



CUMBRIA SACRE NEWSLETTER

Autumn: 2021

(Twitter @CumbriaSACRE #CumbriaSharingRE)

“Our aim is to enrich the quality of learning in R.E. and Collective Worship for all pupils in Cumbria”:
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

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

Cumbria Updates:

Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference

SAVE THIS DATE

Monday, 27th June 2022 – 9-4pm

Keynote Speaker: Adam Robertson, National Adviser for RE Today.
Theme: Diverse and Inclusive Religious Education.



Our next Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference will be led by Adam Robertson, National RE Adviser. Adam was a primary teacher for 14 years, much of it spent in Bristol as a subject leader for RE. In addition, he worked as a school adviser for the Diocese of Bristol for four years – helping schools improve their understanding of RE. Adam was a member of the NATRE Executive 2018 - 2021, served as an adviser to South Gloucestershire SACRE, and led RE Hub groups in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. He now works for RE Today as an Adviser. Adam has always been passionate about RE, and has a fascination with the big ideas, stories and art that have inspired humans for millennia. He loves to take these objects of beauty and make them real for teachers and pupils in our diverse society today.

A Question for the Conference:

‘In diversity there is beauty and there is strength’ (Maya Angelou).

‘How can we teach diverse RE where all can succeed?’

Book via School Development schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk

Local RE CPD

As well as the Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference, School Development will also be running RE courses in the spring term for teachers and governors. Keep an eye out for courses with School Development on RE in the Outdoors, Philosophy for Children (P4C) and RE for secondary non-specialist RE teachers. See: <https://cumbria.sla-portals.co.uk/>

Cumbria Updates: (continued)

New members on Cumbria SACRE

We are delighted to welcome three new Cumbria SACRE members this term. Shweta Marali and Rashmi Manemi were proposed by the [Hindu Education Board](#), and RE Advisor, Laura Watson joins us from the [Carlisle Diocese](#). We are also grateful to Harkirat Singh from the [Sikh Education Service](#) who has kindly agreed to join us and help us find a member from the Sikh community in Cumbria.

What is the Picture of RE in Secondary Schools in Cumbria?

Thank you to all the RE/RS teachers in secondary schools that completed the secondary RE survey. This has been extremely helpful for Cumbria SACRE in gaining a picture of RE and where we can support. Teachers who completed the survey will all receive a summary copy of the survey results.

Cumbria SACRE has also received the latest School Workforce Data (SWD). This is the data that is reported by schools to the DfE in December 2020 and published in June 2021. It is noted that 20% of schools that completed the SWD did not report on RE but did report on other subjects. Secondary teachers who would like to see the data reported for RE by your school to the DfE (usually by SLT), please contact Jane jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com

A National Programme of Change for Collective Worship.

As mentioned in last term's newsletter, Cumbria SACRE has agreed to support a pilot project initiated by Professor Brian Gates, (now Emeritus Professor of Religion, Ethics & Education University of Cumbria). This project concerns 'Collective Worship' (CW). The aim of this project is to initiate a national programme of change for CW. CW remains a legal requirement, but this can be very challenging in a modern Britain that is one of the most secular countries in the world, multi-faith, or of no faith at all. CW is also a challenge in the context of the other manifold requirements and expectations placed on schools.

This project, therefore, aims to support schools by developing a rationale and programme for CW which, whilst being compliant with legal requirement, is of meaning and value for students in our schools. A communal time of reflection and appreciation of beliefs and values can be of great worth and importance in a school, helping to develop a sense of identity and purpose. The clapping for the NHS that took place during the pandemic is an example of the need for a communal act that expressed appreciation, unity and value.

Cumbria SACRE has agreed to work with Professor Brian Gates on a pilot project for a national programme for CW. If you are interested in finding out more or joining a working group, please look at this website <https://communityclapping.net/> or contact Brian Gates brian.gates@cumbria.ac.uk

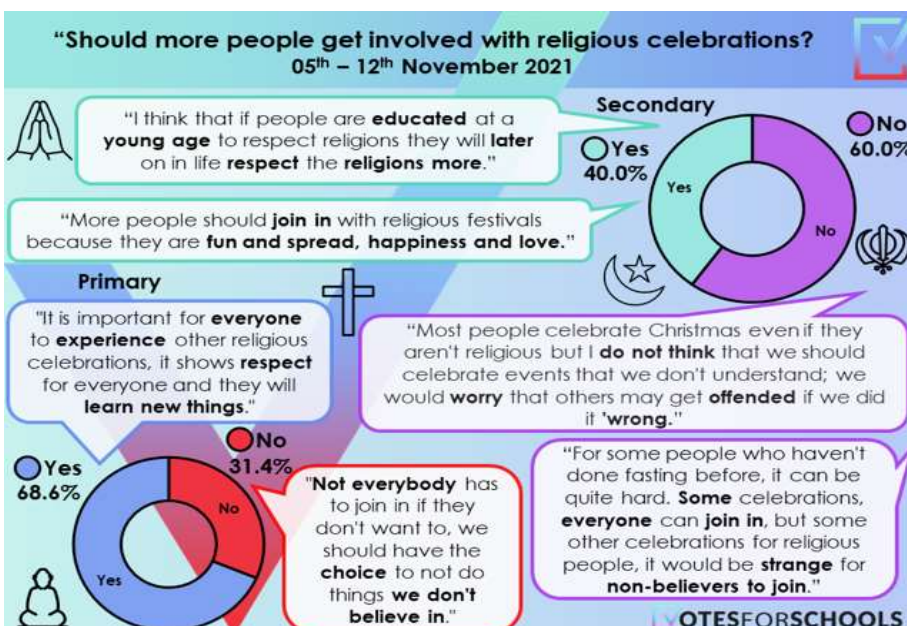


Professor Brian Gates

Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

Inter Faith Week

Cumbria SACRE Chair, Jane Yates was honoured to be asked to provide a response to the Votes for Schools question for Inter Faith Week in November (see resources section for more details). She had to look at the results from over 18,500 pupils from across the UK to the question: *“Should more people get involved with religious celebrations?”* She was interested to see the significant difference between primary and secondary schools and read some of the student comments. She then had the difficult task of providing a response that would be circulated back to all the schools with the results! This was then an excellent resource for an RE homework question for several Y7 classes at William Howard School.



Feedback: “Should more people get involved with religious celebrations?”



“Joining in on any celebration can build a wonderful sense of community. Whatever your faith or belief, I think it is important to develop a better understanding of local and global communities. Joining in on a religious celebration can also help to challenge misconceptions and provide you with new learning.”
(Full quote in Notes)

Take a minute...
Out of the opinions you've read, who do you agree with? Is this different to how you voted originally?

Your voices were also heard by...



Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

Virtual Voices in Religious Education (VVRE)

This is a project between Cumbria SACRE and Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) funded by Culham St Gabriel's Trust. Since the summer term, we have formed a community of 'voices' from across Cumbria from a diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews. Volunteers are currently creating an individual film of their worldview which we are looking forward to sharing with schools. Next term, we will be looking for schools to pilot live events and recordings with a trio of 'voices' in dialogue on a theme. Please contact jane-cumbriasacre@outlook.com if you would like to be involved in this project with the subject heading VVRE Project. All key stages welcome!

#CumbriaSharingRE

Below and on the next page are examples of RE from around the county on social media. Please tag us in on any RE photos on Twitter [@SACRECumbria](https://twitter.com/SACRECumbria) #CumbriaSharingRE or add to the closed Facebook group – [RE Teachers in Cumbria](#)



“Is religion a force for good or a cause of conflict?” new lunchtime ‘Philocoffee’ at The Queen Katherine School.

#ForestofPromises – KS3 students at William Howard School made pledges for themselves and world leaders as part of a [WWF initiative](#) for COP26



Cumbria Updates: (Continued)

#CumbriaSharingRE continued:

Further examples of RE around the county on social media:



Workshop by Solutions Not Sides at The Queen Katherine School

[Solutions Not Sides](#) is a critical approach to education on the Israeli-Palestine conflict



Ullswater Community College Eco Council at COP26 (never miss an opportunity for an RE photo opportunity too!)



Year 6s at Grange C of E School have been thinking about 'Love' and 'Thankfulness'. Jesus' message - 'There is more happiness in giving than receiving'.



Entries for the Dia De Los Muertos 'Day of the Dead' House competition at The Queen Katherine School. A tough job for Art, MFL and RS to judge!

National Updates

The Religious Education Council (REC)

(www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk , Twitter: @RECouncil, Instagram: [religiouseducationcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/religiouseducationcouncil))

Updates from REC:

Public Perception of an Education in Religion and Worldviews

In summer 2021, Culham St Gabriel's Trust commissioned research through Savanta to understand more about public perception of an education in religion and worldviews.

The research, conducted among 2,000 adults found that nearly two thirds (64%) of the UK adult population think that an education in religion and worldviews (or RE) is an important part of the school curriculum today, with a further 65% agreeing that the subject has an impact on people's ability to understand each other in wider society.

The research also found that 71% of UK adults agree that the subject should reflect the diversity of backgrounds and beliefs in the UK today. Seven out of ten people surveyed also agreed that RE's role is to provide pupils with the opportunity to learn more about other people, beliefs, worldviews and cultures (73%), to foster the mutual understanding of different beliefs among young people (71%), and encourage them to openly discuss their beliefs with others (69%).

A further two thirds agreed that the subject's role is to help young people critically evaluate their own beliefs (65%) as well as the beliefs of others (65%).

Religion and Worldviews Conversation:

The RE Council Education Committee has also carried out a SWOT analysis of a world religions paradigm, and a worldviews paradigm. The Chair of this Committee, Kathryn Wright, has written a useful summary of this discussion in the light of the proposed National Entitlement for RE (Commission on RE 2018) and Amira Tharani's *Worldview Project Discussion Papers*. These papers provide clear evidence for the need for change, discussion of the concept of worldview as well as potential disciplinary approaches and discourse about de-colonising of the curriculum.

"For me, the shift to a worldviews paradigm is a once in a lifetime opportunity to re-imagine our vital curriculum subject if we are to empower children and young people to navigate the complex world in which we live. Therefore, for me, it is crucial that everyone engages in the conversation." Kathryn Wright, Chair of RE Council Education Committee.

To read the full summary of the conversation please click on this [link](#).

RE Quality Mark:

The REC has responded to government advice about the ongoing pandemic, and have changed the way the award is managed. Physical site visits have been suspended to help prevent the spread of the virus. RE Quality Mark moved to an online assessment process last April. All the new paperwork for the school application process and the award has been updated and is available on the REQM website <https://www.reqm.org/>

National Updates (Continued)

The Religious Education Council (REC) updates continued:

100s More Opt for Religious Studies at A Level in 2021

The number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries has increased 6.1 percent year this year. The subject outperformed other A-level subjects as a whole, which increased by 5.1 percent, with a greater increase than most other humanities subjects.

16,645 RS A-level entries were recorded in England and Wales this year, compared with 15,690 in 2020. The overall number of A-Level entries in England and Wales increased this year by 5.1 percent from 750,173 in 2020 to 788,421 in 2021.

The Religious Studies results reverse the decline of 11.5% in 2020, where many other subjects saw significant falls in the number of entries, including Geography (down 16.2%) and History (down 15.1%). Last year's reduction reflected a smaller cohort of 18-year-olds and changes to the assessment of A level and AS examinations that had an effect in 2018, when the majority of schools changed their policies to recommending three A-levels, versus four in previous years.

or more information see this [link](#)

Call for a National Plan as Religious Studies GCSE Slip

The number of pupils taking GCSE Religious Studies in England and Wales has fallen slightly in 2021, despite previously remaining stable since 2017. To safeguard the subject, the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and the National Association of Teachers of RE are calling for a National Plan, as recommended by the Commission on RE in 2018, to be funded by Government.

In England, RS GCSE entries for the full course fell by 2.4 percent to 221,419 compared with 226,767 in 2020. Overall entries in England, including both full and short courses, fell by 3.4 percent to 237,091, compared with 245,544 in 2020.

By comparison, GCSE entries to other humanities increased this year, with Geography entries up 4.1 percent to 274,715 and History up 0.8 percent to 286,706.

For more information see this [link](#)

National Updates (Continued)



The National Association of SACREs **(NASACRE)**

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

Annual General Meeting:

The 2022 AGM and Conference will be held at the Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham, on Monday 23 May 2022. The theme is *Ambitious SACREs*.

NASACRE website:

The NASACRE website has been overhauled, bringing a fresh design and a more contemporary feel, making the content easier to navigate and more succinct. The content is being streamlined to make it easier to use and they are combining areas such as the Directory and Reports sections to reduce the number of searches a user needs to do.

NASACRE are also looking at bringing a more 'community' feel, by introducing a section for shared resources and links. The website will shortly go live.

NASACRE funding report:

NASACRE are very pleased with the momentum of the [NASACRE funding report](#) and following publication, there has been some media attention. Through the RE Policy Unit, Luke Pollard, MP for Plymouth, Sutton and Davenport was able to ask some Parliamentary questions about it. In response, Schools Minister, Nick Gibb stated:

“Local authorities are allocated funding through the central school services block (CSSB) for a range of duties that they must meet....., such as establishing and maintaining a SACRE... “We expect that a SACRE should be sufficiently resourced to meet its statutory duties. If a SACRE is unable to do this, it should first raise a complaint locally about the issue. If it has done this unsuccessfully, the issue can be escalated to the Department’s School Complaints Unit.”

In the meantime, the DfE has launched a [consultation on reforming the National Funding Formula](#) (of which the CSSB is part). The relevant section of the proposal document is 4.2 on page 35. The major thrust of the proposals is to reduce the amount given to LAs by giving that funding directly to schools. We understand that there is no intention to give SACRE funding to schools – but it may be that SACREs are funded directly by government, or (more likely) become part of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG), Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) rather than a reduced CSSB block.

National Updates (Continued)

(NASACRE continued)

SACRE Annual Reports:

All SACREs have a statutory duty to produce an annual report on their business. Currently these are sent to the DfE (and NASACRE) and there is no analysis of them. NASACRE has produced a new [SACRE Annual Report Template](#) and the DfE has been fully involved in this. Part of the rationale is to enable easier analysis of the reports. The DfE is also going to encourage MATs (Multi-Academy Trusts) to complete an annual report using the same template, which is available [here](#) on the website. Cumbria SACRE contributed to the NASACRE AGM workshops on this topic of SACRE annual reports.

In order to have as full a data set as possible, NASACRE are asking two things of SACREs:

- Ensure the [new template](#) is used for all annual reports from now on.
- Send the annual report to NASACRE (and the DfE) promptly, ideally before the end of the calendar year, or as soon as possible thereafter.

NASACRE has agreed to set aside funds to engage to carry out an analysis of the reports. NASACRE plan to present the findings of their analysis at our 2022 Conference in Birmingham.

SACRE Self-Evaluation Tool:

NASACRE has updated the SACRE Self-Evaluation Tool, making it more relevant to the work and context of SACREs today. This will be available on the new website and will be featured in their 2021-22 training programme in March.

School Workforce Data:

Deborah Weston has sent the latest school workforce data to every SACRE in England. The chair of Cumbria SACRE has had a number of email conversations with Deborah about how Cumbria SACRE might use the data to inform conversations with schools. It is apparent that not all secondary schools are sending data to the DfE about RE.

Will increases in funding for STEM impact on RE undergraduates?

The DfE is encouraging applications from schools in Cumbria and other areas for teaching internship programmes for 2022. [Grants](#) are available for school-led partnerships to design and provide teaching internships targeted at undergraduates studying STEM-related degrees. Cumbria SACRE discussed how this increase in funding for STEM subject teachers might impact on opportunities for RE teachers to be trained in Cumbria.

National Updates (Continued)

National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE)



NATRE on Twitter: @NATREupdate

New Government Minister for School Standards Acknowledges the Value of Studying RE for a Range of Careers.

The CEO of RE Today, Zoe Keens, wrote a letter to government ministers to draw their attention to an article from the **British Medical Journal** by Nikki Nabavi. The piece was titled [Encourage students with a humanities background to become doctors - The BMJ](#)

A response was received from the new minister for school standards; Robin Walker MP which said: *"I am grateful to you for bringing this article featured in the British Medical Journal to our attention. It was encouraging to read about the benefits that can be gained from teaching RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, not only in developing pupils' skills but also affording them the opportunity to move into a wider range of careers."*

We appreciate your continued work with the RE community and your efforts to highlight the importance of RE for pupils, not only in school, but in later life too."

The Truth about the NATRE ANTI RACIST RESOURCES:

NATRE were in the challenging position of having been radically misrepresented in a Telegraph article '[Primary School Pupils should learn white privilege says RE teachers](#)' (15th June, 2021) regarding the purpose of NATRE's 'Anti-Racist Resources' for teachers.

Despite NATRE being approached for comment, this misrepresentation is continuing to be used by some MPs and by certain media to promote argument about this controversial subject.

This [document](#) outlines the contents of the resource, what have been inaccurately reported and the incorrect information included in both the Telegraph articles, and likewise in a Parliamentary Question asked on 16 June 2021.



Resources & CPD

Resources for RE

- **Cumbria SACRE Visits and Visitors for RE.**

Visits and Visitors:

Points of contact for information about RE visits and visitors in Cumbria:

Mohammed Dhalech (Islam) cumbriamosquevisits@awaz.info

Wendy Ridley (Buddhism) wendyridley1@gmail.com

Dr Shelia Gewolb (Judaism) Sheila.Gewolb@bod.org.uk

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

See also the resources section of the Cumbria SACRE [website](#)

- **CDEC Virtual Visits for RE and SMSC:** A comprehensive collection of websites for virtual tours in Cumbria and beyond for all main religions and worldviews. Website [here](#)
- **Interfaith Week:** This year, Inter Faith Week started on Remembrance Sunday and ended the following Sunday. The [Inter Faith Week website](#) which contains a rich bank of resources including a [new section](#) for schools. There is also a [Golden Rule](#) poster on eleven different faith traditions, to download for display in a classroom or meeting room.
- **Holocaust Memorial Day** is 27 January. SACREs, LAs and schools can find a wide variety of resources on the [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust \(HMDT\)](#) website. The Trust is aware that some SACREs are heavily involved in holding an event, or encouraging schools to mark HMD, but others may not have done this regularly, so please consider increasing your local involvement, especially at a time when hate crime, intolerant/extremist views, anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hate is increasing.
The Trust also commends **Generation to Generation (G2G)**, a charity that provides speakers to tell their family Holocaust stories online or face-to-face to a variety of audiences. Through these engaging and historically accurate presentations (integrating first-hand survivor testimony) **G2G** works to ensure the lessons of the Holocaust are learned, promoting tolerance of all groups in society. To consider how **G2G** can support SACRE or your schools and to book a speaker, visit <https://www.generation2generation.org.uk> or book onto a free introductory event for educators: [https://www.generation2generation.org.uk/news/events/Belonging and Believing \(booksatpress.co.uk\)](https://www.generation2generation.org.uk/news/events/Belonging%20and%20Believing%20(booksatpress.co.uk)) New resources for EYFS and KS1 by Gill Vaisey. Explores the real lives of eight children each from a different religion or worldview.
 - RE clips – browse 1000s of free film clips for [RE teachers \(era.org.uk\)](#)
 - [The Story Tent](#) offers easily accessible online teaching materials to support KS2 pupils to learn more about Religion and Worldviews through the lens of a story.
 - The Alsop Way – powerful assembly films by pupils from [Alsop High School - YouTube](#)
 - [Votes for Schools](#) provides weekly resources for teachers in the UK to prompt discussion about challenging issues.
- **Big Questions, Big Answers** Vol 3, Environment Fiona Moss (RE Today) Link [here](#)
- **Challenging Knowledge in RE** Vol 3, Environment Stephen Pett (RE Today) Link [here](#)
- **Islam as a Worldview:** Mohammed Ali (RE Online) Resource [here](#)
- **Festivals Calendar** (RE Online) Link [here](#)
- **Places of worship – voices from Religion and Worldviews** (RE Online) Link [here](#)
- **Discovering Buddhism:** Amalee Rycroft and colleagues are developing resources for teaching Buddhism. This [short survey](#) aims to find out what would be the most helpful to build a picture of the needs regarding Buddhism; of those working in the area of teaching religion and ethics in schools.
- **NATRE Subscription.** Starting at just £39 per year, there are a range of packages and discounts on resources and CPD. See [here](#).
- **REonline:** www.reonline.org.uk (as recommended for Cumbria Units of work)
- **Research in RE** <http://researchforre.reonline.org.uk/>

Resources & CPD continued

CPD & Funding

- **Being ambitious – a religion and worldviews curriculum for all.** Recorded session by Kathryn Wright RE Online. Link [here](#)
- **Cumbria Virtual Voices in RE (VVRE)** A Cumbria SACRE/CDEC project funded by Culham St Gabriel's between Cumbria SACRE and CDEC. For project brief see [here](#).
- **[Muslim Learner Services - Promoting a better understanding of Islam](#)** Imran Kotwal is a qualified teacher and has visited many schools in Cumbria. He offers primary and secondary school visits.
- **NATRE** are providing regular online CPD with prices according to your NATRE membership status <https://www.natre.org.uk/courses-events/upcoming-courses-events/>
- **RE Online** – Distance Learning modules for RE teachers. This offers a list of ten modules covering practical, national and current issues related to religion and worldviews education, from new subject knowledge to policy and research. Each module takes around 20- 25 hours study. Participants can work at a pace that suits them, completing in any time from a week to six months. The cost per modules is £85.
- **Farmington Scholarships:** <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/farmington-scholarships-now-open/> The Scholarships are divided into two types: university-based and school/home-based. Teachers who live within a reasonable distance of one of the selected universities or colleges may be awarded a university-based Scholarship. The academic facilities of the colleges and universities are available for Scholars.
- **TEACH:RE course:** <http://www.teachre.co.uk>
- For **Masters** funding: <http://www.cstg.org.uk/how-we-help/3forre/>
- **@RE PDPortal** tweets and retweets for all the latest professional development opportunities in RE
- **Beyond the Ordinary** – more information about training to be a RE teacher should visit www.teachre.co.uk/beyondtheordinary.

Resources & CPD continued

Local RE training opportunities:

- **Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference**
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Book via School Development schooldevelopment@cumbria.gov.uk
- **Local RE CPD:** As well as the Cumbria SACRE Primary RE Conference, School Development will also be running RE courses in the spring term for teachers and governors. Keep an eye out for courses with School Development on RE in the Outdoors, Philosophy for Children (P4C) and RE for secondary non-specialist RE teachers. See: <https://cumbria.sla-portals.co.uk/>
- **Muslim Learner Services - Promoting a better understanding of Islam** Imran Kotwal is a qualified teacher and has visited many schools in Cumbria. He offers primary and secondary school visits.
- **Sikh Education Service** Harkirat Singh is delivering school and training sessions across the UK, including Cumbria.