

# CUMBRIAN SACRE NEWSLETTER

**Summer: 2023** 

(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

Working for Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council

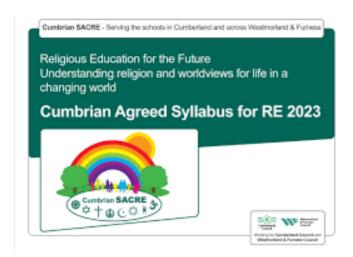




Cumbrian Updates, National Updates, Resources & CPD, Forthcoming Events

## **Cumbrian Updates:**

<u>Launch of the New Revised Cumbrian Agreed Syllabus for R.E. 'A Religious Education for the Future'.</u>



The new Cumbrian Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Agreed Syllabus was launched at the SACRE annual conference on June 26th (see page 2). This is the legal document for the teaching of Religious Education (RE) in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness. Academies are also advised, and welcome, to use this syllabus. This Agreed Syllabus will become statutory from September 2024 following a year of implementation from September 2023. This syllabus is the basis on which the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) will determine the effectiveness of the delivery of RE

While this Agreed Syllabus builds on the enquiry-based approach advocated in the Cumbria Agreed Syllabus 2017, it establishes a disciplinary approach in RE for the first time. All schools in Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness have been sent this syllabus with a covering letter which includes how to access a range of exemplar materials. The new syllabus can be found on the SACRE pages of the Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Council websites.

<u>Cumbrian SACRE page on the Cumberland Council website</u>

Cumbrian SACRE page on the Westmorland & Furness Council website

A series of CPD to support the new Agreed Syllabus for RE is currently being organised through School Development. <a href="mailto:schooldevelopment@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk">schooldevelopment@cumberland.gov.uk</a> or <a href="mailto:schooldevelopment@cumberland.gov.uk">schooldevelopment@cumberland.gov.uk</a>

## **Cumbrian Updates:** (continued)

Kelly Lightfoot from Broughton Primary has commented:

"After attending the launch of the new Locally Agreed Syllabus I started to replan and adjust our curriculum accordingly to fit more with the disciplinary approach. The new Syllabus is easy to follow and understand and really tries to give children the opportunity to reflect on their own worldviews in different ways. The main adjustment was making sure that we are focusing on the 'philosophy' and 'human sciences' elements as well as the 'theological' ones, but the core question bank really helped me with this. I have also found the RE Today resources online really helpful as they offer resources tailored towards the disciplinary approach which are really interesting and engaging for children. I feel the new Cumbria Agreed Syllabus is a positive change, it will help children put themselves at the centre and allow them to take opportunities in lessons to reflect on their own worldview."

# <u>Cumbrian SACRE RE Conference:</u> <u>A Religious Education for the Future – Understanding Religion and Worldviews for Life in a Changing World</u>

The annual Cumbrian SACRE RE Conference was held on 26<sup>th</sup> June at the North Lakes Hotel. There were nearly 100 delegates including primary and secondary RE leaders, teachers, headteachers and members of Cumbria SACRE. Guest speakers were Stephen Pett (National RE Advisor, <u>RE Today</u>) Saima Saleh (Ravenscote Junior School & NATRE <u>Local Groups Officer</u>). Pupils from North Lakes School joined Michael Wilkinson and Martyn Soulsby (both from <u>ClickView UK</u>) to present about the impact of video in the RE classroom. Leading an EYFS workshop on Inclusive RE were Katie Clark (EY Strategic Lead for Learning Improvement) and Emma Littlewood (Grayrigg C of E Primary & <u>Anti-Racist Cumbria</u>).



Chair of Cumbrian SACRE, Jane Yates: "the new syllabus is an opportunity for schools to reframe and engage with latest thinking in RE around worldviews through a disciplinary approach. At the heart of the new syllabus is religious literacy, defined as: the ability for pupils to have the ability to hold balanced and well-informed conversations about religious and non-religious worldviews".

## **Cumbrian Updates:** (Continued)

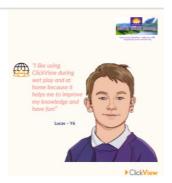


Stephen gave a keynote introduction to present the rationale for a disciplinary approach - with teachers engaging in practical activities for the RE classroom. Saima and Jane then gave a presentation on 'literacy in RE', drawing on their research as part of the <u>Culham RE Leadership Scholarship Programme</u>. Additional workshops included: More than Pillars and Prayer Mats for KS1/2 by Saima and Engaging RE activities for KS4/5 by Stephen. Saima also presented about Local Groups in RE and encouraged delegates to register any new or existing Local Groups on the new <u>RE Hub</u>.

## Using video for real world and real life examples

"Video helps to make our learning real. It can often transport us to places that we might not be able to visit on a school trip e.g. one video transported us to Jerusalem, and another took us to the Haij in Mecca whilst another let us explore inside a mosque. They provide us with real file examples, sometimes then may be something in the news that is current and about something we have recently studied, we are able to link

We have been following a young Muslim girl on My Life, My Religion and it has help me to see how Muslims have to commit some parts of their lives to their religion. This has me to understand Islam as a religion in more depth."





To see the full presentation by North Lakes pupils, please click on this <u>link</u>. This would make an excellent discussion starter for a staff meeting alongside reading the ClickView research on the impact of video in the classroom.

'Changing the World' was the final presentation of the day with Stephen and Saima. Stephen drew our attention to the SMSC guidance (Ofsted, March 2004) and the characteristics a spiritually developed pupil is likely to exhibit: a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit, for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination. He provided examples of classroom activities relating to courageous advocacy, service in the community, making a difference, social justice, charity, empathy and pro-social. Saima then presented about her own journey as an anti-racist RE teacher and shared the Anti-Racist RE resources available on the NATRE website. In addition to this session, a digital resource has been collated by members of Cumbrian SACRE giving examples of local, national and global religious and non-religious organisations and individuals making a difference. Trustee, Gary Newman from Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) was present with a marketplace stall throughout the day, highlighting CDEC support for RE and the 'golden thread' of global learning. See p11 for details of Anti Racist Cumbria free CPD.

For more photos and information about the conference please see page 13 and our page on Twitter Cumbrian SACRE (@SACRECumbria) / Twitter

## **Cumbrian Updates:** (Continued)

## <u>Cumbrian SACRE Chair Appointed Professional RE Advisor and New North West RE Hubs Lead.</u>

Jane Yates, Chair of Cumbrian SACRE, has recently been appointed to two part-time posts. In the next academic year Jane will cease to be Chair of Cumbrian SACRE. Her work for Cumbrian SACRE and RE has been monumental for which we are extremely grateful. However, Cumbrian SACRE is not losing her! Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council have agreed to fund a professional RE adviser for SACRE and Jane will be that adviser.



Jane has also been appointed the new North West RE Hubs Lead.

RE Hubs exists to improve connections and interactions between different people, groups and organisations involved in Religious Education, Religion Values Education, Religion & Worldviews (RE/RVE/R&W). The aim is to enable teachers to teach with greater confidence through access to the support, knowledge, training and resources available in their nation/region.

Jane as North West Lead will be busy ensuring all RE/RVE/R&W contacts and organisations have been mapped out for this area. The central team for RE Hubs has created a new <a href="website">website</a> which went live in May. This website aims to capture what is going on in RE/RVE/R&W nationally and locally helping teachers to find high quality resources and support.

RE Hubs are also offering a **free 1.5hr training session** to places of interest and school speakers for RE/RVE/R&W. If you are interested in such training or know anyone else who might be, or again places and people who would like to be featured on the RE Hubs website, then use this <u>link</u> for the training. Future dates for training are on the website on the sign-up page. Several of Cumbrian SACRE members have already attended training and are on the <u>website</u> as well as some volunteers from the Cumbria <u>VVRE Project</u>.



As part of the RE Hubs role, Jane has been selected to lead on a new Young Ambassadors Project across the North West with ARIEAC. This project will focus on Empowering Pupil Voice in Advocating for Freedom of Religion and Belief. If your school is interested to be involved in training for pupils and teachers, please contact jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com

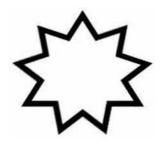
If you are a member or leader of a Local Group, please do consider signing your group up to the RE Hubs website.

\*\*\*Cumbria RE Teachers Group (online) 28th September 4-5pm Sign up here\*\*\*

## **Cumbrian Updates:** (Continued)

#### **Baha'i National Convention**

Karen O'Donoghue, member of Cumbrian SACRE and of the Baha'i faith, was a delegate to the Baha'i National Convention recently to participate in the annual election of the National Spiritual Assembly. This year the gathering followed on from the International Convention



which happens every 5 years when Baha'is from across the world gather to elect the Universal House of Justice. It's an interesting process that happens locally, nationally and internationally without any candidates or campaigning. The video link below explains the process and would make a good resource:

https://vimeo.com/823250880/ebcbb3b82b?share=copy&fbclid=lwAR1pU1NTf6Yhui-lj8Lc7LMgwt2DggmXHhp2JvV66mh2W40TtO4IBvnKOI

As these elections were taking place around the world the one in Yemen was stormed by armed guards and 17 people were arrested. Two are a married couple who had left their baby with its grandparents - where the child remains as the couple are in prison. <a href="https://news.bahai.org/story/1671/">https://news.bahai.org/story/1671/</a>

June 2023 is also the 40th anniversary of execution of 10 women in Iran who were hanged for refusing to recant their faith. The youngest was 17. The Baha'i International Community (BIC) has launched a global campaign to honour their memory. #OurStoryIsOne is asking people to do something artistic to highlight their story <a href="https://www.ourstoryisone.bic.org">https://www.ourstoryisone.bic.org</a>

## <u>Promoting Understanding of the Jewish Faith in Cumbrian Schools</u>

Dr. Sheila Gewolb, member of Cumbrian SACRE and of the Jewish faith, gave a presentation about Shabbat to year 1 and 2 pupils at Brampton Primary School. Afterwards, the children were able to sample challah bread and kosher grape juice and try on Jewish prayer shawls (tallis) and head coverings (kippah).



Sheila Gewolb also visited Bridekirk Dovenby CofE primary school and Robert Ferguson school in Carlisle to speak about Shabbat, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Over 100 children had the opportunity to handle Jewish artefacts, taste challah bread again and try to blow the shofar (ram's horn)!

(See page 9 on how to contact either Sheila or Karen for visiting your school)

## **National Updates**

#### **Government Education Committee Launches New Inquiry**

In March, the government's Education Committee launched a new inquiry into teacher recruitment, training and retention in state-funded English schools.



Schools face huge teacher shortages and in 2021 reported the highest number of vacancies since 2010. Despite a 5% increase in teachers in that period, recruitment has not kept

pace with increasing pupil numbers. Recent figures show that the Government has been unable to meet its recruitment targets for trainee secondary teachers: having reached only 59% of the target for trainees recruited for Initial Teacher Training in the year 2022/23, down from 79% in 2021/22.

MPs will investigate the current situation of teacher retention and recruitment, the main factors leading to difficulties in the process and the impact it has on students. This includes assessing how well the current teacher training framework prepares new teachers, and how the English system compares internationally.

Education Committee Chair Robin Walker said:

"The current teacher shortages in some subjects in state-funded schools make it more challenging for schools to provide high-quality education across the country. It is imperative that we take a comprehensive and nuanced look at the difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. We must urgently identify solutions to ensure pupils receive consistent and quality teaching, and that teachers feel supported in their roles.

......Taking the right approach to supporting teachers through their training and early careers, helping to reduce unnecessary workload, and investment in professional development are all vital to ensure schools can access the highly skilled and motivated workforce they need."

For more information please see the Education Committee page <a href="here">here</a>.

#### The Religious Education Council (REC)

( <u>www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk</u>, *Twitter:* @*RECouncil*, Instagram: <u>religiouseducationcouncil</u>)



#### RE Teacher Recruitment Webinar:

Working Together to Promote RE Teaching as a Career was held on 6<sup>th</sup> March and led by Dr Kathryn Wright and Deborah Weston OBE. The Chair of Cumbria SACRE attended this session. This webinar provided information about the current recruitment crisis and how member organisations can help in the recruitment of secondary RE teachers.

For a comprehensive account of the crisis happening with secondary RE PGCE recruits. Please read Pat Hannam's excellent news piece for the RE Council entitled 'Why RE Teaching Matters – because children and young people are not robots' <a href="https://example.com/here">here</a>.

For all other news items from the RE Council please see the <u>news section</u> on their website.

## National Updates (Continued)

# National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE)





#### **NATRE Secondary Survey**

NATRE is conducting a secondary survey (its tenth) 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. Surveys like this help NATRE when talking to key stakeholders and that is critical at the moment given the ongoing recruitment crisis for teachers of RE. Please access survey link <a href="here">here</a> (deadline 31st July 2023) and for information about incentives for completion. NATRE undertakes this research every two years - you can find the key findings of the NATRE Secondary Survey 2021 <a href="here">here</a>.

### **Subject Knowledge Support for Early Career Teachers (ECT)**

In March, NATRE conducted a survey for secondary teachers in their first two years in the profession since qualification (ECTs). This survey (attracting 60 responses) was submitted to the government's education select committee as part of the inquiry into teacher recruitment, training and retention. Almost 2/3rds of the respondents reported that, in relation to teacher standard 3: Develop good curriculum and subject knowledge, their rating of the ECT programme was either poor (37%) or very poor (28%).

NATRE also wanted to assess the delivery of the government funded programme to develop ECT subject knowledge. When NATRE began its New2RE programme (7 years ago), there was evidence that lack of subject knowledge was a key factor in the alarming proportions of teachers leaving the profession in the early years of their careers. NATRE are pleased that those who participate in the New2RE programme stayed in teaching at significantly higher rates than those who did not, showing the benefits of support in subject knowledge learning.

In 2019 the government announced their Early Career Framework to address the issue of subject specific knowledge and skills. However, anecdotal evidence, from those attending NATRE's free monthly subject knowledge webinars during this academic year, was that little or no attention was being paid to subject knowledge in their schools' early career offering. Worse still, many of the ECTs were the only subject specialist on their staff team, so there was no one properly qualified to support this aspect of the early career programme.

N.B. Chair of Cumbrian SACRE, Jane Yates, has made contact with <u>One Cumbria</u> – the government's teaching hub for Cumbria to begin discussions about how best ECTs and other teachers can be supported. Last term a CPD session was offered through School Development entitled: 'Are you new or aspiring to lead RE?' This was previously reported in the Spring 2023 newsletter.

## National Updates (Continued)

## The National Association of SACRES (NASACRE)

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



#### NASACRE Conference: Celebrating 30 years: SACREs for the Future

NASACRE held their first face-to-face Conference and AGM in three years on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. The conference was held in London and brought together RE professionals, academics and those who champion RE and support SACREs, to celebrate 30 years of NASACRE – their Pearl Anniversary. The conference included discussion groups and the following keynote presentations:

Keynote Address 1: An education in religion and worldviews - the next 30 years? Dr Kathryn Wright (Culham St Gabriel's Trust) talked about the role of SACREs as strengthening voices, supporting innovation, representing community and celebrating an education in religion and worldviews. She stressed that the biggest challenge for the RE community was in teacher recruitment. She stressed the importance of two aspects in writing the Agreed Syllabus for RE. These were: 1) the pedagogy of hermeneutics and 2) lived experience e.g. disciplinary approach.

Keynote Address 2: The role of SACREs in the emerging educational landscape Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke (NASACRE Patron) described the changing political landscape between 2015-2023, and the important emerging role of SACREs. He acknowledged there has not been a coherent school improvement process in recent years. He talked about the strengths of SACREs that can be a force for community cohesion, particularly around topical issues that polarise communities. Charles called on SACREs to propose a manifesto for this that considers the values of society.

## The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC)

AREIAC on Twitter: @areiac



## <u>Annual conference - Leading and Inspiring Religion and Worldviews</u> <u>Education</u>

AREIAC's annual conference will be on 2-3 July 2023 at Woodland Grange, Leamington Spar. The focus will be on supporting all those who lead RE / RVE whether in school, as advisers, consultants, trainers or SACRE members.

#### **CPD** opportunity: A series of webinars

CPD opportunities (a series of webinars) take place during the year. All are free for AREIAC members, non-members please mail the chair (chair@areiac.org.uk) – Flyer here.

### **Resources & CPD**

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

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

Please see the <u>RE Hubs website</u> for details of School Speakers and Places of Interest across the North West.

Guidance document and directory for RE Visits and Visitors on the SACRE websites for Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Councils

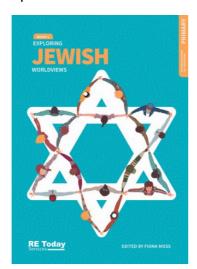
#### • RE Today new series for primary: Exploring Religion and Worldviews

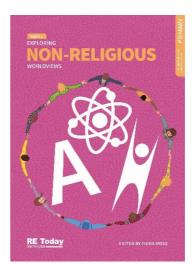
This series will be looking at specific religious and non-religious worldviews, but also at a more general focus on big ideas and celebrations. The books will offer clear subject knowledge for teachers and pupils, and will also show the diversity within each worldview. Moreover, this series will support teachers in using different methods with their pupils and reflecting on three types of knowledge:

- Substantive knowledge
- Ways of knowing
- Personal knowledge

**Book 1 - Jewish worldviews -** This book explores the diversity of Jewish worldviews by offering clear substantive content about Rosh Hashanah, the social-justice-focused Mitzvah Day, some key artefacts, 'Adon Olam', a Jewish liturgical poem and the celebration of Shabbat. See here

**Book 2 - Exploring non-religious worldviews -** This volume looks at the diversity of non-religious worldviews. Subjects covered include weddings for a humanist couple and another non-religious couple, how three non-religious people (a humanist, an ethical vegan and another non-religious child) make ethical decisions, a case study of how a humanist woman was inspired to set up a charity, and we are pleased to have a contribution from Humanists UK. There is a clear philosophical focus on how to be happy using the ideas of Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle.





### Resources & CPD continued

RE Today new series for secondary: Investigating worldviews - this series
reflects the current interest in a worldviews approach, emphasising lived
experience, contexts, and the relationship between individual and organised
worldviews.

These books will weave together ways of engaging with the substantive content, and will seek to generate original source material to illustrate the reality of lived religious and non-religious experience in the UK and beyond.

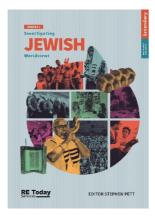
**Volume 1 – Investigating Jewish worldviews** - This book gives students a chance to examine data on Jewish practice and identity. It also examines the contexts of some key concepts and teachings, such as:

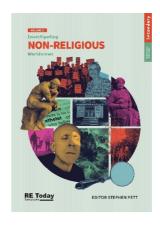
- Outlining Jewish understandings of the Messiah, explaining how they differ from Christian perspectives.
- Jewish views on the treatment of animals to current debates around veganism.
- Jewish ideas about life after death are set in the context of the development of debates, from the Torah, through rabbinic writings, medieval philosophers and Kabbalah to contemporary understandings.

The purpose of this publication is to create and curate sources and resources that will enrich students' classroom encounters with a range of Jewish worldviews, accompanied by thoughtful teaching and learning ideas.

**Volume 2 – Investigating non-religious worldviews** - The second volume in the 'Investigating Worldviews' series gives students an opportunity to explore non-religiousness, to clarify what it means to them and see how it can influence the lives of individuals and communities.

Along with extensive additional material online, this book includes original research into what helps teenagers to find meaning and rich data about non-religious teenagers' views on life after death. Research from the 'Understanding Unbelief' project examines unbelief as just one dimension of non-religion, indicating that religion and non-religion are entangled in how people make sense of the world; portraits and interviews from the same project provide personal stories. Examples of organised non-religious worldviews, such as forms of humanism and sentientism, are shared. Classroom study of these offers opportunities for students to explore the relationship between religion and non-religion in ways that also draw attention to students' own worldviews.





## Resources & CPD continued

#### **Local CPD and resources**

• Philosophy for Children (P4C) is recommended in the new Cumbrian Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE) 2023 as part of the disciplinary approach of Philosophy. We are lucky to have two courses happening in Cumbria next term through the national P4C charity SAPERE. A two-day Foundation Level 1 P4C course will be held at Robert Ferguson School (Carlisle) on 20<sup>th</sup>/27 September 2023. A two-day Advanced Level 2B course will be held at Harraby Community Centre on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Please book on these courses via the SAPERE website. Additional P4C and RE CPD will be advertised through School Development. Cumbrian SACRE highly recommends that schools sign up for the Anti Racist Cumbria FREE P4C training and lessons plans linked to their award-winning animation 'The Fell we Climb' on 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023



Virtual Voices in Religious Education (VVRE) This free digital resource is now available for all schools in Cumbria to use. The VVRE resource is recommended in the new Cumbrian Agreed Syllabus for RE as part of the disciplinary approach of **Human Sciences**.

- The VVRE resource includes 100+ filmed responses to questions from Cumbrian pupils to our community of 'voices' from different religion and worldviews. These cover both Dharmic and Abrahamic religious worldviews and the non-religious worldview of Humanism. Not only is this a powerful resource for the classroom but teachers have also said how valuable it is for developing subject knowledge. More information about this resource and a link to obtain the full resource on the Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) website <a href="here">here</a>. Do also check out the CDEC <a href="Yirtual Tours">Virtual Tours</a> for RE and SMSC, <a href="Resource packs">Resource packs</a> and <a href="RE Boxes">RE Boxes</a> pages too.</a>
- Northern Holocaust Education Group(NHEG)

NHEG was founded because the First Generation of Holocaust Survivors will not be able to tell their stories in person for ever. NHEG is managing the transition from First Generation to Second and subsequent Generations. These life stories form a unique enrichment resource for schools, colleges and civic authorities to use for programmes about t and identity.



NHEG's volunteer accredited speakers deliver the varied personal experiences of their family during the Nazi Period.

To find out more, the NHEG website is:

https://northernholocausteducationgroup.org.uk/

Or complete a booking request form:

https://northernholocausteducationgroup.org.uk/booking-request/

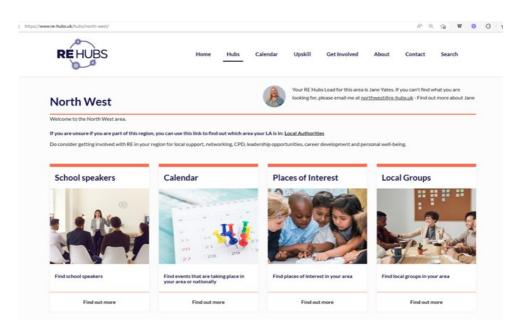
Or email: ernie@northernholocausteducationgroup.org.uk

### Resources & CPD continued

#### **National CPD & Funding**

- 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 <a href="here.">here.</a>
- NATRE are providing regular online CPD with prices according to your NATRE membership status. More information <a href="here">here</a>.
- 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.
- AREIAC CPD opportunities: A series of webinars during the year. All are free for AREIAC members, non-members please mail the chair (chair@areiac.org.uk) - download flyer

RE Hubs: For Local & National RE Support – see page 4.



### **Local Groups for RE on the NW RE Hub**

\*\*\*Cumbria RE Teachers Group (online) 28th September 4-5pm Sign up here\*\*\*

# Thank you to RE subject lead teachers who provided examples of RE learning for the welcome carousel slides at the Cumbrian SACRE RE Conference on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023



#### #CumbriaSharingRE @SACRECumbria