



Virtual Visits and Visitors in RE

Virtual conferencing protocols for religious buildings

Please note that all virtual conferences will take place using Zoom.

Before the meeting:

You will be contacted by any school who wishes to join a virtual conference. Please try to respond to the school within 72 hours to arrange a time that is mutually suitable.

The virtual conference will take place from the place of worship, who will be the host for the Zoom meeting.

Each virtual conference will require a host and a co-host from the religious building, so ensure that both are free and will be in the place of worship at the required time.

If possible, at least one host should have a DBS.

Please send the school the meeting ID and password via email well in advance of the meeting; do not send them to or share them with anyone other than the school. Ensure that the meeting ID and password are randomly generated.

Make sure you have a wifi signal!

Ensure that you can use Zoom in the room of your religious building that you want to broadcast from. It is useful to have minimal background noise. Enable your waiting room.

Disable 'join before host' so that participants do not enter the meeting before you.

Disable 'participant annotation' in the screen sharing controls.

If you are running Zoom from the app, use the most up to date version as this will have the newest security features.



On the day of the meeting:

Position the device in front of you at eye level, ensure lighting is good enough that you can be seen clearly (you may wish to experiment by moving the device and light sources such as lamps to help), look at the camera rather than the screen to help pupils feel you are talking directly to them.

Make sure that participants go to the Zoom waiting room before entering the meeting. Only allow a participant to enter if you can see their name displayed as that of the school, teacher or class.

Once you have allowed the class to enter, lock the meeting so that nobody else can join. Do this by clicking 'lock meeting' in the participants pop up.

Ensure that your microphone is muted when you are not speaking.

It is helpful for pupils to have positive dialogue with people from a range of faith and belief backgrounds within their RE lessons. So give pupils the chance to ask questions and respond to the information you give as you would if you were physically in the classroom.

Hosts (and co-hosts if they are joining in with the presentation and discussion) should be willing to share their own experiences and beliefs whilst avoiding criticising those of others or imposing their views upon pupils in any way. Virtual conferences should be educational rather than promotional about faith and belief backgrounds.

Do not share screen unless you have everything closed on the device except for Zoom and the screen(s) that you wish to share. Sharing privileges should be set as 'host only'. If the class needs to share something with you, ensure that the member of staff from the school has given permission. You can then allow this in the host controls.

You may find it useful to assign the logistics (eg locking the meeting, allowing participants to enter) to the co-host, leaving the host free to focus on the pupils and their learning.

If at any point you feel as if the host, co-host or members of the school community are being made unsafe through the virtual conference, the meeting should be halted. This must be done immediately, there will be no time to say 'goodbye' to the class.

After the meeting:

Expect feedback from the school's perspective. This can be very helpful in letting you know what has gone well and where improvements can be made.

These protocols are for those religious buildings in Havering listed at <https://secure2.sla-online.co.uk/v3/Resources/Page/15417> who are holding virtual conferences with Havering schools.

