

Date of issue: Tuesday, 31st October 2017

MEETING	STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
DATE AND TIME:	WEDNESDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 2017 AT 4.30 PM
VENUE:	THE VENUE, THE CURVE - WILLIAM STREET, SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE, SL1 1XY
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NADIA WILLIAMS 01753 875015

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



ROGER PARKIN
Interim Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

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Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

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Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – Meeting held on Thursday, 15th June, 2017.

Committee 1 – Christian Denominations and Other Faiths

Julie Siddiqi (Chair), Sue Elbrow and Hardip Singh Sohal (Vice-Chair)

Committee 2 – Church of England

Rev Andrew Allen, Christine Isles and Andrew Sparrow

Committee 3 – Representatives of Teacher Associations

Lynda Bussley and Linda Lewis

Committee 4 – Representatives of the Local Authority

Councillors Brooker, Parmar, Sarfraz and Sohal

Apologies for Absence:- Waqar Bhatti, Zubaryr Abbas-Bowkan and Ashpreet Singh Nainu

Vote of Thanks

Members gave a vote of thanks to Jo Fageant, Professional Advisor for all the years of hard work and advice she had provided to Slough SACRE, as she stepped down from the role.

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

It was moved (by Christine Isles), seconded (by Linda Lewis) and agreed that Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair for the municipal year 2017/18.

It was moved (by Rev Andrew Allen), seconded (by Cllr Sohal) and agreed that Hardip Singh Sohal be elected as Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2017/18.

Resolved:

- a) That Julie Siddiqi be elected as Chair of SACRE for 2017/18.
- b) That Hardip Singh Sohal be appointed as Vice-Chair of SACRE for the municipal year 2017/18.

(Ms Siddiqi in the Chair).

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 14th March 2017

Resolved - That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14th March 2017 be approved as a correct record subject to replacing 'Dean of Oxford' with 'Dean of Slough' in minute 28.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

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- 4. SACRE Membership Update** It was noted that work was still on-going to fill the remaining membership vacancies.

- 5. SACRE Membership News (An update from members regarding activities undertaken since the last SACRE meeting)**

Julie Siddiqi announced that she was overseeing the national Star project which encouraged people from all faiths to participate in community events. Numerous events had been organised to take place at the weekend where people of all faiths would have the opportunity to get together in Slough.

Councillor (Cllr) Parmar highlighted that events had been organised at Manor Park on Saturday 10 June 2017 from 1pm to 5pm, as part of The Great Get Together instigated by the husband of murdered MP JO Cox to celebrate community cohesion on the anniversary of her death. It was noted that further work was needed to continue to develop and enhance the harmonious integration and cohesion enjoyed in Slough in light of recent terrorist incidents that had taken place in the county.

- 6. Crossing the Bridges Project**

Jo Fageant gave a verbal update on Crossing the Bridges Project.

It was noted that the Places of Worship Directory would continued to be updated and would be uploaded on the Slough council website.

Members were reminded about the forth coming SACRE conference on 28 September 2017. Four places had been reserved for SACRE members who were urged to notify the Clerk if they wished to attend. It was also agreed for an additional four places to be made available for teachers who may also be interested in attending.

Jo Fageant would include details in the Newsletter to schools about the conference and publicise the four paid places on offer to teachers.

Christine Isles would seek permission to include her church website in the Crossing the Bridge directory. Concerns were raised that just two places of worship in Slough were listed in the directory.

The Clerk would circulate the directory forms to all SACRE members to ensure that their places of worship were listed for school visits. The Chair acknowledged the Crossing the Bridges Project as being very positive and welcomed Slough's contribution to the project.

- 7. Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub - SACRE Hub Meetings - Notes for Summer Term 2017**

Jo Fageant reported that just two out of six SACREs were represented at the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub meeting on 25 April 2017. The Central Hub was

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delegated by the six local SACREs and in order for it to be effective, it was imperative for all six SACREs to be represented at all meetings.

Members were urged to attend meetings, particularly the forthcoming meetings regarding the Agreed Syllabus Review, which could not be managed solely by a single SACRE. All SACRE would need to participate in the review process for the review to be effective.

It was suggested that to ensure continued representation from Slough SACRE an alternative member should attend each meeting if the Chair was unable to do so.

The next Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub meeting was confirmed as 12 September 2017 in Wokingham at 4.30pm. The Chair and Christine Isles would attend this meeting but all members were urged to also attend.

The Chair suggested that the next Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub meeting should be held in Slough. The suggested venue would be raised at the meeting on 12 September 2017.

8. Pan-Berkshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review 2017-18 - Time-frame and Process

Jo Fageant advised that the RE Syllabus was shared by six local authorities and was required to be reviewed every 5 years. The last reviewed took place in 2012. It was noted that the process would need to be undertaken even if it resulted in no changes being made.

The proposed detailed plan was based on the last review and the process would require SACRE to set up an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to lead the review. SACRE would usually become the ASC and the syllabus review matters would be discussed at separate meetings. The Agreed Syllabus was expected to be completed by May 2018. It was noted that the meetings of the ASC would take place immediately after each SACRE meeting. An additional ASC meeting may however be required in the summer term.

Resolved:

- a) That an Agreed Syllabus Conference be set up with immediate effect to lead on the review of the Pan-Berkshire RE Agreed Syllabus.
- b) That the syllabus be agreed by the Agreed Syllabus Conference and ratified by the Council between May and July 2018.

9. Pan-Berkshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review 2017-18 - Consultation Questionnaire

Lynda Bussley left the meeting at 5.43pm.

Jo Fageant reported that the Pan-Berkshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review 2017-18 - Consultation Questionnaire would be included in

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the RE Newsletter to schools. Slough teachers would be invited to attend ASC meetings as part of Teacher Consultation group.

The on-going consultation to teachers would conclude on 21 July 2017 and would be collated by Jan Lever Group and discussed at the SACRE Hub meeting on 12 September 2017. The findings would be reviewed at the Faith and Belief Group Consultation Day on 4 October 2017. Members were encouraged to attend at least part of the day, as it was not a requirement to be in attendance for the whole day. Names of members wishing to attend to be submitted to Jan Lever by the end of September 2017.

It was noted that the consultation questionnaire had also been sent to RE Co-ordinators.

Cllr Sohal left at 5.50m.

10. SACRE Finance/Continuing Advisor Support

It was noted that continued funding for Advisory support to SACRE had been confirmed and that following a tendering process, it had been proposed to offer the advisory contract to the Jan Lever Group.

Resolved – That the update on SACRE Finance/Continuing Advisor Support be noted.

11. Members' Attendance Record

The Members Attendance Record was noted.

12. Date of Next Meeting - 8 November 2017

Jo Fageant highlighted that the Annual SACRE reports covered the period from autumn 2016 to spring 2017 rendering this meeting the last meeting of the SACRE year.

The first meeting of SACRE would therefore be on 8 November 2017.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.35 pm and closed at 6.05 pm)

Pan-Berkshire Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review 2017-18 Action Time-line

SACRE consideration for Autumn term meetings 2017

SEE THE RED TEXT HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW FOR AUTUMN TERM SACRE MEETING POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Syllabus review points
- Revised syllabus launch event/s

Time-frame for the review

1. Summer Term 2017

Each SACRE to form an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to lead the syllabus review. The ASC usually comprises the whole SACRE, it becoming the ASC when the syllabus review matters are discussed and decisions needed. ASCs to be set up Summer Term 2017 at beginning of the review.

SACRE Advisers will advise Chairs etc

Consultation process with SACREs and schools using questionnaires and Meetings

Online survey to be sent to all schools. (Paper copy of survey attached)

Set up a teacher consultation group representative/s from each LA

to harvest feedback and send electronically to JL

Teacher rep's on SACREs are welcome to join this group

(SACRE reps to liaise with the relevant teacher reps as appropriate)

SACREs to give initial feedback on questionnaire questions to JL by 21st July

Feedback to JL by 21 July 2017

JL to summarise feedback and send to SACREs (through Chairs, vice chairs and clerks) and teacher consultation group...

By end of August 2017

ALL ACTIONS IN 1. ABOVE COMPLETED AND THE SUMMARY OF THIS SUMMER CONSULTATION IS ATTACHED

2. Autumn term 2017

Discuss revisions at SACRE Hub 12th September

Conference 28th September, Holiday Inn, Winnersh, 6.30-9pm

Network meetings

Faith and belief group consultation days Tues 3 Oct (Jewish rep's) and

Wednesday 4th October 2017

JL to work on revisions and send to SACRE Hub chairs and vice chairs for consideration by **27 October 2017**

SACRE meetings Autumn 2017

Consider draft revisions sent by JL as result of consultations and members' input

See attached paper, 'Points to consider'

Feed back to JL by email by 8th December 2017 latest please

3. Spring term 2018

JL and Anne Andrews to meet 5/1/18

Early January, JL to send draft revised syllabus to SACRE Hub chairs, vice chairs for consideration at Hub meeting

Tuesday 16th January 2018

Venue:

4.15-6pm

JL amends as result

Consultation with SACREs and teacher consultation group during second half of Spring term 2018

SACRE meetings to consider revisions

Feed back to JL by 29th March 2018 latest

4. Summer term 2018

Mid-April JL to send revised syllabus, final draft, to SACRE Hub chairs, vice chairs for consideration at Hub meeting

Tuesday 24 April 2018

Venue:

4.15-6pm

Consultation with SACREs and teacher consultation group during May 2018

SACRE meetings to consider revisions

COULD SACRE MEETINGS BE HELD IN MAY TO ENABLE SYLLABUS TO BE RATIFIED IN TIME FOR JULY LAUNCH?

Feed back to JL by 25 May 2018 latest

Early June

Revised syllabus checked by SACRE Hub and teacher consultation group and final copy produced

Each SACRE produces its own Foreword endorsed by or written by e.g. Director of Education/Children's Services etc

To be with JL by June 15th 2018

Each SACRE organises its own LA process for ratification by appropriate Council Committee

July 2018

Pan-Berkshire revised syllabus launch event (with training)

Date: Suggest w/c 9 July ???

Venue:

Time:

PLEASE DISCUSS THIS AT SACRE MEETINGS AUTUMN TERM 2017 AND FEED BACK IDEAS ETC TO JL BY DECEMBER 8th 2017

By end of Summer term 2018

All schools have received notification of revised syllabus, how to download it, training events in each LA, expectations regarding implementation guidance etc

September 2018

Schools obliged to delivering RE according to the locally agreed syllabus are starting to implement it, supported by network meetings etc

September 2019

Full implementation expected by schools obliged to follow syllabus

JL April 2017

jan@janlevergroup.com

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PAN-BERKSHIRE SACRE HUB

Notes and recommendations following the Hub meeting held 12th September 2017

In order that all 6 SACREs are aware of the actions agreed, progress made, and the discussions needed at the separate SACRE meetings this term, as a result of the Hub meeting, please consider the following at the Autumn Term round of SACRE meetings and feed back to Jan Lever as below.

Actions and progress

1. Induction and Training

In January 2017, the Hub members raised the need for induction training for new members as they join SACREs and also for refresher training for any current SACRE members who may like to attend.

The first session took place in the Council Chamber at Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1 BN

5.45-7pm Tuesday 25th April

And the second session took place, also at Shute End, on 12th September 2017

Led by Anne Andrews (RE Adviser Oxford Diocese and advisor to Bracknell Forest and RBWM SACREs)

All SACRE members were invited.

Across both sessions nearly 30 people attended.

ACTION:

1. WOULD SACRES LIKE THESE SESSIONS TO CONTINUE?

WOULD YOU LIKE A SESSION AFTER HUB MEETING ON TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2018, 5.45-7.30PM?

THIS COULD FOCUS ON THE SYLLABUS REVIEW AND BE MORE OF A WORKSHOP.

Could each SACRE please send response to jan@janleverage.com by December 8th 2017

2. Annual pan-Berkshire SACREs conference

The Hub annual conference was held on September 28th 2017 at the Holiday Inn, Winnersh Triangle.

The first part of the evening reviewed and celebrated the achievements of the Crossing the Bridges Project, including the launch of the Directory of places of worship and speakers.

Tristram Jenkins from the Westhill/NASACRE Award Panel attended and thanked the SACREs for achieving such a worthwhile project.

After a delicious supper, the conference received the summary of the agreed syllabus review so far and considered the main issues raised.

(see below)

43 people attended including SACRE members, teachers and faith community representatives.

The list of attendees is attached. Numbers below:

RBWM 13

Slough 4

Bracknell 4

Reading 4

Wokingham 15

West Berks 3

Plus x4 advisers

Each SACRE pre-paid for x4 conference delegates. Wokingham provided funding for x20 places. RBWM provided funding for

Also attached is the collated feedback informing a future conference programme and offering suggestions on the agreed syllabus review.

ACTIONS:

2. CONSIDER FUTURE CONFERENCE YES/NO...CONTENT ETC

CONSIDER SYLLABUS FEEDBACK AND SEND TO JAN LEVER UNDER ACTIONS 6 and 7 BELOW

3. Crossing the Bridges Project progress

The project funding has now run out and all the project aims have been achieved except the dissemination of the Directory.

Thank you to all SACRE members for their help with this. We now have teaching materials and processes in place that should enable more learning to happen from more visits and visitors.

We do need to keep reminding our schools that this work is there for them to make use of.

- **The Directory**

Thanks to SACRE input and the work committed to this by Catherine Jinkerson (Wokingham SACRE), we have 45+ places of worship included in the Directory and are ready to launch this to schools.

ACTIONS:

3. PLEASE ENSURE THE DIRECTORY IS UPLOADED TO YOUR RELEVANT WEBSITES AND THE LINK SENT TO ALL YOUR SCHOOLS THIS TERM

The link below takes you to the directory

<https://discoveryschemeofwork.com/crossing-the-bridges/>

4. PLEASE KEEP ENCOURAGING PLACES OF WORSHIP TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT. THE ONLINE DIRECTORY WILL BE UPDATED AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERY TERM SO CONTINUE TO SEND THE INFORMATION SHEETS FOR EACH PLACE OF WORSHIP OR SPEAKERS TO ME

jan@janlevergroup.com

The information pages etc can also be found on my website (link above) and on the Oxford Diocese website

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/>

5. PLEASE REMIND TEACHERS THAT THE PROJECT MATERIALS ARE THERE FOR THEM TO FREELY DOWNLOAD.

The powerpoint presentations resulting from the 'on location' day trips to places of worship are also complete and should by now be on each SACREs relevant website.

If this has not yet happened, please download from either the Discovery RE website of the Oxford Diocese website and upload to your SACRE's relevant website, reminding teachers these are freely available to them to use in their classrooms.

- **Crossing the Bridges Project 'on location' days**

The response to the March 2017 trip was fantastic. We took 33 people to:

Maidenhead Synagogue Slough Baptist Church Slough Gurdwara Stoke Poges Mosque

There was a waiting list for this trip so we repeated it in July 2017 and everyone was accommodated thanks to an additional £200 funding from Westhill/NASACRE, Jo Fageant giving her time for free to lead the day and Jan Lever's office doing the planning and admin at no charge.

The project reports, including the most recent (attached) are on the Westhill website.

www.westhillendowment.org

and look under 'Projects that spark', then look under 'Multi-faith projects'

and you will find our pan-Berkshire work.

- **Agreed syllabus review process**

The process began in the Summer Term 2017.

Schools and SACREs responded to a questionnaire to give their feedback.

The report was sent to SACREs in August and is attached here.

ACTION:

6. THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE AUTUMN TERM SACRE MEETINGS.

PLEASE SEE PAPER ATTACHED OUTLINING THE ASPECTS OF THE SYLLABUS REVIEW NEEDING CONSIDERATION AND FEED BACK TO JAN LEVER BY DECEMBER 8TH 2017

7. REVISED SYLLABUS LAUNCH EVENTS. PLEASE LET YOUR ADVISER AND JAN LEVER KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS BY DECEMBER 8TH

I hope this summary shares with all 6 SACREs the work being initiated and progressed through the pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub.

I look forward to the next Hub meeting and to continuing to take this work forward with you.

Jan Lever

Pan-Berkshire Hub manager on behalf of the 6 SACREs

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Discovery RE: www.discoveryschemeofwork.com



FEEDBACK FROM PAN BERKSHIRE SACRE CONFERENCE

28TH SEPTEMBER 2017

33 feedback sheets received from attendees (43 attendees)

Positives – what went well

- Great mix of people and good discussion/good food/good location
- Well organised / excellent organisation / good structure
- Good review of work done over the year
- Good to meet and chat to teachers other SACRE members
- Good to share ideas and thoughts
- Good pace, different speakers, good chance for discussion
- Clear summaries on power points
- Refresher on resources / update on syllabus
- Cross faith dialogue
- Loved the song at the beginning quite emotional – how can we build on this?
- Useful to talk to teachers
- Very informative and well organised
- Good review of syllabus review and where we are now
- An inspiring evening – thank you

Things that might be improved for 2018 conference

- Timings – could the conference start a bit earlier as after a long day its quite hard when tired
- Not enough time for Big Question
- Could we have something on collective worship
- Less table talk unless it will be used to inform future policy!
- Making it clear how to access your resources (website) etc.
- Shorter summary/reflection at the end
- Ideas about how to lead discussions in school
- More input from audience/more tie to discuss Big Question panel perhaps?
- Market the conference more effectively so that more people come
- Longer session so that we can cover more
- The Big Question could be a conference on its own
- Make more relevant to teachers of RE and helping them teach various aspects rather than informing SACRE/ syllabus review
- Would like panel questioning
- Hearing/ seeing practical ways that bits of the syllabus have been brought to life
- Sharing good practice
- Have table reps
- Name badges please

- Less time on presentations at start
- More info on statutory requirements and what is going on nationally
- Input from Ofsted
- Input from politicians local MP's

Crossing the Bridges Project comments

- Loved Crossing the Bridges info - organising synagogue trip for her school
- Clearer access to resources needed, websites/documents
- Push for more links with people coming into schools
- Can we have some stats from the project
- Directory is very helpful
- A great initiative which has inspired us to create a "faith in our community" trail for our children
- Fantastic idea – would like to get guests into school as trips have been refused in school time?!
- Good to review directory
- Brilliant! A real need for access to forms/paperwork on line
- Amazing resource
- Need to ensure we embed this so it does not become a one off project
- Amazing ideas the work produced is fantastic
- Needs great publicity in schools and faith spaces
- Feel there are gaps by some faith groups – Aliea Rashid would like to be involved
- Excellent – need to build a really good pool of volunteers in each area who are well trained
- How do schools find out about it

Suggestions for syllabus review

- More Islam coverage in KS2 isolating for Muslim children if followed to requirement especially as featured regularly in the media
- Like Big Questions
- Clearer assessment strategies to support teachers
- Assessment should try and reflect new GCSE curriculum – emphasis on knowledge/key vocabulary and presenting persuasive arguments
- Will Discovery RE be updated in line with the new syllabus and how quickly?
- Good timetabling, project management
- Would like to see concepts like "more in common" across the teaching
- Not sure if 4th October sessions worked
- Needs to be dynamic
- Make guidance simpler
- Need to challenge pupils on agnostic beliefs such as consumerism, utilitarianism
- On line version of syllabus would be great with formed lesson plans/resources
- Examples of detailed lesson plans for each age group

- Link all the religions
- Needs to be as explicit and understandable as possible

Any other comments to assist us in the future

- Sufficient training if there are changes to syllabus review
- How do we get more SACRE members involved?
- Make email communications more effective, can it be more succinct, easier to consume, less of an effort!
- Could everyone introduce themselves so we all know who everyone is
- Try and get some faith leaders from the Muslim community
- Share an email contact list
- Let's hear more from teachers. RE co-ordinators

Appendix A - List of Attendance for each SACRE area

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Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub Annual Conference 2017

List of Attendees for each SACRE area as follows –

Slough

Sue Elbrow
Christine Isles
Julie Siddiqi

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Hilary Harris
Nicole Bournier
Michael Gammage
Ceri Neil
Isabella Cooke
Barbara Meaney
Ila Gangotra
Helen Cobb
Rosemaryb Saunders
Aileen Thompson
Rev Rosie Webb

Reading

Alrea Rashid
Zvi Solomon
Michael Freeman
Mark Laynesmith
Mia Stanbrook

Wokingham

Emmanuel Nambo
Ruth Burton
Sian Jones
Kirsty Birch
Linda Galpin
Christine Morgan
Hannah Hillier
Sukhdev Bansal
Anne Coffey
Beth Rowland
Rev Philip Hobday
Anju Sharma
Emily Waddilove
Katherine Jinkerson – apologies
Samantha Lawless
Marie McVeigh

West Berkshire

Rev Mary Harwood
Keith Harvey – apologies

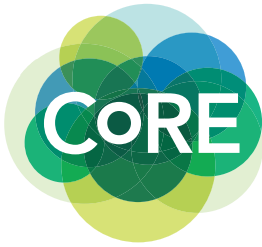
Clare Nolan – apologies
Robin Sharples – apologies

Bracknell Forest

Ruth Jackson
Tracey Williams
Madeline Diver
Robyn Lynch

Others

Margaret Gilham – RE Inspired
Tristram Jenkins – The Westhill Trust



Commission on
Religious Education

INTERIM REPORT

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.¹ 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.² 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.³ 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.

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

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

³ 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.⁴
- The quality of RE is variable across schools. Low standards predominate across too many schools, including schools with and without a religious

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

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

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.*
<https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/an-analysis-of-the-provision-for-re-in-primary-schools/>

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.

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Slough SACRE Draft Action Plan April 2017-March 2018

Aim	Actions	Timescales	People Responsible	Summer 2017	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018
<p>A. CORE BUSINESS</p> <p>To be a supportive and proactive SACRE enjoying full and well-informed membership.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fill memberships vacancies SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and, when possible, teacher termly network meetings and training events e.g. annual SACRE conference Produce annual SACRE Report Review the action plan at each meeting and update for next year ~Subscribe to NASACRE ~ Representation at annual NASACRE conference, NASACRE AGM 	<p>End March 2018</p> <p>Termly SACRE meetings: Summer 2017 Autumn 2017 Spring 2018</p> <p>Termly teacher network meetings Occasional training events</p> <p>Autumn Term 2017</p> <p>At each SACRE meeting</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>SACRE Chair SACRE Clerk</p> <p>SACRE Chair/SACRE Adviser SACRE members SACRE Clerk</p> <p>SACRE Adviser and clerk</p> <p>SACRE Adviser and SACRE</p> <p>SACRE members SACRE Adviser to organise with other Berkshire RE advisers (Jan Lever, Brian Crisell, Alison Harris, David Rees and Anne Andrews)</p>	<p>Mtg 15 June 2017</p>	<p>Mtg 8 November 2017</p> <p>Bring draft to November 2017 meeting</p>	<p>Mtg 7 March 2018</p> <p>Presented at Spring 2018 mtg</p>

Slough SACRE Draft Action Plan April 2017-March 2018

Aim	Actions	Timescales	People Responsible	Summer 2017	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018
<p>Pan-Berkshire Hub</p>	<p>6. Consolidate and develop the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub. Primary task 2017-18 is to review/revise pan-Berkshire agreed syllabus See agreed syllabus review action plan</p>		<p>SACRE members SACRE adviser 6 Chairs from all Berkshire SACREs</p>	<p>Conference to be planned by Hub for Autumn term 2017 Thursday 28 September 6-8.30pm Holiday Inn, Winnersh Triangle</p>		
<p>B. To support teachers of RE to continually improve RE learning in their schools and</p> <p>C. To support the implementation of</p>	<p>1. Provide a termly primary RE network meeting for Slough teachers, 4-5.30 hosted by schools. SACRE members</p>	<p>Autumn term 2017: date tba Venue: 4-5.30pm Spring term 2018: February 2018 date tba</p>	<p>Led by Jan Lever Education Consultancy And SACRE members if possible</p>	<p>Report to SACRE</p>		

Slough SACRE Draft Action Plan April 2017-March 2018

Aim	Actions	Timescales	People Responsible	Summer 2017	Autumn 2017	Spring 2018
the revised Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE	welcome.	Venue: 4-5.30pm (Summer 2018 May date tba)				
	2. Subject Leader Training x1 half-day sessions	Date tba 1-4pm Venue:tbc				

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SACRE MEMBERS ATTENDANCE RECORD 2017/18

Member	Representing	15.06.17	08.11.17	07.03.18
Sue Elbrow	The Free Churches	p		
Julie Siddiqi	Islam	p		
Zubayr Abbas-Bowkan	Islam	Ap		
Waqar Bhatti	Islam	Ap		
Hardip Singh Sohal	Sikhism	P		
Ashpreet Singh Nainu	Sikhism	Ap		
The Rev Andrew Allen	The Church of England	P		
Christine Isles	The Church of England	P		
Andrea Sparrow	The Church of England	P		
Lynda Bussley	National Union of Teachers	P		
Linda Lewis	VOICE	P		
Cllr Brooker	Slough Borough Council	P		
Cllr Parmar	Slough Borough Council	P		
Cllr Sarfraz	Slough Borough Council	P		
Cllr Sohal	Slough Borough Council	P		
Jo Fageant	Professional Advisor	P		

P = Present for whole meeting
Ap = Apologies given

P* = Present for part of meeting
Ab = Absent, no apologies given

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