

Date of issue: 10th October 2014

MEETING	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
DATE AND TIME:	WEDNESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2014 AT 4.30 PM
VENUE:	IQRA SLOUGH ISLAMIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, GRASMERE AVENUE, SLOUGH SL2 5JD
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NEIL FRASER 01753 875015

SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

The following items were not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
6.	SACRE Annual Report	1 - 6
7.	Collective Worship Briefing Paper- Jo Fageant	7 - 14
8.	Newsletter-Jo Fageant	15 - 18

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SACRE Annual Reports – what is necessary and what is desirable?

Note: SACREs have responsibility for advising an authority on its schools. For religious education it advises community, voluntary controlled and Trust and Foundation schools without a religious designation; for collective worship it advises the authority on community and Trust and Foundation schools without a religious designation.

SACREs have to publish an annual report ‘as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council ... during the last preceding year’¹. This report has to be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners (see the Appendix). The main purpose of the annual report is to hold the local authority to account by informing the Secretary of State, and key partners, what advice SACRE gave during the year to the local authority and how that was responded to, this includes advice on religious education and collective worship in those schools for which the local authority has responsibility. Therefore, it is important that the Annual Report writing process takes into account the various audiences that SACRE is hoping to communicate with.

The necessary

Firstly, it is important to recognise that SACREs are statutory bodies that give advice. Hence, the annual report will need to state what advice was given, to whom and how that advice was acted upon in the year under report. Advice would normally be given to:

1. The local authority, this includes the portfolio holder for children’s services, the director of children’s services and any official of the authority
2. The schools within the authority for which the SACRE is responsible and other schools within the SACRE’s geographical area
3. The government, including the Secretary of State, Ministers or civil servants

The annual report should answer the following questions:

1. How did those who were give advice respond?
2. Was the advice taken?
3. How effective were actions taken in light of the advice given?
4. Did those being advised do something different and, if so, to what effect?

If SACRE cannot do this it will be important to state why. Here are some questions to consider:

¹ Education Act 1996: 391 (6); Circular 1/94 recommended that the annual report was sent to the Secretary of State by 31st December each calendar year.

- Is SACRE taken seriously enough?
- Is SACRE adequately supported by professional staff, such as a clerk and an RE professional?
- What resources did SACRE receive, how were they used and did that constitute value for money?

If the answer to any, some or all of these questions is: no, then that needs to be acknowledged in the report.

Secondly, the report needs to include data about SACRE attendance by Committee as well as any monies that it receives from the local authority to carry out its responsibilities, including the time of an advisor and a clerk. As SACRE's are statutory bodies that meet in public they need to be properly clerked by the local authority, as their meetings are part of the public record.

SACRE should also report on any monitoring of RE and collective worship it has done and the results of such monitoring. Indeed, such monitoring should be the basis of at least some of the advice given. Similarly, a SACRE is required to advise on the appropriate materials used in classrooms to support the teaching and learning in RE. SACRE should report on any such materials that it has looked at and advised upon. SACREs also need to report on the work of any Agreed Syllabus Conference done in that calendar year, or indicate when another Conference is due.

SACRE has a statutory role in considering and granting determinations². A request for a determination is made by the head teacher of a school to provide collective worship that is not Christian. If a SACRE grants or refuses a determination it should be noted in the annual report. There is no reason for a full explanation of why SACRE made the decision that it did as that information will be available from the report presented to SACRE and the minutes of that meeting. Likewise, SACRE has a role in investigating complaints against schools in relation to RE and Collective Worship and the number of such complaints dealt with should be noted in the report with an indication as to whether the complaints were upheld or not. In terms of complaints investigated it would be rare to mention the schools or individuals involved, as these matters would usually be discussed with the exclusion of press and public.

The desirable

SACRE may have done a host of things that it should celebrate. This may be provided evenings for teachers to meet members of faith communities of significance in the local authority. It might be lectures that SACRE has hosted. It could be supporting other local authority agendas, such as Prevent or its contribution to the promotion of social cohesion in the authority. Similarly, SACRE may have formal contacts with a number of significant groups in the area, such as Churches Together, the local interfaith network, RE hubs or professional

² Education Act 1996: 394

associations such as NATRE. Whatever SACRE has done can be celebrated in the report.

If possible the report should highlight good practice in the local authority so that schools might see examples of what they might do to improve RE and collective worship in their school.

It is also desirable that the Chair of SACRE write a short introduction to the Annual Report – this may be in the form of a ‘the state of the nation’ address setting out key issues for RE, collective worship and SACRE in the coming twelve months.

Conclusion

SACRE’s annual report is SACRE’s opportunity to hold the local authority to account. As a statutory body it has this duty and responsibility. If RE and collective worship are of low priority in the authority’s schools and it does nothing to stop that then the Secretary of State needs to know, as do key partners. If the local authority is promoting RE and collective worship and the status of RE is high then that should be celebrated.

SACRE too needs to celebrate what it has done and to celebrate what others have done to promote high quality RE and collective worship.

Suggested structure to the report

Here is a suggested structure for the annual report.

1. Chair’s introduction and overview of the report
2. Table of contents
3. Advice to statutory bodies
 - a. Local Authority
 - b. Schools, including advice on methods of teaching and teaching materials
 - c. Government or other statutory bodies
 - d. The response to advice given by SACRE
4. Religious Education
 - a. Standards and quality of provision of RE
 - a. Public examinations
 - b. Attainment in RE not covered by public examination
 - c. Evidence from Ofsted reports
 - d. Withdrawal from RE
 - e. Complaints about RE in the local authority’s community and controlled schools
 - f. Training provided to schools, the number of schools involved in training and its quality
 - b. Agreed Syllabus Review

- a. When the Agreed Syllabus was last reviewed and when the next review is expected to start
 - b. Monitoring of the current Agreed Syllabus, its implementation and issues that SACRE have highlighted as a result of monitoring undertaken
5. Collective Worship
 - a. Compliance with the statutory requirement
 - b. Quality of collective worship
 - c. Determinations
 - d. Withdrawal from collective worship
 - e. Complaints about collective worship in the local authority's community schools
6. Management of SACRE
 - a. Attendance at SACRE by Group
 - b. Membership and training
 - c. The number and work of subcommittees
 - d. Resources available to SACRE, including finance, professional advice and clerking
7. Contribution of SACRE to wider local authority agendas
 - a. Identifying what SACRE has contributed to local authority agendas and the impact of that contribution
 - b. SACRE's contribution to the local authority's public sector equality duty
 - c. SACRE's contribution to governor training and advice to governors
 - d. Links to broader community initiatives
 - e. How SACRE is linked to local and national bodies
8. Summary
9. Membership of SACRE

This is not an exhaustive structure but meant as a useful guide.

Appendix: Key partners

When writing the report it is important to understand whom the various audiences of the report. This may mean thinking carefully about style and the language used, especially acronyms. Here is a suggested list:

- Councillors
- Nominating bodies
- Schools, including Academies, Free Schools and Independent schools in the local authority's area
- Libraries for the general public (including a version for the visually impaired where requested)
- Local faith leaders and faith communities (on request SACRE's annual report should be available in languages other than English)

- Local institutes of further and higher education, especially where teachers are trained, if there are none in the area then those who use schools in the authority for teacher training
- Teaching schools, in that specific capacity
- Academy chains, to the Executive Head Teacher/Principal and the Chair of the Board of Directors

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Collective Worship Revisited

There has been no significant change in the law about collective worship since the Education Reform Act of 1988 but every so often it seems a good idea to remind ourselves of what we **have** to do and reflect on the best practice that makes this aspect of each school day so valuable.

Collective worship: The facts of life

Church Schools and Academies:

It is important at the outset to make it clear that the following explanation of the legal requirements does not apply to voluntary aided and controlled church schools. They have to provide daily worship like all other schools but they do not come under the remit of the SACRE for collective worship advice. They should seek guidance from their diocese.

Obligations in relation to collective worship for academies should be set out in their funding agreements.

Community schools:

These are the schools for which the SACRE has responsibility and the current legislative framework was originally set out in the **1988 Education Reform Act**. Summarised the main points are as follows:

There must be a **daily** act of worship for **every** pupil. This can be at any time of the day in any normal school grouping. It is the headteacher's responsibility, after consultation with the governing body to ensure this happens. Collective worship is distinct from assembly which can be a gathering for a wide variety of reasons.

The **majority** of worship must be **wholly** or **mainly** of a **broadly Christian character**, meaning it should **reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief**. It can contain non-Christian elements.

Worship must be **appropriate** to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. Worship must **not** be denominational.

The basic requirement is that there should be an act of collective worship for all registered pupils every school day. (ERA 6.1) There are only two exceptions to this: parents have the right to withdraw their child(ren) from all or parts of collective worship and pupils in school sixth forms are permitted to decide for themselves whether to attend or not.

None of this legislation applies to special schools.

Exceptions

In some schools, for religious reasons, collective worship that *'reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief'* is deemed to be inappropriate for its pupils. In such cases it is possible for a school to apply for a *determination*. The procedure does not lift the duty to provide daily collective worship; it allows for the requirement that collective worship should be *'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'* to be lifted. Applications for determinations are made to the relevant body by the head teacher after consultation with parents and the school's governing body. Traditionally it has been a function of the SACRE to receive and 'determine' whether such requests are valid, either granting or refusing them and this still applies in the case of community schools without a religious character. The body now responsible for performing this function for Free Schools and Academies is the Education Funding Agency (EFA). All determinations last for five years.

What does all this mean in practice?

Good collective worship involves giving particular attention to:

- the importance of atmosphere
- the respect of pupil integrity
- the promotion of spiritual and moral development
- the importance of planning

The legislation allows for a considerable degree of flexibility. The word *collective* implies something significantly different from *corporate* which was the word used to describe worship in schools prior to 1988. *Corporate* is generally understood to mean worship which is the voluntary response of a corporate body of believers. *Collective* worship is unique and different. It gives us the opportunity to do just that - to collect together, to meet together. It is a collection of differences – different faiths, different cultures, different ages and different backgrounds. It is a focal point of the day in any school community where all ages can/might meet one another, share together and establish a shared sense of identity.

The invitation to choose to provide worship which is either wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character opens up opportunities for variety and breadth which enables the inclusion of secular material and teachings and stories from other religious traditions. Reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief suggests an approach which is not exclusive, something which reflects plurality and focuses not on doctrine or traditions of worship but on belief that is broadly Christian.

The expectation is that school worship will be inclusive, participative, challenging and educational, drawing on a wide range of religious traditions without compromising the religious or non-religious backgrounds of pupils (and staff), whilst giving those for whom it is appropriate the opportunity to worship God.

All schools have a duty to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of children. Of the four the term *spiritual* causes the greatest anxiety as to its meaning. Spiritual is not synonymous with religious. In the context of an educational setting it involves:

- a recognition of the uniqueness of each individual
- helping pupils to develop the capacity to transcend the limitations of the physical world
- helping to lift the horizons of pupils beyond the materialistic
- being creative
- considering ultimate questions about the meaning of life in general and pupils' own lives in particular
- developing positive attitudes and hope.

Collective Worship offers a uniquely rich context for all this. It is a place where a sense of that spiritual part of our lives which needs recognition and expression can be found.

Planning worship

Creating the place for worship

Creating an appropriate atmosphere in the space to be used for worship is important. This might be in the classroom with a single class or a larger space with more children representing a wider diversity. Sometimes when the whole school is assembled, staff use this as an opportunity for things other than worship – which of course means this is not 'whole school' worship. Whether in classroom or school hall the transition between other aspects of the day and the act of worship needs to be facilitated. Creative ways need to be found. Symbols and artefacts can work really well to bridge and mark the transition. Candles, music, pictures and many other things can be used to signify the beginning of worship. To light a candle for a specific person or purpose significant to the

school community/key stage/year group/class on that day marks a moment of togetherness, readiness to be together in a different way, to worship. For older children known prayer or prose patterns that are communally said together can achieve the same.

A menu for worship

- Prayer is as simple and honest, as liturgical and responsive as you want it to be. The range of resources is enormous but it's worth remembering that possibly the best resource is the children themselves when they freely write/offer their prayers in their own words.
- Singing/music: there are amazing resources available. Kevin Mayhew is one of the top publishers of resources of music books and CDs. There are new songs written every year that are appropriate for collective worship. It is important never to get trapped into relying on the old ones from yester-year or deciding that all the old songs are part of the past and not relevant to the present day in school worship. *Out of the ark* music and *Redhead Music* are both popular resources with schools – go to their websites for songs for Easter or Harvest or everyday assemblies and music for all occasions. They also publish other songwriters for both KS1 and KS2, offering rich material to facilitate excellent musical worship. Although musicians in the school are of great value in supporting worship, there are obvious benefits to using CDs: they can be used in any room or corner in which you may find yourself whether it be the computer area, classroom carpet corner or the hall with the whole school and, of course they can be available simultaneously for different groups gathered in different parts of the school for worship. Using actions and repetitive action routines, often choreographed by pupils themselves, allows everyone, even those who cannot read the words or speak English, to join in and have fun.

Web pages:

www.springharvest.org.uk

www.kevinmayhew.org.uk

www.outoftheark.co.uk

www.redheadmusic.co.uk

- Story telling: Schools are good at selecting stories from a wide range of sources, including religious texts, to use in collective worship. It is important to remember that stories specifically from religious traditions are used within faith communities not just to teach moral messages but to communicate something of beliefs about God. When used in inclusive collective worship, their origin should be made clear and that they are sharing the perspective of a particular religious group. That doesn't devalue their use because children and adults who do not share the particular religious faith can still find something of value in a good story. The Bible, for example, can be a rich resource for collective worship. There are so many different children's or youth versions of the Bible appropriate for use in collective worship for all different ages. The Street Bible by Rob Lacey is an example which brings the Bible alive with prose that conveys the meaning with an approach that will resonate with children who want to be surprised by the Bible making such sense and impact rather than old language and irrelevance to life. The Bible offers stories of adventure, journey, poetry or songs of lament, creation, friendship, parables and miracles, fights and famines.
- Art: art, religious paintings and pictures offer a rich resource for collective worship, particularly with the ease of access we enjoy through the internet. There is an example of a school which used the painting of *I stand at the door and knock* to great effect to get children to ponder what it was they would allow into their lives and what it was they would keep out and to which the door would be kept shut. This was a secondary school act of collective worship and it resonated with so many of them as they later discussed what it was that they needed to allow in and keep out.
- Visitors provide information on causes and organisations, personal testimony and interview opportunities. They can be an enriching source of ideas. It is wise to brief them carefully and share the school's understanding of collective worship. Some visitors might lead an act of

worship, others will be a resource making a contribution to worship which is being led by someone else.

- Stillness/Silence: there are few, if any, moments in which complete stillness can descend on a school community without a test or exam being in progress. In collective worship silence and stillness create powerful moments for thinking and listening. 'Drop thy still dews of quietness till all our strivings cease' is a truth to be experienced by the whole school community as they face the usual busy, urgent, rolling programme of learning and achieving. The gift of silence is a gift that can be learnt and practised in any school and collective worship. It is best learnt when it is not the predictable pattern of every assembly but skillfully used with symbols such as light or water or candle flames and a guided intention of how to use the time of stillness.
- Celebrations/Remembrances: Collective worship provides opportunities to celebrate the key festivals that are part of the cyclical yearly pattern of worship. Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Eid, Divali, Vaisakhi or Passover – celebrations are all important, and so much of living faith is about celebration and fun. Collective worship must represent the fun as well as the stillness and reflection.
- Ritual but not habitual: the best collective worship is where there are repetitive symbols, songs or signs that single out the time of collective worship as a special recognisable time for the school community but it should never become so repetitive that it becomes predictable and boring. There is a necessary tension between predictability and creativity, between safeness and adventure during the times that the school sets aside for collective worship each day.
- A number of other activities can legitimately be called worship. Amongst these are:
 - reflection on the meaning of life
 - pondering ultimate questions
 - developing a sense of transcendence
 - responding to a challenge
 - learning from the experience of others

What follows is an example of a possible collective worship policy. It includes a wide range of ideas schools might want to include in such a document. It needs to be personalised and not all the elements included here will be found in all such policy statements.

An Example of a Collective Worship Policy in a LA Maintained School

Schools may use this example as a basis for their policy, if they wish. School policies have to be ratified by the governors every time they are amended. Schools may find that some details which need to be amended more often than a policy is reviewed are better placed in an appendix which does not need to be governor approved every time it changes. References are made to an appendix throughout this example policy.

The collective worship policy at ? School pays due regard to statutory requirements, and has taken account of the guidance offered by the local authority through its SACRE. Collective worship is a valued and valuable part of school life and is taken seriously, because it shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Aims of collective worship

Collective worship in ? School aims to provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to:

- experience a variety of styles of worship
- celebrate together eg festivals, school values, individual achievements
- build a sense of community/foster corporate identity;
- develop a reflective approach to living which sometimes encourages understanding of and invitation to prayer;
- look beyond the physical, material and measurable
- worship God or reflect on human values;
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed in doing any of the above

Statutory requirements

By law, Collective Worship must

- take place for every child not withdrawn by their parents (post 16 students can withdraw themselves) every day
- be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils

This means that our collective worship reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. Not every act of collective worship has to comply with this; just the majority so we are able to be creative and provide a wide variety of experiences.

The Collective Worship Policy of ? School is consonant with the philosophy and aims of the school as expressed in the school prospectus.

The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum

Collective worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, in ? School, we aim to enable collective worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive..

Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with school policy. To achieve this it addresses a wide variety of themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides pupils with opportunities to 'respond' at their own level.

The Management of Collective Worship

The Headteacher is responsible for the provision of collective worship, supported by and after consultation with the governing body. The following arrangements exist to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate collective worship:

1. HT/DHT/delegated teacher draws up a rota for leading collective worship and themes for each week.
2. HT/DHT/delegated teacher observes at least 6 acts of collective worship (from a range of formats) per term to ensure that they comply with school policy and the law.
3. Teacher, pupil and, where appropriate, parental views are collected annually to evaluate the quality and impact of collective worship and to identify ways in which it might be improved.

(Schools may wish to include a 'job description' for the collective worship co-ordinator/team in an appendix to their collective worship policy.)

The Organisation of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings in the school hall, or one of the multi-purpose rooms, or the classroom.

Acts of worship usually last for approximately 15 minutes, although it is recognized that this time will be shortened or lengthened when it is appropriate.

(A description of the variety of groupings may also be included here or in an appendix)

Leadership

Every member of the school staff, pupils and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year. *(The appendix might include details such as a weekly leadership pattern)*

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of collective worship is considered carefully to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils.

Termly planning sheets *(could be included in the appendix)* list themes, special occasions and events, but there is flexibility to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Weekly planning and recording sheets *(could be included in the appendix)*, enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship.

Visitors are welcomed to lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

The Act of Collective Worship

We use a variety of styles, active and interactive methods and a range of resources in our acts of collective worship. Leaders make decisions about these elements according to what is most appropriate to the content, the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils.

Where prayer is included in our acts of worship it is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to 'God' rather than Jesus as this is inclusive of the beliefs of our non-Christian religious pupils. We hope that pupils who prefer not to pray will use these moments to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Collective worship should not be confused with assembly. We often take the opportunity of pupils gathered together to share announcements and notices. Using a variety of strategies eg music, silence etc we indicate clearly to all present when worship begins and ends.

Withdrawal

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff (and students in the sixth form) are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the headteacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about collective worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible. Those pupils who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff.

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Autumn 2014

The latest news from SACRE

Slough has recently appointed a professional adviser to its Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). Some readers may already know Jo Fageant who has been a RE consultant in the area for some time. Jo will advise the SACRE and also serve as RE consultant for Slough schools. Her change of status means the SACRE has a new Chair in Julie Siddiqi. With Julie driving things with energy and enthusiasm the SACRE has also drawn in a number of new members. All this adds up to renewed life and commitment and the SACRE is keen to be serving Slough schools and supporting them in the continuing development of RE and collective worship.

Photo of Jo and Julie to be added here?

This newsletter highlights the opportunities open to teachers and news of what is happening in the RE community at large. The SACRE is, however, very keen to hear from schools about the support they would like and also to hear of successes that can be shared with other schools as examples of good practice. Get in touch with Jo at jo.fageant@oxford.anglican.org or on 07885 697447 if you have requests or ideas to share.

Autumn Term meeting for RE teachers

Slough RE teachers have, for a while, been attending termly meetings organised by the Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE. Whilst this is still possible, this term there will be a meeting in Slough, held at the Khalsa School (SL2 5QR) from 4.00-5.30PM on Wednesday 26th November. There will be a sharing of general RE news and a presentation about Sikhism. It is essential to let Jo Fageant know if you intend to attend.

Support with your RE planning

Struggling to plan an exciting, challenging RE scheme of work that covers all aspects of your syllabus? Look no further than the scheme of work published by the Schools Department of the Diocese of Oxford. It exemplifies the enquiry based method recommended for teaching RE in the Pan Berkshire Syllabus of 2012. It is available from the diocesan website with a purchasable password for only £200.

Coverage:

The scheme of work covers KS1 & KS2, with enough material for a unit each half term. The long term overview pages for each year group show the questions/topics/concepts that are covered by each of the 36 units and the way in which these are linked to the questions in the Slough syllabus.. Topics and concepts are revisited during the six year scheme, giving pupils a chance to explore ideas in greater depth. In accordance with the national guidelines there is an emphasis on Christianity with Judaism covered in KS1 and Hinduism & Sikhism or Islam in KS2. However many of the questions can be adapted to cover other faiths as appropriate to the school setting.

Methodology:

Each unit begins with a "Big Question", created by combining elements from the syllabus and allowing children to explore "Learning About" and "Learning from Religion" in every unit. Each unit consists of an outline plan and a class record sheet containing suggestions for activities that can be used to show pupil achievement and progress. These materials are used together to plan the learning cycle using the Engage, Enquire, Evaluate & Reflect model of teaching. The materials do not have to be used in the order suggested, nor does each section have to be touched on only once, but can be revisited at any point during a unit of work. There should also be scope to leave the plans behind if the pupils' questioning and investigating opens up other interesting avenues for enquiry and in response to special events when they occur

Over the page you can see some examples of questions suitable for Y2:

- Unit 1: Who should you follow?
- Unit 2: Should you wear religious symbols?
- Unit 3: Is it important to celebrate the New Year?
- Unit 4: Is Easter important for the Church?
- Unit 5: Can stories change people?
- Unit 6: How should you spend the weekend?

Find out more at: <http://www.oxford.anglican.org/religious-education/re-scheme-work/>

Locally Focused RE

While the locally agreed syllabus covers a wide range of faith issues, there is little actual local colour in it. The team of RE advisers in the Diocese of Oxford has begun to explore the wide variety of religious life, history and change within its boundaries in order to develop a selection of RE units reflecting this local flavour. As in the scheme of work mentioned above, units begin with a big question. Here are some examples of units they have produced so far:

Does Reading need the Abbey?

Does a town need more than one church?

This unit based on Bracknell explores the differences between denominations and styles of church, encouraging children to look for things that they have in common as well as the features that make them unique.

It is hoped that more and more locally focused units will be developed. Slough is a rich resource in itself and Jo Fageant would like to work with schools and members of faith communities to develop some units that will lead to in depth understanding of the religious life of the town now and how it has changed over time.

Training Opportunities

While the SACRE waits to hear from teachers about their training needs there are already opportunities in place that teachers can access.

So you're the New(ish) RE Subject leader!

If you have recently taken on the role of RE subject leader in your primary school, this is the course for you:

A full day course with opportunities to:

- Explore what is meant by good RE including how it contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Get to grips with the ideas about standards, continuity and progression in the RE curriculum, considering examples of planning and assessment
- Discuss ways in which you can support and monitor RE in their schools
- Discuss school self-evaluation of RE
- Consider issues of resourcing in RE
- Look at how to write a school RE policy statement

By the end of the course participants will:

- Have a clear understanding of what the role of RE subject leader might entail
- Have explored strategies which will enable them to do the job effectively

Date:	20th November 2014
Venue:	Diocesan Church House North Hinksey Oxford OX2 0NB
Course Leader:	Jo Fageant
Time:	9.30am – 3.30pm
Cost:	£120 (+VAT)

The Teach RE Course

[\(http://www.teachre.co.uk/\)](http://www.teachre.co.uk/)

If you already teach RE or want to in the future and would like to develop your understanding of the subject further or perhaps refresh your thinking, this course may be just what you need. Perhaps you are considering a Master's degree and would like to ease your way back into self-study and research. Or perhaps you would like to explore new ways of applying subject knowledge about world religions and beliefs to classroom practice. You may be a new co-coordinator for RE in a primary school and want to find out more about how to lead the subject. Whatever your professional learning requirements, the Teach RE Course is tailored to your individual needs. It is suitable for primary and secondary colleagues, teachers, TAs and HLTAs, and is run as a distance learning programme. Support is provided by a tutor and a certificate of completion is provided which you can use as part of your CPD portfolio. Check out details at the Teach RE website.

Farmington Fellowships

Through the Farmington Institute teachers have an opportunity to take time out for funded research projects. These can be undertaken university or school/home based. The Fellowships are available for teachers who have been in their current post for two years and are involved with teaching RE. Fellows can choose their own area to research but preference is given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools. Tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential local travel and , by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale can be covered.

Fellows submit a plan of their research and when their work is completed they give a presentation and produce a written report. If you are interested you need to start thinking about this NOW because the deadline for applications for the 2015/16 academic year is 26 January 2015

Further details can be found at <http://www.farmington.ac.uk/fellowships> and [awards/fellowships.html](http://www.farmington.ac.uk/awards/fellowships.html) and you can have a look at the papers produced by previous fellows at <http://www.farmington.ac.uk/documents/reports/>

The Global Learning Programme (GLP)

This is a ground-breaking new programme which will create a national network of like-minded schools, committed to equipping their students to make a positive contribution to a globalised world. The GLP helps teachers in primary, secondary and special schools to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues at Key stages 2 and 3. Although not explicitly linked with religious education it is



clear that the aims set out below can be addressed through and enrich aspects of the RE curriculum.

The GLP aims to:

- help young people understand their role in a globally interdependent world and explore strategies by which they can make it more just and sustainable,
- familiarise pupils with the concepts of interdependence, development, globalisation and sustainability
- enable teachers to move pupils from a charity mentality to a social justice mentality
- stimulate critical thinking about global issues, both at a whole school and pupil level
- help schools promote greater awareness of poverty and sustainability
- enable schools to explore alternative models of development and sustainability in the classroom.

If you want to get involved register your interest at www.glp-e.org.uk

Resources from RE Today

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More than 101 Great Ideas“ is one of the latest resources from RE Today services and true to its name it in fact contains 117 different activities designed for the RE classroom. The strategies are suitable for Key Stages 1 to 4 and aim to help support spiritual and moral development.

The introduction looks at

some key questions for teachers of RE and seeks to address some of the issues around active learning in the subject. The main content of the book consists of teaching strategies presented in 7 categories such as Acting, Creating, Enquiring and Reflecting, and links these strategies clearly with some very concrete examples of how they may be employed in a classroom.

Readers of the termly RE Today publications will recognise many of the strategies and some of the examples, but this book conveniently brings these together in one volume. In addition, some PDF resources are available to download for those who purchase the book, while photocopy

permission is included for the resources. This is a useful, good value resource for busy teachers. Available from www.retoday.org.uk for around £18

Subscribers to RE Today materials now need to consider a new way to access these publications. The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE), which has always been a partner of RE Today, has now become a membership organisation with the RE Today materials being member benefits along with much much more. The website (www.natre.org.uk) guides you through what kind of membership is most appropriate to your context. This is a rich resource of support for RE teachers and widely considered to represent value for money.

Resources from the Diocese of Oxford

Life of Jesus through the Eyes of an Artist:

Colourful pictures, Bible passages, commentaries, background notes and lesson plans are interwoven in this CD resource, available from the Diocese for £13.99. Through 22 paintings, key events from the life of Jesus are explored with questions to encourage the children to look closely at the images.



Large coloured plates can be displayed on an interactive white board or printed and laminated. The lesson plans are designed for Upper & Lower KS2, and cover levels 2 – 4. Each unit starts with a big question for the children to explore and links to concepts from the syllabuses. Each unit employs the engage, enquire & explore, evaluate, reflect & communicate model of teaching and gives the pupils an opportunity to experience both of the attainment targets in each unit. Some of the units use groups of pictures, making links between different events in Jesus life. Each picture is linked to a Bible passage (included in full) and a commentary that expands on the event and the picture. The background text gives some interpretation of the event and often places it in a historical context, explaining

some of the symbolism employed by the artist. Alongside other resources, this work provides an insight into the life of Jesus and offers a different perspective on some familiar stories.

Contact helen.mitchell@oxford.anglican.org to purchase or find out more.

Festivals

This term is a very busy with religious festivals and to make sure you have all the information you need dates and details can be found at the following addresses



<http://www.reonline.org.uk/supporting/festivals-calendar/>

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/

www.holidays.net

These sites have lots of links to others with information about all the religions included and their festivals.

RE Quality Mark



Have you considered gaining a quality mark for your school's RE. Check it out at www.regm.org.uk. Even if you don't think your school is ready for this or funds are too tight to pay the fees for the award, it's worth looking at the materials as a tool with which to audit your RE provision and quality. This can help you determine your priorities and targets for the future.