

Learn Teach Lead RE newsletter



May 2024

New RE Syllabus

Sign up to attend the June launch events for the new RE syllabus for schools in Devon, Torbay and Plymouth, ready to teach in Sept 2024. Star presenters and syllabus writers Fiona Moss and Stephen Pett from RE Today will be leading the day:

- Mon 17th June (Bideford)
- Tues 18th June (Exeter)
- Wed 19th June (Plymouth)
- Wed 10th July online

Booking [here](#)

This will be a great day of RE inset for primary, secondary and special school teachers – not to be missed!

The new syllabus (in pdf form) will be sent to all schools by email on Thurs 20th June. From that date it will also be available to be downloaded [here](#).

Password: DevonRESyllabus2024

For RE support, please contact Ed Pawson at efpawson@gmail.com or Church school contact: Jo Hunter jo.hunter@exeter.anglican.org



Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE, Area 1)



LTLRE hub (twilight) meetings are free and open to all teachers of RE, primary and secondary. See [LTLRE website](#) for full details.

SWIFT SW RE hub: Thurs 6th June, book [here](#)

Cornwall: Wed 19th June (online)

Exeter, East Devon, North Devon: Thurs 27th June (online)

Buddhism: Dharma Day

Secondary RE teachers: join us on Fri 7th June to engage with Buddhist teachings and practice at [Hartridge Buddhist Monastery](#) nr Honiton. Contact [Ed Pawson](#) for details. Cost: £50.

Primary RE survey 2024

Primary teachers: could you spare 15 minutes to complete the NATRE bi-annual [teacher survey](#)? This really helps NATRE to support great teaching and learning about Religion and Worldviews in schools.

Join NATRE

If you are not a member, why not consider joining [NATRE](#) (National Association of Teachers of RE). It's a vibrant and supportive community for RE teaching professionals and the largest membership organisation for RE teachers.

Those buying the Primary Enhanced membership get free access to a suite of [Classroom Ready resources](#). This will be offered at a reduced rate at the syllabus launch events.

Ofsted RE report 2024

The recently released Ofsted report: Deep and Meaningful: the religious education subject [report](#) gives a helpful, but challenging assessment of the health of the subject. You can find a useful report [summary](#) from NATRE here on P3.

Some key points to note:

- 1 Careful sequencing of vital curriculum concepts needs attention
- 2 'A superficially broad curriculum does not always provide pupils with the depth of knowledge they require'. Evidence shows deeper learning enables pupils to embed knowledge more fully.
- 3 'The RE curriculum rarely enabled pupils to systematically build disciplinary knowledge or personal knowledge.' Teachers need to plan more opportunities for pupils to explore different 'Ways of Knowing', and also to deepen their own personal understanding.
- 4 Pupils need regular opportunities to review and build on important knowledge over time

Please note: the new RE syllabus for Devon, Torbay and Plymouth sets out a programme for the subject that addresses the issues raised in the report.

RE school support

Contact [Ed Pawson](#) for information about RE consultancy for your school

Primary RE subject leaders

The NATRE Primary Subject Leader [toolkit](#), is a FREE resource for primary school RE subject leaders. Access a whole number of resources and links to support your role.

Pilgrimage on BBC

Pilgrimage is 'praying with your feet.' Follow the personal ups and downs as seven celebrities make an emotional and personal Pilgrimage through North Wales following in the footsteps of Celtic saints as part of the BBC's [Pilgrimage](#). It's really inspiring RE on TV.

Religion and Worldviews Hub

The Open University's [Religion, Belief and Worldviews Hub](#) is a brilliant multi-media site for exploring religion, spirituality and non-religion. This short video about [Religion, Faith, Spirituality and Worldviews](#) is very well explained.

Women in Mosques

A [campaign](#) has been launched to open British mosques to more women. Find out more about [Inclusive Exeter](#) and [Inclusive Mosques](#).

Visits for Christianity study

[Buckfast Abbey](#): contact the experienced Education Team to find out about visits and resources: [email](#) or call 01364 645517

[Exeter Cathedral](#) offers a great range of exciting RE experiences linked to the RE Agreed Syllabus

Sentientism: a worldview

Find out about [Sentientism](#) as a worldview. The belief in 'compassion for all sentient beings' has much in common with religious concepts like ahimsa and compassionate stewardship – while its 'evidence and reason' shares the naturalistic thinking of Humanism.

£600 for Christianity resources

The Jerusalem Trust's Small Grants to Schools Scheme supports the teaching of Christianity within RE. Apply [here](#) for grants of up to £600 to purchase resources for use in RE lessons.

Wider reading for RE

[Here](#) is a list of 100+ books (from EYFS to KS4) that link with RE topics and will inspire young readers to love RE (only available for NATRE members).

Challenging Religion and Worldviews stereotypes

This '[Challenging Religious and Worldview Stereotypes](#)' toolkit is a resource to support schools in dealing with the topic of stereotyping and how to overcome it. It contains resources and films on which to base your teaching within RE, PSHE or Citizenship lessons and in tutor time.

Beyond Belief archive

The BBC [Beyond Belief](#) archive is fantastically rich public resource that provides a wide range of communities across the UK with the opportunity to learn about issues in the study and practice of religions, about cultural and religious diversity, and about the contemporary experience of people in faith communities.

Celebration Kitchen

Celebs and chefs share recipes, treats and traditions with the BBC [Saturday Kitchen](#) team. It's the perfect recipe for a glorious celebration of faith through food.

Spiritual Development in RE

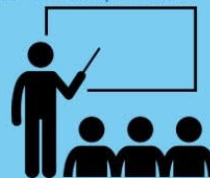
In this short [article](#) (which is only available to NATRE members), Nicki Bonell explains 'How I plan opportunities for spiritual development in RE lessons

'Deep and meaningful?' recommendations from the ofsted subject report for RE

CURRICULUM

Schools should:

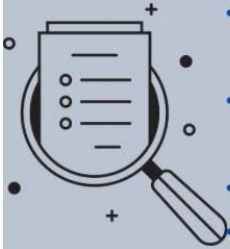
- ensure that there is a distinct curriculum in place for teaching RE at all key stages. They should make sure that this is rigorous and challenging and that it demonstrably builds on what pupils already know
- carefully select the knowledge they expect pupils to gain to make sense of a complex and diverse world. They should make sure that important content and concepts are clearly identified and sequenced. They should also make sure that curriculums do not contain oversimplifications of traditions, including, where appropriate, non-religious traditions
- balance the breadth and depth of study of religious and non-religious traditions to ensure that these are collectively enough for pupils to make sense of a complex world
- ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge in RE over time.
- Leaders in secondary schools should make sure that the curriculum is designed to meet or exceed exam board specifications (rather than being driven by them)
- make sure that curriculums clearly identify how pupils will develop disciplinary and personal knowledge through the chosen substantive content



TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Schools should:

- be ambitious for pupils to develop all aspects of knowledge: substantive, ways of knowing and personal knowledge. They should make sure that teachers have high expectations of what pupils will know and remember
- provide opportunities for pupils to review and build on important knowledge over time. They should make sure that pupils use the knowledge that they gained in previous years as the curriculum becomes increasingly more complex and demanding
- ensure that teaching specifically develops pupils' knowledge of the complexity of religious and non-religious traditions
- develop manageable assessment methods that move beyond the simple recall of factual information. They should check that pupils recall and understand the intended curriculum over time and that the domain of their knowledge is expanding



SYSTEMS AT SUBJECT AND SCHOOL LEVEL

Schools should:

- ensure that all teachers have the subject and pedagogical knowledge that they need to teach RE well
- check that the time allocated for teaching RE at all key stages is used effectively so that pupils learn a curriculum that is both broad and deep
- organise the timetable for RE so that gaps between teaching are minimised
- ensure that the curriculum for statutory non-examined RE at key stages 4 and 5 is ambitious and consistently implemented. They should make sure that the RE content is clearly identified and builds on what pupils have learned at key stage 3



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHERS

- The government should urgently update guidance for schools about its statutory expectations for RE. The government should also ensure that there is appropriate clarity about what is taught in RE, and when and where it is taught, for those schools where Ofsted inspects the subject. This would help schools and, particularly, leaders and teachers of RE.
- Those involved in writing syllabuses and commercial curriculums should make sure that these enable pupils to build deep knowledge of the chosen religious and non-religious traditions. They should make sure that curriculums identify what pupils should learn and when. They should ensure that it is clear to teachers when pupils will revisit and review important content and concepts.
- Those involved in commissioning and organising professional development should increase access to, and the range of, training available to all leaders and teachers, to improve their subject knowledge.
- Those involved in training teachers and early career professional development should prioritise helping trainee teachers and those who are newer to the profession to gain the subject knowledge that they need.
- Exam boards should recognise that the way in which schools use exam-style questions is not always appropriate. They should make sure that their communication with schools reflects this.

URGENT



Ofsted also found that a significant proportion of schools do not meet the statutory requirement to teach religious education at all stages of a pupils' journey through school.

Ofsted's Chief Inspector, Sir Martyn Oliver, said:

"A strong RE curriculum is not only important for pupils' cultural development, it is a requirement of law and too many schools are not meeting that obligation."

