



CUMBRIA SACRE NEWSLETTER

Autumn: 2022

(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 Conference 2023 presenters announced



We are delighted to announce there will be two national presenters for the Cumbria SACRE RE 2023 conference. The conference will take place on Monday 26th June at North Lakes Hotel, Penrith. Joining us will be **Stephen Pett** who is a primary and secondary specialist with many years of experience of leading RE in school. He is currently a National Advisor for RE Today and has contributed to developing the draft handbook for the RE Council for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom: developing a Worldviews Approach. Also joining us will be **Saima Saleh** who teaches full time at a primary school in Surrey and leads the NATRE Local Groups Network. She is also a member of her local SACRE and a NATRE Executive member. Saima took part in the Stage 1 and 2 RE Leadership Programme run by Culham St Gabriel's. As part of the programme, she carried out research into etymology to enhance religious literacy. Saima has a particular interest in anti-racism and strives to raise awareness of this through her work.

The programme will include a mix of sessions for primary and secondary teachers, including separate workshops for early years and A Level. The content of the conference will reflect aspects of the new Cumbria Agreed Syllabus which will be formally launched at the conference.

A detailed programme for the conference will be available next term, but bookings are open via schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk or via the CPD portal.

Cumbria Updates: (continued)

Virtual Voices visit sixth forms during Inter Faith Week



The Virtual Voices in Religious Education (VVRE) Project organised in a series of virtual activities during Inter Faith Week with a focus on sixth form students and teachers. The aim of Inter Faith Week is to build good relationships and working partnerships between different faiths and beliefs.

Year 12 students from **West Lakes Academy** were joined during an assembly by a group of eight 'voices' from Jewish, Buddhist, Baha'i, and Muslim worldviews, and four different denominations of Christianity. They watched a new Theos animation by Emily Downe called [Worlds Apart: Science and Religion](#). The animation travels through a whirlwind of questions surrounding the science and religion debate. The students then discussed the questions raised in the film they were most interested in, and heard from the voices as well. The voices then went on to give responses to the 'big' question of the session: Science and Religion – is there a conflict? At the end of the session, the students were able to use a specially created digital resource where they could access other VVRE recordings and materials for Inter Faith Week.

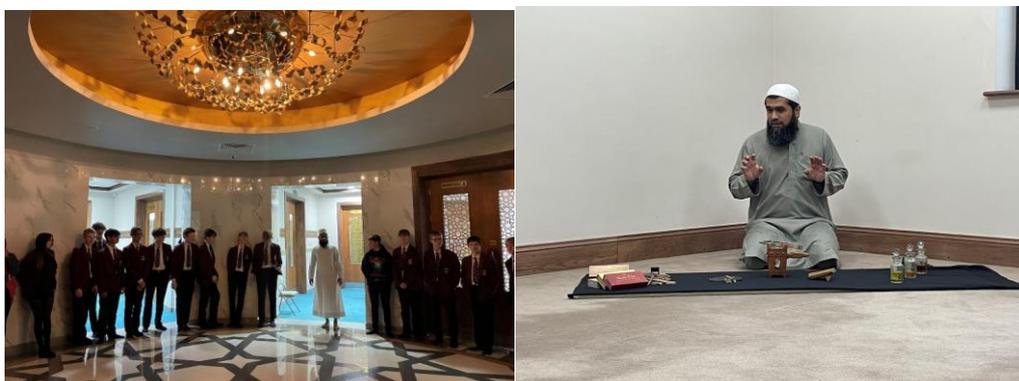
Students from Y11 and Year 12 classes at **William Howard School** were joined by the same group of voices. Prior to the event, RE teacher Lauren Booker worked with her students to come up with ten questions relating to areas of study for both GCSE RE and A Level Philosophy. The students voted on which questions they would be most interested to hear responses from the voices. The event started with medical ethics with questions around whether the voices thought that assisted dying should be legally permitted and whether religious views should affect the law on abortion. The voices then responded to questions around whether war and violence are justified, whether it is right to use religious teachings to justify the oppression of groups, and how voices might try to argue against extremist views about their religion. The session finished with a fascinating question around extra-terrestrials and life on other planets from a faith perspective.

Further classroom discussion enabled the students to compare and contrast the responses to their questions, alongside considering their own thinking and beliefs.

Both of the VVRE events have been recorded and the edited clips will be available as a digital resource for other schools across Cumbria to use. If your school is interested to use this resource, please contact jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com Please see the CDEC website for more information about the VVRE Project [here](#).

Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

Inter Faith Week – The Queen Katherine School



The Religious Studies Department at The Queen Katherine School proudly took 47 of their GCSE students to Masjid e Salaam in Preston during Inter Faith Week. They learned about what it means to live a Muslim life and were made to feel so welcome at the Mosque. Imam Amjad kindly gave them a leaving gift, their school name written in Arabic.



Ghyllside Primary School enrich their learning about Judaism

Cumbria SACRE member, Sheila Gewolb spoke to over 60 Year 5 pupils from Ghyllside Primary School near Kendal via Zoom. The children were learning about Moses and the 10 Commandments, festivals and celebrations and the synagogue and prayer. In two interactive sessions, Sheila was able to give a greater insight into Jewish practices and how being Jewish gave meaning to her life.

It's wonderful to see so many schools building relationships with our virtual voices and arranging their own visits by Zoom/Microsoft Teams or face-to-face where possible. See page 11 for full details of RE visitor contacts in Cumbria.

Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

RExchange Online – Real World Research for Real World Classrooms

In October, Jim Connolly and Jane Yates from William Howard School made a presentation at the annual RExchange event organised by Culham St Gabriels Trust. They presented findings from the Cumbria secondary census survey which 1200 secondary students from 10 schools completed in 2021/2. Jim talked about the impact of the findings on curriculum planning for KS3 & KS4 RE, and Jane talked about how she had been using the findings on school governor training for RE. Their input was followed by questions and discussion from the audience. You can watch the recording of their presentation and other presentations from the event [here](#).

Culham St Gabriel's FREE RE Online courses and programmes

There are some amazing opportunities for FREE RE CPD through Culham St Gabriel's Trust. There are courses for experienced subject leaders and those new to leading or teaching RE. Recently, Claire Armstrong from St Michael's School in Dalston completed a self-study course called: An Introduction to Religion and Worldviews. She said: *"I found the self-study course very useful as Religion and Worldviews subject leader. It gave me the opportunity to reflect on the core purposes of R&W; for children to understand themselves and others whilst preparing them to be able to get along with a range of individuals, some of whom may have contrasting views to their own. It also gave a great insight into a multidisciplinary approach and outlined a useful enquiry cycle for planning. It examined personal and institutional worldviews and the key questions that everyone, whether they have a religion or not, are trying to grapple with such as 'what is a good life?'"*

Chair of Cumbria SACRE, Jane Yates started on the Stage 2 Leadership programme in September. As part of the programme, Jane has been involved in a Community of Practice with a diverse group of RE leaders and teachers from across England. Online sessions after school have involved reading and reflection. Jane is delighted to be mentored by Fiona Moss (NATRE RE advisor) as part of the programme.

Jane said: *"If you are interested in taking your RE subject leadership to the next level, I can thoroughly recommend either Stage 1 or Stage 2 of this programme. It's been a wonderful opportunity to connect with other RE teachers and leaders on research and implementation of religion and worldviews in the classroom."*

Cumbria SACRE would love to hear from you if you have taken part in some national training opportunities for RE. There's no better endorsement to hear from Cumbrian teachers who have taken part! Both RE Online and RE Today offer an amazing selection of CPD opportunities and their courses provide an excellent opportunity to network with other teachers. See the CPD section on pages 11 & 12 for more details.

A new deputy director for education for the Diocese of Carlisle

Laura Watson leads on RE, Collective Worship, Spiritual Development and Character Development (including courageous advocacy) support for schools. She is also the first point of contact for admissions queries for schools which are admission authorities and for governor support for all church schools. Laura is the Diocesan SIAMS Lead. Laura is already well-known to Cumbria SACRE members as she sits on Committee B Church of England. She is also familiar face at Cumbria SACRE conferences and CPD as part of her previous role as subject Lead for RE at Lazonby C of E School.



Cumbria Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

Cumbria SACRE members and a working group of primary and secondary teachers have been making good progress with revising the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus for RE. We plan to formally launch the new syllabus at our conference in June, followed by a series of specific training sessions. More information about the syllabus will be sent out to schools in spring 2023.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)



Cumbria SACRE have been advising the LA on various options for the future of Cumbria SACRE when Cumbria becomes two unitary authorities on 1st April 2023. Advice has been sought from the DfE via the national association of SACREs and in consultation with the legal team of Cumbria County Council and senior education officers. More information on this to follow in the next Cumbria SACRE newsletter.

Anti-Racist Cumbria Summit

Several Cumbria SACRE members attended the Anti-Racist Cumbria Summit in November at the Brewery Arts Centre. This was a thought-provoking and powerful event involving 250 attendees (and an additional 100 online) from business, education, local authorities, other organisations and individuals.

CEO and Co-Founder Janett Walker gave an engaging talk about the challenges and progress in the last twelve months, including feedback about the 40 schools across Cumbria where Ambassadors have undertaken Anti-Racist audits. We heard from local school heads Kirsty Cooper and Pete Barfoot who shared their anti-racist story, insights and actions so far, addressing the theme of 'Are We Nearly There Yet?'

The inspiring keynote speaker was Nova Reid, author of *The Good Alley: A guided anti-racism journey from bystander to changemaker*.

To get a taste of the Anti-Racist Cumbria Summit please see the link [here](#).

National Updates

A Level Results 2022:

The number of students taking an A level in Religious Studies in England and Wales has fallen by 447, despite an increase of 6.1 percent last year. This year's 2.7 percent decrease comes after a two decade period in which RS has had one of the fastest growth rates for A levels in the humanities, beating Law, Geography and History in a similar time period. This year there were 45.5 percent more RS A level entries than in 2003.

The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) have warned this period of growth is now under threat after a five year funding gap that has impacted current and future young people taking the subject. This includes disadvantaged students, who are twice as likely to take RS A level than their peers, favouring it over Geography and History.^[1]

Full article on the RE Council website [here](#).

GCSE Results 2022:

The number of students in England and Wales taking a GCSE course in Religious Studies GCSE has risen to 253,225, an increase of 0.6% from last year. The increase was largely driven by a surprise rise in the short course in England, up 16.5% from 15,672 to 18,257.

The strong entry results saw the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) reiterate their call for a National Plan for the subject. They warn that an ongoing funding crisis and lack of a specialist teacher recruitment strategy now seriously threatens the provision of high-quality learning for the quarter of a million students who take the subject annually.

Full article on the RE Council website [here](#).

The Religious Education Council (REC)

(www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk , Twitter: @RECouncil, Instagram: [religiouseducationcouncil](#))



Statement on A Level results by the Chair of the REC, Sarah Lane Cawte:

“Over two decades RS has become more and more popular for A level students. However, this year’s results raise serious concerns over the ongoing funding crisis in the subject. The subject has cemented its reputation as academically rigorous and personally enriching with graduates going onto successful careers in media, law and politics at some of the best universities in the country. It also appears to be a tool for social mobility, with many disadvantaged students taking the subject and doing well, opening up a wealth of transferable skills to these pupils that may previously not have been accessible.

“Sadly, we now foresee a situation in which the brightest and best students attracted to the A level risk being let down by a lack of specialism as a result of government inaction over funding and teacher recruitment.”

National Updates (Continued)

(REC update continued:)

Statement on GCSE results by the Chair of the REC, Sarah Lane Cawte:

“I’m delighted to see an overall rise in students taking GCSE RS. At its best, RS is one of the most personally enriching and academic subjects on the curriculum. Yet sadly, I cannot think of another subject that has ever attracted such a large cohort of students yet received such little corresponding government support.”

“In neglecting RE, the Government risks letting down a record number of students. There is now an average of around a quarter of a million students taking the subject at GCSE each year who receive £0 of additional government money to help with their study of RE. In comparison, in the last five years a GCSE music student has received up to £10,000 a head after a National Plan for music. We want an even distribution of funding across the curriculum to ensure it is broad and balanced.”

RE Quality Mark:

All the school application process and the award information is available on the REQM website <https://www.reqm.org/>

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

NATRE on Twitter: @NATREupdate



Statement on A Level results by Chair of NATRE, Katie Freeman:

“Congratulations to all students who have faced immense challenges in the last few years. These results are testament to the hardworking and passionate community of RE teachers we have across the country. At A level we see some of the brightest students attracted to a subject which sees them debate, analyse and think deeply about a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews on humanity’s most profound questions. Subsequently, teaching the subject at A level requires a high level of expertise and knowledge. A National Plan will ensure we can support current and future teachers by scaling out the best evidenced-based curriculum to ensure every A level student is taught by the specialist they deserve.”

National Updates (Continued)

NATRE continued:

Statement on GCSE results by Chair of NATRE, Katie Freeman:

“These results are testament to the hardworking and passionate community of RE teachers we have across the country. We would now like to see the Government back up their hard work with a properly funded National Plan. This will ensure that every young person has access to an excellent RE teacher, armed with the best evidenced-based curriculum that will allow them to take their place in modern society.”

Regional RE Hubs team:

Céline Benoit, Chair of the Regional Hub Steering Group, is delighted to announce the full team of Regional Leads that will be representing and supporting their region in the new RE Hubs project.

The new team provides a rich and diverse set of skills and experience within education and RE provision with extensive years of working as practitioners. They have been recruited to build relationships with advisers, dioceses, universities, SACREs, LAs, governors, MATs, teaching school hubs and more. The Regional Leads will also act as conduits between the regional providers of research, CPD, resources, places of worship and so on for the benefit of all Religion and Worldview stakeholders.

Under the leadership of Claire Clinton, Lead Director, a fantastic team of Regional Leads will be supporting their region. Naomi Anstice has been appointed as the Regional Lead for the North West. Naomi is well known to Cumbria SACRE and she attended and supported some of the RE Teach Meets held during Covid.

NATRE New member benefits:

From the **1st October**, all NATRE members will be able to access brand new member benefits through improved packages. NATRE has updated its membership offering discounts and membership names to give members even more resources and support to better equip assist members with teaching of RE. More information [here](#).

National Updates (Continued)

The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

(Twitter: @NASACRE, www.nasacre.org.uk)



NASACRE Website:

The new website was launched at the recent NASACRE conference. The link for the website is [here](#).

NASACRE Conference:

A summary of the May conference is available [here](#). The 2023 conference will be held in London. Details to follow.

NASACRE Membership:

As part of the new website, NASACRE has developed a [FAQ section](#) for subscribers. A summary has been provided by NASACRE in the bullet points of particular relevance concerning membership of SACREs:

- *a SACRE does not determine its own membership - that is a matter for the LA (the Council)*
- *if an LA were to seek its SACRE's advice on its own membership, then anything that the SACRE says is simply that - advice, not a definitive legal statement*
- *currently, representatives of Humanists UK have different positions on different SACREs - some do not include them at all, others include them as co-opted members with no voting rights and others include them as full members of Group A - and at least one LA has appointed a Humanist to Group D.*

Guidance from the DfE on these issues is available [here](#). The [Still Standing](#) report also has guidance and questions for SACREs to use to help them review their membership.

NASACRE/Westhill Award Projects:

There was a focus on subject knowledge (both teacher and student) for several of the projects this year. See the resources section below to view films and resources developed by Barking & Dagenham and Coventry and Warwickshire. Winners for 2022-23 are Bristol, Leicester and Luton SACREs.

Education White Paper

NASACRE are suggesting that SACREs develop awareness of this paper and of its relevance to SACREs and RE. You can read the paper [here](#).

National Updates (Continued)

**The Association of RE Inspectors,
Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC)**
AREIAC on Twitter: @areiac



AREIAC July Conference - Plurality in Religion and Worldviews: Exploring Lived Traditions:

The conference was for advisers, consultants, inspectors, teachers, SACRE members, faith representatives and everyone interested in promoting excellence in RE.

The two day programme provided lots of opportunity to engage with key note speakers and seminar providers including Martha Shaw, Jagbir Jhutti Johal, Justine Ball, Alastair Ross, Gill Vaisey and Debbie Tibbey. This enabled delegates to listen and learn, debate and discuss, and reflect upon experiences of teaching, advising and training in religion and worldviews education.

Sessions included an exploration of some of the less familiar worldviews such as the Bahá'í Faith, Sikhism and Humanism. Meeting with local faith representatives gave to the opportunity to consider how we can promote quality educational engagement with individuals and communities to enrich RE.

A panel of representatives gave updates on their organisations, including Kathryn Wright from Culham St Gabriel's Trust, Richard Kueh from Ofsted and Ed Pawson for the REC. We heard more about the Young Ambassadors Programme and the popular 'Show and Tell' slots kept us up to date with new resources and projects. Exhibitor space was also provided for guests and delegates to display their resources and support materials.



Resources & CPD

New Resources and Opportunities 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

Wendy Ridley (Buddhism) wendyridley1@gmail.com

Dr Shelia Gewolb (Judaism) she1la46@aol.com

Karen O'Donoghue (Baha'i) kareninkendal@gmail.com

Rashmi Manemi (Hindu) rooprashmi@gmail.com

Jaswinder Singh Sidhu (Sikhi) northeastsikhservice@hotmail.com

Jane Yates (Humanist) jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com

See also the resources section of the Cumbria SACRE [website for further RE Visitors](#)

- **Westhill/NASACRE Award** project resources from Barking and Dagenham. **Interfaith Encounters for Pupils and Teachers.** This project organised a range of subject knowledge enhancement sessions across a range of faiths and venues. These events were filmed and are [available to view](#).
- **Westhill/NASACRE Award** project resources by Coventry and Warwickshire SACREs. **RE Subject Knowledge Enhancement Programme** by Coventry and Warwickshire SACREs featured live events where SACRE members gave a tour of places of worship, a talk on their tradition and answered questions for teachers. Short subject knowledge films were produced by a professional filmographer for use in schools to support teacher subject knowledge and these were supplemented with 'road maps' (sharing approaches and resources for teaching each tradition) and image banks. These will be made available for any schools or SACREs to use [here](#).
- **New resources for Understanding Humanism from Humanist UK.** Information about how to use the resources, see [How to use Understanding Humanism](#). The [resources](#) are organised into different areas of knowledge in which you'll find overviews, information sheets, activities, presentations, films, and assessment. [What is humanism?](#) provides an introduction to the humanist approach to life. There are then five core areas of knowledge: Human beings, Understanding the world, The one life, Humanist ethics, Society
- **Interfaith Week** – celebrating it's 35th year in 2022, Inter Faith Week takes place this year from Sunday 13th to Sunday 20th November. The Inter Faith Network for the UK leads on this, making significant contribution to inter faith understanding, harmony and cooperation. A useful Inter Faith week flyer can be downloaded [here](#). (N.B. The Virtual Voices in RE (VVRE) Project will be organising events for schools during Interfaith Week.)

New CPD & Funding

- **The Culham St Gabriel's Leadership Programme:** This two-stage programme aims to help teachers find their voice as leaders of religion and worldviews. Applications usually open in January each year, and close in March. More information [here](#). Cumbria SACRE Chair, Jane Yates was one of eight people selected to be part of the 2022-2023 cohort for the Stage 2 programme. See page

Resources & CPD continued

New CPD & Funding continued:

- **Free Self-Study RE Courses – Culham St Gabriels Trust:** Introduction to religion and worldviews, Introduction to curriculum and Introduction to research. To enrol please click [here](#).
- **Farmington Scholarships:** 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. Applications for the Farmington Scholarship for 2022-2023 will open in October 2022. More information [here](#).
- **NATRE** are providing regular online CPD with prices according to your NATRE membership status. More information [here](#).
- **The Jerusalem Trust: RE Grants for Schools** The Jerusalem Trust's Small Grants to Schools Scheme supports the teaching about Christianity within Religious Education. The scheme operates by providing schools with grants of up to £600 to purchase resources for use in RE lessons. More information [here](#).



A resource of theological literacy, that explores the impact of Christianity and encourages reflection and connections



UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIANITY TEXT IMPACT CONNECTIONS

Understanding Christianity for Primary Schools

Tuesday 3rd January 2022
Church House, Penrith
9:30am-3:30pm

Follow up sessions:
Wednesday 19th April 4-5:30pm online
Wednesday 21st June 4-5:30pm online
Thursday 6th July 4-5:30pm online

Trainer: Laura Watson – Deputy Director of Education
Carlisle Diocese

Cost: £195 to include the resource folder
£120 without the folder; ideal for new staff in school
Community School subsidised price by RE Today
£60 includes the resource folder

For further details email laura.watson@carlisle-diocese.org.uk
To book a place contact education@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

RE Today
Services

- 7 modules over 4 sessions
- Teacher's handbook
- 22 units of work
- Wall frieze of 'The Big Story'
- Folder of photo-copiable resources
- Online access to resources
- Follow up support from the Diocese



28 - 29 January 2023

Includes recordings and downloads from
all seminars!

