

REFocus Issue 9 Summer 2022

Welcome to issue 9 of REFocus. SACRE members have been so impressed by the work and commitment of school teachers and leaders in these very challenging times and pass on our heart-felt gratitude to you all for the continued work you are doing to provide religious education to the children and young people in our schools. We hope that you had a good, well-earned break over the half-term holidays.

The review and development of the new agreed syllabus 2022-27

The Oxfordshire Agreed
Syllabus for Religious
Education
2015 - 2020



Work on the Agreed Syllabus has been seriously affected by the impact of Covid. We anticipate that the final version will be available in January 2023. We had very little response to the survey monkey questionnaire sent out in Dec 2020, but the views of the writing panel of teachers have informed developments.

Changes will be minimal, reflecting the need for continuity, but we have also taken the impact of Religion and Worldviews into account to ensure that pupils' views and experiences are taken into account.

Schools should continue with the current syllabus until the launch and training for the new syllabus.

SACRE's role: Monitoring RE and collective worship

Part of SACRE's statutory responsibility is to monitor RE and collective worship in schools. As part of this, we are embarking initially on a review of school websites to see how schools are publicising their provision for an RE curriculum. The [DfE guidance](#) for maintained schools (up-dated in Feb 2021) makes clear that a school website must include:

Curriculum - You must publish:

- the content of your school curriculum in each academic year for every subject, *including Religious Education even if it is taught as part of another subject or subjects, or is called something else.*



- the names of any phonics or reading schemes you're using in key stage 1.
- a list of the *courses available to pupils at key stage 4, including GCSEs*.
- how parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum your school is following.

This is also a requirement of Free Schools and Academies:

Academies should publish:

- the content of the curriculum your school follows in each academic year for every subject, including for mandatory subjects such as Religious Education, even if it's taught as part of another subject or subjects or is called something else

SACRE is seeking to identify where good practice exists, where support and encouragement are needed and how to meet the needs of teachers and schools. We will also be sending out a questionnaire to schools to assist in this. This is likely to be to secondary schools in the first instance, followed by primary schools. It is important that all pupils receive their statutory entitlement to RE, and that we all work together to ensure that this is of a good quality.

If you have any questions or suggestions about this, please contact our Adviser, Bill Moore bjvmoore@aol.com to discuss.

In the academic year 2023-24 we will focus on collective worship, identifying need and providing support.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2023

The graphic features a purple header with the text 'Holocaust Memorial Day 2023 Theme vision'. Below this is the title 'Ordinary People' in orange. A quote by Elie Wiesel is written in a cursive font: 'What is abnormal is that I am normal. That I survived the Holocaust and went on to love beautiful girls, to talk, to write, to have toast and tea and live my life - that is what is abnormal.' The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust logo is in the top right, with the tagline 'Learning from genocide - for a better future' below it. The name 'Elie Wiesel, survivor of the Holocaust' is at the bottom.

27th Jan 2023 Theme: Ordinary People

The theme is challenging and increasingly important in the 21st C. You can access more information on the website [here](#) and download the pdf [here](#). It would be great if schools could mark this day through collective worship, the curriculum (not just RE) and any ways suggested in the HMD [materials](#). If you do, please let SACRE know, ideally with a photo, and we can share and celebrate your work.

The Archbishop of York's Youth Trust



The Arch-Bishop of York's Youth Trust was established by the former Archbishop of York, John Sentamu with a clear vision for the role of young people in the world.

" Never before has it been so important for our young people, **regardless of their background or faith**, to discover the life skills of compassion, patience, self-control, gentleness and leadership. The Youth Trust is helping to raise a generation motivated by such virtues. Our work with schools enables young people to fulfil their individual potentials, develop key skills, and, through youth-led social action, foster a desire for justice that will transform lives and communities."

Archbishop Sentamu



Working to develop character and leadership, the ABYYT provides training for staff and workshops for pupils. There is a Leadership Award for pupils in all Key Stages.

To find out more about how you can support pupils to develop in leadership and character through the Young Leaders Award Programme and see their up-coming events, visit their website [Archbishop of York Youth Trust](http://www.archbishopofyorkyouthtrust.org.uk)

Developing RE: resources and CPD

The most important investment a school can make for its pupils is in the professional development of its staff.

REQM



REQM is a highly prized validation of quality RE in a school and ranges from Bronze – Silver – Gold. For more information and how to apply, visit [REQM/how to apply](http://www.reqm.org.uk/how-to-apply) SACRE is keen to promote REQM as a means to help improve RE not just in those schools that apply but also through them to support other

schools across the county. If you are interested, please do apply and if possible contact Bill Moore (bjvmoore@aol.com) so that SACRE can celebrate and share your achievement.

Farmington Scholarships 2023-24

It may seem a long way off, but this is something well worth thinking about for your professional development in 2023.

Who is eligible?

The Scholarships are for head teachers who wish to undertake research into values and standards in schools, school leadership, school improvement, or religious education; teachers of Religious Education and associated subjects in UK secondary schools and primary school RE co-ordinators or other primary school teachers involved in teaching RE, and teachers of children with Special Educational Needs who are involved with RE. Applicants should have completed at least two years in their present post.

Applications for the academic year 2023-34 will open in **October 2022**. These are absolutely brilliant CPD opportunities for RE teachers. For more information and how to apply, go to: [Farmington scholarships](#)
The closing date will be **31st Jan 2023**



School speakers and support from Humanists UK are available for primary and secondary schools, including the resource 'Understanding Humanism'. They are offering online 'visits' whilst the Covid-19 pandemic prevails. All this is provided for free. This will help to support the agreed syllabus and also recognise the importance of non-religious worldviews. Please click [here](#) to access the information. Their website offers a range of resources for pupils [Humanists UK/students](#) and information for teachers [Humanists UK/teachers](#)



RE:Online offers excellent resources, CPD and courses for teachers at all stages in their careers. If you have not already done so, it is well worth visiting [REOnline](#) for knowledge, leadership and CPD, and [REOnline/Early career](#) for early career development in Religion and Worldviews.

In particular, they offer specific tutored courses [REOnline/free self-study](#)

And for those of you who want to expand your leadership skills beyond one school, supporting other schools in a network or a MAT, see their leadership programme [REOnline/leadership programme](#)

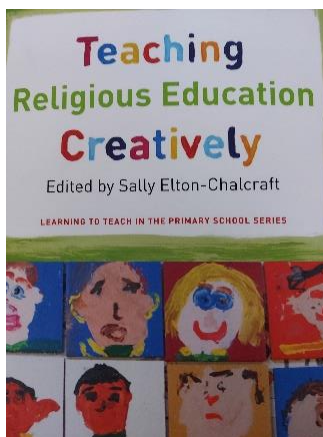


Gideons Bibles transformed

This re-branded resource provides free Bibles and visits to schools. Having consulted with [NATRE](#) over how best to work in and with schools, Good News for Everyone can offer free resources and visitors, school assemblies and classroom lessons. Find their website [here](#).



BeSpace is a Christian charity based in Oxfordshire that equips churches to run prayer and reflection spaces for their local schools and in the wider community. Although a Christian charity, it recognises and works with children and young people of all faiths and none. Further information can be found [here](#).



A Good Read: Teaching Religious Education Creatively

Ed. Sally Elton-Chalcraft Routledge 2015

An excellent book bringing theory and practice together. Creativity is about creative thinking, and this book looks at how important this is in RE and how it can be encouraged and developed in the classroom. It is packed full of practical things teachers can do, as well as challenging us to think about the value of RE and what kind of RE we can have in schools. I would recommend this very highly to all primary teachers, but also to secondary teachers who want to broaden their understanding of RE in primary schools.

School visits and visitors

Have you taken your pupils on a trip to visit a place of worship? Or invited in a visitor to share their faith, beliefs and/or way of living? These visits and visitors add a rich and stimulating dimension to the

