



# City of Wolverhampton SACRE

## 9 March 2023

**Time** 4.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Other Committees  
**Venue** MS Teams

### Membership

Martin Gomberg (Chair)	Representative of the Jewish Community
Jaswinder Singh Chaggar (Vice Chair)	Representative of the Sikh Community
Akeel Ahmed	Representative of the Muslim Community
Tanya Athwal	Representative of Teachers' Professional Association
Councillor Chris Burden	Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work
Kay Cresswell-Green	Association of Teachers and Lecturers Representative
Ourmala Devi	Uplands Junior School Representative
Laura Jude	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England
Ven. Bante Tejwant	Representative of the Buddhist Community
Rebecca Wood	Representative of the United Reformed Church
Janine Wright	Representative of the Church of England

### Information

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Democratic Services team:

**Contact** Shelley Humphries  
**Tel/Email** Tel: 01902 554070 email: [shelley.humphries@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:shelley.humphries@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

# Agenda

## PART 1 – Items open to press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*


### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1            **Welcome and Introductions**
- 2            **Apologies**
- 3            **Declarations of interest**
- 4            **Minutes of previous meetings** (Pages 1 - 14)  
[To approve the minutes of the meetings of 7 October 2021, 28 April 2022 and 15 December 2022 as a correct record.]
- 5            **Matters Arising**  
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the meetings held on 7 October 2021, 28 April 2022 and 15 December 2022 as a correct record.]
- 6            **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today** (Pages 15 - 24)  
[To receive an update report from RE Today.]
- 7            **Finance**  
[To consider and agree financial matters in respect of City of Wolverhampton SACRE.]
  - 7a        **Service Level Agreements for 2023 - 2024**
- 8            **Westhill Project Update**  
[To receive an update on the progress of the Westhill Project.]
- 9            **Local Authority Updates**
  - 9a        **Secondary RE Network Trial Options Update**
  - 9b        **Use of the Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) Options - Update**
  - 9c        **Support for Special School RE Leads Options - Update**
- 10          **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**  
[To receive an update on Ofsted findings during the last quarter.]
- 11          **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**  
[To receive an update on findings from SIAMS and Inspection 48 Visits.]

12 **Dates of further meetings**

13 **Any other business**

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 <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">City of Wolverhampton SACRE</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Minutes - 15 December 2022</h3>
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## Attendance

### Members of the City of Wolverhampton SACRE

Martin Gomberg (Chair)	Representative of the Jewish Faith
Jaswinder Singh Chaggar (Vice Chair)	Representative of the Sikh Faith
Councillor Chris Burden	Cabinet Member for Education, Work and Skills
Laura Jude	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England
Rebecca Wood	Representative of the United Reformed Church
Janine Wright	Representative of the Church of England

### In Attendance

Lat Blaylock	RE Today
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*     *Title*

- 1     Welcome and Introductions**

It was acknowledged that the meeting was not quorate and it was agreed to proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified by consultation with Board members not present.

Resolved:

That the meeting proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified by consultation with Board members not present.
- 2     Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Members of City of Wolverhampton SACRE were invited to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Following nominations and elections, it was agreed that Martin Gomberg, Representative of the Jewish Faith and Jaswinder Singh Chaggar, Representative of the Sikh Faith be elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. All members of City of Wolverhampton SACRE present agreed to these elections.

The newly elected Chair undertook to welcome Councillor Chris Burden, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work to the meeting.

Resolved:

1. That Martin Gomberg be appointed as Chair of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.
2. That Jaswinder Singh Chaggar be appointed as Vice-Chair of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

3 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from City of Wolverhampton SACRE member Ourmala Devi.

Apologies were also received from Emma Bennett and Phil Leivers.

4 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

5 **Minutes of previous meetings**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2021 and 28 April 2022 be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

6 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

7 **City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2021 - 2022**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council presented the City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2021 – 2022 and highlighted key points. The report provided a summary of work undertaken by SACRE over 2021 – 2022 and included a review of the Action Plan for 2021 – 2022. The Action Plan for 2022 – 2023 then outlined priorities for the coming year.

The work undertaken was commended and thanks were extended to Representatives of City of Wolverhampton Council and Lat Blaylock, RE Today for their contributions.

Resolved:

1. That the progress detailed within City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2021 – 2022 be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.
2. That the priorities set out in the SACRE Action Plan for academic year 2022 – 2023 be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

8 **Finance**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council delivered a presentation outlining financial decisions on payment of invoices. The Chair highlighted that this item would assist to provide the public with clarity in terms of local authority support to SACREs.

8a Annual Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

It was reported that RE Today continued to provide value for money and recommended that payment of work undertaken from April 2022 – March 2023 be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present. It was acknowledged that the payment would be covered by the SACRE budget.

Resolved:

That payment of the invoice for services provided by RE Today from April 2022 – March 2023 be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

9 **Westhill Update**

It was reported that work undertaken towards the Westhill project also required approval for payment; this included the facilitation by RE Today of two school conferences. It was noted that the grant funding received from Westhill would cover this payment.

Resolved:

That payment of work undertaken against the Westhill project be approved, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

10 **RE Today Invoices**

Resolved:

That it be noted that further invoices were yet to be received and would be considered as a standing agenda item going forward.

11 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today**

Lat Blaylock, RE Today presented the report from RE Today and highlighted salient points. The report provided an update on RE related matters over the past few months.

It was highlighted that an article was available written by a Muslim reflecting on his experience joining the Queue to observe the Queen's lying in state.

It was noted that a Regional RE Hub with a network of Regional Leads had been established to provide RE teaching support to a wide range of settings and the regional lead for the West Midlands was identified as Chris Giles.

Also highlighted were the NATRE Annual RE Conference to be held on 28 – 29 January 2023, entry details and themes for the annual Spirited Arts competition and virtual and video RE resources provided by the Arts Society Birmingham.

Attention was drawn to the forthcoming series of free webinars aimed at Early Career Teachers (ECTs) with a focus on classroom strategies and it was noted the booking link was embedded into the published agenda paper.

Thanks were extended for drawing attention to the video resources as it wasn't always easy to arrange for young people to go out onto visits.

Resolved:

That the Report from Religious Education (RE) Today be received.

12 **RE Report Card**

Lat Blaylock, RE Today provided an update on the RE Report Card, which outlined outcomes from a review of the national performance of Religious Education in schools. There were positive aspects to report, such as an increase in RE studies being continued to GCSE level or higher, an improvement on time spent on the subject and students achieving higher attainment scores, however concerns continued to be raised nationally around the lack of quality RE provision in some schools and, in some cases, where Department for Education (DfE) requirements were not being met.

It was proposed that a letter be drafted between the Chair and Lat Blaylock to encourage the Secretary of State for Education to consider developing DfE policy in relation to RE provision.

Resolved:

That a letter be drafted on behalf of City of Wolverhampton SACRE to encourage the Secretary of State for Education to consider developing DfE policy in relation to RE provision, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

13 **Secondary RE Network Trial**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that following the establishment of the Primary RE Network, there had been an appetite amongst headteachers for a separate network for secondary schools and it was proposed this be explored in consultation with the ConnectEd Partnership.

It was noted that this was achievable within the existing budget and agreed that a series of options would be prepared for consideration at the next meeting of SACRE.

In response to a query around which key stages the network would be open to, it was suggested that Key Stage 3 and 4 would be preferable but this was reliant on decisions made on the models at the next meeting. It was noted that if six or more schools were to become involved, this would form a functional network. The aim of the network was to develop a cohesive approach to teaching RE in secondary settings and to cover a wide range of faiths.

Resolved:

That options for a new Secondary RE Network be presented for consideration at the next meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

14 **Use of the Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS)**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that there had been interest expressed by Multi Academy Trusts in using the Locally Agreed Syllabus (LAS) in non-Wolverhampton schools.

Whilst Wolverhampton schools could use the resource at no extra charge, it was considered whether allowing out of City schools to use it should carry a fee to reflect the time and cost invested into its development. It was noted that the addition of the Scheme of Work had also attracted interest.



It was noted that another local authority in a similar situation had introduced a licensing system to allow access to their LAS for a five-year period at a cost of £150 per school and proposed that a similar model could be introduced for Wolverhampton's LAS. It was noted that this was a fair proposal which could generate income for the improvement of RE in schools and, if a precedent had already been set, was worth exploring.

It was agreed that proposals would be presented to a future SACRE meeting for consideration.

Resolved:

That proposals for the use of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by non-Wolverhampton schools be presented for consideration at the next meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

15 **Support for Special School RE Leads**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that Special School headteachers had voiced that they were keen to implement the LAS, however felt that advice was required from specialists familiar with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

It was therefore proposed to explore funding to provide this support and options would be presented for approval by City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

Resolved:

That options to provide support for Special School RE leads be presented for consideration at the next meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE, subject to ratification by consultation with Board members not present.

16 **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that there had been five inspections since the last meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE. As the reports had not yet been made public, it could only be revealed that there had been varied inspection outcomes for the settings visited, however reports relating to RE had been positive in nature.

Resolved:

That the Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

17 **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that The Kings Church of England School had enjoyed an excellent SIAMS inspection report in May 2022 and members were encouraged to view the published report whenever possible.

It was noted that a list had been published of schools due to be inspected although it was thought to be unlikely that all visits would be undertaken within this academic year.

There had been no Section 48 visits made since the last meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

Resolved:

That Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

18

**Dates of further meetings**

It was agreed that the 4.00 pm start time worked more favourably than the 6.00 pm start time although it was noted that 4.30 pm may be more convenient for some members. It was agreed to schedule the next meeting at 4.00 pm and then the following meeting at 4.30 pm.

It was agreed that virtual meetings were working well and currently members were happy with this arrangement.

Resolved:

That City of Wolverhampton SACRE members were happy to continue with the virtual meeting format and the revised start times.

19

**Any other business**

There was no other business.



# City of Wolverhampton SACRE

## Minutes - 28 April 2022

### Attendance

#### Members of the City of Wolverhampton SACRE

Martin Gomberg (Chair)	Representative of the Jewish Faith
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Phil Leivers	Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England

#### In Attendance

Lat Blaylock	RE Today
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer

### Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1 Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting opened with welcome and a statement from Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre who reported he would be exiting the role of Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work in the new municipal year to become Deputy Mayor. He stated how enjoyable being a member of City of Wolverhampton SACRE had been and commended the Committee's effectiveness and thoughtfulness in carrying out its activities. Thanks were extended to the Chair and Lat Blaylock for their contributions and support.

It was acknowledged that the meeting was not quorate and it was agreed to proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified at the next quorate meeting.

Resolved:  
That the meeting proceed on an informal basis with any agreed actions being ratified at the next quorate meeting.
- 2 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Aman Rai, Janine Wright and Laura Jude.

Apologies were also received from Emma Bennett.
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Resolved:  
That the minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2021 be approved subject to ratification at the next quorate meeting.

4 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2021.

5 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today**

Lat Blaylock, RE Today presented the report from Religious Education (RE) Today and highlighted key points.

Attention was drawn to the collating of Ofsted reports which refer specifically to RE and a summary was provided of the 11 common themes emerging. Links had been provided in the report for further reading.

It was raised that following research into the provision of government support for subject specific projects, there had been no funding allocated from the Department for Education (DfE) for religious education. It was reported that RE Today had been lobbying government to rectify this. Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre agreed to endorse and sign a letter drafted by Lat on behalf of Wolverhampton SACRE to local Members of Parliament and the Secretary of State to support this effort.

The NASACRE Conference was highlighted and it was reported that it was being held in person this year. It was suggested that a member of SACRE might like to attend as it would be hugely beneficial. Phil Leivers offered to attend as a representative of the Local Authority and SACRE members were encouraged to attend. It was confirmed that there was funding available to cover this and if the SACRE member happened to be a teacher, costs could be covered. An email would be circulated to the SACRE membership to offer the opportunity to attend.

Other items highlighted were the NATRE Spiritual Arts 2022 competition and themes, the RE:ONLINE writing competition as well and a series of links to training opportunities and free resources.

It was raised that a tailored version of the RE Today Report could be cascaded as a newsletter to subject leaders in schools. In response to a query, it was confirmed all information would be shared in RE Network Meetings.

Resolved:

1. That a letter endorsed by Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre be sent to local Members of Parliament and the Secretary of State to lobby for support in funding for RE in schools.
2. That an email be circulated to SACRE membership to encourage attendance at the NASACRE conference.
3. That a tailored version of the RE Today Report be circulated as a newsletter to subject leaders in schools

6 **Westhill Project Update**

Lat Blaylock, RE Today and Phil Leivers, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council provided a verbal update on the progress of the Westhill Project. Phil Leivers reported that two conferences to involve pupils and teachers had been set up, the first being scheduled for secondary schools on 26 May 2022 and the second (yet to be announced) for primary schools.

Lat Blaylock recapped the bid which had successfully secured £4,500 for an RE-based project, the theme for which had been chosen by Wolverhampton schools as

using values in RE to reduce prejudice and racism. Lockdown restrictions had caused some difficulties due to inability to engage in consultation in person, however the project was progressing well.

It was reported that the number of schools currently booked to attend was lower than the number that had expressed an interest, however Phil Leivers reported that efforts were being made to encourage attendance. It was hoped that there would be representation from a wide range of faiths and non-religious world views which would be valuable to informing the report required by Westhill for the next phase of the project.

Lat Blaylock offered to contact RE heads in secondary schools as well to offer places at the conference and also suggested increasing the number of places available for schools already booked on.

Resolved:

That the Westhill Project Update be received.

7 **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**

Phil Leivers, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council delivered the presentation outlining an update on the outcomes of Ofsted visits since the last meeting in October 2022. The schools that had been inspected had all received a rating of 'good' which for some was an improvement on the last inspection and for others a stable result. It was noted that St Stephen's CE and Goldthorne Primary's inspections had been the first since transforming into academies as had Ormiston SWB Academy and Ormiston NEW Academy. It was highlighted that the latter two had made a marked improvement since the last inspection and Councillor Dr Michael Hardcare had written to both.

It was noted that only Claregate Primary School and Ormiston SWB Academy had been subject to a deep dive into RE provision and there was only one comment made specific to RE recorded for Claregate Primary School, although it spoke positively of the teaching approach. Although there had not been many undertaken, the Council were still providing schools with support in preparation for deep dive exercises.

Resolved:

That the Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter be noted.

8 **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**

There had been no visits made since the last meeting of City of Wolverhampton SACRE.

9 **Dates of further meetings**

It was confirmed that meetings would still be held at 6.00 pm in the evening and the next scheduled dates were:

- 16 June 2022
- 6 October 2022
- 9 March 2023

10 **Any other business**

The Chair extended his thanks to Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre on behalf of Wolverhampton SACRE for his contributions and wished him well before closing the meeting.

## Attendance

### Members of the City of Wolverhampton SACRE

Martin Gomberg (Chair)	Representative of the Jewish Community
Tanya Athwal	Representative of Teachers' Professional Association
Ourmala Devi	Uplands Junior School Representative
Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Laura Jude	Representative of CWC
Maggie Keeley	NASUWT Representative
Alison Smith	Representative of the Church of England

### In Attendance

Lat Blaylock	RE Today
Shelley Humphries	Democratic Services Officer
Janine Wright	Prospective Member of Wolverhampton SACRE

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

1        **Welcome and Introductions**

2        **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Members of Wolverhampton SACRE were invited to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair of Wolverhampton SACRE.

Following nominations and elections, it was agreed that Martin Gomberg, Representative of the Jewish Community and Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre, representative of the Local Authority be elected as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. All members of Wolverhampton SACRE present agreed to these elections. It was also agreed that Janine Wright be welcomed to the membership.

Resolved:

1. That Martin Gomberg be appointed as Chair of Wolverhampton SACRE.
2. That Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre be appointed as Vice-Chair of Wolverhampton SACRE.
3. That Janine Wright be appointed as a member of Wolverhampton SACRE.

3        **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Wolverhampton SACRE member Daniel Lee.

Apologies were also received from Phil Leivers.

4 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of 11 March 2021 and 15 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

5 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

6 **Report from Religious Education (RE) Today**

Lat Blaylock, RE Today presented the report from RE Today and highlighted salient points. The report provided an update on RE related matters over the past few months.

Particular attention was drawn to RE public examinations. GCSE entries had been falling therefore a National Plan to address this had been called for by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and the National Association of Teachers of RE. SACRE members were invited to consider how this compared in this LA and how this could be addressed. There had been however an increase in students opting to study RE at A level which had been encouraging.

Also noted were events such as Interfaith Week, taking place from 14 -21 November; Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January 2022 and the annual NATRE Spirited Arts creative competition.

Laura Jude reported that there were new communication platforms for teachers which were being used to share bulletins, resources, etc. It was agreed that the RE report be circulated using this channel.

Resolved:

1. That the Report from Religious Education (RE) Today be received.
2. That RE Today report be circulated to teachers in the City.

7 **Review of City of Wolverhampton SACRE Action Plan 2020 - 2021**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council presented the Review of City of Wolverhampton SACRE Action Plan 2020 – 2021 and highlighted salient points. The report set out progress over the last year and the status of each objective.

The two key areas highlighted were SACRE vacancies and continuing professional development audit. Steps were being taken to fill the vacancies and details of the NASACRE audit would be provided in due course.

The report was commended as a good reflection of a busy year despite the restrictions imposed by COVID-19.

Resolved:

1. That the Review of City of Wolverhampton SACRE Action Plan 2020 – 2021 be approved.
2. That outcomes from the NASACRE audit would be shared with SACRE members.



8 **City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2020 - 2021**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council presented the City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2020 – 2021 and highlighted salient points. The report provided a summary of work undertaken by SACRE over 2020 – 2021 and included the Action Plan for 2021 – 2022 which outlined priorities for the coming year.

Particular attention was drawn to the successful delivery of continued professional development (CPD) for teachers and thanks were extended to Lat Blaylock, RE Today for his ongoing support in this.

City of Wolverhampton SACRE members offered feedback on further support they would like to see. It was noted that there were ongoing challenges for primary teachers and support was needed in strengthening subject knowledge. It was reported that only five hours was typically devoted to RE in teacher training and many teachers had felt this was insufficient. There were similar challenges reported in secondary schools and it was also felt that more lessons could be dedicated to applying learning in RE in the context of the wider world view.

Resolved:

1. That the progress detailed within City of Wolverhampton SACRE Annual Report 2020 – 2021 be approved.
2. That the priorities set out in the SACRE Action Plan for academic year 2021 – 2022 be approved.
3. That the feedback on CPD be noted.

9 **NASACRE Virtual Training Offer**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council provided a verbal update on the virtual training offer provided by NASACRE, further details of which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. It was reported that sessions were now being recorded to make them easily accessible at any time. As NASACRE members, it was noted that Wolverhampton SACRE members had full access to all online training opportunities and were encouraged to take these up wherever possible.

Resolved:

That the NASACRE Virtual Training Offer update be noted.

10 **Westhill Project Update**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council provided a verbal update on the progress of the Westhill Project.

It was reported that the bid for funding had been successful, the project planning was in the final stages and awaiting final internal sign-off. Officers had been engaging with secondary schools to gain an understanding of what was currently being taught and what they hoped to achieve with the project.

It was reported that there was one place remaining if another secondary school wished to participate.

Resolved:

That the Westhill Project Update be received.

11 **Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that there had been some recent inspections however there had not yet been a substantial RE update available.

Resolved:

That the update on Ofsted Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

12 **Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter**

Laura Jude, Representative of City of Wolverhampton Council reported that there were some SIAMS inspections due and outcomes would likely be ready for the next meeting of SACRE.

Resolved:

That the update on Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) and Inspection 48 Findings During the Last Quarter be received.

13 **Any other business**

There was no other business.

14 **Dates of further meetings**

- 10 March 2022
- 19 May 2022

## RE National Updates Spring 2023

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

### Resources

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

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

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



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

#### NATRE Primary Subject leader support pages

Natre have created a new resource the primary subject leader toolkit. This has many resources and links to support your role as Religious Education/ Religion and Worldviews subject leader. All the content detailed and linked in these pages has been written and collated by Primary members of the NATRE Executive and RE Today Advisers.

[www.natre.org.uk/primary/primary-subject-leader/](http://www.natre.org.uk/primary/primary-subject-leader/)

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

##### THE ARTS SOCIETY BIRMINGHAM

##### Birmingham faith visits

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

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

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

## £600 grants for teaching Christianity

The Jerusalem Trust's

### Small Grants to Schools Scheme

Resourcing the teaching of Christianity within Religious Education

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

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

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

## NATRE Spirited Arts 2022 WINNERS!

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

Categories in the 2022 competition included:

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



Mollie (13) - Winner

The competition is supported by the Jo Cox Foundation. This year entrants were invited to develop a creative response to the 2015 quote from the late Jo Cox MP: **"We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us"**.

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

## NATRE Spirited Arts 2023 – new themes announced

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

The 6 themes

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



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

## Training and CPD opportunities and other support

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

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



Although the conference is over all sessions were recorded and schools can buy access to all the recording for only £135 (£115 for NATRE members)

Workshops included:

- Thinking out loud- joining the dots to help children think more critically (Primary)
- Introducing Philosophy and Philosophers to the Primary Classroom (Primary)
- Dharmic Lenses on the Climate Crisis (Secondary)
- Creating a core RE Programme for KS4 (Secondary)
- Interfaith conversations - exploring creative projects that deepen pupils' understanding in RE (Crossphase)
- Special RE (Crossphase)
- Championing and advocating for RE with parents (for SLTs)

To buy access contact [courses@retoday.org.uk](mailto:courses@retoday.org.uk)

### Free webinars for primary and secondary ECTs – a taster for NATRE ECT membership

Early Career Teachers have access to a range of free support through a series of online sessions. 'Café' sessions give you a chance to talk with experienced teachers and experts from different worldview backgrounds. The taught sessions offer expert input with a focus on practical classroom strategies.

Date – All Mondays 4.00-5.30pm	Topic
9 Jan	Taught session: Focus on Non-religious worldviews
13 Feb	Taught session: Focus on Hindu Dharma
13 Mar	Café NATRE – Subject knowledge Judaism
15 May	Taught session: Focus on Multidisciplinary RE
12 June	Taught session: Focus on Sikhi
10 July	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge Christianity

ECT webinars booking link [www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teacher/ect-free-monthly-webinar/](http://www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teacher/ect-free-monthly-webinar/)

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

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

Two conversations are programmed for the spring:

- 20 Feb: 4-00-4.40pm Learning from experiences in Lebanon: diversity, solidarity and safeguarding human dignity
- 20 March 4.30-5.10pm RETOPEA! Promoting religious peace and tolerance through history

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

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

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

Under the leadership of Claire Clinton, Lead Director, a fantastic team of Regional Leads will be supporting ten regions of England and Wales. They have been recruited to build relationships with advisers, dioceses, universities, SACREs, LAs, governors, MATs, teaching school hubs and more. The Regional Leads will also act as conduits between the regional providers of research, CPD, resources, places of worship and so on for the benefit of all RE/Religion and Worldview stakeholders.

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

Details and the list of Regional Leads:

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

## NATRE: new membership packages!

NATRE is the largest membership organisation that promotes, defends and supports RE teachers and RE teaching. It does this through producing high-quality resources and CPD, lobbying government, being involved in conversations with the DfE and Ofsted, Local Authorities and SACREs, telling teachers' stories and experiences and being a voice for all teachers.



Membership packages for students, ECTs, teachers, schools, RE professionals and RE enthusiasts!

Details: [www.natre.org.uk/membership](http://www.natre.org.uk/membership)

## NATRE: welcome webinars for new members

New NATRE members are invited to a monthly welcome webinar. This will help them use their NATRE membership and enjoy it to its fullest!

### What will they learn?

- How to Access NATRE resources
- Access online termly mailing resources
- Access Local Groups area
- Take the best out of the NATRE monthly newsletter
- How to redeem your REtoday library membership
- How to use your membership discount

**Members can register their interest to attend a webinar at this link.**

[www.natre.org.uk/member-login/natre-members-welcome-webinar/](http://www.natre.org.uk/member-login/natre-members-welcome-webinar/)

## Other information

### Research into parent views on Religious Education

In summer 2021, the Culham St Gabriel's Trust (CSTG) commissioned a survey to understand more about public perception of an education in religion and worldviews. In the summer of 2022, CSTG commissioned another survey, this time exploring the views of parents about education in religion and worldviews. In both cases, the language used in the questions was chosen to try to avoid



these misconceptions and to collect a more accurate set of data about what people thought about modern RE.

Some key findings about what parents talk about with their children:

- Around 8 in 10 discuss beliefs about the origins of life and the universe (78%)
- 7 in 10 discuss beliefs concerning what happens when we die (72%)
- 8 in 10 discuss beliefs that affect people's behaviour and decision making (77%)
- 7 in 10 discuss issues related to religious and non-religious worldviews that appear in the media (67%)

Find out more here: [www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/](http://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/)

*How can SACRE capitalise on these findings to further improve RE provision in the LA?*

## Link between study of RS at examination level and positive outcomes for disadvantaged students?

There is a growing body of research linking the study of Religious Education/Studies with improved outcomes for pupils identified as 'disadvantaged'.

This collection of research would suggest that schools that are serious about improving the outcomes for their disadvantaged pupils, should look carefully at their provision for Religious Studies at key stage 4 and 5. Find out more [here](#)

**What do we know about the levels of disadvantage in the schools in our area and their experience of RE?**

## Why does the rate of entry for GCSE RS vary so much around England? Does the 2021 Census provide part of the answer?

In answer to a parliamentary written question asked by Janet Daby MP and **answered by Nick Gibb MP in January**, the minister provided a table ranking each local authority in relation to the number of entries for GCSE Religious Studies in 2022. The range is significant; from 14.4% to 81.0%. Looking for an explanation for this gap, we tabulated the percentage of the population in each local authority that recorded they belonged to a religion in the 2021 Census alongside the average entries for GCSE. The correlation is interesting as you will see by the colour coded shading in the last column. Comparisons between the local authorities entering the most and the least students are worth noting as follows:

An average of 57% of the English population, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

An average of 51% of the population, in the bottom 10 LAs in terms of entries for GCSE RS, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

An average of 71% of the population, in the top 10 LAs in terms of entries for GCSE RS, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

The full table can be downloaded [here](#).

Even though this is correlation and not proven causation, SACREs may like to consider the following:

- How do entries in their LA compare with other LAs in their region and nationally?

- Does the census data provide part of the answer or not?
- Why do some LAs buck the trend implied by the census data – i.e. pupils appear to be more likely to be entered for GCSE RS in areas with a larger proportions of people who identify with a religious worldview?
- Might parental views of what their child should study be affecting curriculum design? See CSTG survey of parents here.
- What are the implications of the answers to these questions for Religious Education in England?

Find out more in the document linked below

[Local Authorities entries for GCSE and census records](#)

## Cross-party calls for RE National Plan after Westminster debate

**London, 01 November 2022:** A Westminster Hall debate heard cross-party calls of support for religious education, as MPs urged the Government to do more to protect the subject, they considered vital for young people in modern Britain.

The debate, entitled ‘Religious Education in Modern Britain’, was called by Conservative MP Martin Vickers who cited concerns about the number of schools fulfilling their statutory responsibility to teach the subject. At year 11, one school in five reported offering zero hours of RE.

[www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/?news=re-in-modern-britain-westminster-hall-debate](http://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/?news=re-in-modern-britain-westminster-hall-debate)

*How do these figures compare with the picture in our LA?*

*What action (if any) should SACRE be taking?*

*Would SACRE like to inform local politicians further about issues facing RE? [This document](#) might support this activity*

## Shortage of Specialist Secondary RE Teachers

We are pleased to have collaborated with Culham St Gabriel’s Trust and our partners in the RE Policy unit on this Policy Briefing on the current shortage of subject specialist secondary teachers for religious education. We hope it will provide a useful source of information about the national picture of recruitment and the arguments we are making to lobby for government action. Please share this document widely.

**[Access the documents here.](#)**

## Minister Admits most Teachers of RE mainly teach another subject

In response to the **parliamentary written question** asked by Janet Daby MP, minister for school standards; Nick Gibb MP admitted that 51% of the total number of secondary teachers of RE spend most of their teaching timetable delivering a different subject. Only 27% of teachers of History, 28% of Geography and 13% of English fall into this category. This statistic lends further support for the call for immediate action to boost the number of trainee teachers of RE after the government, yet again, refused to offer trainees teachers of RE a bursary and, unsurprisingly, recruitment is currently down 32% on last year (22% for all subjects).



NATRE believes pupils deserve better, and that they should be taught by well-trained and qualified teachers. According to the government's own **teacher standards** (3), teachers must "demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge". It is difficult to see how these can be met when the proportion of specialist teachers is so low.

School leaders struggling to recruit RE specialists blame the DfE, especially as they **recently justified the decision**, on the basis that in one single year in the last ten (2020/21), the target was exceeded, conveniently ignoring the fact that it had previously **stated**, "In 2020/21, we saw an unprecedented increase in new entrants to ITT compared to the previous year, which was likely to be a direct result of the impact of COVID-19... "

A school leader in the North of England spoke for many when he described the consequences of DfE policy:

*"I have championed and delivered RE as a compulsory subject from Year 7 to Year 11 for a significant number of years. I have also made it compulsory for all students to sit the GCSE RS examination throughout this time. Unfortunately, the Government did not include RE in the Humanities subjects in the English Baccalaureate and due to a national shortage of RE teachers I have been unable to appoint new staff. Therefore, I do not have trained RE teachers to deliver RE on the scale I have done previously."*

You can find detailed arguments and statistics to support our case for action to support the case for government action including the restoration of bursaries here:

**[The case for ITT bursaries 2023 final](#)**

## NATRE survey of provision for RE in primary schools published

**Key highlights from the survey show:**

- The number of schools where pupils are withdrawn is increasing. 23% of schools report some withdrawal from RE (18.6% in 2020. and 16% in 2018).
- 96% of schools report that they make provision for RE for all pupils in their school.
- More than 40% of teachers report that they received between 0 and 3 hours of training to teach RE in their initial teacher training. 20% received none.
- 63% of schools say some RE is being delivered by adults other than teachers (TAs/HLTAs etc.)
- In 28% of schools, RE receives no budget or no set budget and is 30% less funding than foundation subjects.
- In just under a third of schools (31.5%) insufficient time (less than 60 mins) is being spent on the teaching of RE to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- In 80% of schools, subject leaders receive some training but 25% of other teachers receive none and report reduced confidence.
- In over 30% of schools, time for RE increased and in 30% of these, Ofsted has cited as the main reason: inspection comments, the Framework, or the Research Review in RE.

Read more [here](#) and an infographic [here](#):

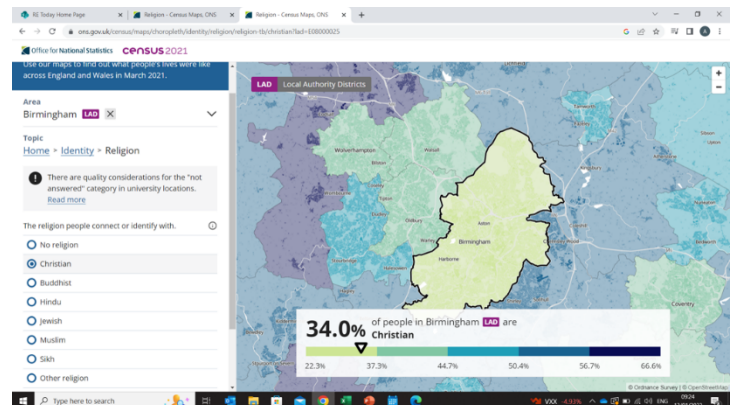
**[To what extent do these findings from primary teachers nationally, reflect the situation in our area?](#)**

## Office for National Statistics publishes responses to the question on religion in census 2021

- 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.
- There were increases in the number of people who described themselves as “Muslim” (3.9 million, 6.5% in 2021, up from 2.7 million, 4.9% in 2011) and “Hindu” (1.0 million, 1.7% in 2021, up from 818,000, 1.5% in 2011).
- Wales had a greater decrease in people reporting their religion as “Christian” (14.0 percentage point decrease, from 57.6% in 2011 to 43.6% in 2021) and increase in “No religion” (14.5 percentage point increase, from 32.1% in 2011 to 46.5% in 2021) compared with England and Wales overall.
- 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”.



Explore our region and the surrounding area

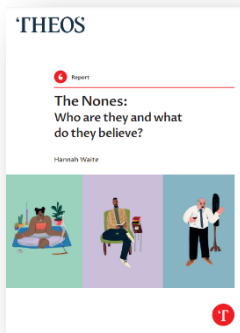
using this interactive online map: [www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps](http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps)

***What are the implications of this census for our Agreed Syllabus and the membership of SACRE?***

***How are the religious and non-religious traditions, including the smaller ones reflected in the membership of our SACRE?***

***How does the data for 2021 compare with 2011? How is our area similar and different to England and Wales as a whole?***

## Theos Report: Who are the Nones and what do they believe?



This report published on 24th November, shortly before the census data above was released explores the demography, beliefs and practices of Nones and then presents a cluster analysis of this group. It shows that Nones comprise a complex and sometimes counter-intuitive group with, for example, only 51% of them stating they “don’t believe in God,” and 42% believing in some form of the supernatural.

Download the full report here:

[www.theosthinktank.co.uk/research/2022/10/31/the-nones-who-are-they-and-what-do-they-believe](http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/research/2022/10/31/the-nones-who-are-they-and-what-do-they-believe)

*What, if any, are the implications of this report for our Agreed Syllabus?*

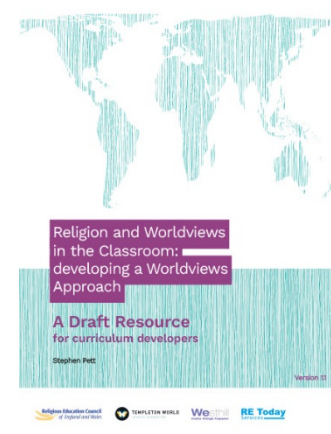
## Draft Resource for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom

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

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

Sections include:

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



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

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

**News updates created for X SACRE by RE Today Services, January 2023**

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