for encounter and dialogue.
6. The Big Ideas approach to RE needs to be given positive consideration.

This was followed by a Q&A session, which covered issues of knowledge and disciplines in RE.

The vision of RE presented in this webinar would contribute to leaning about diversity, development of a pupil's own worldview and enable critical consideration of alternatives. It should be compatible with Church schools and faith schools and offer the ability to operate without examinations.

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countercultural on its own.

A full recording of the discussion can be found on the Culham St Gabriel's **Vimeo Channel**.

Regional REHubs

The **regional REHubs project** is pleased to announce FREE training for those interested in helping schools to deliver high-quality RE/R&W/RVE.

The training aims to help participants understand the purpose and context of RE/R&W/RVE in England and Wales and offers top tips for working well with schools by hosting visits or visiting schools.

The training session lasts 1.5 hrs, and sessions are running monthly, for you to select one that fits your schedule.

After training, providers that have signed up to the agreed principles for working with schools will be accredited with the RE Hubs Kitemark. Providers will then be featured on the website to be launched soon.

Upcoming dates:
Monday 20 February 6-7:30pm
Thursday 23 March 2-3:30pm
Tuesday 18 April 9:30-11am
Wednesday 17 May 11-12:30pm
Tuesday 20 June 10-11:30am

To sign up, email **marketing@regionalrehubs.co.uk**

Items for your next agenda

- Use your **SEF** to design your development plan
- Submit applications for a **Westhill Award**
- Discuss and feedback on the REC resource
- Ask your LA to answer the NASACRE FOI request by 7 February
- Ask your LA about **2021 Census** data and consider whether you need to revise SACRE membership
- Book for **NASACRE Conference** and webinars
- Ask your SACRE Clerk to encourage your teacher members to fill out the Google form: **https://forms.gle/Gxum6LLBNBgV6iVs5**

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	Objective	Action	Responsible	Cost	Start date	Achieved?	Action/Outcome
1	Meetings should be held in a space that is more conducive to conversation between members	Book the new committee room, with boardroom style layout, for future meetings	Clerk	nil	Nov 22	🟩	Meetings to be held in the new conference rooms going forward
2	Every SACRE meeting should include a time for discussion between members. It would be planned, led and would model good practice in discussion.	Add "Discussion: xxx" to future agendas	Clerk	nil	Feb 23	🟩	Autumn meeting agreed a topic for the spring meeting Each meeting will agree a topic for the next meeting Clerk to the add to each agenda
	Teachers from schools where there is good practice in RE should be invited to present their work at one meeting each year	Add "Good Practice in RE: xxx school" to the spring term agenda	Clerk	nil	Nov 22	🟩	Clerk to add to the spring term agenda
		Identify and invite appropriate schools	RE Consultant	nil	Nov 22	🟩	CW to identify and invite a school
4	A list of the CPD events held, their key topics, evaluation scores and attendance should be included in future annual reports, along with details of attendance at SACRE meetings by committee/ individual members	Register of such events created and kept up to date	Clerk	nil	July 23	🟧	Clerk will keep a register to inform the writing of the annual report
5	SACRE should meet its constitutional requirement to have a member to represent the NAHT/ASCL to enable better communication with head teachers, and to consider inviting a lecturer from higher education to represent their organisation	Approach NAHT/ASCL and appropriate higher education institution	Lead Officer	nil	Feb 23	🟧	Appropriate persons will be in place from September 23
6	SACRE should support the roll-out of the new Agreed Syllabus and should consider	Create and promote a programme of AS-linked CPD events	Consultant	££	Sept 22	🟧	Understanding Christianity training took place in November 22 Network meetings planned for Dec 22

	ways in which this can be achieved, e.g., a CPD roadshow and/or webinars				🟧	An event will take place in 2023 to support schools in implementing the new syllabus
7	SACRE members, where appropriate, should support schools by visits to classrooms, accompanying teachers and pupils on visits to places of worship or other sacred spaces, and by offering Q and A Zoom sessions.	Create and promote a list of volunteers and their topics	Consultant	nil	Jan 23	🟧	List to be circulated for comment at the spring meeting
		Circulate the list	Lead Officer	nil	Feb 23	🟧	List to be circulated once agreed
8	SACRE members, where appropriate, should offer Q and A sessions online.	Create a list of volunteers and their topics	DVDV	nil	Jan 23	🟧	List to be circulated for comment at the spring meeting
		Circulate the list	Lead Officer	nil	Feb 23	🟧	List to be circulated once agreed
9	SACRE should urgently investigate how it can support schools in relation to the Lindisfarne Gospels exhibition in Newcastle	Promote linked events via the Northumberland Education website and SACRE newsletter	Lead Officer	nil	Sept 22	🟩	Linked events were promoted via the Northumberland Education website and SACRE newsletter
10	SACRE should seek ways in which it can play a greater role in Holocaust Memorial Day	Ensure SACRE representation on the planning committee	Clerk DVDV	nil	Dec 22	🟩	Clerk to discuss with the HMD planning team
11	SACRE should advise the Council on the need for support from school improvement services to gather data on how far schools meet their statutory duties, particularly with regard to the implementation of the new agreed syllabus	School visits in summer 2023 to contain the following question: "Will the new agreed syllabus be fully implemented from September 2023?"	Lead Officer	nil	April 23	🟧	Lead Officer to ensure the summer term SIP report template includes the appropriate question
12	The Chair of SACRE and consultant/officer should have an annual meeting with the Director of Children's Services	Arrange and create agenda for the meeting	Clerk	nil	Jan 23	🟧	Clerk to arrange for early in 2023
13	Analysis of workforce data and examination results should be presented annually	Agenda item added to the autumn meeting	Lead Officer	nil	Sept 22	🟩	Item was on the agenda
		Appropriate analysis to be undertaken	Lead Officer	nil	Sept 22	🟩	Information was presented
14	Analysis of evidence from Ofsted reports should be presented annually	Agenda item added to the spring meeting	Lead Officer	nil	Jan 23	🟧	Clerk to add to the spring agenda

15	SACRE should continue to pursue the question of its status in relation to the Local Authority through further discussion with NASACRE and other national bodies	Appropriate analysis to be undertaken	Lead Officer	nil	Jan 23		DC to feedback at the spring meeting
		Discussions to take place with NASACRE	JM	nil	Nov 22		JM to feedback at the spring meeting
		Explore whether Council policy will allow hybrid meetings	JM	nil	Nov 22		JM to feedback at the spring meeting
		Explore whether Council policy will allow the chair to serve a four year term	Clerk	nil	Nov 22		Clerk to feedback at the spring meeting

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