

# CUMBRIA SACRE NEWSLETTER

## Summer: 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:

#### **Cumbria SACRE needs your help.**

##### **Cumbria SACRE questionnaire for secondary schools**

Cumbria SACRE would be grateful if subject leaders for RE/RS or a member of SLT in secondary schools could complete an online questionnaire about RE and Collective Worship, in line with many other LAs nationally. This is mainly to receive feedback about the extent of the guidance and support which schools require, but also to fulfil statutory responsibilities to monitor and support RE and Collective Worship. Cumbria SACRE instigated a similar questionnaire for primary headteachers last year and collected responses from over 100 schools, for which we are very grateful. Both the primary and secondary school questionnaires will inform the Cumbria SACRE development plan for 2022-2027.

Click on the link for the questionnaire

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=fgdLrFinxUuUZTXBkgB3BCE41hmNb6RDr1WzEGqCPOJUMVc3UDRQTIQ1MFM0R1RNUlqxMTJWT0JPWC4u>

If you, or any other members of staff, have any questions about the questionnaire, please contact the Clerk to Cumbria SACRE, Sue McGaw email: [sue.mcgaw@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:sue.mcgaw@cumbria.gov.uk)

#### **Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference**

Sixty primary teachers and members of Cumbria SACRE came together online for our primary RE conference. The main speaker was Fiona Moss, who is a national advisor for RE Today. She started the conference with a presentation on Ofsted and the RE curriculum which was timely following the recently published Research Review on RE by Ofsted. Further workshops were provided by Fiona on planning and progression in RE, stories and festivals in KS1, and Green Issues in RE. We also welcomed Luke Donnellan who is the Education Director of Humanist UK to provide a workshop on teaching the non-religious worldview of Humanism to KS1 and KS2. This provided valuable subject knowledge for teachers considering adding Humanism to their curriculum planning. RE Ambassador for the North and Cumbria SACRE member, Katherine France, provided input on the RE Quality Mark and NATRE networks. Jane Yates gave an update on the Virtual Voices in RE (VVRE) project. As if the day wasn't full enough, School Improvement Officer and LA Advisor on Cumbria SACRE, David Salmon, skilfully facilitated a Q & A panel at the end of the conference with a range of relevant questions from teachers.



## Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

### RE training for governors in Cumbria

Over 100 governors signed up for one of a series of online training sessions titled: **Do we need RE now more than ever?** These sessions are led by the Chair of Cumbria SACRE, Jane Yates, and cover areas such as Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF) for RE, Collective Worship for community schools, Cumbria Agreed Syllabus, a Covid-19 response to RE and how governors can support the development of high-quality of RE in their schools. There has been brilliant feedback from governors and the opportunity to attend online training without travelling has been especially valued. We will continue to run this training online alongside the other popular course entitled: Philosophy for Children (P4C) for governors. Contact School Development for details on dates.

### Virtual Voices in Religious Education Project – funded by Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

Plans are progressing with the VVRE project between Cumbria SACRE and Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC). A group of 15 'voices' from across Cumbria will meet on 14<sup>th</sup> July to develop a learning community of Cumbrian voices who will be involved in a number of live and recorded events and activities with schools. We are delighted to have engaged a diversity of voices within Christianity, Buddhism and Islam and are actively seeking additional voices. Other voices also include a Humanist celebrant. Please contact [debbie@cdec.org.uk](mailto:debbie@cdec.org.uk) if you are/know anyone who would be interested to join the community of voices.

We are looking for schools who are interested to work with us next term. In preparation for pupils encountering the virtual voices, we would like schools to introduce the idea of personal worldviews to their pupils. We are developing a resource bank of activities and ideas and would like a group of schools to pilot these activities during the autumn term. This resource bank also includes a free copy of one of RE Today's latest publication on Worldviews. Please register your interest with [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com)

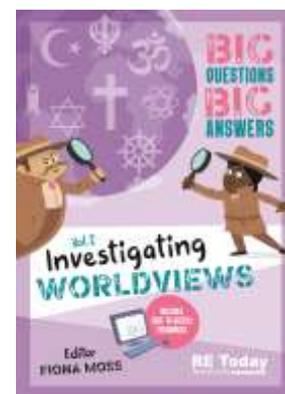
As part of the project, we have also formed a small focus group of small schools who teach RE with significant age-ranges in the same class e.g. YR-6, Rec-Y2 or Y3-Y6. Please be in touch with Jane if you are interested to join this focus group.

Project website: [Cumbria Virtual Voices in Religious Education - Cumbria Development Education Centre \(cdec.org.uk\)](http://Cumbria Virtual Voices in Religious Education - Cumbria Development Education Centre (cdec.org.uk))



Are you interested to introduce the idea of **personal worldviews** to your pupils?

Resources and training available as part of the Virtual Voices in RE (VVRE) Project  
Contact [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com)



## Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

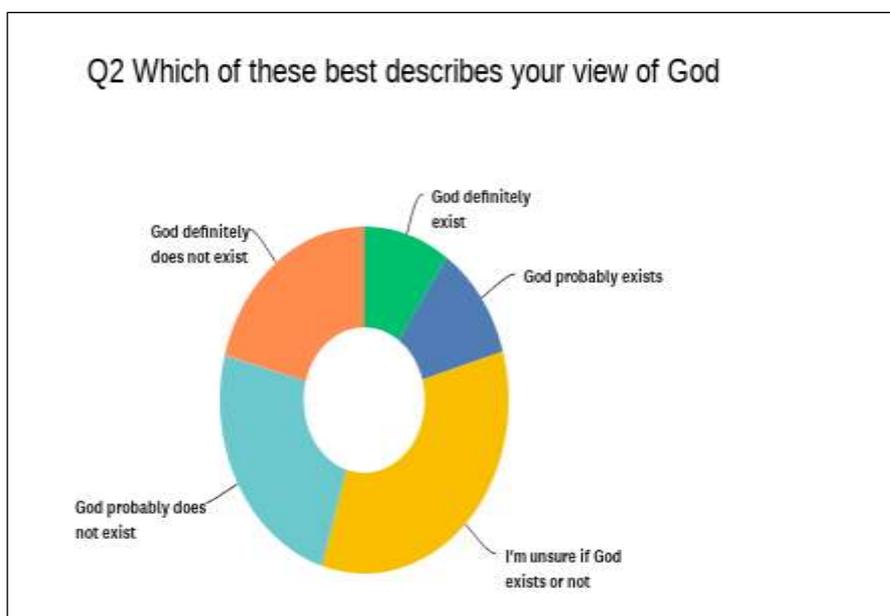
### Cumbria Secondary Census Survey

In our March newsletter, we reported on the Cumbria Secondary Census 2021 Survey created by Jim Connolly, who is the Head of RE at William Howard School. This survey was completed by over 2000 students from 12 secondary schools. The results show a fascinating snapshot of religion and worldviews by young people in Cumbria. Pupils were asked for their responses for eight thought-provoking questions:

- 1) What is your religion?
- 2) Which of these best describes your view of god? (*God definitely exists, God probably exists, I'm unsure if God exists or not, God probably does not exist, God definitely does not exist*)
- 3) Do you believe that humans have a soul?
- 4) Have you had a religious ceremony such as baptism, christening, naming ceremony, Bar Mitzvah for example?
- 5) Do you believe that this is the only life we have?
- 6) What is your view on living in a multi-faith community?
- 7) What is your view on how humans related to the natural world?
- 8) What is your view on how humans should relate to animals?

Here we present and compare a few of the results from the questions. The results showed that 70% of pupils surveyed said they have no religion, with 25% identifying as Christians and a smaller percentage of other religions. When we compare this with questions around pupil views of god, humans having a soul, and life after death, we see a striking diversity of worldviews. Reasons for this will vary from pupil to pupil, but arguably they indicate a curiosity around the meaning and value of human life. This is exactly why our pupils need RE – they need the space to explore and examine their own and other's lives through the lens of religion and worldviews. Teachers from these schools will be using the results to support their planning for next year to build on pupil interest and understanding.

An example from the survey:



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

### **Farewell to Cumbria SACRE member**

Cumbria SACRE said a sad farewell and huge gratitude to David Pitkeathly this term, who is re-locating to West Sussex. He has been a member of Committee A for 12 years, representing the Church of Scotland. David has always been an active member on Cumbria SACRE, contributing to working groups, conferences, interfaith activities and the RE Teachers in Cumbria Facebook group. We are delighted to have a lasting legacy from David through a KS1 film about prayer. Contact Jane for details.

### **Cumbria Research Project**

Are you a teacher or school in Cumbria with an interest in global learning? Would you like to take part in a research project to capture learning from teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic to inform best practice and future support from Cumbria Development Education Centre?

All you need to do is complete [this short online survey of 15 questions](#) which should take approximately 5-10 minutes. You will find more details about the research at the start of the survey.

### **School Assemblies and Collective Worship Project**

Community Clapping is a new project developing school assemblies and collective worship. It is a project which clarifies and reconfigures the experience of school assemblies and collective worship as an inclusive community experience that contributes to each pupil becoming not only literate and numerate, but also spiritually, morally, socially and culturally wise. The project would like to initially work with a small group of community schools in Cumbria. There will also be some involvement from Cumbria SACRE members.

You can find out more about the project on the website <https://communityclapping.net/> If you would like to be part of initial discussions about this project please contact Brian Gates [brian.gates@cumbria.ac.uk](mailto:brian.gates@cumbria.ac.uk)

### **RE Quality Mark (REQM)**

Find out more about the RE Quality Mark (REQM) on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July from 4-5.30pm. Join Katherine France (the regional Ambassador for RE in the North) if you are interested to discuss how the REQM can help with your own monitoring and support for RE in your school. There is no cost for this session. Primary and secondary schools welcome.

[REQM \(The RE quality mark\) Tickets, Thu 8 Jul 2021 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)

### **RE in the North**

RE in the North hosted a successful series of CPD for secondary schools including Teaching Islam for KS3 by Matt Vince from Cardiff University and Navigating Worldviews by Katherine Wright. Sessions were organised by RE Ambassador Katherine France. Please contact Jane Yates for the recordings if you missed them.

### **DfE's Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery**

The DfE has published optional guidance on 2<sup>nd</sup> July for school leaders and staff in Reception and Key Stages 1 to 3. Pages 32-33 focus specifically on RE and states that **RE remains compulsory for all year groups in all local authority maintained schools, and academies**. It suggests that if pupils develop thorough knowledge of a particular religion, its origins, settings, cultures, stories, sights and sounds, they will gain not only a secure sense of what a religion is but will also have a strong foundation for studying other religions. It suggests that teachers should retain a breadth of study within a religion. Otherwise, pupils may develop misconceptions about what it means to be religious or non-religious. It suggests that schools might find it useful to concentrate on teaching two religions only, in depth. Schools may find it useful to study two contrasting religions such as one Abrahamic and one Dharmic faith, to ensure that pupils have a sense of the diversity of religions, as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism. The link to the full document is here [DfE external document template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### **Ofsted Research Review on RE**

Ofsted has published a research review into RE. In the conclusion the review states: *“RE is vital in preparing pupils to engage in a diverse and complex multi-religious and multi-secular society. However, this review has also identified that there are significant challenges that limit high quality in RE, including:*

- *insufficient time to teach an ambitious RE curriculum*
- *school decisions that are not taken in the best interests of all pupils, such as decisions concerning the statutory teaching of RE, the opportunity to take a qualification in religious studies, or early examination entry*
- *a lack of consideration about what it means to ‘be scholarly’ in objective, critical and pluralistic RE*
- *a lack of clarity on what constitutes reliable knowledge about religion/non-religion, leading to teachers embedding unhelpful misconceptions*
- *teaching approaches that do not support pupils to remember the RE curriculum in the long term*
- *approaches to assessment that are poorly calibrated to the RE curriculum*
- *insufficient development of RE practitioners to address gaps in professional subject knowledge.*

*That said, this review shows that there are well-warranted and constructive ways forward that could support improvements in RE. The literature suggests that many of these are already taking place in the sector in subject communities and in some schools.”*

The review, published in May 2021, can be found [here](#)

**Short films explaining the RE Research Review** [Dr Richard Kueh, Ofsted's Subject Lead for Religious Education, on the RE research review. - YouTube](#) (1)

[Dr Richard Kueh, Ofsted's Subject Lead for Religious Education, on the RE research review. - YouTube](#) (2)

## National Updates (Continued)

### The Religious Education Council (REC)

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



### Joint statement from REC & NATRE about Ofsted Research Review on RE, spelling out essential role of RE

In response to the Ofsted research review on RE, NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE) and REC (Religious Education Council) have made a joint statement:

*“The timing of the Ofsted report on Religious Education sends a powerful message to all those with an interest in the status of RE. As only the second subject review after science and the first Arts and Humanities subject in the schedule, it is a clear indication of the importance of Religious Education as a discrete subject, and the need for a broad and balanced curriculum.”*

*“The review spells out the essential role that RE plays in every young person’s academic and personal development and emphasises the value that an education in religious and non-religious worldviews provides in later life.”*

Professor Trevor Cooling, Chair, Religious Education Council of England and Wales

*“It sends out a strong reminder to all school leaders of the requirement to teach the subject at all key stages, including sixth form, and to consider the professional development and subject knowledge needed for teachers to deliver a high quality RE curriculum.”* Katie Freeman, Chair, National Association of Teachers of RE

### RE Quality Mark:

The RE Quality Mark recognises, celebrates and publicises outstanding religious education in all primary and secondary schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland through its three levels of award, bronze, silver and gold.

A move to an online assessment process was made in April 2020. All the new paperwork for the school application process and the award has been updated and is available on the REQM website <https://www.reqm.org/> See details of local REQM training on page 4.



## National Updates (Continued)



### **The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)**

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

#### **SACRE funding**

NASACRE's report into SACRE funding in England was published in May 2021. Levels of funding for SACREs have been a source of concern and interest to the Association for some time. The report is the first ever national survey of LAs to assess SACRE funding. It is based on the responses to a Freedom of Information request sent in November 2020 to all LAs in England. Responses were obtained from 136 LAs, with 15 not supplying answers by the end of March 2021. You can read the report [here](#).

#### **Annual General Meeting:**

NASACRE held their AGM on Monday 24 May. This was a virtual conference and was attended by five members of Cumbria SACRE. The theme for the conference was Authority in RE. Keynote addresses were made by Dr Richard Kueh and Professor Denise Cush.

Dr Richard Kueh is Ofsted's subject lead for religious education. He explored the idea of curriculum as 'narrative over time' and the different sorts of authorities that leaders and teachers draw upon when they construct their RE curriculum. Richard also discussed Ofsted's conception of curriculum impact – that pupils 'know more, remember more, do more' – and how that can be thought of in subject-specific terms. Professor Denise Cush is currently Professor of Religion and Education at Bath Spa University. She made her keynote presentation about 'Sources of Authority in Religions/worldviews and Religious Education'

We are delighted that Dr Shelia Gewolb was re-elected at the AGM onto the NASACRE Executive Committee in the important role of Development Officer.

#### **NASACRE website**

The NASACRE website is currently being upgraded. New features will include an opportunity for each SACRE to share links to their locally agreed syllabus and associated materials, as well as other documents and/or guidance the association has produced.

#### **SACRE Meetings:**

The DfE confirms that SACREs and ASCs wishing to hold their meetings online are legally within their rights to do so. SACREs function under the following advice:

"In April 2020, the Local Government Secretary confirmed that local authorities can hold public meetings remotely by video or telephone and removed the requirement for physical attendance at meetings. You can find the announcement on this [here](#) or on the Local Government Association website [here](#)."

## National Updates (Continued)

(NASACRE continued)

### **SACRE Annual Reports:**

NASACRE is working with the DfE to draw up a new template for SACRE Annual Reports. The purpose of this is to make it easier to carry out an annual analysis of these reports for two main reasons:

- to identify and share exemplars of good practice more readily',
- to identify where SACREs may be struggling to fulfil their legal obligations and the reasons for this, so that these might be addressed more effectively.

### **SACRE Membership:**

Some members of the NASACRE Executive are currently working on a small-scale project focusing on membership of SACREs as part of the Local Area Networks (LAN) project. This will result in the production of some NASACRE guidance materials for SACREs and will enable them to offer more effective advice to their LAs about how membership might be determined and managed, which groups should be represented and how current legal obligations might be fulfilled. It is the LA, **not** the SACRE which determines membership of SACRE.

Many SACREs are awaiting the forthcoming 2021 National Census, the results of which are likely to be published a year or so later; this will include information about the demographics relating to religion and belief in their area. Some SACREs may wish to consider this data before making recommendations to their LAs about membership of Group A.



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

*NATRE on Twitter: @NATREupdate*

### **Statement from NATRE on the Ofsted Research Review:**

NATRE warmly welcomes **Ofsted's Research review** report on religious education, which highlights the priority Ofsted places on the importance of high quality RE in all schools.

NATRE are pleased to note the reiteration of the law that RE is for all pupils in all key stages and all types of state funded schools, including special schools and academies. As the report notes, if schools do not teach pupils any RE, this is illegal.

Ofsted acknowledges that any high-quality RE curriculum must have sufficient teaching time. NATRE has worked hard for many years to make clear the importance of sufficient curriculum time for RE and so NATRE are pleased to see Ofsted recognise the importance of this issue. Delivering RE in tutor time, through assemblies or other weakly framed models does not allow for an ambitious RE curriculum that ensures that all pupils know more, remember more and do more.

## National Updates (Continued)

(NATRE continued)

### **Statement from NATRE on the Ofsted Research Review continued:**

In clearly articulating what the features of high-quality RE might be, this report challenges the RE community in its discussions about what ambitious RE looks like. This includes discussions about subject content, structure, progression, pedagogy, assessment and overall curriculum design. NATRE welcomes these challenges and seeks to engage teachers in taking an active leadership role in determining the various ways that schools can construct and teach high-quality RE.

NATRE is very pleased to see the emphasis given in this report to subject specific training for all those teaching RE. As has been noted, many teachers, especially in primary schools, lack confidence in teaching RE. Subject specific training, including that offered by subject associations play a vital role in teachers helping pupils to make greater progress in RE. The training and professional support offered by NATRE membership is an excellent way for schools to access high quality, subject specific CCPD.

NATRE recognise that this report outlines the OFSTED view of quality in RE, through the lens of the education inspection framework. It will be good practice as schools annually review their subject provision, to look at their curriculum and wider aspects of teaching the subject in the light of the research discussed in this report.

NATRE note that there is much for school leaders to consider in this report and would encourage leaders of RE to share key aspects of this report with the school senior leadership team and governors.

NATRE are very aware of the pressures teachers are currently under and therefore encourage teachers to take time to consider the information in this report.

Ofsted clearly recognise that high quality RE is an essential part of every school's curriculum that prepares pupils to engage in a diverse and complex multi-religious and multi-secular society. NATRE hopes that this report can lead to positive change and we will continue to work closely and positively with Ofsted and other partners to ensure that all pupils in all schools receive high quality RE. For the full statement see [here](#)

### **NATRE secondary survey**

NATRE secondary survey is being conducting to obtain information about the current state of RE in all types of schools so that it can continue to support the teacher in the classroom by raising awareness of the impact of government policy on RE. NATRE understands that the last year has been 'unusual' so NATRE would like you to complete the information according to the timetable that you were running in September 2020. To complete the survey click [here](#). **CD 30<sup>th</sup> July**

### **The Learning to Listen report from the APPG on Religion in the Media**

This report from an All-Party Parliamentary Group draws attention to the importance of education in religion and worldviews. If we want religiously literate journalists; with an understanding of diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews, the learning needs to start in schools.

The problem is, the subject is being neglected and needs the government to take action in the form of a National Plan for Religious Education in schools. For more information click [here](#).

## Resources & CPD

### Resources for RE

- **Cumbria SACRE Visits and Visitors for RE.**

**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)

See also the resources section of the Cumbria SACRE [website](#)

- **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](#)
- **Exploring Worldviews:** REC Discussion papers Website and resources [here](#)
- **Challenging knowledge in RE:** Secondary Vol 2: World Views by Stephen Pett, RE Today (April 2021) (*Free copies with your NATRE membership – limited free copies available to VVRE Project Schools See below*)
- **Big Questions Big Answers:** Primary Vol 2: Worldviews by Fiona Moss, RE Today (April 2021) (*Free copies with your NATRE membership – limited free copies available to VVRE Project Schools See below*)
- **NATRE Subscription.** Starting at just £39 per year, there are a range of packages and discounts on resources and CPD. See [here](#).
- **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/>

### National CPD & Funding

- **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.
- **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->

## Resources & CPD continued



The Templeton World Charity Foundation Inc. has awarded funding to the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) to work with RE Today Services to take the vision of worldviews in RE a step closer to the classroom.

The £150,000 grant will fund the creation of a toolkit of materials to help subject leads and advisers build a syllabus and define a curriculum for teaching religious education framed by the new worldview vision.

Recommended as the central idea for religious education by the Commission on RE in 2018, the worldview approach emphasises the importance for pupils of an academic understanding of the contribution of religious and non-religious worldviews to human life. It focuses both on organised worldviews and on the personal worldviews that pupils bring with them into the classroom. The new project will produce a range of syllabus frameworks and example materials that illustrate how this vision translates into different syllabus models for different contexts. The materials will be crafted over three phases during a three-year period until 2024.

### Local CPD and project opportunities

- **RE Quality Mark (REQM)** Local online session on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July from 4-5.30pm. Join Katherine France (the regional Ambassador for RE in the North) [REQM \(The RE quality mark\) Tickets, Thu 8 Jul 2021 at 16:00 | Eventbrite](#)
- **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](#).
- **SAPERRE** – The national charity for P4C is starting a new project entitled: Thinking together through Science and RE. Secondary schools are needed for a new project linking science and RE through P4C(Philosophy for Children). Congratulations to William Howard School who have already been selected for this project. We strongly encourage further schools to apply asap from Cumbria so a possible cluster can be formed. The project is being funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation. For further information about the project, please see the SAPERE website page. [Thinking Together in Science and RE \(sapere.org.uk\)](#)
- **Do we need religious education now more than ever?** For governors. Various dates in the autumn, please contact the School Development Team
- **RE and P4C courses for teachers in Cumbria 2021-22** Please contact the School Development Team [schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk)
- **RE Teach Meets for Primary and secondary RE teachers.** Please contact [jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com](mailto:jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com)