Learn Teach Lead RE newsletter

November 2026



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

Is RE in the NC yet?

No, not yet! We are expecting the DfE to launch the long-awaited National Curriculum consultation process in November. Please can I ask you to look out for this in the news, and to respond with your comments about RE.
This is a crucial step along the path towards possible inclusion of RE into the NC, so it's vital that teachers' voices come through loud and clear. All our local SACREs strongly support the idea of RE becoming a national curriculum subject. It will give the subject far more visibility and bring a much clearer set of standards and expectations for schools to follow.

Spirited Arts 2027

Get creative in RE and take part in NATRE Spirited Arts 2027, using almost any art form your pupils can think of, including: art, poetry, photography, dance, music, drama

Any Questions

Join the open online forum to ask questions about teaching **Judaism.** Next date: Tues 17th Nov 3.45-4.45pm Zoom link (see P4)

Join the Any Questions **Islam forum** 2.45-3.45pm on Mon 16th Nov.

Interfaith Week 2026

Interfaith Week 2026 runs from 8th – 15th November. The theme this year is "Lighting the Way to a Shared Future" with resources here.
Here are some ideas for schools:
Invite visitors to talk in RE lessons or assemblies
Set up a poetry competition (see examples here and here)

Find the list of RE school visitors here

Learn Teach Lead RE

LTLRE hub meetings (4-5.15pm) are **free and open to all teachers of RE,** primary, secondary and special schools, wherever you are based. See LTLRE website for full details. Find a list of **LTLRE hub meetings here**
See P3 for a full list of meetings for 2026/7
Upcoming meetings include:

Exploring Hindu lived experience in the South West today Zoom link
Tuesday 17th November 2026

Mapping Oak Academy resources to the RE syllabus Zoom link Thurs 19th Nov 2026

The historical reality of key religious figures: who was Muhammad? Zoom link
Tues 26th Jan 2027

Research in RE: examples of small-scale research projects from Culham St Gabriel's leadership programme Zoom link
Thurs 11th Feb 2027

HMD 2027

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2027 is 'No Place for Prejudice': how did prejudice shape and enable the Holocaust, how do prejudices impact on our everyday lives today?
For details of events for schools in Exeter on Wed 27th Jan 2027 see P5.
Download booking form here

RE Hubs

Visit the RE Hubs website for all your RE needs: accredited School Speakers, Places of Worship, Advertise RE Jobs, Resources, Calendar of CPD Events, Local Groups, School Speakers

Learning with - not just about

In this helpful blog Nikki McGee talks about the importance of RE in an increasingly polarised world. She discusses how to have difficult conversations in the classroom and beyond, to inspire a genuine sense of curiosity about religious and non-religious worldviews, and to develop pupils' abilities to have nuanced conversations about contentious topics.

Understanding Humanism

Understanding Humanism CPD Webinars:
Wed 18 Nov, 16:00-17:00 - Primary- find out more and register here
Thurs 19 Nov, 16:00-17:00 - Secondary - find out more and register here

British Library – take part

The British Library's Learning team is recruiting secondary RE teachers to take part in a user consultation study. The feedback will help shape the future development of their online RE resources, ensuring they continue to meet the needs of audiences. See P6

Diwali 2026

Diwali will be celebrated this year in the UK on Sun 8th Nov. There are some excellent resources on TrueTube which schools may find useful.

Warning: Dodgy Websites

Watch out for a website that's been corrupted. Unit L2.12 explains the Jewish concept of Tzedek, which means 'justice'. However, the website for the Tzedek charity 'the Jewish Medical Association' has been hacked, so be careful when researching this topic. Please get in touch if you find other links that don't seem right.

Indian dance for schools

The Annapurna Indian Dance company visits the SW of England offering schools engaging Indian storytelling and dance workshops, suitable for pupils of all ages. The interactive sessions introduce children to Indian culture through storytelling, music, movement, and rhythm.

Community Iftar in Schools

Over recent years a number of schools in the SW have been setting up an Iftar meal for local Muslim families during Ramadan. It's a great way for schools to impact positively on local faith and belief communities. Get in touch if you'd like to find out more.

Islam website for schools

This Islamic Society of Britain website hosts excellent resources to support the teaching of Islam in primary and secondary schools.

Magnifying Magnificent Muslims

This toolkit which c**elebrates the impact and legacy of Muslims in our communities** aims to support primary school educators to facilitate conversations around Islamophobia and Muslim contributions within the classroom and wider school community.

Farmington Scholarships open

Sign up for a Farmington scholarship to gain funding to study RE. Each teacher receives up to 30 days out of the classroom, plus a supportive research supervisor. See P8

Baha'i, Jain and Pagan: new RE Today resources

These resources are an excellent starting point for exploring three diverse religious traditions less commonly studied: Baha'i, Jain and Pagan: primary and secondary.

Films for RS

A list of films and documentaries for RS



Looking forward to Christmas! Beautiful Nativity image of Mary and Child – art-work by Frank Wesley, Uttar Pradesh, India

LTLRE hub meetings 2026/7

LTLRE hub meetings (4.00-5.15pm) are free and open to all teachers of RE from primary, secondary and special school settings, wherever you are based. Please join any meeting, using the Zoom links below.
See LTLRE website for full details of all meetings.

Exploring Hindu lived experience in the South West today
Rekha and Jay Jina are Hindus who live near Totnes. They will talk about the way they live out their Hindu practices in everyday life, and the beliefs that underlie their worldviews. LTLRE: Greg Parekh, Nicki Bonell and Becca Parkinson
Tuesday 17th November 2026
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85327675412

Mapping Oak Academy resources to the RE syllabus
This session will show how the excellent Oak Academy materials can be used to support the local RE syllabus, bringing a new edge to the way we teach. Suitable for schools in Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and Cornwall.
Speaker: Adam Roberson LTLRE: Belinda Twiggs
Thurs 19th November 2026
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87572668865

The historical reality of key religious figures: who was Muhammad?
This session will use the 'historical lens' to explore what research can tell us about key historical figures who feature in our RE lessons, including Muhammad and Jesus. Why does this matter in RE? Speaker: Ed Pawson
Tues 26th January 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85200952887

Research in RE: examples of small-scale research projects from Culham St Gabriel's leadership programme
Find out how small research can make a big impact on your lessons in RE Speaker: Kelly Keatley
Thurs 11th Feb 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84568009222

Adaptive teaching and RE
Speaker: Rachael Jackson-Royal LTLRE: Katie Freeman
Date?

SWIFT professional RE community
Wed 3rd March 2027
https://www.sw-ift.org.uk/professional-communities.html

Will I burn in hell?
Helping teachers bring diverse views into their lessons.
We will be exploring a number of different Christian approaches to faith, to help teachers deliver more powerful RE. We'll be discussing literalist and liberal views, meeting Christians from diverse global and cultural perspectives: how do different Christians understand Heaven and Hell, Creation, the Bible, Pentecost?
Leaders: Amber Griffiths, Laura Twamley, Kari-Ann Webb, Ed Pawson
Mon 8th March 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82386398276

Assessment in RE
This session will bring old and new ideas together to help teachers understand how to assess RE with ease!
Speakers: Kate Vernon and Amber Griffiths (primary); Rachel Willcocks and Rosie Lee (secondary)
Mon 19th April 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85435770635

Celebration of RE
Teachers bring their favourite RE ideas and resources together to share the best of our subject
LTLRE: Laura Twamley, Rachel Willcocks and Rosie Lee
Thurs 10 June 2027
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89850367467

Are you an RE teacher with questions about Judaism?

A chance to ask anything you like...

Open to primary and secondary teachers who teach Judaism

Why don't all...
What's the difference between...
I don't understand which...

Tues 17th Nov 2026, 3.45-4.45pm

Any question answered

BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
ADVOCACY | DEMOCRACY | COMMUNITY

by Anna Silver,
Education Officer

Monthly informal drop in session

(for monthly dates and zoom links email anna.silver@bod.org.uk)

For Zoom link see attached text

Next date: Tuesday 17th November 2026
3.45-4.45pm
Zoom link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81576961749?pwd=blzUqbYSOgDdQVgiOchovXz6m0EM5x.1
Meeting ID: 815 7696 1749
Passcode: 424751

Events for Holocaust Memorial Day Exeter 2027

Theme: No Place for Prejudice Wednesday 27th January 2027

Events for Schools and the General Public

Place	Times	Details
Cathedral (Y5 upwards)	10.00 - 10.10am	**Welcome and introduction to Holocaust remembrance** (Ed Pawson)
	10.10 – 10.20	**Candle lighting**: Lord Mayor of Exeter, Chair of DCC, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Dean of Exeter Cathedral, Exeter Mosque, President of Exeter Synagogue, Devon Faith and Belief Forum, Romani Community, Deaf and Disability community, Chair of Devon SACRE, school pupils
	10.20 – 10.25	**A visit to Auschwitz** (Y13 students, King's School)
	10.25 – 10.30	**A song for peace** (Payhembury /Awliscombe pupils)
	10.30 – 10.40	**Nazi repression of LGBT community** (Kevin Mitchell)
	10.40-11.05	**Keeping the stories alive** (Jane Carpenter)
	11.05-11.10	**Prayers and reflections** (Cate Edmonds)
Southernhay URC Southernhay E, Exeter EX1 1QD	11.35-12.20pm	**Talk: a Kindertransport Child, the story of Otto Deutsch** (Stuart Raine, Jewish community) (Y5 up)
	12.20 - 12.45	**Lunch break**
	12.45-1.25	**Film and talk: showing of 'Porrajmos',** the Nazi genocide of the Gypsy, Roma and Sinti peoples. (Liz Small, Romani community) (Y8 up)
	1.25-2.15	**Talk: On the religious artworks of Holocaust survivor Samuel Bak (**Leah Lawford, Uni of Exeter) (Y8 up)
Guildhall 203 High St, Exeter EX4 3EB	3.00 - 3.40	**Closing ceremony:** Reflections & Candle Lighting led by the Jewish Community
		Human rights trail: Self-Guided Tour through Exeter's Multi-Coloured History
Exeter Synagogue Synagogue Pl, Exeter EX4 3EX	12.00-12.30pm 1.15-1.45pm 2.00-2.30pm	**Guided visits for schools**

27th January marks Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) every year. At HMD we remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, the millions of others (including Gypsies, homosexuals etc) killed under Nazi Persecution and those murdered in subsequent genocides including Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. We take time to acknowledge lives lost in current conflicts and to pray for peace.

Download booking form here

Message from the British Library to Secondary Teachers

Could you send this message to any secondary local group groups you have in your region/area to share with their membership. The British Library's Learning team is recruiting secondary Religious Education teachers to take part in a user consultation study, due to take place this autumn 2026. The feedback will help shape the future development of our online RE resources, ensuring they continue to meet the needs of audiences. We're particularly interested in understanding:
Your experience of teaching RE and the key challenges faced by you and your students
The types of digital resources you currently use, or would like to access
The ways articles, primary sources, films, teachers' notes and other content can best support and enrich the study and enjoyment of RE for you and your students.

Participating teachers will be paid £25 of book tokens to engage with one of the following:
45-60 minutes of looking at the British Library's legacy RE content, followed by an hour-long one-to-one discussion held after school at an agreed time
45-60 minutes of looking at the British Library's legacy RE content, followed by an hour-long survey

If you're an RE teacher and are interested in taking part, please contact jaelwilliams@jemassociates.org providing the following information:
Name
Where you teach
Which year group you teach
Whether you've used British Library digital learning resources in the past
Whether they're happy to be contacted by our evaluator Jael Williams

Background: In October 2023, the British Library experienced a major cyber-attack, which rendered our web estate, including Digital Learning resources, temporarily inaccessible. While the Library's Marketing team leads on the redesign and restoration of our interpretive content, this user consultation study will help us evolve our content according to audience need.

Which Bible?

Rev Sam Sheppard explains:

Twice in the last week someone from church has asked me what bible they should get. Others may have the same question so here's my answer:

Firstly despite what you may have heard on the internet the KJV is not a good translation of the bible.

It's really important in translation history but it's not a good translation in an academic sense and wouldn't hold up to the standards of modern translation.

It's also in 500 year old English which really doesn't help.

So don't use that one but when it comes to what bible should we be using…

Well that's not a simple question because a "neutral" translation of the bible doesn't exist.

Pete Ens said

"Every translator who has ever lived has had to make a lot of decisions, both consciously and also unconsciously, about meaning, or context, or grammar, or what these idioms mean, or style …we will not achieve neutrality."

The NRSV is broadly considered by translators and scholars to be the standard of modern biblical translation so that's probably the best bet.

But here's what I'd say to someone picking up the bible for the first time, from someone who picked it up once and completely fell in love with it:

If you're expecting to find a clear and uncomplicated explanation of God, life and the universe you won't find it.

And if you're expecting to find an accurate and unbiased account of history you won't find it.

It's a complicated book. To begin with it's not one book it's a collection of different books including multiple genres and styles from multiple cultures and time periods.

It's not an accurate, unbiased account of history. And it's not really pretending to be. That's been projected onto it.

It has biases, cultural influences and at times is intentionally projecting a political and religious interpretation of events.

And it's been influenced by later editors.

Simplistic readings of the bible are dangerous.

Just because someone says "the bible says" doesn't mean that the bible actually says it. And people have used that approach to claim God ordains some very harmful and violent things.

It's not a magic book written by the hand of God that you can't interpret or question.

It took shape over a few hundred years. The first list we have of the books we call the new testament is from 367 AD.

And its interpretation is complex, confusing and sometimes utterly confounding.

Approach it with curiosity and nuance. Ask lots of questions.

And you'll find wisdom, passed down from people who came long before you. You'll find beauty and yes, I believe, you'll find God.

https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1CSWAmASeT/



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