



# CUMBRIA SACRE NEWSLETTER

## Spring: 2021

(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:

#### **Cumbrian Students Engage in Census About Beliefs**

In the lead up to the National Census on Sunday 21 March, students around Cumbria have been exploring what census data can tell us about ways in which religious belief has changed in the county over the last 20 years.

Thirteen Cumbrian Secondary schools have been completing the first ever on line ‘Cumbrian Students Religion and Worldviews’ Census. It is hoped that over 2000 students will complete questions on their faith, beliefs and worldviews. These include questions on belief in God, the possibility of life after death and how humans should relate to animals and the natural world.

Mr Connolly, Head of the RE Department at William Howard School, created this survey. From a classroom project at William Howard School engagement in the survey has spread through school links and RE teacher groups to encompass schools across the county. Students can complete the survey on their phones. Findings of the survey will be reported in the next SACRE newsletter.



Mr. Connolly at William Howard School with two students working on the census. Picture: William Howard School.

#### **Cumbria SACRE, CDEC and the 2021 Census**

Cumbria SACRE have also teamed up with Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) to provide a range of additional resources for RE and PSHE lessons in the lead up to the Census 2021. These are available on the [CDEC website](#) and include P4C inspired activities such as a discussion plan, a questioning the question activity, and a concept stretcher around ‘affiliation’ to a religion or worldview

## **Cumbria Updates: (Continued)**

### **Virtual Voices in Religious Education**

Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) and Cumbria SACRE are starting an exciting new collaborative project called Cumbria Virtual Voices in Religious Education (VVRE)



The aim of the project is to create a facilitated and secure virtual platform where primary and secondary schools can meet and explore a range of 'voices' from a variety of religions and worldviews.

In the past, schools may have relied on visitors coming to their school or pupils may have visited a place of worship to speak to and learn from people of different faiths and beliefs. Perhaps some positive learning from the pandemic has enabled us to see new opportunities; the idea of a virtual platform to meet, explore or discuss with a much wider range of voices from the principal religions in Britain (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism) and other religious or non-religious worldviews, especially those with a local presence.

Please see the [CDEC website](#) for further information.

### **Cumbria SACRE Members Create RE and Collective Worship Films**

As part of the VVRE project, we have been using a new digital platform called Loom to store and record films. At the start of the year, Baha'i member on Cumbria SACRE, Karen O'Donoghue, produced a short film about the Baha'i faith as part of World Religion Day on 19<sup>th</sup> January. This film gained national recognition and has subsequently been put on the Baha'i RE Resources for Schools website. You can read more information about World Religion Day and see Karen's film [here](#).

Church of Scotland member on Cumbria SACRE, David Pitkeathly, has also been busy making films. David made one film in January for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021 with an interesting focus on the Quaker faith with reference to Carrs Biscuit Factory. David made a second short film about Christian prayer at the suggestion of RE Lead Fiona Fletcher from Inglewood Infants School.

If you would like to access either of these films, please contact Jane Yates [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com)

### **UN Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination – 21 March**

"Racial discrimination is a global problem that exists internationally, in the UK and in Cumbria" - Cumbria County Council website (CCC). To mark the UN Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination CCC wishes to: affirm our commitment to race equality and anti-racism, set out how our commitment links to our Equality Objectives for 2020-24; highlight some of the work we have been doing to promote race equality, support countywide organisations promoting race equality and anti-racism.

Please click on this [link](#) to see further details from Cumbria CC and other organisations involved; what they have done, and continue to do, to mark this day.

## **Cumbria Updates:** (Continued)

### **Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference is going ONLINE!**

**Date:** Monday 14th June 2021

**Time:** 9-3.30pm

**Book via School Development** [schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk)

The conference will be led by **Fiona Moss**, National RE Adviser. Fiona is a primary specialist. Before joining RE Today as National RE Adviser she was a primary teacher for 15 years and then the RE and SACRE Curriculum Adviser for Leicester City council. She has written and edited a variety of publications designed to support primary RE teachers. She is currently the Editor of RE Today's Primary RE series '[Inspiring RE](#)'. She was also one of the writers for the [Understanding Christianity](#) resource. She trains hundreds of teachers each year in schools and through RE Today's [consultancy service](#).



The conference keynote will be: **What does the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework mean for your RE curriculum?**

Workshop 1: Progression and Knowledge and RE

Workshop 2: Teaching Festival, story and beliefs in KS1

Workshop 3: Green Issues and RE: how to change the world

The day will also include input by Cumbria SACRE members about the new Virtual Visits for RE (VVRE Project) and other local/national updates. Depending on numbers, additional workshops will be provided by other RE providers.

### **FREE new online CPD for secondary RE teachers**

Four online sessions are being planned next term for secondary RE teachers involving national speakers. These sessions will be from 4.30-5.30pm.

The first is on 20th April [Discovering Muslims in Britain](#) for KS3 with Matt Vince from the University of Cardiff.

The second is on 25th May - 'Teaching Hindu Worldviews at KS3' with Joanne Harris [RE Ambassadors \(natre.org.uk\)](http://natre.org.uk)

The third is 'Navigating new approaches to Religion and Worldviews' Wed 30<sup>th</sup> June with Kathryn Wright [Committee \(natre.org.uk\)](http://natre.org.uk).

These sessions have been organised by RE Ambassador for North, Katherine France. For Cumbria teachers, booking details will be circulated through the RE Teach Meet Network and via the RE Teachers in Cumbria Facebook page. Please contact [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com) if you would like to be added to the RE Teach Meet circulation list.

# National Updates

## The Religious Education Council (REC)

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



## Exploring Worldviews – REC discussion papers:

The REC is running a project to support conversations in the RE community exploring the concepts of Worldviews in religious education as a follow up to the Commission on RE. To equip these explorations, they have published some free resources to download. The REC also ran a series of three online discussion events exploring the contribution of worldviews to RE, which were attended by the Chair of Cumbria SACRE.

## Government Independent Faith Engagement Review:

Colin Bloom was appointed as the Faith Engagement Adviser at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in October. He is leading a review into how best the government should engage with faith groups in England. Colin launched an open consultation to collect views that will underpin a Faith Engagement Review. As part of his review, he will make recommendations to the Communities Secretary. This consultation closed in December. Cumbria SACRE contributed to this consultation and details were circulated to RE networks in Cumbria. There was a specific question about RE:

**Q41:** Do you believe that Religious and Belief Education (often referred to as “RE”) is comprehensive enough within the English education curriculum to provide a good understanding of different faiths and beliefs?

Yes / No / Prefer not to say

**Q42:** Please expand

The REC recommended that if we want the government to address the issues affecting Religious Education that are comprehensively set out and evidenced by the report from the Commission on RE, then we need as many individuals as possible to respond to this survey explaining:

- the potential of RE– especially in relation to this specific question of providing “a good understanding of different faiths and beliefs”
- the impact of government policy on the abilities of teachers to deliver the best RE to **all pupils in all schools** (in a context where DfE data shows 41% of **all schools** report providing **no time for RE in Year 11**)\*
- What you believe needs to be done to re-establish Religious Education in the curriculum

The feedback is currently being analysed and will be available soon on the following page on the government website.

## National Updates (Continued)

### **RE Quality Mark:**

The REC has responded to government advice about the ongoing pandemic, and they have changed the way they manage the award. They have suspended physical site visits to help prevent the spread of the virus. They moved to an online assessment process last April. All the new paperwork for the school application process and the award has been updated and is available on the REQM website <https://www.regm.org/>

### **Young Ambassadors for RE:**

The RE Council champions RE at all levels – from students and teachers, to politicians and policymakers. The Young Ambassadors' scheme gives students aged 11 – 18 opportunities to:

- share their enthusiasm and interest for RE and gain leadership experience,
- give their perspective to adults who work to support RE at the highest levels, such as the RE Council and MPs in parliament,
- develop skills in communicating successfully to a wide range of audiences,
- build up relevant experience for college, UCAS or job applications,
- meet and debate with other young people about why RE matters.

Cumbria is proud to have one of the ten Young Ambassador Teams across England and Wales. This highly successful team, from The Queen Katherine School in Kendal, made a presentation at the last Cumbria SACRE conference in 2019. For more information about the Young Ambassador Team see [this link](#) and for information about the team at The Queen Katherine School see [here](#).



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

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

### **New Chair for NASACRE:**

At the EGM in November, Linda Rudge was appointed as the new Chair of NASACRE. Linda thanked Paul Smalley for all his work with NASACRE and outlined her own experience - paralleling the 27 years NASACRE has existed. Linda went on to commend how SACREs have been working in the difficult circumstances thrown at them in 2020. Linda asked the meeting: *What does your SACRE want to change? And, How can we speak for all our constituents?*

Linda outlined the current priorities and lines of work/research that NASACRE is tackling, her personal NASACRE wish-list and invited members' views. She reminded delegates that we bring our human experiences and diversity with us when we walk into every SACRE meeting. The delegate's questions are attached with this update and on the [NASACRE website](#), along with her Power Point, minutes and chat feed with delegates' ideas.

## National Updates (Continued)

(NASACRE continued)

### **Delegate Questions at NASACRE EGM: Chair of Cumbria SACRE Raises Question:**

The Chair of Cumbria SACRE raised the question: *Our Secondary RE teachers talk about marginalisation and entanglement of RE with PSHE, PD, RSHE, Citizenship, what can we do to support them?*

Answer: *It is really important that SACREs support teachers facing this issue. There are a number of different ways of doing this, for example:*

- *Ensure your agreed syllabus clearly states the difference between RE and PSHE (RSHE), as well as any commonalities between them*
- *Use recent statements from government and the DfE about RE, reinforcing its aims and legality*
- *Ensure you have annual SACRE training opportunities with governors on RE and CW, working with the LA's Governor Services, building knowledge of the importance of RE in a broad and balanced curriculum*
- *Get regular updates about RE into Headteachers' Briefings*
- *Ensure you communicate RE 'good news' stories from Primary and Secondary schools in your area (examination results, school winners in e.g. NATRE's Spirited Arts competition)*
- *Highlight the RE Quality Mark as a way of raising the profile of RE in schools.*

Many SACREs asked questions about Collective Worship. Answer: NASACRE is working at present with AREIAC to set up a collaborative project on Collective Worship for 2021. The intention is to try to bring more up to date the existing advice offered by NASACRE and AREIAC, which is based on the original Circular 1/94 government guidance.

### **Cumbria SACRE Presentation at NASACRE EGM:**

Karen O'Donoghue and Jane Yates of Cumbria SACRE were delighted to be able to present the Westhill Trust Buried Treasure Project along with Lambeth SACRE who presented their Westhill Faith Trail project. You can view the Powerpoint and watch the recording [here](#).

### **Annual General Meeting:**

NASACRE will hold their AGM on Monday 24 May. This will be a virtual conference. Details are to follow from NASACRE.

### **New Agreed Syllabus for Norfolk SACRE:**

This was published in 2020. You can read a copy of their syllabus and watch and interview with Paul Smalley [here](#)

### **Role of C of E Committee B:**

Michael Metcalf from NASACRE has written a personal 'think piece' about the role of C of E Committee B over the years. You can read it [here](#).

## National Updates (Continued)



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

*NATRE on Twitter: @NATREupdate*

#### **New Chair for NATRE:**

Katie Freeman was appointed as new Chair at the recent Executive meeting. Katie is currently the primary Vice Chair. She will be ably supported by the continuing secondary Vice Chair, Joanne Harris and the new Primary Vice Chair, Naomi Anstice. Ben Wood steps down as Chair and becomes Assistant to the Chair. Katie is also the Chair of Plymouth SACRE.

We are also delighted that Cumbria SACRE member, Katherine France has been successfully nominated and appointed on to the NATRE Executive for 2021-24. Katherine joins a star-studded band of RE teachers from around the country. Thanks to everyone who was able to vote for Katherine and we know she will not only be a strong advocate for RE in the North, but her feedback will enrich the work of Cumbria SACRE, complementing her role as RE Ambassador for the North. For full details of the elections please see the link [here](#).

#### **Strictly RE:**

This online conference was held over a weekend at the end of January, attracting some 350 delegates from all over the country. A full range of workshops, keynote presentations and panel discussions were offered ranging from topics such as religion and worldviews, anti-racist RE, Hinduism, Ethical Veganism as worldview, Stories to RE events. The conference also held a unique virtual exhibition hall where delegates could visit the regular stalls and speak virtually with representatives from different RE organisations. Jane and Katherine both attended the full event and are busy working their way through the online recordings of all the sessions to inform future RE Teach Meets in Cumbria.

#### **Interesting and positive report about the vitality of RS:**

The British Association for the Study of Religions (BASR) has just published a robust, data-driven response to the British Academy's Report from 2019, Theology and Religious Studies Provision in UK Higher Education. NATRE hopes this new report will challenge some of the damaging misrepresentations of the vitality of Religious Studies in the UK. NATRE suspect it will be of use to colleagues in departments which face cuts or reorganisation and will be a useful snapshot of the state of the field today—far healthier, diverse and vital than the BA report suggested. Further information [here](#).

#### **New Curriculum Symposium:**

NATRE will be running a 24-hour residential curriculum symposium in Autumn. They want to create a curriculum learning community.

There will only be 25 places therefore NATRE are running an application process as they want to attract delegates from a variety of school types and at a variety of stages on their curriculum design journey for RE/Religion and worldviews. More information in the CPD section below.

## National Updates (Continued)

### Update from INSIGHT – social movement of British Hindu and Indian (BHI) communities:

**Hinduism in Religious Education in UK Schools:** A report published by INSIGHT UK in January 2021 reveals that pupils leave school with an incorrect and sparse understanding of Hinduism. The document titled "*A report on the state of Hinduism in Religious Education in UK Schools*", includes claims of bullying and inferiority complex issues experienced by British Hindus because of the inaccurate teaching of Hinduism in RE. Many concerns have been raised across the country by parents and educationalists about the reduction in the availability, content and quality of teaching Hinduism in Religious Education in UK schools. Grave errors in resource content, lack of understanding among RE teachers and incorrect references can create a lot of harm. This has an adverse impact on the UK's youth, and this will impact many more future generations to come. To download a copy of the report please click on this [link](#).



**INSIGHT UK**

Insight UK conducted an online survey for one month in Sept/Oct 2020 to gauge and understand from the parents and students the current state of Hinduism in Religious Education in UK schools. The survey proved to be one of the most successful Hindu surveys in the history of the UK, based on the number of responses received and good distribution of responses from all 4 countries in the UK. **(Please see page 3 for CPD concerning teaching Hinduism)**

### Statement from SAPERE Philosophy for Children on the EEF report

The [final report](#) of the Education Endowment Foundation's Effectiveness Trial on the impact of SAPERE P4C was published earlier this month.

While the report found no effect on reading and maths, it did find other strong positive results in key P4C areas such as respect for others' opinions, ability to express views clearly, and self-confidence. Both teachers and students in schools implementing P4C found it enjoyable and engaging, and teachers felt strongly that P4C has a positive impact on their students' social, thinking and communication skills. With no negative impacts found, it's great to have it confirmed that schools can reap all the benefits of P4C – in terms of social, emotional, behavioural and well-being outcomes – without reducing reading or maths outcomes.

- 96% of teachers felt that P4C helped pupils to respect others' opinions.
- 91% of teachers felt that P4C improved pupils' ability to question and reason.
- 93% of teachers felt that P4C improved pupils' ability to express views clearly.

It's also worth highlighting that teachers found that those pupils who struggle to 'have a voice' in normal lessons – including those with English as an Additional Language, those who lacked confidence, and those with special educational needs – particularly benefited from P4C. Pupils themselves emphasised that they enjoyed being able to express their own opinions in a non-judgmental way. Responses from teachers found that SAPERE training and support to be high quality and that it enabled teaching staff to facilitate P4C sessions effectively. The research suggests that it takes time for teachers to become confident with and to embed the P4C approach, and underscores the importance of a school being fully committed in the longer term to P4C.

**If anyone is interested in P4C training, please see the CPD section of this newsletter**

## Resources & CPD

### Resources for RE

- **Cumbria SACRE Visits and Visitors for RE.** See the resources section of the Cumbria SACRE [website](#) list below.
- **CDEC Virtual Visits for RE and SMSC:** A comprehensive collection of websites for virtual tours in Cumbria and beyond for all main religions and worldviews. Website [here](#)
- **Census 2021:** A full range of local and national resources and links on the news section of [Cumbria Development Education Centre](#)
- **Making Every RE lesson Count** by Louise Hutton and Dawn Cox New book by RE teachers see [here](#)
- **Shared Space RE and good community relations:** What can RE learn from social psychology? A Toolkit for Teachers of RE <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/the-shared-space-project/> (Toolkit link is top right of web page)
- **Festivals Calendar:** See [RE Online](#)
- Big Ideas Curriculum Covers **Islam and Christianity at GCSE** and supports the **Beliefs and Practices** questions (Paper 1). See [RE Online](#).
- RE Online competition: **Why does an education in religion and worldviews matter?** Blog page competition for 5-18 years. Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Further information [here](#).
- **Big Questions Big Answers:** Vol 1: Investigating God by Fiona Moss [RE Today](#) (Primary) Jan 2021
- **Challenging knowledge in RE: Vol 1:** Studying God by Stephen Pett [RE Today](#) (Secondary) Jan 2021
- 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/>
- **Imran Kotwal from Muslim Learner Services ([www.muslimlearnerservices.org](http://www.muslimlearnerservices.org))** is offering Primary Schools Virtual and Face-to-Face Islam assemblies, pupil workshops and Islam staff meetings.

To discuss a possible visit - please complete our enquiry form [HERE](#) or copy the link this in to your browser <https://zfrmz.com/aJbKiqynJIHAK9stSRYO>

### Learning from a Pandemic

- Many RE teachers have reported that students are keen to discuss the medical ethics around vaccines in the classroom. Here are some useful resources.
- [Vaccination resources | Hackney Services for Schools](#) [Learning from a Pandemic | British Council](#)

#### 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

### CPD and Funding

- **Cumbria Virtual Voices in RE (VVRE)** A new project funded by Culham St Gabriel's between Cumbria SACRE and CDEC. For project brief see [here](#).
- **NATRE National Curriculum Symposium** To express your interest please see the NATRE website [here](#).
- **RE Online** – Distance Learning modules for RE teachers. This offers a list of ten modules covering practical, national and current issues related to religion and worldviews education, from new subject knowledge to policy and research. Each module takes around 20- 25 hours study. Participants can work at a pace that suits them, completing in any time from a week to six months. The cost per modules is £85.
- **Discovering Muslims in Britain** An online course exploring Islam and the everyday lives of Muslims in Britain for KS3, as well as how to understand religion from sociological perspectives. CPD details and free [online resources](#) (Plans are in the pipeline to run CPD in Cumbria)
- **Farmington Scholarships** <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.
- **TEACH:RE course:** <http://www.teachre.co.uk>
- For **Masters** funding: <http://www.cstg.org.uk/how-we-help/3forre/>
- **@RE\_PDPortal** 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).
- **NATRE** are providing regular online CPD with prices according to your NATRE membership status <https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/upcoming-courses-events/>

## Resources & CPD continued

### Local RE training opportunities:

- **SAPERE Philosophy for Children Level 1 P4C** 11, 18, 25 May 1-5pm  
<https://cumbria.sla-portals.co.uk/Event/131721>
- **Do we need religious education now more than ever?** For governors. 11th or 25<sup>th</sup> May (fully booked) New date 8<sup>th</sup> June
- **Leading and developing RE – a post Covid-19** response (primary RE teachers) 28<sup>th</sup> April 1-4pm <https://cumbria.sla-portals.co.uk/Event/135072>
- **Cumbria SACRE RE Conference** for primary teachers 14th June 9-4pm Keynote speaker – Fiona Moss Book [here](#). **See also page 3 of this newsletter.**
- **RE Teach Meets for secondary teachers** with national speakers: 20<sup>th</sup> April Matthew Vince – Discovering Muslims in Britain for KS3; 25<sup>th</sup> May Joanne Harris NATRE North West RE Ambassador – Teaching Hinduism; 30<sup>th</sup> June Kathryn Wright from Culham St Gabriel's Trust – Religion and Worldviews. Details via RE Teach Meet network or RE Teachers in Cumbria Facebook group. **See also page 3 of this newsletter.**
- **RE Teach Meets for primary teachers** Please contact Jane Yates [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com) if you are not already on the email list or part of the RE Teachers in Cumbria Facebook group.