

## Rutland County Council

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

A meeting of the **RUTLAND SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)** will be held as a Virtual meeting via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/93432637282> on **Tuesday, 6th July, 2021** commencing at 4.30 pm when it is hoped you will be able to attend.

Yours faithfully

Mark Andrews  
**Chief Executive**

Recording of Council Meetings: Any member of the public may film, audio-record, take photographs and use social media to report the proceedings of any meeting that is open to the public. A protocol on this facility is available at [www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/have-your-say/](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/have-your-say/)

### **A G E N D A**

**1) APOLOGIES**

**2) A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION**

We gather together here today intent on doing good work.

We seek to represent fairly and well, those who have given us this task.

May our efforts be blessed with insight, guided by understanding and wisdom.

We seek to serve with respect for all.

May our personal beliefs give us strength to act honestly and well in all matters before us.

**3) RECORD OF MEETING**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Rutland SACRE held on 27 April 2021 (previously circulated).

**4) MATTERS ARISING**

**5) REPORT FROM NASACRE CONFERENCE**

To receive a verbal report from Cllr Powell and Revd McWhirter.

[2021 papers and materials | NASACRE](#)

**6) ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

To receive a progress update from Cllr Powell.

**7) SACRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020-22**

To review the SACRE Development Plan 2020-22.

**8) OFSTED REPORT MAY 2021**

To receive a verbal report from Mrs Fitton on the highlights of the recent Ofsted report.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-publishes-research-review-on-religious-education>

(Pages 5 - 14)

**9) TRAINING AND NETWORK MEETINGS**

To receive an update from Mrs Fitton.

**10) MONITORING OF RE IN SCHOOLS**

To receive a verbal report from Ms. Papworth, Education Development Lead.

**11) AGREED SYLLABUS FROM SEPTEMBER 2023**

i. Next steps – introduced by Mrs Fitton

ii. Initial discussion on world views - led by Revd Dr Holmes

(Pages 15 - 22)

**12) ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

**13) DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12 October 2021.

**DISTRIBUTION**  
**MEMBERS OF THE RUTLAND SACRE (STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION):**

<b>GROUP A – Representatives of faiths (other than Church of England) and world views</b>	
Ms A Cahn	The Jewish Faith
Ms R Gibson	The Baptist Church
Mr A Hull	Humanists UK
Mr A Menzies	The Roman Catholic Church
Mr G Singh	The Sikh Faith

<b>GROUP B – Church of England Representatives</b>	
Mrs S Barrett	Rutland Deanery
Rev P Holmes	Peterborough Diocese
Rev J McWhirter	Peterborough Diocese

<b>GROUP C – Teacher Representatives</b>	
Mrs M Davis	National Association of Head Teachers

<b>GROUP D – Local Education Authority Representatives</b>	
Cllr R Powell	Rutland County Councillor
Cllr L Stephenson	Rutland County Councillor

<b>Local Education Authority Officers</b>	
Ms G Curtis	Head of Learning and Skills, RCC
Mrs A Fitton	SACRE/RE Advisor, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland
Mrs J Morley	Interim Governance Manager, RCC
Ms L Papworth	Education Development Lead, RCC

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# Highlights of the Ofsted report

Ofsted publishes research review x +

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News story

## Ofsted publishes research review on religious education

Ofsted has published the second in a series of reviews into different subjects across the curriculum. This review looks at religious education (RE).

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From: [Ofsted](#)

Published 12 May 2021

In the spring term of 2022, we will be publishing a report on the quality of RE curriculums taught in schools. We will gather the evidence for this through subject 'deep dives' during inspections under the EIF.



## 1. Teaching should be grounded in academic study

Ofsted say what is taught and learned in RE should be “grounded in what is known about religion or non-religion from academic study”.

Schools should maintain “high expectations about scholarship” in the curriculum as this helps prevent pupils from developing misconceptions about religion and non-religion, they said.

There should also be a consideration of when pupils should relate content of the lesson to their own personal knowledge for example to challenge prior a:

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**2. Cover content ‘collectively enough’, rather than ‘superficially’**

The curriculum should cover substantive content and concepts “collectively enough”, rather than simply covering “excessive amounts of content superficially”.

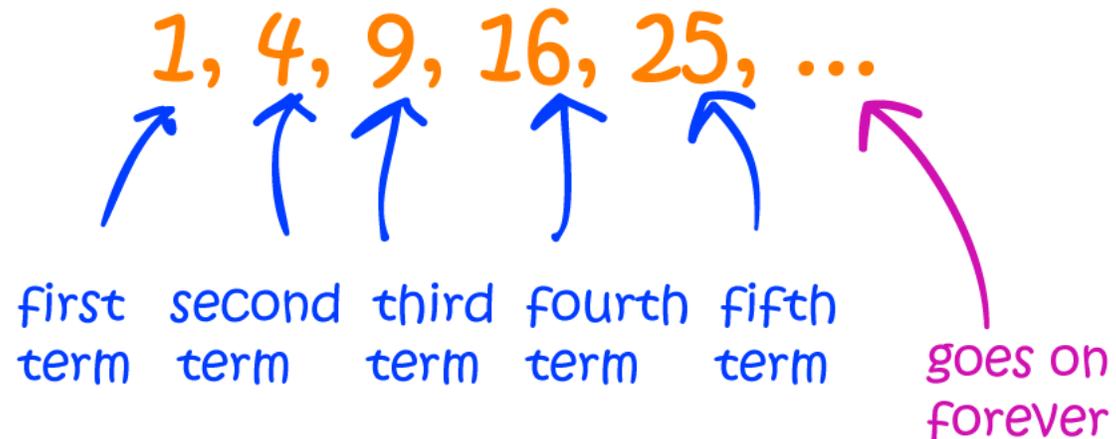
Ofsted say that the content covered should allow pupils to “grasp a bigger picture” of the place of religion and non- religion in the world. Representation of both religious and non religious traditions should be as “accurate as possible” so that pupils do not develop misconceptions.

### 3. Well-sequenced curriculum key for dealing with sensitive topics

The schools watchdog advises schools to have a well-sequenced curriculum that prepares pupils with the prior knowledge they need for subsequent topics. This includes content, concepts and vocabulary.

“The importance of this is very clear in the case of controversial and sensitive topics”, Ofsted states.

Sequence:



#### 4.Pupils should learn the ‘ways of knowing’

The research conducted by Ofsted suggests it would be “more useful and constructive” for teachers to plan for pupils to learn ‘ways of knowing’ which are specific to different content.

“For example, they can learn how to know the extent to which particular beliefs are widespread, or suitable tools for interpreting religious texts, or the criteria for valid arguments in analytic philosophy”, Ofsted explains. Such an approach helps prevent “over-simplifying or stereotyping religion” and “brings to light a variety of perspectives, positions and voices”.



## 5. Assessments should not be “excessively onerous” on teachers

Ofsted states that leaders should ensure assessments are “not excessively onerous for teachers”. There should also be professional development opportunities for staff which allow them to reflect on how different assessments frame expectations and engagement. The research review found it is important the different types of assessment are used appropriately. For example, formative assessment can help identify gaps in knowledge but are less useful when judging how the curriculum as a whole has been learned and remembered.



## **6. Sufficient time must be allocated to RE**

In order to deliver an ambitious RE curriculum there must be sufficient time allocated to its teaching.

Ofsted warns problems can sometimes emerge when RE is “too weakly classified”. At secondary level this may be if RE is delivered through tutor times or in rotation with other subjects.

These approaches “limit the quality of RE” and mean there is not enough time for “teachers to deliver a curriculum of ambitious scope”.

Pupils also benefit when they are taught by subject -specialist RE teachers.



All Schools should review their existing curriculum and keep what they consider to be outstanding and strong RE.



## **Agreed Syllabus from 2023**

### **The RE commission report**

#### **Background**

##### The RE Council and NATRE Report

- In a report published in 2017, the National Association for RE teachers (NATRE) reported that more than a quarter of England's secondary schools did not offer Religious Education, in contravention of the law.
- The report, produced in association with the Religious Education Council for England and Wales (REC), was based on previously unpublished data obtained from the Department for Education under Freedom of Information law. It said that overall, 26% of secondary's were not offering RE lessons.
- Among academies, which make up the majority of secondary schools, more than a third (34%) were not offering RE to 11 to 13-year-olds and almost half (44%) were not offering it to 14 to 16-year-olds.
- NATRE warned that as more schools became academies, those figures could increase. It said the data showed a shortage of specialist RE teachers throughout the state system. The research was carried out in partnership with the RE Council for England and Wales.
- In response, the main union for secondary head teachers, the Association of School and College Leaders, said many schools covered religious issues in ways other than RE lessons, such as conferences, citizenship classes or assemblies.
- In 2019, NATRE published another report based on a survey of 663 schools in England. This suggested 50% of Academy schools in England and almost 40% of community schools did not offer Religious Education, in contravention of the law. For GCSE students in years 10 and 11 the situation was worse, with up to 64% of students receiving no Religious Education.

#### **Commission on Religious Education**

Established in July 2016, the commission was asked to make wide-ranging recommendations to overhaul Religious Education in England, and to review the legal, education and policy frameworks for the subject in all primary and secondary schools and further education colleges. It was set up by the Religious Education Council for England and Wales, but operates independently and produces its own reports and recommendations. The Rev Dr John Hall, Dean of Westminster, was appointed chairman.

In September 2018, the commission published its report. Its key recommendations were as follows:

- A new National Entitlement for Religious Education. This would clearly set out for the first time the aims and purposes of RE and what students should experience in the course of their study. The commission proposed that RE should enable pupils to understand the relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions in political, public, social and cultural

life, and how worldviews are “inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience”. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice.

- Schools should be held to account for the provision and quality of RE they offer. All schools, including free schools, academies, and schools of a religious character, should publish details of how they meet the new National Entitlement, and inspectors and other approved bodies would have the power to monitor RE to ensure a minimum standard.
- A National Plan for improving the teaching and learning of RE – along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education – which brings together the Commission’s recommendations for improving teacher subject knowledge. The nine draft proposals for the plan include a minimum of 12 hours devoted to RE in all primary initial teacher training courses; the opportunity for all primary trainees to observe RE teaching in a leading school for RE; and the requirement that teachers “demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews”.

In response, in December 2018 the Education Secretary Damian Hinds said he would not pursue the recommendations at that time, as schools were already dealing with other education reforms and one of his priorities was to reduce teacher workloads. He had also received concerns that including ‘worldviews’ risked diluting the teaching of RE.

### **The Clarke Woodhead report**

- In July 2018, former Education Secretary Charles Clarke published a pamphlet claiming Religious Education in schools was outdated and should be replaced with a new subject, Religion, Belief and Values.
- Along with co-author, Prof Linda Woodhead of Lancaster University, he said the syllabus for the new subject should be determined nationally, rather than at local authority level.
- The report said there had been significant shifts in the UK since the 1944 Education Act, when Britain was a predominantly Christian country, in that a majority of people now said they had no religion, and there were parts of the country where people of other religions formed a significant part of the population.
- The report also called for the right of parents to withdraw their children from RE classes to be scrapped. And it said daily collective worship of “a broadly Christian character”, a legal requirement under the 1944 Act, should be replaced with a requirement for all state-funded schools to hold a “regular assembly or act of collective worship in keeping with the values and ethos of the school and reflecting the diversity and character of the school community”.
- Clarke and Woodhead also proposed changes to the admissions criteria of faith schools to broaden their intake. The children of families which followed a particular faith should continue to be given priority for admission to schools of that religion, but the proportion admitted on faith criteria should be reduced. (A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools).

- The report was condemned by a prominent Roman Catholic bishop, who said it had “little regard” for the Catholic Church, and that its recommendations were “unacceptable”.
- Bishop Marcus Stock of Leeds, the lead bishop for Religious Education on the bishops’ conference, said the report would “dictate” what the Church could teach in Catholic schools, and that it treated religion as a purely sociological matter. (Catholic Herald 18 July 2018)

### **22nd August 2019:**

The number of pupils in England and Wales taking GCSE Religious Studies full course has fallen for the third year in a row, down 1.6% against 2018 to 237,862. In addition, the number of pupils in England and Wales taking the short course GCSE in Religious Studies has fallen even more sharply, down 19.7% from last year to 27,384. When the entries for the full course and short course GCSE are combined, the picture is of significant decline in the number of pupils taking a qualification in Religious Studies.

The number of students taking Religious Studies A level has also declined. Figures show a drop of 5.1% in 2019 and 22.8% in 2018.(Religious Education Council)

### **20<sup>th</sup> August 2018:**

The Number of pupils taking Religious Studies at A level in 2018 slumped by 22.8 % – the lowest number since 2008.

18,422 candidates took Religious Studies A level in England and Wales in 2018  
254,618 took Religious Studies GCSE in 2018, a drop of 10.1% from the previous year, according to the Joint Council of Qualifications Examination

### **Religious Education Council (REC) 2020/21**

The REC is running a project to support conversations in the RE community exploring the concepts of Worldviews in religious education. A series of debates and discussions was had through the summer of 2020 discussing the concept of world views which seemed to bring up more questions than answers. Part of their conclusion being;

‘A shared understanding of what worldview means in RE and how that understanding can be effectively taught to students is crucial if the RE community is to move forward, as it will allow them to decide how best to implement the recommendations set out in the CoRE report (2018). The review team invite readers to engage with the questions above in order to advance meaningful discussions about the place and role of worldview in RE/R&W’.

### **Links to the different discussions**

[Exploring Worldviews - REC Discussion Papers | The Religious Education Council of England and Wales %](#)

[Layout 1 \(commissiononre.org.uk\)](http://commissiononre.org.uk)

[NATRE Report on the provision for RE -SWF for SOTN 2017 final4 130917.pdf](#)

[Layout 1 \(faithdebates.org.uk\)](#)

## **REFORMING RE<sup>1</sup>**

### **POWER AND KNOWLEDGE IN A WORLDVIEWS CURRICULUM**

This book is a series of reflections on the Commission on Religious Education (2018)<sup>2</sup>

The commissioners made 11 recommendations, which are below:

#### **THE COMMISSION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION<sup>3</sup>**

1. A name change to Religion and Worldviews (R&W).
2. A National Entitlement statement, describing pupils' entitlement to curriculum content offered offered by qualified teachers, which should become statutory for all publicly funded schools.
3. Non-statutory programmes of study, interpreting the National Entitlement, to be written by a national body of professionals, including practising teachers.
4. A legal amendment to remove the requirement on local authorities to produce agreed syllabuses.
5. When GCSE and A level specifications are next reviewed, this should be done in the light of the National Entitlement.
6. All initial teacher education for R&W should be based on the National Entitlement and should have a feasible amount of time allocated as a minimum.
7. Funding for professional development to deliver the National Entitlement.
8. **A legal amendment to SACREs into Local Advisory Networks for R&W, with a more inclusive composition and a wider remit.**
9. Ofsted and faith-based inspections should report on whether schools are meeting the National Entitlement.
10. A reconsideration of the impact of school performance measures such as the EBacc.
11. A review of the right of parents to withdraw their child from RE.

The contents of **REFORMING RE<sup>4</sup> POWER AND KNOWLEDGE IN A WORLDVIEWS CURRICULUM**

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<sup>1</sup> Chater, Mark, *Reforming RE Power and in a Worldviews Curriculum*. Woodbridge, John Catt, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Commission on Religious Education (2018)

<sup>3</sup> Commission on Religious Education (2018) *Religion and Worldviews: the way forward. A national plan for RE*. London: RE Council.

<sup>4</sup> Chater, Mark, *Reforming RE Power and in a Worldviews Curriculum*. Woodbridge, John Catt, 2020.

## Structure

There are:

- 11 contributors.
- 14 chapters:
- Part 1 *The Fall of RE*, 5 chapters,
- Part 2 *The Rise of Worldviews* 9 chapters
- In Part 1 The contributors agree with the general statements made in the Forward
- In Part 2 There is no general agreement about the solutions to the problems raised.

## Forward<sup>5</sup>

‘There is a huge mismatch between statutory expectations for Religious Education and classroom realities.’

‘RE in English schools is in a lamentable state, and this book explains why and how change can happen.’

‘Most worrying situation pupil entitlement: a quarter of secondary schools reported in 2018 that they provided no dedicated curriculum for the subject, 800,000 pupils not receiving legal entitlement to learn about religion and worldview’

## PART 1 THE FALL OF RE

Challenge 1: Address the failure to create a credible academic rationale.

Challenge 2: Liberate the subject from the political and economic control of belief communities and other producer interests.

Challenge 3: Ensure the subject’s design is both broad and deep, managing its complex and contested content effectively while creating space for neglected areas.<sup>6</sup>

## PART 2: THE RISE OF WORLDVIEWS

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<sup>5</sup> Mary Myatt, *Reforming RE*

<sup>6</sup> Alan Brine and Mark Chapter 1, *How did we get here?* p.21

The history of RE: the foundational history of RE is the Butler Act (the 1944 Education Act) where it says, ‘a measure of avowedly Christian stewardship: advanced by a Christian minister, passed by a Christian parliament, directed towards the goal of creating a truly Christian population’.<sup>7</sup>

From the beginning, academic expectations were not set. RE was never an academic or critical intellectual project. The original aim of Religious Instruction was to mature children into Christianity.<sup>8</sup>

What do we mean by worldviews?<sup>9</sup>

Immanuel Kant<sup>10</sup> is credited with coining the word weltanschauung, arguably it is from the Berlin philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833 - 1911) that we derive the strongest roots of ‘worldview’ as an epistemological and hermeneutic concept. Dilthey built upon Kant’s ideas about identifying certain objective knowledge and applied it to the social and human sciences. Since knowledge in the human sciences necessarily uses interpretation, Dilthey believed that it must take account of its context in history and culture. Thus he came to the theory that one must stand outside of one’s own worldview and one’s own inherited assumptions, seeing and naming them as one perspective among others. It is mainly to him that we owe the idea of a worldview as a comprehensive account of our existence and of the world, a constructed belief system, one among several.<sup>11</sup> His ideas went on to influence early phenomenology as well as psychoanalysis.<sup>12</sup>

I chose the previous two extracts from the book to illustrate the tension, which the book reflects, between faith and reason. The first view gives priority to faith; in the second view reason is first. The book argues that RE should join humanities in the search for understanding through detached reason. It is reflecting our time and culture.

Below is an extract from chapter 13

SACREs must change or fade away

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<sup>7</sup> Green, S. J. D. (2000) ‘The 1944 Education Act: a Church-state perspective’. *Parliamentary History* 19 (1), p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.161.

<sup>9</sup> Mark Chater and Luke Donnellan Chapter 7, *What do we mean by worldviews?* p.115

<sup>10</sup> Immanuel Kant, Prussian philosopher (1724 - 1804).

<sup>11</sup> Makkreel, R. and Rodi, F. (eds.) (2010) *Wilhelm Dilthey: selected works, volume 2: understanding the human world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Mark Chater and Luke Donnellan Chapter 7, *What do we mean by worldviews?* p.116.

In the commissions vision of the future (Recommendation 8), SACREs would become Local Advisory Networks for Religion and Worldviews (abbreviated to LANs). The LAN would no longer be required to convene agreed syllabus conferences and develop locally agreed syllabuses; but they would be encouraged to develop programmes of study and supplementary materials for use within and across their local authority boundaries, preferably within the parameters provided by a statutory national programme.<sup>13</sup>

As well as the change of name and duty regarding syllabuses, the Commission has also proposed a highly desirable end to the SACRE system of having four groups that each have a single vote on a SACREs decisions. One of the groups is reserved for Church of England representatives, who thus have a veto over any decisions. Another is for all the other religious communities in the area; however many there may be, they still have only one vote between them! A third group is for teachers' associations, and final one is for the local authority. Instead it is proposed that the new LAN consists of five groups:

- teachers of R&W from all phases, including higher education
- school leaders and governors
- ITE and/or CPD providers
- school providers including local authority, multi academy trusts, dioceses, etc.
- religion, belief and other groups that support RE in schools or wish to do so (this might include local museums and galleries as well as religion and belief groups).

Although the Commission does not propose a new system of voting on any decisions made by LAN, an immediate consequence of the new structure would be to end the Church of England's privileged position on SACREs. In addition, the proposal to change membership of the 'other religions' group to 'religion, belief or other group that supports RE in schools' means that non-religious Humanists can be included as a matter of course, rather than having to resort to technical and legal arguments for inclusion on the grounds of equality.<sup>14</sup>

Revd Dr Peter Holmes AKC

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<sup>13</sup> Commission on Religious Education (2018) *Religion and Worldviews: the way forward. A national plan for RE*. London: RE Council. p.17

<sup>14</sup> Chater, Mark, *Reforming RE Power and in a Worldviews Curriculum*. p. 209.