



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Date: 9 March 2023

Committee:

SACRE

Shropshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Date: Wednesday, 15 March 2023

Time: 18.15 pm – 20.15 pm

Venue: The Lantern, Meadow Farm Drive, Harlescott, Shrewsbury, SY1 4NG

You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Tim Collard
Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

Members of SACRE

Teacher Association

Adrian Black
Steph Shirra
Amanda Skidmore
Rachel Parsonage

C of E

Fiona Iddon
Vacancy
Mark Harrington
Garry Ward
Ruth Gittins

Christian and other

Denise Samari
Bill Morris
Sohayb Peerbhai

David Bowgett
Jacqui Osmund-
Smith
Mark Michaels
Sue Michaels

LA
Mike Isherwood
Roger Evans
Simon Nightingale

Support and advice
Sue Round
Helen Woodbridge
Fiona Moss
Stephen Pett
John Rowe

Your Committee Officer is:

Helen Woodbridge Admin Manager, Learning & Skills
Tel: 01743 254556
Email: helen.woodbridge@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Welcome from chair

A welcome from the chair.

2 Apologies

To receive and record apologies from members who are unable to attend.
(Apologies already received from: Akasharaja Bruton, Inderjit Singh Gill, Jacquie Osmund-Smith, Simerpreet Kaur Gill, Sohayb Peerbhai, Roger Evans)

3 Declaration of interest

The opportunity for SACRE members to declare any interest in items on the agenda.

4 Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2022 (B) (Pages 1 - 6)

To receive, amend and approve minutes of the last meeting.

5 Matters arising from the minutes above

To consider matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

6 Membership

Updates on new members.

7 Feedback from Visits (standing item)

The opportunity for colleagues to feedback from visits made to schools.

8 Update on Primary Videos

The opportunity for colleagues to provide an update.

9 Web Links for new SLG

A request for suggestions from colleagues for links to resources.

10 Compliance

A discussion to decide how to tackle possible non-compliance.

11 Census (C) (Pages 7 - 12)

An opportunity to consider the census results.

12 Advisor's Update (Pages 13 - 26)

- Ofsted reports **(D)**
- RE Hubs training Flyer **(E)**
- National updates **(F)**
- Recruitment
- NASACRE conference 22 May 2023 in London

13 To confirm date, time and venue of the next meetings:

Wednesday 5 July 2023

14 Any Other Urgent Business

(To be notified to chair or clerk in advance please)

**SHROPSHIRE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
10 November 2022, 18.15
The Lantern, Shrewsbury**

Present

Adrian Black (Chair)	Steph Shirra
Mark Harrington	Denise Samari
Mike Isherwood	Sue Michaels
Simon Nightingale	

In Attendance

Jon Rawson (Observer) Fiona Moss, Sue Round, John Rowe, Helen Woodbridge (Clerk)

1. Welcome from chair

The chair welcomed all to the meeting. He especially welcomed Mike Isherwood as this was his first in person meeting. Jon Rawson was also welcomed as an observer. Jon explained his interest in attending this meeting to support his professional development as he is enrolled in the RE Leadership Programme Stage 1 run by Culham St Gabriel's Trust and is looking at the function and organisation of local SACRE committees.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:

Name	Reason
David Bowgett	Other commitment
Fi Iddon	Other commitment
Mark Michaels	Work commitment
Amanda Skidmore	Work commitment
Garry Ward	Work commitment
Soyhayb Peerbai	Work commitment

3. Declaration of interest

Fiona Moss advised that she works for RE Today and is CEO of the National Association of RE Teachers. She is also a member of the steering group for the RE Leadership Programme Stage 1 run by Culham St Gabriel's Trust.

4. Minutes of meeting held on 29 June 2022

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes above (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

The matters arising had either been completed or were covered by the agenda.

6. Membership

New members continue to be sought.

Fi Iddon (although absent) had advised that she had approached the Salvation Army contact and will be discussing membership with her. She had also suggested a representative from an independent church, Emma Elliot, RE teacher from Thomas Adams in Wem, who attends Barnabas. SACRE colleagues agreed that the clerk should ask Fi Iddon to make an approach noting that Emma could slot into either of two committees. A Buddhist representative is still being sought by the chair.

Jane Crouch had resigned and is to be replaced by diocese who have been contacted by the clerk. The chair will be writing to Jane with SACRE's thanks and asked members to contact him if they had anything to contribute to the letter.

The clerk advised that she had emailed the Orthodox church but so far there had been no response regarding contact details for Bill Morris. Various members undertook to pursue this.

Fiona Moss advised that the census results will be out on 29 November so after consideration of these, it may be a good time to consider membership at the next meeting.

The clerk agreed to chase up a representative from Catholicism.

Denise Samari agreed to follow up a possible Hindu contact.

Simon Nightingale will be liaising with a Sikh when he delivers a talk on Sikhism next week.

7. Visits and Visitor Booklet

The booklet including a new front cover using the pictures from schools and the exhibition was displayed. Some details had been changed and members are sending further updates.

This has been sent to schools and will be available to download via the SLG. It was agreed that SACRE should gather information about what has been done in schools via an online (Google) feedback form. The chair agreed to progress this and will share the link. It was also agreed that feedback at SACRE meetings should also be done so this is to return as a regular short agenda item.

It was agreed that if there were any negative issues raised by schools, the chair would talk directly to those concerned.

The clerk agreed to send the new Shropshire Council logo to the chair.

Fiona Moss advised of the creation of a website which will only contain contacts who have attended free training (Chris Giles – Regional Hub will be in touch with Fiona Moss regarding this).

8. Shropshire Learning Gateway

John Rowe provided an update and provided the URL for the beta version which is set up and accessible. He added that the new SLG is far more user friendly. It will be shared with schools and views sought. The old SLG will be shut down at the end of January.

The default position is that the SLG will be open to the public but there will be password protected areas. John Rowe confirmed that he is happy to continue to add items for SACRE.

Fiona Moss suggested that her national update could be uploaded.

Colleagues agreed that an interactive message board would be advantageous but this is not part of the SLG at this stage. John Rowe advised that he will be discussing the possibilities (including menti board) with IT.

9. Draft Religion and World Views booklet

Fiona Moss provided an update and displayed the draft 48 page document which is a resource for curriculum developers talking through reasons why change is required and what religion/world views means. It provides a suggested draft national statement of entitlement and practical guidance for those putting the curriculum together.

Three groups have successfully bid to trial this. Inspiration Trust (East of England), two SACREs - Coventry/Warwickshire and a group of disparate members – each will produce a curriculum/agreed syllabus which will be shared and be reported back in around a year's time.

This fits with the call for a National Plan and last week there was a back bench business debate on RE. There are links to this on the NATRE news pages.

On Wednesday there is a visit to the new schools minister – Nick Gibb – for further discussion around statement of entitlement and the problems of making complaints re non-compliance and the lack of bursaries.

Mark Harrington wondered about the fit with the Schools Bill.

Fiona Moss suggested that the assumption is that the Schools Bill is not going ahead although the aim for schools to academise by 2030 remains.

Oak Academy are still in place. They are trying to recruit people to write materials for the first tranche – RE is in the second tranche. They know that there will be issues in writing these.

Link to document [Draft Resource - The Religious Education Council of England and Wales](#)

Link on NATRE [Cross-party calls for RE National Plan after Westminster debate \(natre.org.uk\)](#)

The future of SACREs was highlighted as Sue Round had concerns re governance.

10. Annual report

Fiona Moss advised of the NASACRE report which included a summary of the Annual Reports.

The draft Annual Report was shared as it needs to be completed by December 2022. The previous year's GCSE data will have to be used.

Additions were identified:

- Foreword - chair
- Appendices - clerk
- New Cover/logo - chair
- Collective Worship URL - clerk
- Improved additions re local community/interfaith groups etc. Simon Nightingale/Sue Michaels
- LA meetings with diocesan directors – Sue Round
- RE Hub Group - Steph Shirra.
- SIA conversations regarding RE – John Rowe
- Visits and visitors/collective worship videos

Colleagues agreed to forward information to the clerk so that a master copy can be created.

The annual report was unanimously agreed.

11. Advisor's Update

Ofsted reports

Bomere Heath – RE Deep dive – found syllabus was being used. It was agreed that the clerk would ask if the RE lead would be willing to attend the next SACRE meeting to share her experience.

Burford – positive evidence of collective worship

St Edwards and Tilstock – noted visits to different places of worship.

Wilfred Owen – positive on assemblies.

Mark Harrington advised that SIAMs has been updated in the last week with a new framework from September 2023. The main change is that there will no longer be grade descriptors – schools will be fulfilling or not fulfilling.

Workforce data

Fiona Moss provided an update including her concerns around the RE provision in some Shropshire secondary schools

She agreed to send in her findings and concerns to David Shaw, Steve Compton, John Rowe and Sue Round.

National update

The national update was shared.

12. To confirm dates, times and venues of the meetings for 2022/23

Wednesday 15 March 2023 – The Lantern

Wednesday 5 July 2023 - tba

13. Any other business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Summary of Actions from the meeting

<p>6</p>	<p>Ask Fi Iddon to make contact with Emma Elliott</p> <p>Contact the chair with any contributions for Jane's thank you letter,</p> <p>Try to find out a contact method for Bill Morris.</p> <p>Add consideration of the census results to the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>Chase up a representative from Catholicism.</p> <p>Follow up a possible Hindu contact.</p> <p>Liaise regarding a Sikh representative.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>All</p> <p>Various colleagues</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Denise Samari</p> <p>Simon Nightingale</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Create a Google feedback form and share the link</p> <p>Add feedback from visits as a standing item to SACRE meetings.</p> <p>Send the new Shropshire Council logo to the chair.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Forward additions for the Annual Report to the clerk.</p>	<p>Various colleagues</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Ask the RE lead from Bomere Heath if she would be willing to attend the next SACRE meeting to share her experience.</p> <p>Send findings from workforce data to David Shaw, Steve Compton, John Rowe and Sue Round.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Fiona Moss</p>

Date Chair

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A report on responses to the religion question of the 2021 Census: Shropshire

Executive Summary

The publication of the 2021 census on 29th November 2022 provides a useful source of information for SACRE. The 2021 census provides a snap shot of the size of some of the smaller groups, allowing members to consider whether to recommend to the local authority that new members be included in Committee A.

1. Recommendation(s) that SACRE:

- Review the data from the census as it applies to Shropshire
- In a future meeting consider whether the membership of Committee A is appropriate and, in particular, if SACRE should recommend to the Council that a representative of any other religion or belief system should be sought.

2. Introduction and Background

Group A of SACRE is required by law to include, "Such Christian denominations and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Authority, will approximately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area. In respect of Group A, section 390(6) Education Act 1996 states: The number of representative members appointed to any representative group under subsection (4)(a) [referred to as Group A] to represent each denomination or religion required to be represented shall, so far as consistent with the efficient discharge of the group's functions, reflect broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The decision of which groups to include in committee A is a matter for the council but it is within the remit of SACRE to make recommendations on this matter as it sees fit. We do this through adapting our constitution and then proposing changes to the council.

3.2 The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to discriminate against someone because they are of a particular religion, and the guidance published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission makes it clear this applies to smaller religions for example

Paganism: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/religion-or-belief-discrimination> If the council were to receive an application from a Pagan to serve on SACRE then these legal matters would need to be considered. SACRE has not received such an application recently. This would also be true if an application was made from a non- religious worldview. Note that we have a member who represents Humanists.

Main points – From the Office for National Statistics with additional commentary in relation to Shropshire

For the first time in a census of England and Wales, less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as "Christian", a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011; despite this decrease, "Christian" remained the most common response to the religion question.

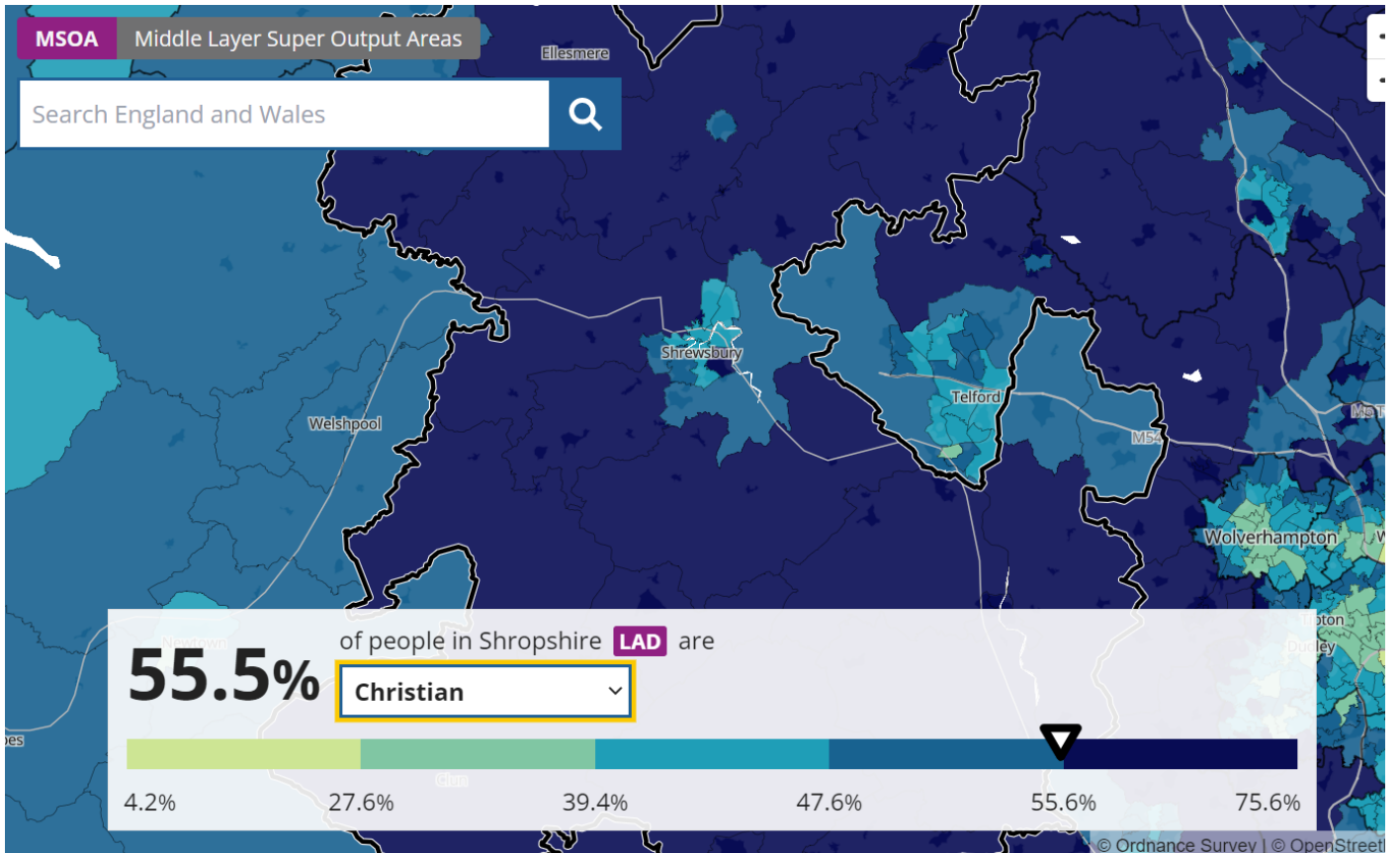
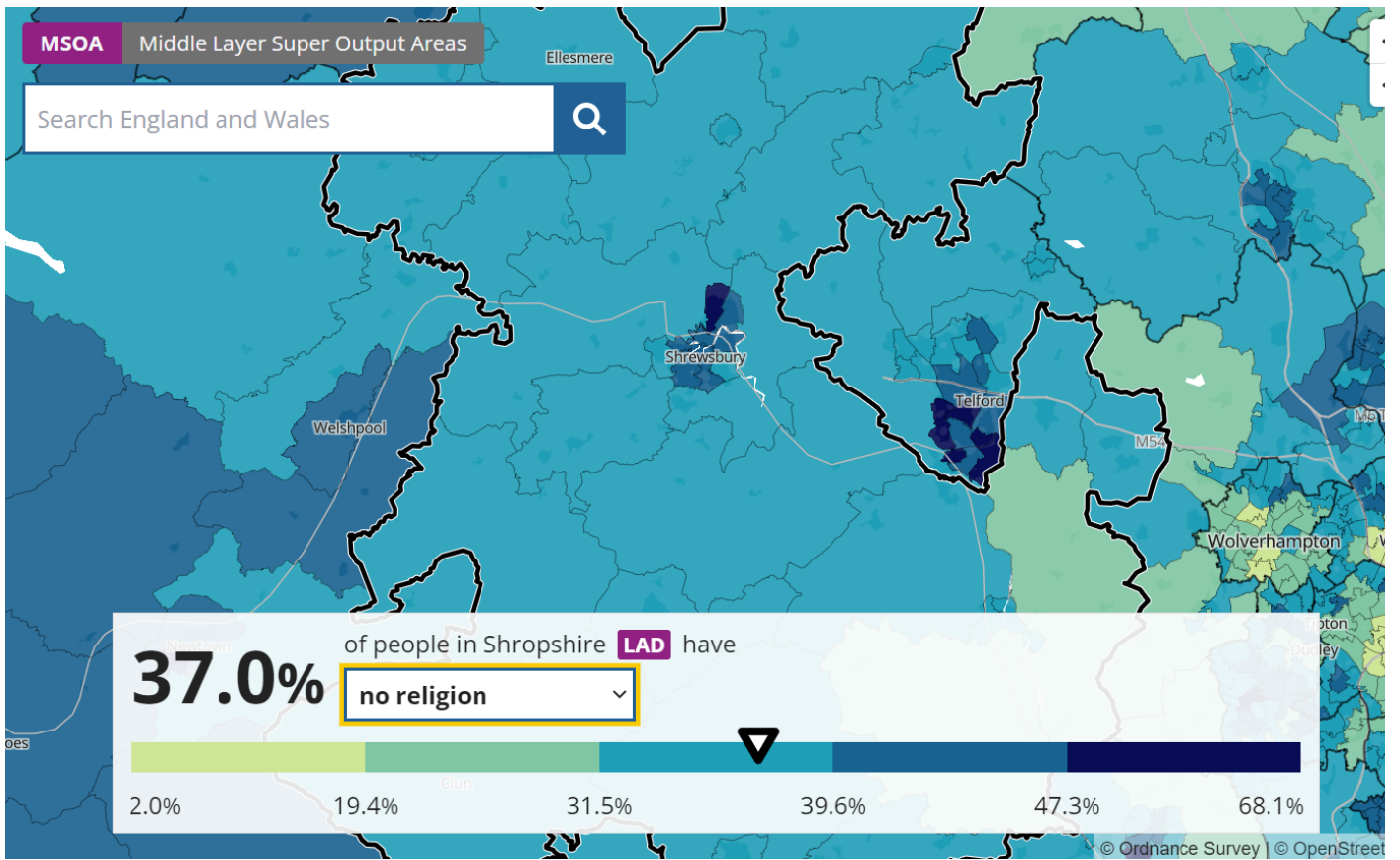
- In Shropshire the proportion of the population responding "Christian" fell by a slightly smaller margin than in England as a whole and the proportion of the population affiliating with Christianity

(55.5%) is considerably higher than that in the population of England where (46.32%) responded 'Christian'.

- "No religion" was the second most common response, increasing by more than 48%, from around 13m to almost 21m between 2011 and 2021
- In Shropshire "No religion" was the second most common response (After Christian) and increased from 22.7% to 36.92%, a proportionally larger increase than the rest of England.
- There were increases in the number of people who described themselves as "Muslim" (3.9 million, 6.5% in 2021, up from 2.7 million, 4.9% in 2011) and "Hindu" (1.0 million, 1.7% in 2021, up from 818,000, 1.5% in 2011).
- The Muslim population in Shropshire is the second largest single religious group although Muslims still make up just 0.5% of the population. Proportionally this figure has grown at an increased rate to the country as a whole – although the 5 of people who ticked Muslim on the form is still far fewer than the national percentage.
- The Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh populations population of Shropshire have all increased numerically but are all below the national average for people of those religions.
- London remains the most religiously diverse region of England in 2021, with over a quarter (25.3%) of all usual residents reporting a religion other than "Christian"; the North East and South West are the least religiously diverse regions, with 4.2% and 3.2%, respectively, selecting a religion other than "Christian".
- Shropshire is not very religiously diverse- see maps below.
- In Shropshire the proportion of residents responding that they had a religion (57.17%) broadly the same as the national average (57.31%).

Regional data can be found here which demonstrates that there are very few areas that have much religious diversity. There are certain areas eg Shrewsbury Town where you can identify larger numbers of members of particular communities.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021>



Appendix A

Figure 1: Shropshire: Religion question in %	2011	2021	England	2011	2021	Change
Christian	68.7	55.5	Christian	59.38	46.32	-21.99
Buddhist	0.26	0.3	Buddhist	0.45	0.46	3.21
Hindu	0.12	0.2	Hindu	1.52	1.81	18.79
Jewish	0.04	0.1	Jewish	0.49	0.48	-3.28
Muslim	0.32	0.5	Muslim	5.02	6.73	34.10
Sikh	0.08	0.2	Sikh	0.79	0.92	16.15
Total Pagan Traditions ⁱ (write in)	0.17	0.13	Total Pagan Traditions (write in)	0.14	0.18	24.07
Total other religions excluding Pagan Traditions (write in)	0.20	0.24	Total other religions excluding Pagan Traditions (write in)	0.29	0.41	43.39
Humanist (write in)	0.040	0.028	Humanist (write in)	0.03	0.02	-36.95
No religion excluding those who wrote in Humanist	22.7	36.92	No religion excluding those who wrote in Humanist	24.71	36.65	48.33
Religion not stated	7.3	5.9	Religion not stated	7.18	6.02	-16.11

Figure 2: Shropshire: Religion question in numbers (pop 2021: 323,601)	2011	2021	England	2011	2021	Change
Christian	210,268	179,516	Christian	31479876	26167904	-5311972
Buddhist	792	895	Buddhist	238626	262437	23811
Hindu	378	557	Hindu	806199	1020539	214340
Jewish	127	182	Jewish	261282	269295	8013
Muslim	989	1708	Muslim	2660116	3801182	1141066
Sikh	256	760	Sikh	420196	520090	99894
Total Pagan Traditions (write in)	515	705	Total Pagan Traditions (write in)	76336	100920	24584
Total other religions excluding Pagan (write in)	598	773	Total other religions excluding Pagan (write in)	151489	231470	79981
Humanist	123	92	Humanist (write in)	14252	9575	-4677
No religion excluding those who wrote in Humanist	69,602	119,482	No religion excluding those who wrote in Humanist	13099980	20706073	7606093
Religion not stated	16,184	18,931	Religion not stated	3804104	3400553	-403551

ⁱ Pagan Traditions include the following categories: Other religion: Animism, Other religion: Druid, Other religion: Heathen, Other religion: Mysticism, Other religion: New Age, Other religion: Occult, Other religion: Pagan, Other religion: Pantheism, Other religion: Reconstructionist, Other religion: Shamanism, Other religion: Thelemite, Other religion: Vodun, Other religion: Wicca, Other religion: Witchcraft

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Review of OFSTED reports of Shropshire Schools

The following inspection reports have been published between **31st October 2022 and 28th February 2023**

Belvidere Primary School RI 18 and 19 October 2022

However, there are weaknesses in the sequencing and delivery of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum. Pupils have very limited knowledge of different people's faiths. They also have very limited knowledge of British values such as democracy and tolerance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

Pupils' knowledge of some aspects of British values and different faiths is limited. As a result, they may not be as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. Leaders should ensure that pupils develop a better understanding of all aspects of British values and of different faiths.

Bishop's Castle Primary School Good but... 15 September 2022

The curriculum includes topics that introduce pupils to a range of cultures and traditions. Leaders use assemblies to focus, for example, on Black History Month or the festivals of different religions.

Church Preen Primary School Outstanding but... 13 December 2022

No comment on RE

Criftins Church of England Primary School Outstanding 23 November 2022

Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Pupils learn about different religions and understand fundamental British values. This helps pupils to be tolerant towards and respectful of views that are different from their own. Leaders take every opportunity to develop awe and wonder

Greenacres Primary School RI 3 and 4 November 2022

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and religions are limited and, at times, confused. This means that pupils do not have a clear understanding of different cultures. This sometimes impacts on their ability to recognise and respect differences in others.

What does the school need to do to improve?

Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and religions are limited and at times confused. This means that pupils do not develop a clear understanding of different cultures. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge and resources they need to teach pupils to recognise and respect a wide range of cultural influences.

Idsall School Inadequate 28 and 29 September 2022

No comment on RE

Market Drayton Junior School Good 8 and 9 November 2022

No comment on RE

Myddle CofE Primary School Good 18 October 2022

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about different cultures and the main world religions. They are developing plans to ensure that pupils learn more about the differences that make people unique.

Norton-in-Hales CofE Primary School Good 1 November 2022

They learn about the different cultures and beliefs found in modern Britain.

Onny CofE (A) Primary School Good 10 and 11 January 2023

They respect people from different religions and ethnic backgrounds.

Rushbury Church of England Primary School Outstanding But...11 October 2022

No comment on RE

St George's C of E Academy, Clun Good 21 September 2022

To date, when evaluating how effectively staff are implementing the curriculum, leaders have placed an emphasis on the core subjects, geography, history, and religious education. Other subjects have received less attention. As the capacity for subject leadership grows, senior leaders should extend their monitoring and evaluation to the whole curriculum, drawing on the strengths of other schools in the trust as appropriate.

The Meadows Primary School Good 15 and 16 November 2022

No comment on RE

Trinity CofE Primary School Good 8 and 9 November 2022

No comment on RE



Do you work at a place of worship, at a museum, or are you a school speaker?



If so, join our kitemark accreditation online training to get tips on how to work well with schools. Whether you are hosting visits, visiting schools, or delivering a speech, this training can give you the confidence to ensure you are providing the best experience for schools.

The webinars are being led by professionals in RE, RE Hubs Director Claire Clinton, and RE Hubs Leads.

These are free to attend and will be ran on a monthly basis for you to select a session that fits your schedule.

**To book a date visit:
<http://bit.ly/3lqzN91>**

RE Hubs is a new project seeking to build relationships between Advisers, Dioceses, Universities, SACREs, LAs, Governors, MATs, Teaching school Hubs, places of worship, school speakers and more.

Delegates that have signed up to our agreed principles for working with schools, will then be accredited with our RE Hubs Kitemark.



Webinar dates

- 2023**
- **Thursday 23 March 2-3:30pm**
 - **Tuesday 18 April 9:30-11am**
 - **Wednesday 17 May 11-12:30pm**
 - **Tuesday 20 June 10-11:30am**



To book a date visit:
<http://bit.ly/3lqzN91>



AULRE



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RE National Updates Spring 2023

SACRE receives updates on what is happening in the world of RE. We thought you might like to have this information – about resources and events, and other news updates. Please pass this on to members of your community, RE subject leads and others interested in RE.

Resources

Inclusive Judaism: resources from the Jewish Museum of London

Classroom resources, including an extensive image library, open up the diversity of Jewish communities. Developers, Shereen Hunte and Eliana Mendelsohn, say: *The teaching of Inclusive Judaism is important for many reasons and ensures that:*

- *The Jewish community is represented authentically.*
- *Students truly understand what it means to be Jewish, in all its diversity.*
- *We are able to connect to each other's experiences with empathy and compassion.*

See: [Inclusive Judaism - The Jewish Museum London](#)



NATRE Primary Subject leader support pages

Natre have created a new resource the primary subject leader toolkit. This has many resources and links to support your role as Religious Education/ Religion and Worldviews subject leader. All the content detailed and linked in these pages has been written and collated by Primary members of the NATRE Executive and RE Today Advisers.

www.natre.org.uk/primary/primary-subject-leader/

Visits, videos and other resources for the classroom

THE ARTS SOCIETY BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham faith visits

The Arts Society Birmingham has worked with six faith communities to provide guidance and materials on six places of worship. Teachers can find a 4-page booklet, three videos introducing the building and community, and a related quiz for each place of worship.

Supported by a generous grant from Westhill Endowment Trust, The Arts Society Birmingham has collaborated with six different places of worship, Birmingham Faith Leaders and other organisations to produce resources designed to enhance a school visit, or to support a virtual visit, to a place of worship for children 8 to 13 years.

Actual visits to the places of worship may be arranged by contacting them directly. Contact details are provided on the Illustrated Guides. <https://birmingham-faith-visits.theartsociety.org/>

£600 grants for teaching Christianity

The Jerusalem Trust's

Small Grants to Schools Scheme

Resourcing the teaching of Christianity within Religious Education

The Jerusalem Trust's Small Grants to Schools Scheme supports the teaching of Christianity within Religious Education. The scheme operates by providing schools with grants of up to £600 to purchase resources for use in RE lessons.

The scheme is open to state funded schools in England and Wales, with 60% awarded to secondary schools and 40% to primary schools.

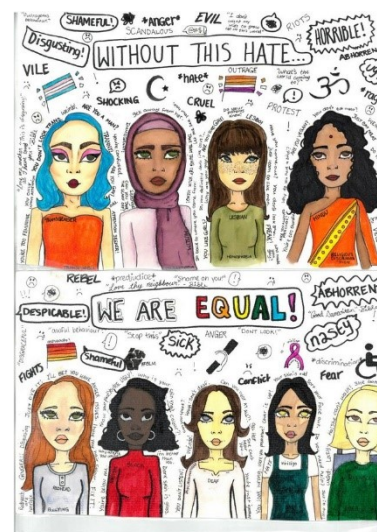
Details and application information: www.regrants.org.uk

NATRE Spirited Arts 2022 WINNERS!

Over 30,000 young people from around the world took part in the Spirited Arts competition last year, with entries from Australia, Bahrain and Thailand, as well as many from Stoke-on-Trent. 523 schools took part, selecting their pupils' best artworks, and sending 3196 entries for judging. 27 winners have been selected and are now in the [Spirited Arts online gallery](#).

Categories in the 2022 competition included:

- 'God's Good Earth?', which invited pupils to explore the threat of climate change and the beauty of the earth
- 'Searching for God', where pupils considered their personal search for God, regardless of whether they are atheist, agnostic, or believers in God, and
- 'A view of the world', where pupils were encouraged to explore their own worldview.



Mollie (13) - Winner

The competition is supported by the Jo Cox Foundation. This year entrants were invited to develop a creative response to the 2015 quote from the late Jo Cox MP: **"We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us"**.

www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-gallery/2022/

NATRE Spirited Arts 2023 – new themes announced

Will your school join hundreds of schools from around the world taking part in this year's Spirited Arts competition? Entries are welcomed in (almost!) any art form pupils can think of. Winning entries will provide a good response to one of the 5 themes, and judges will be asking is it original? Is it well-crafted? And (most importantly!) is it excellent RE?

The 6 themes

1. "We have more in common than that which divides us."
2. Green faith, green future? ['God's good earth?']
3. Where is God today?
4. Faith in action, values in action.
5. Sacred space and holy buildings
6. All God's creatures?



More details here www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-2023/

Training and CPD opportunities and other support

NATRE's annual Strictly RE conference returned on 28-29th January 2023

Taking place online for the third year, the conference themes explore: **depth, diversity and Abrahamic worldviews**



Although the conference is over all sessions were recorded and schools can buy access to all the recording for only £135 (£115 for NATRE members)

Workshops included:

- Thinking out loud- joining the dots to help children think more critically (Primary)
- Introducing Philosophy and Philosophers to the Primary Classroom (Primary)
- Dharmic Lenses on the Climate Crisis (Secondary)
- Creating a core RE Programme for KS4 (Secondary)
- Interfaith conversations - exploring creative projects that deepen pupils' understanding in RE (Crossphase)
- Special RE (Crossphase)
- Championing and advocating for RE with parents (for SLTs)

To buy access contact courses@retoday.org.uk

Free webinars for primary and secondary ECTs – a taster for NATRE ECT membership

Early Career Teachers have access to a range of free support through a series of online sessions. 'Café' sessions give you a chance to talk with experienced teachers and experts from different worldview backgrounds. The taught sessions offer expert input with a focus on practical classroom strategies.

Date – All Mondays 4.00-5.30pm	Topic
9 Jan	Taught session: Focus on Non-religious worldviews
13 Feb	Taught session: Focus on Hindu Dharma
13 Mar	Café NATRE – Subject knowledge Judaism
15 May	Taught session: Focus on Multidisciplinary RE
12 June	Taught session: Focus on Sikhi
10 July	Café NATRE: Subject knowledge Christianity

ECT webinars booking link www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teacher/ect-free-monthly-webinar/

Culham St Gabriel's 'In conversation' series

Extend your understanding of religion and worldviews, subject knowledge and pedagogy by listening in on conversations among teachers, researchers and other experts.

Two conversations are programmed for the spring:

- 20 Feb: 4-00-4.40pm Learning from experiences in Lebanon: diversity, solidarity and safeguarding human dignity (recording available)
- 20 March 4.30-5.10pm RETOPEA! Promoting religious peace and tolerance through history

Details and booking info here: www.cstg.org.uk/activities/events/in-conversation/

Extensive back catalogue here: www.reonline.org.uk/research/in-conversation/

Regional RE Hub leads in place and ready to go!

Under the leadership of Claire Clinton, Lead Director, a fantastic team of Regional Leads will be supporting ten regions of England and Wales. They have been recruited to build relationships with advisers, dioceses, universities, SACREs, LAs, governors, MATs, teaching school hubs and more. The Regional Leads will also act as conduits between the regional providers of research, CPD, resources, places of worship and so on for the benefit of all RE/Religion and Worldview stakeholders.

The Regional Hub structure aims to increase accessibility for all teachers to local and regional professional development and research, and to enable teachers to teach with greater confidence through their access to the support, knowledge, training and resources available in their region.

Details and the list of Regional Leads:

www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/the-regional-re-hubs-team-is-ready-to-go/

Through the regional Hubs there will be a regional website. Amongst other things this will feature local speakers and places of worship. In order to feature on the website there is a free training session to attend which will get those attending kitemark accreditation.

To book a date visit: <http://bit.ly/3lqzN91>

These online sessions are led by professionals in RE, RE Hubs Director, Claire Clinton and Re Hub leads. Suitable for those hosting visits and visiting schools.

Can this be shared with local speakers and places of worship?

NATRE: new membership packages!

NATRE is the largest membership organisation that promotes, defends and supports RE teachers and RE teaching. It does this through producing high-quality resources and CPD, lobbying government, being involved in conversations with the DfE and Ofsted, Local Authorities and SACREs, telling teachers' stories and experiences and being a voice for all teachers.



Membership packages for students, ECTs, teachers, schools, RE professionals and RE enthusiasts!

Details: www.natre.org.uk/membership

NATRE: welcome webinars for new members

New NATRE members are invited to a monthly welcome webinar. This will help them use their NATRE membership and enjoy it to its fullest!

What will they learn?

- How to Access NATRE resources
- Access online termly mailing resources
- Access Local Groups area
- Take the best out of the NATRE monthly newsletter
- How to redeem your REtoday library membership
- How to use your membership discount

Members can register their interest to attend a webinar at this link.

Other information

Research into parent views on Religious Education

In summer 2021, the Culham St Gabriel's Trust (CSTG) commissioned a survey to understand more about public perception of an education in religion and worldviews. In the summer of 2022, CSTG commissioned another survey, this time exploring the views of parents about education in religion and worldviews. In both cases, the language used in the questions was chosen to try to avoid these misconceptions and to collect a more accurate set of data about what people thought about modern RE.

Some key findings about what parents talk about with their children:

- Around 8 in 10 discuss beliefs about the origins of life and the universe (78%)
- 7 in 10 discuss beliefs concerning what happens when we die (72%)
- 8 in 10 discuss beliefs that affect people's behaviour and decision making (77%)
- 7 in 10 discuss issues related to religious and non-religious worldviews that appear in the media (67%)

Find out more here: www.cstg.org.uk/activities/campaigns/parent-survey/

How can SACRE capitalise on these findings to further improve RE provision in the LA?

Link between study of RS at examination level and positive outcomes for disadvantaged students?

There is a growing body of research linking the study of Religious Education/Studies with improved outcomes for pupils identified as 'disadvantaged'.

This collection of research would suggest that schools that are serious about improving the outcomes for their disadvantaged pupils, should look carefully at their provision for Religious Studies at key stage 4 and 5. Find out more [here](#)

What do we know about the levels of disadvantage in the schools in our area and their experience of RE?

Why does the rate of entry for GCSE RS vary so much around England? Does the 2021 Census provide part of the answer?

In answer to a parliamentary written question asked by Janet Daby MP and **answered by Nick Gibb MP in January**, the minister provided a table ranking each local authority in relation to the number of entries for GCSE Religious Studies in 2022. The range is significant; from 14.4% to 81.0%. Looking for an explanation for this gap, we tabulated the percentage of the population in each local authority that recorded they belonged to a religion in the 2021 Census alongside the average entries for GCSE. The correlation is interesting as you will see by the colour coded shading in the last column. Comparisons between the local authorities entering the most and the least students are worth noting as follows:

An average of 57% of the English population, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

An average of 51% of the population, in the bottom 10 LAs in terms of entries for GCSE RS, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

An average of 71% of the population, in the top 10 LAs in terms of entries for GCSE RS, recorded that they had a religion in the 2021 census

The full table can be downloaded here.

Even though this is correlation and not proven causation, SACREs may like to consider the following:

- How do entries in their LA compare with other LAs in their region and nationally?
- Does the census data provide part of the answer or not?
- Why do some LAs buck the trend implied by the census data – i.e. pupils appear to be more likely to be entered for GCSE RS in areas with a larger proportions of people who identify with a religious worldview?
- Might parental views of what their child should study be affecting curriculum design? See CSTG survey of parents here.
- What are the implications of the answers to these questions for Religious Education in England?

Find out more in the document linked below

[Local Authorities entries for GCSE and census records](#)

Cross-party calls for RE National Plan after Westminster debate

London, 01 November 2022: A Westminster Hall debate heard cross-party calls of support for religious education, as MPs urged the Government to do more to protect the subject, they considered vital for young people in modern Britain.

The debate, entitled ‘Religious Education in Modern Britain’, was called by Conservative MP Martin Vickers who cited concerns about the number of schools fulfilling their statutory responsibility to teach the subject. At year 11, one school in five reported offering zero hours of RE.

www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/?news=re-in-modern-britain-westminster-hall-debate

How do these figures compare with the picture in our LA?

What action (if any) should SACRE be taking?

Would SACRE like to inform local politicians further about issues facing RE? [This document might support this activity](#)

Shortage of Specialist Secondary RE Teachers

We are pleased to have collaborated with Culham St Gabriel’s Trust and our partners in the RE Policy unit on this Policy Briefing on the current shortage of subject specialist secondary teachers for religious education. We hope it will provide a useful source of information about the national picture of recruitment and the arguments we are making to lobby for government action. Please share this document widely.

[Access the documents here.](#)

Minister Admits most Teachers of RE mainly teach another subject

In response to the **parliamentary written question** asked by Janet Daby MP, minister for school standards; Nick Gibb MP admitted that 51% of the total number of secondary teachers of RE spend most of their teaching timetable delivering a different subject. Only 27% of teachers of History, 28% of Geography and 13% of English fall into this category. This statistic lends further support for the call for immediate action to boost the number of trainee teachers of RE after the government, yet again, refused to offer trainees teachers of RE a bursary and, unsurprisingly, recruitment is currently down 32% on last year (22% for all subjects).

NATRE believes pupils deserve better, and that they should be taught by well-trained and qualified teachers. According to the government's own **teacher standards** (3), teachers must "demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge". It is difficult to see how these can be met when the proportion of specialist teachers is so low.

School leaders struggling to recruit RE specialists blame the DfE, especially as they **recently justified the decision**, on the basis that in one single year in the last ten (2020/21), the target was exceeded, conveniently ignoring the fact that it had previously **stated**, "In 2020/21, we saw an unprecedented increase in new entrants to ITT compared to the previous year, which was likely to be a direct result of the impact of COVID-19... "

A school leader in the North of England spoke for many when he described the consequences of DfE policy:

"I have championed and delivered RE as a compulsory subject from Year 7 to Year 11 for a significant number of years. I have also made it compulsory for all students to sit the GCSE RS examination throughout this time. Unfortunately, the Government did not include RE in the Humanities subjects in the English Baccalaureate and due to a national shortage of RE teachers I have been unable to appoint new staff. Therefore, I do not have trained RE teachers to deliver RE on the scale I have done previously."

You can find detailed arguments and statistics to support our case for action to support the case for government action including the restoration of bursaries here:

[The case for ITT bursaries 2023 final](#)

NATRE survey of provision for RE in primary schools published

Key highlights from the survey show:

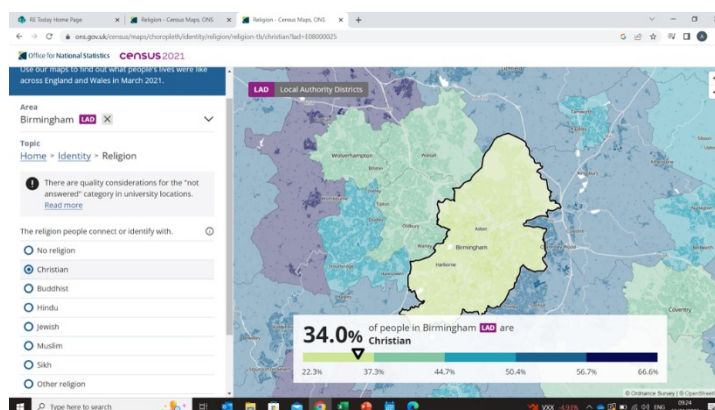
- The number of schools where pupils are withdrawn is increasing. 23% of schools report some withdrawal from RE (18.6% in 2020. and 16% in 2018).
- 96% of schools report that they make provision for RE for all pupils in their school.
- More than 40% of teachers report that they received between 0 and 3 hours of training to teach RE in their initial teacher training. 20% received none.
- 63% of schools say some RE is being delivered by adults other than teachers (TAs/HLTAs etc.)
- In 28% of schools, RE receives no budget or no set budget and is 30% less funding than foundation subjects.
- In just under a third of schools (31.5%) insufficient time (less than 60 mins) is being spent on the teaching of RE to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- In 80% of schools, subject leaders receive some training but 25% of other teachers receive none and report reduced confidence.
- In over 30% of schools, time for RE increased and in 30% of these, Ofsted has cited as the main reason: inspection comments, the Framework, or the Research Review in RE.

Read more [here](#) and an infographic [here](#):

To what extent do these findings from primary teachers nationally, reflect the situation in our area?

Office for National Statistics publishes responses to the question on religion in census 2021

- For the first time in a census of England and Wales, less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as “Christian”, a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011; despite this decrease, “Christian” remained the most common response to the religion question.
- “No religion” was the second most common response, increasing by 12.0 percentage points to 37.2% (22.2 million) from 25.2% (14.1 million) in 2011.
- There were increases in the number of people who described themselves as “Muslim” (3.9 million, 6.5% in 2021, up from 2.7 million, 4.9% in 2011) and “Hindu” (1.0 million, 1.7% in 2021, up from 818,000, 1.5% in 2011).
- Wales had a greater decrease in people reporting their religion as “Christian” (14.0 percentage point decrease, from 57.6% in 2011 to 43.6% in 2021) and increase in “No religion” (14.5 percentage point increase, from 32.1% in 2011 to 46.5% in 2021) compared with England and Wales overall.
- London remains the most religiously diverse region of England in 2021, with over a quarter (25.3%) of all usual residents reporting a religion other than “Christian”; the North East and South West are the least religiously diverse regions, with 4.2% and 3.2%, respectively, selecting a religion other than “Christian”.



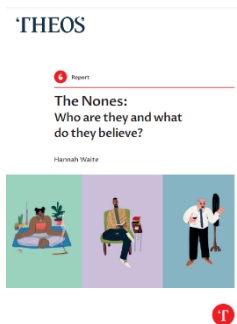
Explore our region and the surrounding area using this interactive online map: www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps

What are the implications of this census for our Agreed Syllabus and the membership of SACRE?

How are the religious and non-religious traditions, including the smaller ones reflected in the membership of our SACRE?

How does the data for 2021 compare with 2011? How is our area similar and different to England and Wales as a whole?

Theos Report: Who are the Nones and what do they believe?



This report published on 24th November, shortly before the census data above was released explores the demography, beliefs and practices of Nones and then presents a cluster analysis of this group. It shows that Nones comprise a complex and sometimes counter-intuitive group with, for example, only 51% of them stating they “don’t believe in God,” and 42% believing in some form of the supernatural.

Download the full report here:

www.theosthinktank.co.uk/research/2022/10/31/the-nones-who-are-they-and-what-do-they-believe

What, if any, are the implications of this report for our Agreed Syllabus?

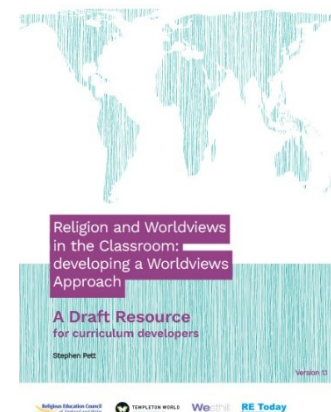
Draft Resource for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom

As part of a three-year Worldviews project, the RE Council of England and Wales (REC) has published a draft resource for Religion and Worldviews in the Classroom.

The resource sets out a rationale for a religion and worldviews approach, building on the developments since the 2018 Commission report. It incorporates a revised **National Statement of Entitlement** (NSE), which gives a clear description of an education in religion and worldviews, and sets a benchmark for high-quality teaching and learning. The resource then offers practical guidance, including how to use the NSE to develop a syllabus or curriculum, applying ways of knowing, developing pupils’ personal worldviews, and what progress looks like in a worldviews approach.

Sections include:

- What do people mean by ‘religion’?
- What do people mean by ‘worldview’?
- The value of worldviews
- Purposes for RE in a religion and worldviews approach
- **Revised National Statement of Entitlement**
- Developing pupils’ personal worldviews
- Making good progress
- Applying disciplinary methods
- How to use the NSE to develop a syllabus
- How to use the NSE to develop questions and construct units of work
- Making good progress: three models



The resource is primarily written to inform three Framework Development Teams, who are currently working to apply the NSE and the guidance to their own contexts. During this process, the draft resource will be tested and revised as necessary, before the publication of a final Handbook, three example frameworks, sample units of work and pupil responses, in 2024.

You can download copies of here: www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/projects/draft-handbook-and-nse/

News updates created for Shropshire SACRE by RE Today Services, March 2023

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