

ITEM 11

National and Local RE Updates for Wokingham SACRE Autumn 2021

NATIONAL UPDATES

Research into public perception of an education in religion and worldviews

In summer 2021, Culham St Gabriel's Trust commissioned a survey to understand more about public perception of an education in religion and worldviews. 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:

Nearly two thirds (64%) of the UK adult population think that an education in religion and worldviews (or RE) is an important part of the school curriculum today, new research has revealed, with a further 65% agreeing that the subject has an impact on people's ability to understand each other in wider society.

Find out more here: [Research into public perception of an education in religion and worldviews \(natre.org.uk\)](https://natre.org.uk)

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

New government minister for school standards acknowledges the value of studying RE for a range of careers

An article from the British Medical Journal, 'Encourage students with a humanities background to become doctors - The BMJ says' was widely shared on social media in the summer. Nikki Nabavi and Callum Phillips who wrote the article are both medical students, and claim, in their article, that studying humanities subjects at advanced level has had far-reaching impact in shaping the skills needed to become the doctors they hope to be. They specifically illustrate how studying religion and ethics helped hone essential skills, knowledge and competencies. NATRE thought it would be helpful for government ministers to hear these views so RE Today CEO, Zoe Keens wrote a letter to them, drawing attention to the article. This response was received in which the new minister for school standards; Robin Walker MP says:

I am grateful to you for bringing the article featured in the British Medical Journal to our attention. It was encouraging to read about the benefits that can be gained from teaching RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, not only in developing pupils' skills but also affording them the opportunity to move into a wider range of careers.

We appreciate your continued work with the RE community and your efforts to highlight the importance of RE for pupils, not only in school, but in later life too.

Religious Studies: Public Examinations

Call for National Plan as Religious Studies GCSE entries fall

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England and Wales has fallen slightly in 2021, despite previously remaining stable since 2017. To safeguard the subject, the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and the National Association of Teachers of RE are calling for a National Plan, as recommended by the Commission on RE in 2018, to be funded by Government.

In England, RS GCSE entries for the full course fell by 2.4 percent to 221,419 compared with 226,767 in 2020. In Wales, entries rose by 3.6 percent from 9,997 in 2020 to 10,358 in 2021. Overall entries in England, including both full and

short courses, fell by 3.4 percent to 237,091, compared with 245,544 in 2020. In Wales, combined entries fell by 5.4 percent from 15,436 in 2020 to 14,583 in 2021.

By comparison, GCSE entries to other humanities increased this year, with Geography entries up 4.1 percent to 274,715 and History up 0.8 percent to 286,706.

Hundreds more opt for Religious Studies at A-level in 2021

The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has increased 6.1 percent year on year. The subject outperformed other A-level subjects as a whole, which increased by 5.1 percent, with a greater increase than most other humanities subjects. Read NATRE's full press release here: [A Level results media release FINAL v2 10-08-21.pdf \(natre.org.uk\)](#)

*How do these figures compare with the picture in our LA?
What action (if any) should SACRE be taking?*

Inter Faith Week 2021

Inter Faith Week 2021 takes place from **14-21 November** 2021, led by The Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN). Inter Faith Week is important for promoting mutual understanding and respect between those of different faiths and beliefs.

This year Inter Faith Week starts on Remembrance Sunday and ends the following Sunday. For details about the week, the best place to look is the [Inter Faith Week website](#) which contains a rich bank of resources for those wishing to hold events. A [new section](#) has been created for schools. It contains bespoke materials for both [Primary](#) and [Secondary](#) schools that are designed to support the delivery of a locally agreed syllabus. There is also a [Golden Rule](#) poster on eleven different faith traditions, to download for display in a classroom or meeting room. SACREs are asked to register any Interfaith Week events here: <https://www.interfaithweek.org/events/submit>. For event ideas or further information, please contact Dr David Hampshire, Assistant Director of the Inter Faith Network, at david.hampshire@interfaith.org.uk.

Spirited Arts: NATRE's annual competition for creative RE

Once again, in the 17th year of its work, the Spirited Arts competition has had over 25 000 entries nationwide and some stunning winners are available to view on the NATRE web gallery where themes for the next competition are also announced. There are 5 themes:

- "We have more in common than that which divides us." (Jo Cox MP, in association with the Jo Cox Foundation)
- God's good earth? ("Beautiful World, wonderful God?") An environmental theme in RE
- Searching for God
- A view of the world. Connecting to current ideas about worldviews
- Celebrations: Big days and big ideas

How could we encourage our schools to take part in this?

NATRE are providing online recorded training about the competition and schemes of work for primary and secondary schools to use to engage with the opportunities. It runs for the full year till 31/7/22.

Here's the link: (SACRE can see a PPT of winning entries if they wish)

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2021/>

Holocaust Memorial Day 2022

Holocaust Memorial Day is 27 January. SACREs, LAs and schools can find a wide variety of resources on the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust \(HMDT\)](#) website. The Trust is keen to encourage schools to mark HMD, especially at a time when hate crime, intolerant/extremist views, anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hate is increasing.

The Trust also commends **Generation to Generation (G2G)**, a charity that provides speakers to tell their

family Holocaust stories online or face-to-face to a variety of audiences. Through these engaging and historically accurate presentations, integrating first-hand survivor testimony, **G2G** works to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust are learned, promoting tolerance of all groups in society.

To consider how **G2G** can support SACRE or your schools and to book a speaker, visit <https://www.generation2generation.org.uk> or book onto a free introductory event for educators: <https://www.generation2generation.org.uk/news/events/>

*How does SACRE support events such as Interfaith Week and Holocaust Memorial Day?
Could we be doing more?*

NEW2RE - A great opportunity for NEW Secondary RE teachers

Will you be a secondary Early Career Teacher in September 2021? If so NATRE's New2RE is the best support RE teachers can get.

For further information on the benefits of joining the programme as well as how to join click on this link: [NEW2RE - A great opportunity for NEW Secondary RE teachers \(natre.org.uk\)](https://www.natre.org.uk/new2re)

How can SACRE raise awareness and support teachers with access to CPD and networking opportunities?

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

The Church of England Education Office (CEEEO) has announced that SIAMS inspections will resume in the Autumn term 2021 (from 1st October 2021). SIAMS inspections were paused in March 2020. A new national team has been appointed to manage the restart and schedule inspections in the future. More information, including a list of schools likely to be inspected in the academic year 2021-2022, can be found here: [SIAMS Inspections | The Church of England](https://www.ceeoo.org.uk/siams-inspections) .

National CPD and networking opportunities

Farmington Scholarships

Teachers of RE, and now headteachers can now apply to becoming Farmington Institute scholars. Scholarships are free and cover is paid for up to 30 days to release the teacher for studying. More information can be found here:

[Farmington Scholarships – Farmington Institute](https://www.farmingtoninstitute.org.uk/scholarships)

NATRE Strictly@Home RE national conference - 29 & 30 January 2022

Strictly RE is back! NATRE will be hosting its national annual conference online for your convenience and peace of mind while still giving you everything you love about Strictly RE without having to leave your home. To find out more and to book a place, follow this link: [Strictly RE 2022 – RE teacher conference with practical CPD \(natre.org.uk\)](https://www.natre.org.uk/strictly-re-2022)

BSA Socrel Chair's Response Day: Teaching Religion

This event will gather new ideas, experiences and critiques of the state of the teaching of religion in the UK today. It will take place on 12 November 2021 (10am–5:30pm) at University of Nottingham (on campus) Bookings are now open. Find out more here: [BSA SocRel Study Group Response Day - November 2021 \(britsoc.co.uk\)](https://www.britsoc.co.uk/socrel-response-day)

#REChatUK twitter forum

Occurs the first Monday of every month in term time.

The next one is 4 October 2021: What do we mean by substantive and disciplinary knowledge in RE?
Please save the date in your diary. You can view the timetable here: [#REchatUK \(natre.org.uk\)](https://twitter.com/REchatUK)

Buddhist Resources: A request for help

Culham St Gabriels is asking for assistance from members of the Buddhist community with project to produce resources

Dr Kate Christopher writes:

"A former Teach:RE student who is a Buddhist is working on a website for teachers to access resources on Buddhism. She has given us this text and link to a survey.

We are a group of teachers and Buddhists who wish to translate our knowledge and experience in teaching Buddhism to children and teenagers into useful resources for others. This [short survey](#) aims to find out what would be the most helpful. We are seeking to build a picture of the needs regarding Buddhism, of those working in the area of teaching religion and ethics in schools.

*We are grateful for your input and ideas.
All the best,
Amalee Rycroft and colleagues*

Resources

What's Your Worldview?

Here is a video clip to help teachers and leaders of RE understand the concept of 'worldview': [WHAT'S YOUR WORLDVIEW? \(QUIZ\) - YouTube](#)

Check out the REtoday Library website

This fantastic resource lets you explore all our REtoday magazine content on a searchable, indexed website.

There is no quicker way for you to find inspiring, practical RE lesson ideas and more.

NATRE members get **FREE** access to Professional REflection articles and can **SAVE £10** off the annual subscription.

[Home » REtoday Online Library \(retodaylibrary.org.uk\)](https://retodaylibrary.org.uk)

Gender and Religion Today: School Resources

Woolf Institute has developed an online course Gender and Religion Today and related age-appropriate materials for teachers searching for new, accessible materials to support classroom teaching across UK national curriculum.

They centre on a new series of short videos, offering a fresh way to teach and consider religion through the lens of gender.

Find more details here: https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/outreach/education/gender-and-religion-today-school-resources?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=professional_natre_members_newsletter_with_download_september_2021&utm_content=2021-09-22

Research for RE

RE:Online has had a bit of a refresh - check it out and access some of the latest research online. Don't miss 'Research of the Month' featuring a different piece of research each month. Visit the website: [Research of the Month - RE:ONLINE \(reonline.org.uk\)](http://Research of the Month - RE:ONLINE (reonline.org.uk))

Visiting a Mosque: a free resource for teachers

Teachers can now access the free online resource pack, *Visiting a Mosque*, by following this link: www.visitmymosque.org/for-re-teachers

The pack is intended to support and empower RE teachers in organising and delivering school visits to places of worship, such as mosques. There are also signposts to “virtual” mosque tours included in this pack as an additional resource and to increase familiarity and confidence when organising in-person visits.

How can SACRE ensure that teachers are aware of and have access to access to good quality teaching and learning resources to support RE in its schools?

LOCAL UPDATES

Wokingham Autumn Festival of RE CPD

Teachers and leaders of RE in Wokingham are currently being an exciting programme of twilight CPD, generously funded by Wokingham SACRE

Inspiring RE Conference

The NATRE Inspiring RE Conference took place on 13th October in Milton Keynes, hosted by the NATRE RE Ambassador for the Central South region, Sarah Payne. More than 20 teachers attended the event, at which workshops and talks took place, given by prominent RE advisers and scholars of Religious Studies at the Open University.

Real Faith: Real People

Anne Andrews, in her role of Pan Berkshire Hub leader continues to make links with local places of worship and is using additional funding to produce more videos for classrooms that will show the diversity of faith for real people across Berkshire.

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