



## **Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Monday, 27th November, 2017 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston**

### **Agenda**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>
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|------------|--|----------------|
| <b>1.</b>  | <b>Annual Meeting: Election of Chair and Vice Chair</b>  |                |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>Apologies</b>   |                |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 September 2017</b><br>Attached.  | (Pages 1 - 4)  |
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>Quality and Standards Sub Group Feedback</b><br>Religious Education for all – Online Consultation (CoRE) and feedback from Birmingham conference. | (Pages 5 - 44) |
| <b>5.</b>  | <b>NNW Hub</b><br>Verbal update.   |                |
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>School Visits</b><br>Verbal Update.   |                |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Monitoring Report</b><br>To be tabled at meeting.   |                |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Annual Report - Draft</b><br>To be tabled at meeting.   |                |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>10 Minute Break and Networking Opportunity</b>  |                |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>R.E. Associate Consultants Update</b><br>Verbal update.   |                |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Community Cohesion</b><br>Report from Faith Coordinator – Mr A Anwar  |                |

- 12. Lancashire Youth Voice**
- 13. Quiz!**
- 14. Members' News**
- 15. Observers' Contributions**
- 16. Correspondence**
- 17. Forthcoming QSS Agenda Items**  
Verbal update.
- 18. Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the SACRE will be held at 10.00am on Monday 5 February 2018 in Cabinet Room C – The Duke of Lancaster Room at County Hall, Preston.

Paul Bond  
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall  
Preston

# Agenda Item 3

## **Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 25 September 2017 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room D – The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston**

### **Attendees**

#### **Teacher Associations**

Mr P Martin (ASCL) (Chair)  
Mrs J Gordon (ATL)  
Mrs J Roper (NASUWT)

#### **Church of England**

Mrs N Chappelow  
Mr J Wilson  
Mrs H Sage  
Mrs J O'Rourke

#### **Lancashire County Council**

CC A Cheetham  
CC S Malik  
CC Y Motala (Vice Chair)  
Mr F Williams

#### **Representing Islam**

Mufti J Pathan  
Mufti K Ibrahim

#### **Representing Hinduism**

Mrs H Shukla  
Mr I Tailor

#### **Representing Higher Education**

Mrs C Reade

#### **Representing the LASGB**

Mrs Kathleen Cooper

#### **The Faith Centre**

Mr Afraisiab Anwar

### **Observers**

#### **Representing the Bahá'í Faith**

Dr Malcolm Craig

#### **Previously represented Lancaster Diocese**

Mrs J Busby

### **Officers**

Mrs A Lloyd – Advisor (School Improvement), Lancashire County Council, Children and Young People Directorate

Mrs M Mahmood – Senior Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council, Legal and Democratic Services

Mrs L Cook – Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council, Legal and Democratic Services

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr B McMullen, Mr C Wills, Mr K Pagpa, Ms J Crabtree, CC P Buckley, Ms J Harris, Mr A Brennand, Ms S Elton-Chalcraft, Mr A H Qureshi and Mrs T Safraz.

Link to Website:

[Lancashire SACRE Website](#)

## **2. Minutes of the last meeting 3 July 2017**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 3 July 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

## **3. Powerpoint Presentation – New Member Training**

Mrs A Lloyd welcomed new members to the meeting and introduced herself. Members received a welcome pack which provided essential information such as the terms of reference for SACRE, meeting dates, list of members and information on what SACRE was all about.

A detailed presentation was provided for new SACRE members and covered a range of information including:

- What is the purpose of a SACRE
- Membership of the SACRE and the different groups
- The Lancashire SACRE
- Aims of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus
- Field of Enquiry
- Community Cohesion

As part of the presentation, members grouped together into small groups and discussed what they wanted a religiously educated school leaver to know, understand and do.

Information was provided on the Faith Centre in Burnley by Mr A Anwar. Members were informed that the Faith Centre was established by the County Council in 2001 following the Burnley disturbances with an aim to promoting tolerance and respect between different faiths. The Centre had developed significantly over the years and now provided a traded service for primary and secondary schools across the whole of Lancashire. The meeting in April 2018 would be held at the Faith Centre in Burnley.

Mrs A Lloyd provided details on the annual report that was produced by the SACRE, and information on Youth Voice which was led by Ms J Harris was shared. The last event arranged for Youth Voice was a Student Debate held at County Hall earlier in

the year where students from 8 schools in Lancashire debated R.E. topics. The event had been a huge success.

Members were informed of the annual R.E. conference which would take place on the 16 October 2017 at Farington Lodge in Leyland. 10 spaces had been allocated for SACRE members, anyone wishing to attend needed to inform Mrs A Lloyd.

The Chair, Mr P Martin shared information on the North North West (NNW) Hub meetings which took place on a regular basis. The group had been established for 4 years and it was a group of SACRE's getting together and included representation from Blackpool, Cumbria, Bolton, Rochdale, Halton, Warrington and Wigan. The next meeting would be held on the 15 November 2017.

**Action:** It was agreed that the Quiz would be postponed to the next meeting.

#### **4. 10 Minute Break and Networking Opportunity**

A networking opportunity and break was provided to members of the SACRE.

#### **5. Expert Pool of Teachers – Progress Update**

Mrs A Lloyd explained that Management Team had agreed to recruit a band of teachers in Primary and Secondary schools who were experts in their field as currently there was only Ms J Crabtree and Ms J Harris that were relied upon heavily. The role had been advertised and interviews would take place on the 18 October 2017. An update would be provided at the next SACRE meeting.

#### **6. School Visits**

The SACRE arranged regular school visits for members to attend and feedback would then be shared at SACRE meetings. There had not been a visit since the last meeting but the next one was being organised for Friday 20 October 2017 in Burnley.

#### **7. Members' News**

This agenda item was an opportunity for members to share any news from their community including any events, celebrations or news.

Mrs H Shukla shared with the group that the Hindu community were currently celebrating Navratri and on the 19 October 2017 it would be Diwali celebrations.

#### **8. Observers' Contributions**

Dr M Craig shared with the group that 13 - 17 November 2017 would be Interfaith Week, members could find out further information about events and activities on the Preston Faith Forum website.

#### **9. Correspondence**

There was nothing to report for this item.

## **10. Forthcoming QSS Agenda Items**

Items for the next QSS agenda had been discussed and included the following:

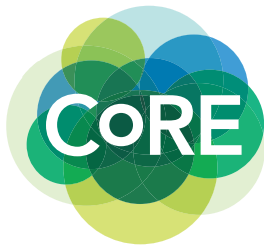
- Review of recent reports including NATRE report on the provision of R.E. and report from Commission on Religious Education.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the SACRE will be held on Monday 27 November 2017 at 10.00am in Cabinet Room D, The Henry Bollingbroke Room at County Hall, Preston.

Paul Bond  
Clerk to the SACRE





Commission on  
Religious Education

INTERIM REPORT **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR ALL

SEPTEMBER 2017







# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This interim report is published with the intention of creating an opportunity for as many people and organisations as possible to engage with the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) about our developing thoughts on RE in schools in England. The interim report explores a number of issues which have emerged during our deliberations on the evidence presented to us during the initial consultation, at the evidence gathering sessions held around the country and in written submissions received during the 2016/17 academic year. It sets out initial recommendations alongside a range of issues on which we are seeking to consult further before drawing any conclusions. We hope that there will be a full and vigorous consultation on the content of this interim report, and that this will help to inform the final report of the Commission, due to be published in 2018.

RE remains a vital academic subject for education in the 21st century. Studying RE gives young people the knowledge, understanding and motivation they need to understand important aspects of human experience, including the religious, spiritual, and moral. It gives insights into the arts, literature, history, and contemporary local and global social and political issues. It provides them with a space in the curriculum to reflect on their own worldview and to engage with others whose worldview may be different. The young people that we have spoken to have told us that RE enables them to have better friendships and to develop greater respect and empathy for others. RE is highly valued by many employers, who increasingly understand that in a globalised world, understanding others' worldviews and their impact on people's lives is essential to success.

The knowledge gained through studying RE is central to good local, national and global citizenship. It enables young people to have a nuanced and informed understanding of key political and social issues that they will need to face as they grow up in an increasingly globalised world. RE helps pupils to deal positively with controversial issues, to manage strongly held differences of belief, and to challenge stereotypes.

As local and global demographics have changed, including patterns of affiliation to religious and non-religious worldviews, today's students will encounter people with a much more diverse range of beliefs, lifestyles and backgrounds than did the previous generations. Understanding religious and non-religious worldviews, and their impact on individuals, communities and wider society, has never been more essential to good citizenship than it is now. For these reasons, we argue throughout the report that all pupils, regardless of background or the type of school they attend, are entitled to high quality RE which enables them to develop the nuanced and informed

understanding of worldviews that they will need as citizens.

We were impressed by the evidence of high quality and innovative approaches to RE that were presented during our consultations.<sup>1</sup> At its best, the subject offers great educational benefit for pupils and the British model of RE is highly regarded and has earned international esteem. Of particular note has been the appearance in recent years of local and national support networks for teachers and also the high level of examination entry at GCSE and A level.

Having said that, we are unanimous in the view that RE faces a perilous future without strategic, urgent intervention. Examination entries fell for the first time in 2017, and many who gave evidence saw this as a sign of further decline in years to come. Amongst the many challenges the subject faces, the following are identified as particularly significant:

- The changed patterns of religious and non-religious belief from the time when the current system was enacted in 1944 present a requirement to ensure that RE's structures reflect the realities of contemporary society. The religious landscape in the UK has diversified with fewer people identifying as Anglican and more identifying with other Christian denominations or other religious traditions. Moreover, the number of people identifying as non-religious has increased: in 2017, 53% of the population described themselves as not having a religion.<sup>2</sup> The global religious landscape has also been undergoing rapid change, where religion is highly significant in many societies.
- There is inconsistency in the quality and provision of RE, with increasing numbers of schools not even meeting the basic legal requirement. Pupils are experiencing a lottery in their access to high quality RE. Evidence presented to the Commission made clear the impact that the type of school had on the extent to which RE is provided: while 6.5% of schools that follow an RE curriculum determined by their religious character devote no part of their curriculum time to RE at key stage 4, the figure is 20.7% for schools required to follow a locally agreed syllabus for RE and 43.7% for academies without a religious character.<sup>3</sup> This inequality of provision means that many children are being disadvantaged by being denied RE.
- As more schools become academies, leaving ever fewer under local authority control, the current framework of determination of RE via local authorities and agreed syllabuses is ceasing to be fit for purpose. A decrease in local authority funding has exacerbated this problem.

<sup>1</sup> Please see Appendix 1: Evidence received by the Commission for details of how we collected evidence.

<sup>2</sup> NATCEN (2017). *British Social Attitudes Survey*.  
<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1469605/BSA-religion.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> RE Council & National Association of Teachers of RE (2017, forthcoming). *The State of the Nation*.

Moreover, evidence submitted to the Commission makes clear that the current approach of relying on the requirements of academy funding agreements is not sufficient for ensuring the proper provision of RE across all academies. If no action is taken, there is a serious risk of increasing numbers of pupils leaving school with an inadequate level of knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews at precisely the time when such understanding is becoming more important.

- RE has suffered from a policy environment that has not encouraged headteachers to regard it as a high-status subject. This environment includes insufficient processes to hold schools to account for their provision of RE and the omission of RE from key performance indicators published by DfE.
- There has been diminishing access to adequate training and support for teachers. This is particularly acute at primary level where the Commission heard that on average a primary trainee receives less than three hours of RE-specific training during a one-year PGCE or School Direct course.<sup>4</sup>
- The quality of RE is variable across schools. Low standards predominate across too many schools, including schools with and without a religious

character. Teachers are not always clear on the purpose of the subject and many lack the subject knowledge necessary to teach about sensitive and crucial issues with skill and nuance. Locally agreed syllabuses are also variable in quality. One

We are advocating RE for all not because children belong to religious traditions or not, but because in our age a nuanced understanding of the role of worldviews must be a part of citizens' intellectual make-up

issue that we have noted is the fact that religion is often presented in an essentialist mode that fails to help pupils understand the complexity, diversity and historicity of religious ideas, institutions and practices. This was most often mentioned in relation to the Dharmic traditions (i.e. Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh traditions) in the written and oral evidence but affects the presentation of all religions and worldviews in resources and in the classroom.

The Commissioners have therefore made initial recommendations in four areas:

4 Fiona Moss, oral evidence submitted to the Commission. See also NATRE (2016). *An analysis of the provision for RE in primary schools*. [www.natre.org.uk%2Fuploads%2FAdditional%2520Documents%2FNATRE%2520Primary%2520Survey%25202016%2520final.docx&usg=AFQjCNFDWLUicovE8LOQEgZiiuHF7fFcAA](http://www.natre.org.uk%2Fuploads%2FAdditional%2520Documents%2FNATRE%2520Primary%2520Survey%25202016%2520final.docx&usg=AFQjCNFDWLUicovE8LOQEgZiiuHF7fFcAA)

1. **A national entitlement for RE.** This would set out clearly the aims and purpose(s) of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject. This national entitlement should be for all pupils at all state-funded schools and we seek to consult with independent schools about whether they should adopt it. We are advocating RE for all not because children belong to religious traditions or not, but because in our age a nuanced understanding of the role of worldviews must be a part of citizens' intellectual make-up. It is to do with their ability to function effectively as citizens and as human beings. This is as important an aspect of education for pupils in schools of a religious character as it is in those without a religious character. It should be introduced through non-statutory guidance as early as possible with a view to it ultimately becoming statutory, either to supplement or replace the current legislation on agreed syllabuses. This national entitlement provides a reinvigorated vision for RE for all pupils in the future, drawing on the very best of the RE that we know happens in some schools. It seeks to be a basic statement of what all pupils are entitled to, but is not a national syllabus or curriculum. We hope that the flexibility of the proposed national entitlement will ensure that a diversity of high quality approaches will emerge and that this will best suit the landscape of a school-led system. We recognise that schools will need guidance and support to translate this entitlement into curriculum planning and we are reviewing where this guidance and support should come from.
2. **Holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE.** The evidence presented to us indicates that at present too many schools are not being held to account for failing to provide adequate RE. Schools should be required to publish details on their website of how they meet the national entitlement for RE. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether schools meet the national entitlement for RE. The Commission has also given thought to how schools should provide for those Key Stage 4 pupils who are not taking the GCSE in Religious Studies and would like to consult on the possibility of a revised qualification for these pupils to ensure that their work can be accredited.
3. **A National Plan to improve teaching and learning in RE.** The Commission would like to develop a National Plan for developing teaching and learning in RE, along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education. The National Plan will bring together the Commission's recommendations for improving teacher subject knowledge and confidence and we seek to consult on how this can best be achieved.
4. **A renewed and expanded role for Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs).** The evidence we have received suggests that SACREs can have an important role in promoting and supporting RE and in promoting good community relations more broadly, but that their capacity to deliver this role fully has been diminishing in many local authorities. The Commission's suggested recommendations, which are

consultative at this stage, call for consideration to be given to adding the promotion of improved community relations to the remit of SACREs and make proposals for the securing of resources for their work. There are also recommendations that seek consideration of the composition of SACREs with a call to ensure that they are fully representative, with representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.

The full recommendations are set out on pages 8 to 12.

In addition, the Commissioners are seeking to undertake further consultation in these areas and have set out the issues that they are particularly interested in exploring. These areas for consultation are set out on pages 12 to 14.

## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### A NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- a. There should be a national entitlement statement for RE which sets out clearly the aims and purpose of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject. A draft statement for consultation is overleaf.
- b. This entitlement should become normative through non-statutory guidance as early as possible, and should ultimately become statutory, either to supplement or to replace current legislation on agreed syllabuses.
- c. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character.
- d. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice.

#### **The National Entitlement for Religious Education**

Overleaf is the draft text of the proposed national entitlement for RE. This draft is for consultation. We welcome comments on and refinements to the text.

## **A National Entitlement for RE**

RE in schools should enable students to engage in an intelligent and informed way with the ideas, practices and contemporary manifestations of a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. It should enable them to understand how worldviews are inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience. It should prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by enabling them to engage respectfully with people with worldviews different from their own. RE should equip pupils to develop their own beliefs, practices, values and identity in the light of their reflections on the worldviews they have studied.

Through their study of worldviews, pupils should develop a lifelong motivation to enquire into questions of meaning and purpose, and investigate others' worldviews and what they mean for individuals, communities and society. All of this will enable them to become responsible citizens and members of diverse and changing local, national and global communities.

Throughout their period of compulsory schooling, pupils should learn about, understand and engage with:

- a. The diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and ways of life that exist locally, nationally and globally.
- b. The ways in which communities and individuals holding different worldviews interact, change and maintain continuity in different times and contexts and as the surrounding culture changes.
- c. The different ways that people interpret and respond to texts and other sources of authority.
- d. The ways that people communicate their beliefs, experiences, values and identities through verbal and non-verbal means (eg prose, story, poetry, art, music, dance, ritual, architecture).
- e. How people seek moral guidance from religious and non-religious worldviews and how they interpret this guidance in their lives.
- f. The importance of experience, including extra-ordinary experiences, in shaping people's worldviews and how worldviews are used to interpret experience.

- g. The role of religious and non-religious rituals and practices in both creating and expressing experience, beliefs, values and commitments.
- h. The relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions concerning political, public, social and cultural life.
- i. Both the positive and negative exercise of power and influence resulting from people's worldviews.
- j. The important role that worldviews play in providing people with a way of making sense of their lives and in forming their identity.\*

As part of a balanced programme aimed at meeting this provision, it is expected that pupils will:

1. Experience meeting and visiting people from their local community from a range of worldviews including those different from their own and that of the school.
2. Develop core skills for researching the beliefs, values and practices of individuals and groups in society.
3. Experience a range of approaches to the study of religions (e.g. phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, textual studies, theology).
4. Engage with questions of meaning and purpose and of the nature of reality raised by the worldviews that they study.
5. Think through and develop a reflective approach to their own personal responses and developing identity and learn to articulate these clearly and coherently while respecting the right of others to differ.
6. Develop the core skills and dispositions of careful listening, critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy and open-mindedness required for making wise judgments.
7. Learn to discuss controversial issues and work with others (including those that they disagree with) with the intention of securing a healthy and peaceful society in the context of significant diversity.

*\* We are indebted to Barbara Wintersgill, who presented her project on Big Ideas in RE. Her work has informed much of the content of this list.*



## HOLDING SCHOOLS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RE

- a. Schools should be required to publish on their website details of how they meet the national entitlement for RE.
- b. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether or not schools meet the national entitlement for RE, in the light of schools' duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.
- c. The DfE should either monitor, or give SACREs or other approved bodies the power and resources to monitor, the provision and quality of RE in all schools, including free schools, academies and schools of a religious character.
- d. The government should consider the impact of school performance measures, including the exclusion of RS GCSE from the EBacc, on GCSE entries and on the provision and quality of RE, and consider reviewing performance measures in the light of the evidence.

## A RENEWED AND EXPANDED ROLE FOR SACRES

We seek to consult on all our recommendations relating to SACREs. (See page 12)

## A NATIONAL PLAN FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE

We are considering developing a National Plan for developing teaching and learning in RE, along the lines of the National Plan for Music Education. This plan is likely to include the following recommendations:

- a. A minimum of 12 hours should be devoted to RE in all primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses.
- b. Leading primary schools for RE should be identified and all primary trainees should be given the opportunity to observe RE teaching in such a school.
- c. Include under the Teachers' Standards, part 1, section 3 (Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge), the requirement that teachers 'demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews where necessary.'
- d. Restore funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses for those applying to teach RE and for serving teachers of RE without a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject.
- e. Restore parity of bursaries for RE with those for other shortage subjects.

- f. The government and relevant funding bodies should consider how funding of grassroots teacher networks can be made more sustainable.
- g. SACREs and local authorities should review existing good practice in developing and sustaining these grassroots networks and start their own if such a network does not exist in their local area.
- h. University performance measures should be updated to credit universities for their engagement with schools, including the provision of continuing professional development (CPD) and resource materials.
- i. University staff conducting research in areas related to RE should be encouraged to contribute to grassroots networks, lead teacher development days, develop resource materials or become SACRE members. This may provide opportunities for them to demonstrate the impact of their research or increase student recruitment.

## LIST OF AREAS FOR CONSULTATION

### A NATIONAL ENTITLEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. The entitlement is not a national syllabus or curriculum. It is a basic statement of what all pupils are entitled to, whatever type of school they attend. Many schools will need guidance and support to translate this entitlement into curriculum planning, particularly in relation to progression. We are still reviewing where this guidance and support will come from. We seek input on what bodies would be best placed to translate the entitlement into detailed programmes of study and how best to support schools to plan their curriculum in line with the entitlement. Several possibilities have been discussed by the Commission so far:
  - a. Removing the requirement for local authorities to hold Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs). In a context where every school will eventually become an academy, this requirement is no longer proportionate for many local authorities and will become even less so over time. However, it might be possible for programmes of study to be developed at regional levels. It would also be possible to include regional universities on this model. A regional system might not provide sufficient support to academies unless they were explicitly included. If the requirement for local authorities to develop a locally agreed syllabus were to be removed, it would not preclude those local authorities that had the resource and expertise from convening ASCs and developing programmes of study that could be adopted by those schools that chose to, within or outside that local authority.
  - b. Recommending the development of a national set of programmes of study compliant with the entitlement. This may or may not be government-funded. This has the advantage of providing consistency

across localities, which was requested by some teachers in the written and oral evidence. However, there are a number of potential difficulties with it. First, there is the vexed question of who develops programmes of study. Second, there is the justified criticism that in the era of a school-led system a nationally agreed set of programmes of study is too rigid and leaves schools insufficient freedom to undertake RE that is appropriate for their pupils and immediate community. Third, there is the question of how to ensure that the syllabus is appropriately independent of political interference. Many of those who gave oral and written evidence were concerned about excessive political interference in the scope and content of RE.

- c. Leaving the market open for schools, groups of schools, dioceses, SACREs, commercial providers and other relevant groups to write their own programmes of study. This would allow maximum freedom for schools but might not resolve the inequality in provision and quality discussed above. Non-statutory guidance or a range of model programmes of study might also be developed to support relevant groups in writing their own programmes of study.
2. There is likely to be a range of possibilities within these broad categories and other possibilities that we have not yet considered. We seek views on what would be most helpful to support schools with curriculum planning and ensure that all schools can meet the entitlement effectively.
3. The question also remains as to whether the entitlement statement should replace or supplement the current legislation on agreed syllabuses, which requires that they must ‘reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain’ (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2). This legislative statement remains a statement of historical and social fact. Of those who identify themselves as having a religion, the majority are Christian, and Christianity has played a particular role in the history of Great Britain. However, the statement in and of itself does not specify how much time should be spent on any worldview. It also does not include non-religious worldviews. We seek views on whether the entitlement should specify a number and range of worldviews, or a minimum time to be spent on one worldview.
4. We have also discussed whether the name of the subject should be changed, to signify the renewed vision for the subject. It is difficult to find an alternative name that appropriately captures the breadth and depth of the subject as outlined in the entitlement statement. We have discussed a number of options. A small majority of the Commission preferred to call the subject Religion and Ethics (or Religions and Ethics) while others wished either to preserve the current name, or to change its name to Religions and Worldviews or Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (or Philosophy, Religion and Ethics). We seek views on which of these options best captures the nature of the subject outlined in the entitlement. We

also seek suggestions on alternative names which fit the entitlement and the renewed vision for the subject.

## HOLDING SCHOOLS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF RE

1. We seek views on the most appropriate mechanisms for holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE at both primary and secondary level.
2. We are considering recommending that a revised qualification at Key Stage 4, for those not taking Full Course GCSE RS, be developed. This would need to meet the requirements of the national entitlement for RE and have currency in school performance measures. This qualification would not be compulsory but would count in school performance measures and in individuals' applications for work or further study. We seek views on how effective this would be and what demand there would be for such a qualification.

## A RENEWED AND EXPANDED ROLE FOR SACRES

1. We seek views on the following recommendations on the role of SACREs:
  - a. The Government should publicly highlight and reaffirm the important role of SACREs in supporting and resourcing RE.
  - b. The Government should consider whether the role of SACREs should be expanded to include a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.
  - c. The Government should consider ways of securing funding to resource SACREs adequately. Options for this may include:
    - i. Ring-fenced funding for SACREs.
    - ii. Funding for SACREs from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport or the Department of Communities and Local Government.
    - iii. Specifying a minimum amount of funding (perhaps per school or per pupil) to which local authorities must adhere.
  - d. The Government should consider the composition of SACREs and the law should be changed to include representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.
  - e. The Government should publish all SACRE annual reports publicly on a dedicated website.
2. We seek views on what the duties of SACREs should be in relation to promoting good community relations, beyond matters relating to religion

and belief in schools.

3. We are still considering how the composition of SACREs should be adapted to be fit for purpose in a changed social and educational landscape. In particular, we are considering whether the committee structure should be changed or abolished. We seek views and evidence on this.
4. We seek views on which groups and organisations should be represented on SACREs.

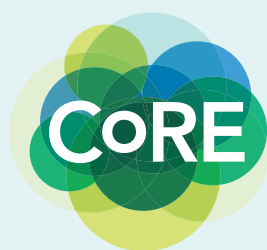
## THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

1. We seek further evidence on the number of pupils being withdrawn from RE, and the reasons given, where these are given, as well as whether the number of cases and reasons given have been changing over time.
2. We seek views on the most effective ways to manage the right of withdrawal in practice.
3. We seek views on whether it is desirable to look to adopt an overall approach to the design of the RE curriculum in every school so that it is sufficiently 'objective, critical and pluralistic' as to render it capable of being compulsory without the right of withdrawal.

## A NATIONAL PLAN FOR IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RE

1. We seek views on what should be included in the National Plan for RE, beyond the recommendations set out above.
2. We seek views on how the National Plan might best be implemented.
3. There are increasing expectations of teachers to be engaged with research, by keeping up to date with published research at minimum, and where possible by engaging in action research, lesson study and other forms of practitioner research. We seek views on the kinds of research which would be most helpful for RE teachers to engage with, and what mechanisms would support this.





## **Commission on Religious Education**

Report drafter: Amira Chilvers  
Report produced for the Commission on Religious Education  
by NCVO-CES

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## About you

**Thank you for participating in the consultation on the Commission on RE's interim report. The consultation is open until 1 December 2017.**

**Your responses to the consultation will help inform the Commission's final report in September 2018. We will not be publishing a separate consultation response.**

\* 1. What is your name?

\* 2. Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- ☐ As an individual
- ☐ On behalf of an organisation

\* 3. What is your role? You may have more than one, so please select the most relevant.

4. If you have any other roles that you think are relevant to this consultation, please tick them here.

- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Inspector, adviser or consultant
- ☐ SACRE member
- ☐ School leader (assistant, deputy, head teacher, executive head, MAT CEO)
- ☐ Governor or MAT trustee
- ☐ Member of a faith-based organisation
- ☐ Academic - post-doctoral researcher or above
- ☐ Other (please specify)

5. Do you consent to your name and organisation being included in the final report?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. May we quote from your responses in the final report, if necessary?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. Did you participate in the initial consultation last year? You may have given written evidence via our survey or by email, or given oral evidence at one of our evidence gathering sessions.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Your data will be stored in a secure location and will only be used by the Commission on RE for the purposes of developing the final report. We will not give your personal data to any third party. The data will be stored by the Commission on RE and by NCVO CES who designed the survey for up to three years before being deleted.

## About your school

\* 8. Please tell us more about the school that you work in. Which phases of education does it cover?

- ☐ Primary
- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ All-through
- ☐ Special
- ☐ Other (please specify)

\* 9. What type of school is it?

If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in the box below

\* 10. Is your school part of a Teaching School Alliance?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

If you are a member of a Teaching School Alliance, please enter the name of the Alliance in the box below.

11. Are you a member of any of the following professional organisations?

- ☐ NATRE
- ☐ ISRSA
- ☐ NAHT
- ☐ ASCL
- ☐ NGA
- ☐ Other (please specify)

## About your school or college

\* 12. Please tell us more about the school or college that you attend, or that your child attends. Which phases of education does it cover?

- ☐ Primary
- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ All-through
- ☐ Special
- ☐ Sixth form college
- ☐ FE college
- ☐ Other (please specify)

\* 13. What type of school is it?

If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in the box below

## About your university

\* 14. Which university or college do you attend?

\* 15. What degree course are you studying?

Level (eg BA, BEd, MA,  
PhD)

Title of degree

Department

\* 16. Which SACRE(s) are you a member of?

## More about your role

\* 17. Which professional organisation(s) are you a member of?

- ☐ NATRE
- ☐ AULRE
- ☐ AREIAC
- ☐ NASACRE
- ☐ Other (please specify)

\* 18. Are you employed by a Local Authority or SACRE as an adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, which local authority or authorities are you employed by and for how many days each?

\* 19. Are you employed by a Church of England or Roman Catholic diocese as an adviser?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, which diocese(s) are you employed by and for how many days each?



\* 20. Which faith-based organisation are you a member of?

\* 21. Which university and department do you work in?

University

Department

## About your organisation

\* 22. What type of organisation are you responding on behalf of?

- ☐ School or college
- ☐ MAT
- ☐ Local authority
- ☐ SACRE
- ☐ Professional body
- ☐ Faith-based organisation
- ☐ Other (please specify)

\* 23. Please enter the name of your organisation

## The National Entitlement for RE

24. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. There should be a national entitlement statement (see below) for RE which sets out clearly the aims and purpose of RE and what pupils should experience in the course of their study of the subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. This entitlement should become normative through non-statutory guidance as early as possible, and should ultimately become statutory, either to supplement or to replace current legislation on agreed syllabuses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The national entitlement should apply to all state-funded schools including academies, free schools and schools of a religious character.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Independent schools should consider adopting the entitlement as an undertaking of good practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

Here is the proposed national entitlement for RE:

RE in schools should enable students to engage in an intelligent and informed way with the ideas, practices and contemporary manifestations of a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. It should enable them to understand how worldviews are inextricably woven into, influence and are influenced by, all dimensions of human experience. It should prepare pupils for life in modern Britain by enabling them to engage respectfully with people with worldviews different from their own. RE should equip pupils to develop their own beliefs, practices, values and identity in the light of their reflections on the worldviews they have studied.

Through their study of worldviews, pupils should develop a lifelong motivation to enquire into questions of meaning and purpose, and investigate others' worldviews and what they mean for individuals, communities and society. All of this will enable them to become responsible citizens and members of diverse and changing local, national and global communities.

Throughout their period of compulsory schooling, pupils should learn about, understand and engage with:

- a. the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews and ways of life that exist locally, nationally and globally.
- b. the ways in which communities and individuals holding different worldviews interact, change and maintain continuity in different times and contexts and as the surrounding culture changes.
- c. the different ways that people interpret and respond to texts and other sources of authority.
- d. the ways that people communicate their beliefs, experiences, values and identities through verbal and non-verbal means (eg prose, story, poetry, art, music, dance, ritual, architecture).
- e. How people seek moral guidance from religious and non-religious worldviews and how they interpret this guidance in their lives.
- f. the importance of experience, including extra-ordinary experiences, in shaping people's worldviews and how worldviews are used to interpret experience.
- g. the role of religious and non-religious rituals and practices in both creating and expressing experience, beliefs, values and commitments.
- h. the relationship between people's worldview and their thinking and actions concerning political, public, social and cultural life.
- i. both the positive and negative exercise of power and influence resulting from people's worldviews.
- j. the important role that worldviews play in providing people with a way of making sense of their lives and in forming their identity.

As part of a balanced programme aimed at meeting this provision, it is expected that pupils will:

1. experience meeting and visiting people from their local community from a range of worldviews including those different from their own and that of the school.
2. develop core skills for researching the beliefs, values and practices of individuals and groups in society.
3. experience a range of approaches to the study of religions (e.g. phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, textual studies, theology).
4. engage with questions of meaning and purpose and of the nature of reality raised by the worldviews that they study.
5. think through and develop a reflective approach to their own personal responses and developing identity and learn to articulate these clearly and coherently while respecting the right of others to differ.
6. Develop the core skills and dispositions of careful listening, critical thinking, self-reflection, empathy and openmindedness required for making wise judgments.
7. learn to discuss controversial issues and work with others (including those that they disagree with) with the intention of securing a healthy and peaceful society in the context of significant diversity.

26. Is the above national entitlement at the right level of specificity?

- ☐ Too specific and detailed
- ☐ About right
- ☐ Not specific and detailed enough
- ☐ No opinion

Please comment on your response, in particular to explain what should be added or removed.

27. Should the entitlement be accompanied by expected standards of attainment at each Key Stage?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Don't know

Please comment on your response and the reasons that you have chosen it.

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28. Please comment further on the national entitlement in the box below.

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29. Should the requirement for local authorities to produce locally agreed syllabuses be removed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ No opinion

Please comment on your answer below

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30. If the requirement to produce locally agreed syllabuses were removed, what do you think would happen to SACREs and why?

--

31. How should the entitlement statement be translated into detailed programmes of study?

- ☐ There should be one single national set of programmes of study to apply to all schools.
- ☐ Local authorities should continue to be required to produce locally agreed syllabuses as they currently do.
- ☐ The market should be left open for schools, groups of schools, dioceses and other relevant providers to produce their own programmes of study.
- ☐ There should be a non-statutory national model set of programmes of study and the market should also be left open for other providers to produce their own programmes of study.
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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32. Please comment further on who should develop programmes of study and how this can best be organised to meet the needs of all schools. Please explain your response to the question above on how the national entitlement should be translated into detailed programmes of study.

--

33. How should the national entitlement interact with the current statement in legislation that agreed syllabuses must 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (UK Parliament, Education Act 1996, Section 375.2).

- ☐ This statement should remain on the statute books and the national entitlement should have the status of non-statutory guidance
- ☐ This statement should remain on the statute books and the national entitlement should also become statutory
- ☐ This statement should be removed from the statute books and the national entitlement should replace it
- ☐ Other - please specify in the comment box
- ☐ No opinion
- ☐ Don't know

Please comment on the reasons for your choice. If you have been asked to specify your answer, please do so in this box.

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34. Should the entitlement specify a number and range of worldviews?

- ☐ No, we should avoid limiting RE to a specific number or range of worldviews
- ☐ Yes, it should specify a minimum number of worldviews but nothing further
- ☐ Yes, it should specify a minimum number of worldviews and that there should be one Abrahamic worldview, one Dharmic worldview and one non-religious worldview.
- ☐ Yes, it should specify a number of worldviews and name particular worldviews that should be studied (please specify).
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other, please specify in the comment box below.

Please comment on your response in the box below. If you were asked to specify your answer, please do so here.

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35. Should the entitlement specify a minimum amount of time to be spent on any one worldview?

- ☐ No, a minimum time should not be specified
- ☐ Yes, there should be a minimum time specified for one worldview
- ☐ Yes, there should be a minimum time specified for more than one worldview
- ☐ Yes, and there should also be a maximum time specified
- ☐ Don't know

Please comment on your answer below. If you have suggested that there should be a minimum or maximum time, please specify these below.

36. Should the name of the subject be changed? If so, which option would best fit the entitlement statement?

- ☐ Don't change it, stick with Religious Education
- ☐ Religion and Ethics
- ☐ Religions and Ethics
- ☐ Religions and Worldviews
- ☐ Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
- ☐ Philosophy, Religion and Ethics
- ☐ Other (please specify)

37. Please explain your reasons for your choice of name.

38. If you have any other comments about the National Entitlement for RE, please enter them in the box below.



## Holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE

39. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. Schools should be required to publish on their website details of how they meet the national entitlement for RE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Inspection frameworks should be revised to ensure that inspectors monitor whether or not schools meet the national entitlement for RE, in the light of schools' duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The DfE should either monitor, or give SACREs or other approved bodies the power and resources to monitor, the provision and quality of RE in all schools, including free schools, academies and schools of a religious character.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The government should consider the impact of school performance measures, including the exclusion of RS GCSE from the EBacc, on GCSE entries and on the provision and quality of RE, and consider reviewing performance measures in the light of the evidence.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

40. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

41. What are the most effective ways to hold schools to account for the provision and quality of RE, at both primary and secondary levels?

42. Should a revised Key Stage 4 qualification for those not taking GCSE RS be developed? This would need to meet the requirements of the entitlement and have currency in school performance measures.

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure  
☐ No opinion

Please comment on your answer and the reason for your choice.

43. Please add any further comments about holding schools to account for the provision and quality of RE in the box below.

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## A renewed and expanded role for SACREs

44. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
a. The Government should publicly highlight and reaffirm the important role of SACREs in supporting and resourcing RE.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The Government should consider whether the role of SACREs should be expanded to include a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The Government should consider ways of securing funding to resource SACREs adequately.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. i. The Government should consider the composition of SACREs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. ii. The law should be changed to include representatives of non-religious worldviews as full members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. The Government should publish all SACRE annual reports publicly on a dedicated website.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

45. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

46. Should the role of SACREs be expanded to include promoting good community relations beyond matters of religion and belief in schools?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure  
☐ No opinion

Please comment on your answer. If you answered yes, what should this role involve?

47. SACREs currently have a committee structure. Should the committee structure be abolished?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Don't know  
☐ No opinion

Please comment on your answer below.

48. Which groups and organisations should be represented on SACREs? Tick as many as apply.

- ☐ The Church of England
- ☐ Representatives of other Christian denominations
- ☐ Representatives of the other five major religious worldviews commonly studied: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism
- ☐ Representatives of smaller religious worldviews
- ☐ Representatives of non religious worldviews
- ☐ Teacher associations - please specify
- ☐ Teachers
- ☐ Parents
- ☐ School governors
- ☐ School leaders
- ☐ MAT trustees
- ☐ Universities
- ☐ NATRE
- ☐ AREIAC
- ☐ Local heritage sites eg museums
- ☐ Other (please specify. Add as many groups/organisations as you wish)

49. If you have any other comments on the role and function of SACREs, please enter them in the box below.

## The right of withdrawal

**Parents and carers currently have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of RE. While the majority of those we consulted would like to see an end to the right of withdrawal, the legal implications of this are complex and difficult. Please see the interim report for more information on this.**

50. Please comment on the most effective ways to manage the right of withdrawal in practice, given the legal issues discussed in the report.

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51. Should the Commission be seeking an approach to RE that is 'objective, critical and pluralistic' enough to be compulsory, without the right of withdrawal?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ No opinion

Please comment on the reasons for your answer choice.

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52. If you have any other comments on the right of withdrawal, or any further information about the right of withdrawal as currently practised, please enter them in the box below.

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## A National Plan for improving teaching and learning in RE

53. How far do you agree with each of the following recommendations?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No opinion
a. A minimum of 12 hours should be devoted to RE in all primary initial teacher education (ITE) courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Leading primary schools for RE should be identified and all primary trainees should be given the opportunity to observe RE teaching in such a school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. include under the Teachers' Standards, part 1, section 3 (Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge), the requirement that teachers 'demonstrate a good understanding of and take responsibility for the sensitive handling of controversial issues, including thoughtful discussion of religious and non-religious worldviews where necessary.'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Restore funded Subject Knowledge Enhancement (SKE) courses for those applying to teach RE and for serving teachers of RE without a relevant post A-level qualification in the subject.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Restore parity of bursaries for RE with those for other shortage subjects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. The government and relevant funding bodies should consider how funding of RE networks can be made more sustainable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. SACREs and local authorities should review existing good practice in developing and sustaining these RE networks and start their own if such a network does not exist in their local area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. University performance measures should be updated to credit universities for their engagement with schools, including the provision of continuing professional development (CPD) and resource materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. University staff conducting research in areas related to RE should be encouraged to contribute to RE networks, lead teacher development days, develop resource materials or become SACRE members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

54. Please comment on any of your answers above, in particular your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations.

55. What else, if anything, should be included in a National Plan to improve teaching and learning in RE?

56. How should the National Plan for RE be implemented in order to be most effective?

57. If you have any other comments on how to improve teaching and learning in RE, please enter them in the box below.

## Next steps

58. If you would like to comment on any other aspect of the interim report, or anything else that you think the Commission should be aware of, please enter your comments in the box below.

59. If you would like to be kept in touch with the progress of the Commission and sent a link to the final report when it is published, please include your name and email address below.

**Name**

**Email Address**

Alongside this consultation, the Commission is also looking for case studies from schools, advisers and organisations. They are keen to receive case studies of approaches and curriculum that exemplify the delivery of the national entitlement, or those that show the ways in which current practice would need to change to meet the entitlement. They are also seeking case studies of good practice that does not fit the entitlement. If you would like to contribute a case study, you can do so here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CoRECaseStudies>.



