



# CUMBRIA SACRE NEWSLETTER

## Autumn: 2020

(Twitter @CumbriaSACRE #CumbriaSharingRE)

**“Our aim is to enrich the quality of learning in R.E. and Collective Worship for all pupils in Cumbria”:  
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

*Cumbria Updates, National Updates, Resources & CPD, Forthcoming Events*

### Cumbria Updates:

#### Funding Success for Cumbria SACRE



**CDEC**  
Cumbria as a Beacon  
of Global Citizenship

Cumbria SACRE are delighted to announce they have been successful with a funding bid to Culham St Gabriel’s Trust.

This joint application with Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) will see the start of a new 2 year project to develop a safeguarded virtual platform for RE visitors to schools in Cumbria and ITE students at the University of Cumbria. The project will link with relevant themes from the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus and be guided by the needs of teachers. Further details about this project will soon be available on the CDEC website and be introduced as part of the RE Teach Meets.

#### Updated Units of Work

Cumbria SACRE RE Agreed Syllabus Support for Teachers through Planned Enquiry		
Unit title: What can we learn from religious texts? Age Group: 9 - 13		
		June 2020

The Cumbria SACRE Units of Work for primary have all been updated over the summer term. Revisions include: additional teaching and learning activities; updated assessment section; new enquiry section; streamlined resources section and revisions made through a lens of greater diversity and inclusion e.g. *What can we learn from religious leaders?*

There are also two new Units of Work suitable for KS2 and KS3. *What can we learn from religious texts?* is an outcome of the Westhill Trust funded Buried Treasure Project. In addition, we have further developed the Unit of Work *Can charities change the world?* All Units of work take into account the increased need and opportunity for using digital platforms e.g. *What can we learn from visiting sacred spaces?* All of these Units of Work are on the Cumbria SACRE [website](#) or available in the files section of the RE Teachers in Cumbria (closed) Facebook group.

We sincerely welcome feedback from these Units of Work. Huge thanks to Wendy Ridley and Jane Yates for extensive work on this during the summer term. Our next update will be to the Cumbria SACRE EYFS Units of Work.

## Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

### Inter Faith Week – 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November

Six representatives from Cumbria SACRE produced a series of 3-5 minute 'Talking Heads' for use in school during Inter Faith Week. These included representatives from Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Humanism, Islam and Judaism. Teacher representatives on Cumbria SACRE piloted these across their own schools, giving valuable feedback as a preliminary exercise for the Culham St Gabriel's Project.



Questions included: *What does it mean to live a religious life? How does your religion or worldview impact on your daily life?*

Head of RS at Dowdales School, Victoria Bunter said: *"Talking Heads has been an amazing way to interact with students over a digital platform. They have had the opportunity to learn about different Faiths from 'real people' in the local community of Cumbria."*

Head of RS at The Queen Katherine School, Katherine France said: *"We were able to use the 'Talking Heads' across the school during Inter Faith Week, not only in RS lessons. They gave a really personalised and local reflection for our students. A fantastic resource for future use too!"*

A huge thanks to newly qualified RE teacher, Lou Bee from Dallam School who produced an excellent Inter Faith Week Quiz based on celebrities. It was wonderful to see this stimulating resource being shared between schools in Cumbria through the RE Teach Meet network. If you would like a copy of this resource, it is filed on the RE Teachers in Cumbria (closed) Facebook group or you can email [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com)

### RE Teach Meets

Opening up a virtual space for RE teachers to meet with others across the County has continued during the autumn term with meetings in both September and November for separate primary and secondary groups. Topics discussed include: Effective starter activities for secondary teachers as they face greater transition between year group 'bubbles'; Knowledge organisers for RE; Inter Faith Week ideas; Anti-racist RE.

If any teachers would like to join the RE Teach Meets, please join the RE Teachers in Cumbria (closed) Facebook group or email [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com) to be included on the mailing list. These sessions are facilitated by NATRE RE Ambassador, Katherine France [katherine.france@queenkatherine.org](mailto:katherine.france@queenkatherine.org)

The next session for secondary will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January at 4.30pm. The next date for primary TBC.

## Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

### Black History Month 2020 in Cumbria

Members of Cumbria SACRE and RE teachers from across Cumbria attended online events as part of Black History Month.



These included: Race 2B BAME conference hosted by [Multicultural Cumbria](#) and the University of Cumbria. You can watch the inspiring keynote presentations [here](#).

Later that day, a third of schools and key organisations in Cumbria attended the powerful Race and Education event hosted by [Anti-racist Cumbria](#). You can watch highlights from this event [here](#).



The following week, [AWAZ](#), the BAME organisation for Cumbria hosted a fascinating and illuminating event and discussion around Black History and the Anti-Slavery movement in Cumbria. You can find out more information about this [here](#).

Students and staff from The Queen Katherine School took part in a TV piece with ITV Border News. You can watch the powerful piece [here](#). This TV piece would make an excellent staff meeting discussion stimulus.

This term NATRE has launched a new Anti-racist RE national project which includes a comprehensive resource selection for primary and secondary schools. Please see the new resources section at the end for more information.

### SACRE Members Presentation to NASACRE

Cumbria SACRE members, Karen O'Donoghue and Jane Yates were honoured to be asked to make a presentation at the National Association of SACRE Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) this term. Along with Lambeth SACRE, they showcased the development and outcomes of the Buried Treasure Project to SACREs from across the country. If anyone would like to read the final report for this project, you can download from the [Cumbria SACRE website](#).

### Cumbria SACRE Annual Return for RE and Collective Worship 2019-2020

A huge thanks to over 100 primary school headteachers from across the County who completed our survey in the spring distributed by officers from LIS via school clusters. This is important feedback for Cumbria SACRE in terms of planning future CPD and the Cumbria SACRE development plan. We are keen to make contact with subject leaders for RE/RS in secondary schools so we can carry out a similar survey. If you are not already on the RE Teach Meet mailing list, please contact [katherine.france@queenkatherine.org](mailto:katherine.france@queenkatherine.org)

## National Updates

### The Religious Education Council (REC)

( [www.religioueducationcouncil.org.uk](http://www.religioueducationcouncil.org.uk) , Twitter: @RECouncil, Instagram: [religioueducationcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/religioueducationcouncil) )



### Religious Studies A Levels:

Religious Studies A- Level entries compare well against other humanities. The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has declined at a lower rate than other humanities in 2020, performing better than some subjects despite a backdrop of overall declining entries and changes to the examination system.

15,692 RS A-level entries were recorded in England and Wales this year, compared with 17,490 in 2019. Although this represents a decline of 11.5%, it compares favourably with Geography (down 16.2%) and History (down 15.1%). For a more detailed explanation and statistics see: <https://www.religioueducationcouncil.org.uk/news/news07-20-2/>

### Project on Worldview:

The REC is in the middle of a major project on 'worldview' as a follow up to the Commission on RE. So far this has produced an academic literature review, which will soon be available on the REC website. This has been followed by a series of five consultation events in June involving 13 leading academics. The aim of this phase was to provide a robust academic underpinning for using worldview in RE. These position papers will then feed into the final stage of the project, which is a major consultation with all REC members. This consultation will last through to March 2021.

### RE Quality Mark

The RE Council of England and Wales has published the new criteria for the REQM award in both English and Welsh. These will be used for awards from September 2020. However, in the light of ongoing school closures and the national emergency (COVID19), the REC will run awards using legacy criteria (available on the REQM web site) until 1st January 2021. If a school applies for the award for the autumn term 2020, they can make a choice of criteria during the application process.

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### The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

(Twitter: @NASACRE, [www.nasacre.org.uk](http://www.nasacre.org.uk) )

### NASACRE Statement from Acting Chair:

The NASACRE community is aware of the incredible work taking place in schools, in local authorities and their SACREs, and in the wider education community to make sure that pupils and students continue to receive a religious education. It might be called Religion and Worldviews, Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics, Religious Education (RE) – or something completely different - but the intentions are usually the same, and requirements haven't changed.

## National Updates (Continued)

(NASACRE continued)

### **Groupings for Collective Worship:**

There has been discussion with some schools and with SACREs about groupings for Collective Worship – the guidance says that any groupings already in place within a school can be used for Collective Worship – traditionally, this has been interpreted to mean the whole school, key stage groups, year groups and individual class groups. In the present circumstances, other groupings such as ‘bubbles’, ‘pods’ etc formed by schools to manage appropriate social distancing could also be included in this list. This is in accordance with the legislation (Schedule 20 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998). The DfE view is that this gives schools a lot of flexibility to conduct CW in any grouping that they think appropriate.

### **Inter Faith Network for the UK:**

Mr Paul Smalley, nominated by NASACRE, was recently appointed as a Trustee for the next four years for the Inter Faith Network(IFN). NASACRE is a member of IFN UK in the membership category Educational and Academic Bodies (<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/members/list>). If SACRE members would like The IFN’s bimonthly bulletin can be received by subscribing to it at: <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-e-bulletin> .The current bulletin and previous bulletins can be downloaded from the same webpage.

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### **The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE)**

(Twitter: @NATREupdate, [www.natre.org.uk](http://www.natre.org.uk))

### **NATRE Statement on GCSE & A Level Results (from August 2020):**

NATRE has made a statement regarding the 2020 examination results. Two extracts from that statement are:

*“The mess the government has found itself in was entirely of its own making, and it has taken too long to respond to the many genuine concerns about the outcomes of this year’s A level and GCSE grading. Nobody doubts the difficult position the government was in when confronted by the effects of a pandemic, but they ought to have liaised more with the teaching profession to ensure that students were not put in such stressful situations”*

And:

*“The decision to revert to centre assessed grades is good news for pupils receiving their GCSE grades today. However, this U-turn has caused an enormous amount of distress and disruption to students, in particular those A-level students who may have missed out on their first-choice university. These students deserve every support possible at this challenging time.”*

## National Updates (Continued)

(NATRE continued)

### **Government response regarding schools and RE:**

NATRE was pleased to see that Nick Gibb MP, Minister for schools, has given a clear and fulsome answer to a question from Luke Pollard MP regarding schools and RE.

NATRE note from his answer that he restates that;

- State-funded schools in England have a duty to teach religious education to all pupils aged 5 to 18 years
- Where pupils do not choose Religious Studies as an examination subject, the requirement to teach religious education still applies.
- An agreed syllabus can stipulate that pupils follow an accredited qualification such as GCSE

He also clearly says that in the reopening of schools Religious Education is one of the subjects that should be taught.

For more detailed information see <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/schools-minister-reiterates-schools-duty-to-teach-re-to-all-pupils-aged-5-18/>

### **Productive Meeting with Shadow Minister:**

NATRE, the RE Council (REC) and RE Today had a very productive meeting with the Janet Daby MP on 12th October 2020. They learned that the Shadow Minister, who is the MP for Lewisham East, had served on Lewisham SACRE and was fully conversant with the issues surrounding the subject. Following the meeting, she entered the ballot to ask an oral question in parliament and was successful. For more details and a video of this meeting please see:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/shadow-minister-for-faiths-janet-daby-mp-asks-the-minister-for-education-nick-gibb-mp-a-question-about-re/>

### **GCSE stability for 2020:**

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England and Wales has remained stable in 2020 despite ongoing challenges, reflecting the relevance of the subject and its popularity among young people. For more detailed and statistical information on this please see this link

<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/religious-studies-gcse-proves-its-relevance-as-entries-hold-firm/>

### **Parental complaint about RE:**

NATRE was approached by a parent who was dismayed that discrete lessons in RE were being replaced by a combined life skills style programme and wanted to challenge the academy about it. The link below is to a chart that sets out the two year journey towards the re-establishment of RE at the academy. NATRE hopes that it demonstrates that it is possible to take action when pupils are not receiving their entitlement to RE and secure a change. Encouraging parents to take action the Minister for Schools; Nick Gibb MP has repeatedly suggested that, people concerned about the level and quality of provision for RE to use the statutory school and academy complaints process.

Link to chart:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Additional%20Documents/Academy%20Complaint%20time%20line%202020-%20a%20case%20study.pdf>

## National Updates (Continued)

(NATRE continued)

### **NATRE Analysis for the Provision of RE in Primary Schools – Autumn 2020:**

New research by NATRE has revealed that over 95% of primary teachers report time spent on teaching RE has increased or stayed the same. Almost a half (46%) of Academies without a religious character, almost a third (29%) of Agreed Syllabus Schools and a fifth (21%) of Schools including academies with a religious character report increasing their time for teaching RE.

This has been welcomed by NATRE who surveyed nearly 500 primary teachers from across the country. NATRE believe this finding has come about following many months of lobbying and working with a variety of partners including Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted, parliamentarians, and teacher organisations.

Ofsted's release of the new Education Inspection Framework (September 2019) emphasises the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum including RE for all pupils in all school types and the expectation of pupils 'to know more and remember more'.

NATRE hope to see this trend continue, with the resumption of Ofsted inspections to take place in the new year.

### **Ben Wood, NATRE Chair, has commented:**

"It is very good to hear that many primary schools are recognising the importance of RE by providing more time for teaching RE in what is a packed curriculum. This commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum is to be welcomed, as is Ofsted's ongoing commitment to 'deep dives' in RE. What is now especially important is that primary teachers of RE are given the subject specific training they need to ensure that the most is made of this time, enabling pupils to understand and explore the diversity of beliefs and practices they see in the world they are growing into."

To download the full report:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/uploads/Free%20Resources/NATRE%20Primary%20Survey%202020%20final.pdf>

## Resources & CPD (continued)

### Resources for RE

- **Cumbria SACRE Collective Worship guidance** updated with additional online resources in September 2020 (Appendix 10)  
<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/6381/6528/6529/4206195955.pdf?timestamp=4411811327>
  - **NATRE Anti-Racist Resources for RE:** The project is generously supported initially by the Free Churches Group and Methodist Schools, and managed, written and edited by Lat Blaylock, RE Adviser and editor of *RE Today* magazine.  
<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/anti-racist-re/?fbclid=IwAR2OQocbS06BwnHqva4-ORmI4TlhRVoaHbWOfwKdKYiypzsYJ8NTg4IjJVQ>
  - **Inter Faith Week – 8<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> November** <https://www.interfaithweek.org/>
  - The **Inter Faith Network** is working to develop a resource for secondary schools, similar to that produced for primary schools in 2019. The writing of the materials is at an early stage but SACREs will be alerted when they are available.  
<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/learning-about-inter-faith-activity-a-primary-resource>
  - **The Church of England** has produced faith sensitive and inclusive Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (RSHE) resources and guidance <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/relationships-sex-and-health-education>
  - Newham **SACRE's Bullying and Belief Toolkit** is now hosted on the NATRE website; this is a Westhill NASACRE award project toolkit that came out of their winning grant on Bullying and Belief <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/anti-bullying>
  - **REonline:** [www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk) (as recommended for Cumbria Units of work)
  - **Research in RE** <http://researchforre.reonline.org.uk/>
  - **Free teaching resources for Key Stage 3 – Cardiff University:** please follow this link to these materials: [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2430314-Free-teaching-resources-for-Key-Stage-3?fbclid=IwAR27E\\_ILe\\_YqDPRNE5PhXFbklah9qnTXEr4gJZ2mzLI8Bun\\_ZN3Y9mQCoso](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2430314-Free-teaching-resources-for-Key-Stage-3?fbclid=IwAR27E_ILe_YqDPRNE5PhXFbklah9qnTXEr4gJZ2mzLI8Bun_ZN3Y9mQCoso)
  - **New website from Imran Kotwal.** Many of you will know Imran as he is a popular Muslim faith visitor to schools in Cumbria. Do take a look at his new website which has resources and training for Islam. <https://smex12-5-en-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.islamresources.co.uk&umid=607147ae-28cc-4a82-8842-3f9d51f8ca27&auth=438558d5329f5814a0a31cfd8e89073841978136-cc72283824cc5fc547506615d5fb8924f5d199ed>
- All Cumbria Primary Schools can have 10% OFF the subscription fee! Using promotional code; CUMBRIA10**

#### Visits and Visitors:

##### Points of contact for information about RE visits and visitors in Cumbria:

Mohammed Dhalech (Islam) [cumbriamosquevisits@awaz.info](mailto:cumbriamosquevisits@awaz.info)

Wendy Ridley (Buddhism) [wendyridley1@gmail.com](mailto:wendyridley1@gmail.com)

Dr Shelia Gewolb (Judaism) [Sheila.Gewolb@bod.org.uk](mailto:Sheila.Gewolb@bod.org.uk)

Karen O'Donoghue (Baha'i) [kareninkendal@gmail.com](mailto:kareninkendal@gmail.com)

## Resources & CPD continued

### Further CPD (national) and Funding

- **What are worldviews and why should schools teach them?** Panel event on 21<sup>st</sup> October with Theos and Culham St Gabriel's Trust  
<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/events/2020/09/21/worldviews-launch>
- **Strictly RE online** – 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 <https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/strictlyRE-2021/>
- **Farmington Scholarships** are now open <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/farmington-scholarships-now-open/> The Scholarships are divided into two types: university-based and school/home-based. Teachers who live within a reasonable distance of one of the selected universities or colleges may be awarded a university-based Scholarship. The academic facilities of the colleges and universities are available for Scholars.
- For training opportunities, the new **TEACH:RE course**: <http://www.teachre.co.uk>
- For **Masters** funding: <http://www.cstg.org.uk/how-we-help/3forre/>
- **@RE\_PDPportal** tweets and retweets for all the latest professional development opportunities in RE
- **Beyond the Ordinary** – more information about training to be a RE teacher should visit [www.teachre.co.uk/beyondtheordinary](http://www.teachre.co.uk/beyondtheordinary).
- **Professor James Holt** from the University of Chester has been providing an excellent selection of FREE CPD for teachers which can still be viewed <https://jamesdholt.com/cpd/>
- **NATRE** are providing excellent regular online CPD with prices according to your NATRE membership status <https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/upcoming-courses-events/>
- **2021 RE and Philosophy for Children CPD** as part of the Cumbria's Training Events for School Based Staff administered by The School Development Team. These courses and the annual Cumbria SACRE RE conference will be advertised via direct email to school, schools portal and the School Development Facebook page.