

Havering SACRE, December 3rd 2019

National RE updates

First OFSTED reports published

The new OFSTED framework came into force at the beginning of September
www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-inspection-framework#handbooks-and-framework

The framework emphasises the importance of the broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils in all school types. As the first inspection reports under the new framework are released it is pleasing to note that inspectors are reporting where improvements are needed in RE, or where it is being taught well.

During the new-style OFSTED inspections, inspectors look at particular subjects closely, known as a 'deep dive' into the subject. RE can be chosen as a subject for a deep dive. However, recently published reports act as a reminder of how even when RE isn't the focus of a deep dive a lack of provision will be picked up.

NATRE has been monitoring what the first reports say about RE. The results of the monitoring can be found here:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/Ofsted%20update%20-Religious%20Education.pdf> (secondary)

<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/what-are-primary-school-inspection-reports-saying-about-religious-education/> (primary)

NATRE only publish extracts of reports and don't publicly name the schools concerned. The aim in publicising this information is for all schools to understand the importance of RE rather than to identify individual schools.

What could SACRE do?

Massive improvement in recruitment of trainee teachers of RE

Based on the UCAS figures, nationally there are 505 trainee teachers of RE placed or conditionally placed which, when compared to **2018**, is an increase of over 100 trainees. This will be the best recruitment figures for RE in a very long time! This is crucial because it has the potential to improve the percentage of lessons of RE taught by specialists. That figure has remained stubbornly low for many years and can clearly have an impact on outcomes for pupils.

What could SACRE do?

Welsh consultation

This term, the Welsh Government has consulted on key potential changes to the teaching of Religious Education (RE). The reforms up for consultation include a potential change of the name of

the subject to 'Religions and Worldviews' and the ending of the right of parents to withdraw their children from RE lessons.

The proposed name change might be to indicate a more inclusive description of RE. However, the Commission on RE recommends the name to be changed to "Religion and Worldviews" rather than "Religions and Worldviews".

The consultation is open until 28th November and can be found [here](#).

What could SACRE do?

Discovering Sacred Texts: a new online resource

Discovering Sacred Texts is a new free British Library online learning resource, inviting visitors to explore the world's major faiths through the Library's extensive collection of sacred texts.

Available to all, the new website includes over 250 digitised collection items, teachers' resources, short films and articles written by academics, faith leaders and practitioners, library curators and cultural leaders.

Texts range from some of the best-known and most beautiful manuscripts of the scriptures of various world religions, to an extensive collection of printed editions, both early and modern, including selections from over 100 texts that are newly digitised and available online for the first time.

Discovering Sacred Texts provides access to the richness and diversity of the texts from the world's great faiths. Designed for Religious Education students, teachers and lifelong learners, it features the six most-practised faiths in the UK - Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism - as well as a number of other faiths including the Baha'i Faith, Jainism and Zoroastrianism. Highlights include:

- A copy of the *Lotus Sūtra* in a lavishly decorated scroll from Japan, written in gold and silver ink on indigo-dyed paper dating back to 1636, which will also feature in the Library's upcoming *Buddhism* exhibition
- The earliest surviving copy of the complete New Testament, Codex Sinaiticus, which dates from the 4th century
- The *Ramayana*, an epic poem ascribed to the sage Valmiki, composed in Sanskrit in the middle of the first millennium
- The Ma'il Qur'an, one of the very earliest Qur'ans in the world, dating back to the 8th century
- One of the earliest surviving manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible from the 10th century
- The Prayer Book of Rani Jindan, a manuscript including three hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib, prepared in the early 19th century
- Tablet written by the Bab, co-founder of the Baha'i Faith in the 19th century

At present, this is suitable for secondary schools, but primary resources will be added early in the new year.

What could SACRE do?

Local RE updates

Exhibition and competition

SACRE's exhibition inspired by the BBC year of Beliefs was held at the Appleby Gallery at Frances Bardsley Academy on 25th and 26th September. The exhibition featured stalls and displayed a number of pupils' entries to Havering SACRE's RE and art competition. After this, the artworks were moved to a new display in Hornchurch library.

SACRE received over 150 entries to this year's RE and art competition and will be judging the winning entries at its meeting on 3rd December.

Subject Leaders' meetings

This term's Subject Leaders' Network meeting was held at Harrow Lodge Primary School. Many thanks to Louise Byrne and the staff at Harrow Lodge for hosting. Teachers shared their approaches to teaching units 1.4 and 2.14 from the syllabus as these have been two of the most difficult to teach. The adviser also shared some activities that could be used during these units including work on stories from Islam, dilemmas, use of traditional Christian and Jewish texts and silent discussion.

Next term's Subject Leaders' meeting will be held at Ardleigh Green Infants on 28th January. The Subject Leaders and adviser have decided that the focus should be on what might be inspected of an RE Subject Leader in an OFSTED inspection.

Professional development package for teachers

HSIS is running a CPD series entitled Curriculum Matters during this academic year, offering subject specific CPD for primary schools. For each subject included, HSIS will provide three Subject Leaders' Network meetings, one Curriculum Development Day and one Subject Knowledge Enhancement Day. RE is part of this package. The whole day's training on Curriculum Development took place on 21st November at CEME. This day focused on Ofsted, the HSIS curriculum model, planning (including long, medium and short term planning), quality of delivery and outcomes for pupils. The Subject Knowledge Enhancement Day is scheduled for 6th February.