



SACRE NEWS

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Autumn 2023

RE and Collective Worship news and updates for teachers and governors

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SACRE FOR 2023-24

Welcome to a new academic year, with all the promise that a new year holds. Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE has an ambitious forward plan, and this newsletter will set out some of the proposals. The Agreed Syllabus review is beginning, and the Agreed Syllabus Conference would like to hear your opinions on the [current syllabus](#). What do you like? What do you think needs to be changed? What can be added to it? Is the range of religions suitable? Should there be topics or big questions?

Please ensure that you give feedback on the [syllabus](#) not on any schemes of work that you use, as they are not part of SACRE's remit.

SACRE is keen to find out what is going well with RE and collective worship in schools across the borough, and later in the newsletter you will find information about some self-evaluation audit tools that have been produced and are being trialled.

SACRE would also love to hear about what is going well in RE teaching or Collective Worship. Some members of SACRE may be available to come and have a look at what you are doing, or you could send in an article to showcase your work.

One of the key things that SACRE does is to fund a variety of training for RE leaders and teachers.

SACRE FUNDED CPD

RE NETWORK MEETINGS FOR 2023-24

Thursday 19 October 2023: 4 – 5.30pm on Teams

In this session we will look at the current Locally Agreed Syllabus and gather your ideas on what it might look like moving forward. We will also be sharing the audit tools that SACRE has developed and have feedback from schools that have been trialling the tools.

Wednesday 7 February 2024: 4 – 5.30pm on Teams

Please suggest topics that you would like to discuss that are relevant to you. This may also include a chance to look at the draft syllabus if the Agreed Syllabus Conference has made significant progress with the review.

Tuesday 11 June 2024: 4 – 5.30pm on Teams or in person

Resource sharing and/or work monitoring as appropriate.

To book places on these free sessions, please contact Elaine Norstrom
(elaine.norstrom@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Every year RE Today and NATRE organise a national conference on the last weekend of January. The last couple of years this has been an online event, which gives delegates access to recordings of the sessions for the following year. This event is an opportunity to meet with RE professionals, teachers, and researchers from across the country, and is suitable for all key stages. In previous years, RBWM SACRE has offered bursaries of a maximum of £100 to contribute to the cost of national training for up to 10 teachers. If you intend to book, please contact [Clive Haines](#) before you book, unless you are prepared to fund the course yourself if the 10 places have already been taken. Other training courses may also be subsidised, but please seek approval before applying.

More information will be available soon on the NATRE and RE Today websites.

RE NETWORK: SHARING SESSION

The summer term RE network meeting took place at Furze Platt Infant School, where delegates shared resources and asked questions about how others tackle difficult issues. Delegates heard the experience of undergoing a Deep Dive in RE. The following notes and questions that had been asked by the inspector were shared:

The process scrutinises RE Overviews and skills progression matrices and compares the information on them to what is taught in the children's books. Have examples of planning ready to show. The inspector looks through children's books, observes an RE lesson and asks children questions. Children from a range of year groups are selected by the Ofsted inspector from a list (schools do not get to choose) and interviewed without a teacher present.

Here are some of the questions that an Ofsted inspector may ask of an RE leader:

1. How do you support SEND children?
2. How do you extend the more able?
3. How do you make sure each pillar of Islam is taught in depth?
4. How do you know what children have retained?
5. How do you differentiate between key concepts and knowledge?
6. How do visits to places of worship, help the children?
7. How do you incorporate RE into other subjects/cross curricular?
8. How long have you been the school RE Lead?
9. Do you follow a scheme?
10. How do you share CPD/good practice with other staff?
11. How do you show progression?
12. How do you decide which religions you teach?
13. How do the children retain their knowledge over the years?
14. How do you ensure the scheme you are following is executed fully, to ensure all knowledge is taught over the years?

If you have experience of a Deep Dive in RE, others would love to hear from you, so please consider writing a short article for the next edition of this newsletter.

There was much discussion about curriculum, with) those present using a range of resources to construct their schemes of work. Commercially produced schemes need to be adapted to a school's vision and context. The sequencing of the curriculum is one of the most important things that the RE leader needs to be able to explain, and there need to be ambitious end points. This means that leaders need to evaluate the scheme to be chosen to ensure that it will deliver what the school intends.

The newly developed audit tool, based on the RE Quality Mark criteria was shared, including the version that is being tested for EYFS. Delegates gave feedback and the teachers who are involved in the project have taken the ideas and the new tools will be shared at the next RE network meeting, when further work has been carried out.

NATRE and RE Today resources were shared, particularly the curriculum books that can be purchased even where schools do not subscribe. The primary curriculum books are a mixture of thematic and worldview specific, so that schools can find just the right resource. There are lessons ideas for EYFS through to Y6 in each of the primary books and the [RE Today online catalogue](#) is the best place to find the details.

SOLUTIONS NOT SIDES

Offering a critical approach to education on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, [Solutions Not Sides](#) aims to tackle Antisemitism, Islamophobia and polarisation around the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the UK. The RE leader at Desborough School has recent experience. This is what he says:



I first heard about the work of Solutions Not Sides at the NATRE annual conference, Strictly RE. Impressed by the positive reviews from a number of schools, they were booked to work with our Year 12s. Their Mission and Values matched our experience of their speakers, facilitator and support materials:

Solutions Not Sides is an education programme that exists to provide humanising encounters, diverse narratives and critical-thinking tools in order to empower young people with the knowledge, empathy and skills to promote dialogue and conflict resolution, and to challenge prejudice in the UK.

The programme enables students to see those affected as fellow human beings, helping them to understand and embrace the complexity of the problem, and empowering them towards seeking solutions. The first two sessions are delivered by school staff and the materials and guidance are exemplary. After reading the instructions and slides, and watching the film clips, a teacher can feel surprisingly confident dealing with intricate and emotive issues around the history of Israel and the principles of conflict resolution. The third session is led by a facilitator who oversees a live link to Israeli

and Palestinian presenters. After learning about their lived experience, students ask them directly questions that have been mounting over the three sessions.

BAHA'Í – A DIFFERENT WORLDVIEW

In the Bahá'í Faith there is no clergy or priesthood. Authority lies instead in divinely-ordained elected institutions, at the local, national and international level.

The Bahá'í electoral process is unique. There are no nominations and no campaigning. Each Bahá'í casts their ballot in an atmosphere which is prayerful and focussed on service.

Every five years, Bahá'ís from across the planet, the elected members of the National Spiritual Assemblies in each country, gather at the Bahá'í World Centre on Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel for the election of the international governing body of the Bahá'í Faith, the Universal House of Justice.

In May 2023, more than 1,400 Bahá'ís, from more than 170 countries, travelled to Haifa for the 13th International Convention. It is a uniquely diverse gathering of representatives of the peoples of the world, together for a sacred purpose.

Extensive coverage of the International Convention, including images and videos, can be found on the Bahá'í World News Service [website](#), for instance, here:

28 Apr 2023 [Delegates spiritually prepare for sacred responsibility](#)

29 Apr 2023 [Representatives from 176 countries cast ballots to elect Universal House of Justice](#)

2 May 2023 [13th International Convention: Consultations inspire new hope for humanity's future](#)

This year, an introductory film was commissioned for a reception in Haifa for civic leaders and leaders of faith communities, to explain the purpose of the International Convention (they are aware that their city is the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, so they are used to seeing Bahá'í staff and pilgrims, but the International Convention is a very special event for the city). The video (7 mins), which is entitled *Summons To Service*, can be found [here](#). There is more on the reception [here](#).

RESOURCES

If you use any of the resources mentioned below, it would be great to have a review.

Please note that Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE does not offer an endorsement of any of the resources listed. Please use your professional judgement to decide whether these materials are suitable for your school.

REAL PEOPLE, REAL FAITH

RBWM SACRE, in conjunction with the Pan-Berkshire SACRE hub, and funded by a NASACRE/Westhill Award is pleased to announce that the most recent films in the [Real People, Real Faith](#) Series are now available on the NATRE website.

Humanist, Baha'i and Buddhist films have now been added to the collection and so offer teachers the opportunity to engage their pupils in a wider range of religions and worldviews.

For each worldview there are six films – two for each of KS1, KS2 and KS3. Each film is accompanied by a brief introductory document.

The full list of films is as follows:

Baha'i
Buddhist,
Christianity – Anglican, Baptist and Catholic.
Hindu
Humanist
Islam – Sunni and Shia
Jewish – Orthodox and Reform
Sikh



Filmed in locations across Berkshire, mostly in places of worship, these films explore some of the key features of these traditions, offering a wide diversity of voices within each worldview.

Build them into your planning and let SACRE know how you use them.

SPRINGS DANCE COMPANY



Several schools have recently had sessions from Springs Dance company. Have a look at the website to see if one of this term's sessions would suit your school.

"Thank you for doing that amazing lesson with us. I loved it!" - Pupil, Seabrook school

This term Spring Dance company are offering **Creation**, **The Christmas Story: Refugee** and **Bethlehem Bound**. Further details can be found at <https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/index.php/join-in/schools-workshops>

To book and to find out more please email touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or call **07775 628 442**.

This company, headed up by an expert in RE at Foundation Stage, offers a wide range of resources and support material for the early years.

[11 comprehensive planning units](#) covering a wealth of RE topics and over 33 practical pupil activities @ £45 (or £4.99 each)

[A Wet and Windy Harvest for Puddles](#) story book with accompanying soft toy characters, explores how and why Christians celebrate harvest - making this an essential resource for the Autumn term. eBook @£13.99

[Puddles and the St Francis Service](#) big book story sees Puddles and her family enjoying the St Francis Service. (4th October) Two feline visitors arrive unexpectedly leaving everyone wondering where they have come from and who they belong to... Will they find a home?! @ £17.99

[Puddles and The Christmas Play](#) big book is a must to use with Early Years pupils at this time of year. Puddles longs for a part in the Christmas play but will she get one?! Big book @ £17.99

[Puddles](#) – the adorable cuddly soft toy cat to thoroughly engage the children. @ £16.99 plus VAT

[Belonging and Believing](#) My Family books are a must have series exploring 8 worldviews for all year round RE! @£14.99 each or Set of 8 @ £110

[NEW Video and PowerPoint Resources and Teacher's Guide](#): @£35 (per each worldview)

Christianity:

Introduction to Vesper and her family video

6 PowerPoints: 1. Vesper and being kind 2. Vesper and her special times for worship 3. Vesper and things that are special to her 4. Vesper and how the world began 5. Vesper and the natural world 6. Vesper and her dedication ceremony

Humanism:

Introduction to Wilf and his family video

6 PowerPoints: 1. Wilf and this one life - be happy 2. Wilf and the importance of family and friendship 3. Wilf and a humanist baby naming ceremony 4. Wilf and how the world began 5. Wilf and how humans came to be part of the natural world 6. Wilf and the natural world (*This resource is also available on the Humanism for Schools website free of charge*)

Introduction to Nia and her Bahá'í family video @ £7.99 and Introduction to Yusuf and his Muslim family video @£7.99









[Curriculum planning support documents](#) linked to the respective curriculum for England, Wales or Scotland @ Free to download.

<https://www.re-hubs.uk/>

A new website has been launched which is intended to become a one-stop shop window for all things connected with RE. You can find faith speakers, places to visit, information about local groups and national training. It's in its infancy so some sections are a little sparse still but keep checking for updates!



[Home](#) [Hubs](#) [Calendar](#) [Upskill](#) [Get Involved](#) [About](#) [Contact](#) [Search](#)

Hubs  Find your hub location	Calendar  Courses and events	Local groups  Find local groups	Places of interest  Find places of interest
School speakers  Find school speakers	ITT/ECT & NQT  Access our support area	News & blogs  Read latest news & blogs	Get involved  Register to be featured

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

A new academic year is always a good time to take a fresh look at what is happening in school. Collective worship is one of those areas that can get quite stale. What are you going to do this year to ensure that collective worship inspires pupils and enables them to grow spiritually?

Below are some questions that can be used to audit collective worship:

1. Are the acts of collective worship (CW) different from other activities in the school day?
2. Is collective worship happening daily for every pupil?
3. How much variety is there in the content and format of worship?
4. What contribution does CW make to school life? Are vision and values reinforced?
5. Does CW allow experiences of times of quiet?
6. Do pupils hear music from a range of times, places, and cultures?
7. Do pupils hear stories and words from religious and /or other literature which suggest that there is more to life than meets the eye?
8. Are there opportunities for pupils to become more familiar with Christian traditions?
9. Are religious or value-based materials used?
10. Does worship encourage reflective and analytical thinking?
11. Is there opportunity for pupils to engage their minds? Does it have an application to their lives?
12. Do pupils have their ideas and beliefs confirmed or challenged?
13. Do pupils share times of joy and times of sadness? Do they reflect upon ideas of beauty?
14. Do pupils explore the range of talents and gifts found within the school community and beyond?
15. Does worship encourage a positive and responsible attitude to the world and encourage service to others and the community?
16. Is CW appropriate for all pupils and staff to attend?
17. Are any pupils withdrawn from CW by their parents? If so, how many?

The above are some of the questions from the Windsor and Maidenhead collective worship audit that SACRE would love teachers and governors to try out. Are there any questions missing? Have you got resource recommendations? There's so much available commercially, but it is not all high quality, or appropriate for every context. What do you use that fits your vision, values and context?