

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 3 December 2013

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

**Group A:
Christian Denominations
and Other Religions or
Religious Denominations**

Mr David Burbidge, Baptist Church
Mr Mark Cawte, Methodist
Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte, United Reformed Church
Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance
Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community
Mr Tony McAteer, Catholic Community
Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community

**Group B:
The Church of England**

Miss Janet French
Reverend Norma McKemey
Ms Steph Mundin
Mrs Penny Summers
Reverend Beth Brown

**Group C:
Teacher Associations**

Mrs Tracy Mason, NUT
Miss Lottie Rowe, NASUWT
Mrs Mandy Sandleton, NASUWT
Ms Mel Shepherd, NASUWT
Ms Catherine Lomax, NASUWT - Deputy
Mr Paul Sunners, NAHT

**Group D:
The Local Authority**

Councillor Fay Howard
Councillor James Robbins
Councillor Alan Bishop
Councillor Fionuala Foley
Councillor John Haines

Support Officers:

Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor
Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Committee Officer: Stuart Figini (Telephone 01793 463612)
email: sfigini@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

3. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

4. Chair's Announcements (Pages 1 - 4)

- Potential letter to Primary and Secondary School Governors from REC as a response to "The Truth Unmasked". Two briefing papers are attached.

5. Membership Update (Pages 5 - 20)

A report by the Director of Law and Democratic Services is attached.

6. Minutes (Pages 21 - 26)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2013.

7. Example of Good Practice from RE in a Swindon School

Steph Mordin from St Francis CofE VA School will show how their school monitors the progress of pupils in RE.

8. RE Ofsted Report: Realising the Potential (Pages 27 - 78)

A report of the SACRE Advisor is attached along with a report from Ofsted.

9. Feedback from RE Best Practice Clusters

The SACRE Advisor will report.

10. REC RE Review

The SACRE Advisor will report.

11. Progress Report from Sub-Committees

To receive updates from the following Sub-Committees:

- Sub-Committee to develop a strategy and actions to promote the role of Swindon SACRE in schools and academies for Headteachers
- Sub-Committee to look at developing new distinctively local Swindon RE units of work for Swindon schools and academies

12. Feedback from Members Representing SACRE on other Bodies

To receive feedback from members who represent SACRE at other committees/organisations.

13. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE is on Tuesday 18 March 2014. Members of the SACRE are asked to suggest venues or indicate where this and future meetings of the Panel should be held.

Date of Despatch: 25 November 2013

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

Access Arrangements – The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

This page is intentionally left blank



THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The purpose of this paper is to make school governors aware of the findings and recommendations of *Religious Education the Truth Unmasked*, which reports the outcomes of the recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG). The full text of the report can be found on the RE Council website: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>

Governors' legal responsibility for religious education (RE)

Governing bodies and headteachers in all state schools must ensure that provision is made for RE for all pupils, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. Further details, in particular guidance on the RE curriculum to be taught in different types of school, may be found in two documents on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

- 1 *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010.*
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religious-education-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>
- 2 *Religious Education (RE) in academies and free schools.*
http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re_and_collective_worship_in_acads_a.pdf

The importance of RE

The APPG concluded that:

Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.

The staffing of primary RE

Ofsted has found that pupils' achievement in RE is very inconsistent. At the time of Ofsted's most recent report on RE (Ofsted 2010)¹ primary school pupils' achievement in RE was good or outstanding in only 4 out of 10 schools. The APPG inquiry identified four key concerns related to the deployment of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in RE.

- a) ***The excessive use of teaching assistants to teach RE.*** Ofsted has found that class teachers use their RE lesson time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) more than they use other subject time. In over half of the 300 primary schools participating in the APPG inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than the class teacher. In 24% of schools in the inquiry RE was taught to some children by higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs), a practice almost unknown in foundation subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. The outcome is not always negative and Ofsted has reported that in the few occasions 'where the teaching assistants were very carefully supported, managed and monitored, their enthusiasm and interest in the subject could have a very positive impact on pupils' learning' (Ofsted 2010:36). BUT generally the practice is not good and reflects the low status of RE in many schools (2.2-2.5).

¹ Ofsted (2010) Transforming Religious Education

- b) **Teachers' lack of confidence.** About a half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE (2.6-2.10). Evidence presented to the APPG shows that the following reasons account for trainees' caution/lack of confidence with RE:
- Fear of bias (especially in those of faith)
 - Feeling of unpreparedness/ lack of experience
 - Fear about pronunciations
 - Fear of offending
 - Unsure about the RE curriculum
 - Fear of teaching controversial topics
 - Uncertainty about the place of RE in the curriculum
- c) **RE subject leaders' lack of expertise.** About a half of subject leaders who replied to the inquiry said that they lacked the expertise or experience to undertake their role effectively (2.11-2.13) Over a third of primary RE subject leaders in responding schools had no qualifications in RE above GCSE/O Level.
- d) **Insufficient teacher training in RE.** There is a wide variation in the extent of initial teacher training in RE and too many trainee teachers had little or no effective preparation for teaching the subject.(2.14-2.16)

Support for primary teachers of RE

The APPG inquiry found that in spite of many teachers' weak subject knowledge and confidence, too little in service training in RE is available (6.1-6.3). In particular:

- a) RE subject leaders responding to the APPG identified three particular CPD needs above all others:
- improving their knowledge of world religions
 - help with implementing a new agreed syllabus
 - how to assess pupils' learning
- b) The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers of RE at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions. (6.31-6.36)
- c) Primary teachers and subject leaders in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to RE CPD (6.13-6.21)
- d) Teachers' access to RE CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools.
- e) CPD is sometimes provided by other organisations, if teachers know where to look. In particular the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. In addition several websites (e.g. NATRE) and journals (e.g. RE Today) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:

- require a review of RE in the school to find out
 - the extent of teachers' confidence in teaching RE, and the reasons for any lack of confidence
 - how many teachers, if any, are not teaching RE to their class and the reasons why
 - the training, expertise and enthusiasm of staff covering other teachers' RE classes
- require the school leadership to:
 - make proper provision for continuing professional development for RE subject leaders and others with responsibility for teaching RE in order to improve its quality
 - ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from national organisations
 - provide regular opportunities for RE subject leaders to train their colleagues in subject knowledge and planning and assessing RE.

THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The purpose of this paper is to make school governors aware of the findings and recommendations of *Religious Education the Truth Unmasked*, which reports the outcomes of the recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG). The full text of the report can be found on the RE Council website: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>

Governors' legal responsibility for religious education (RE)

Governing bodies and headteachers in all state schools must ensure that provision is made for RE for all pupils, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. Further details, in particular guidance on the RE curriculum to be taught in different types of school, may be found in two documents on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

- 1 *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010.*
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religious-education-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>
- 2 *Religious Education (RE) in academies and free schools.*
http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re_and_collective_worship_in_acads_a.pdf

Why does RE matter?

The APPG concluded that:

Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.

To what extent are standards and the teaching of secondary RE a problem?

The most recent Ofsted report on RE found that pupils' achievement in RE in secondary schools shows a very mixed picture. It was good or outstanding in 40 of the 89 schools visited, requiring improvement in 45 schools and inadequate in 14 schools. The APPG inquiry identified five key concerns related to the management of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in over half of all secondary schools.

- a) **The excessive use of non-specialists.** The DfE has argued that pupils' attainments are affected "above all other factors" by the quality of their teachers. Ofsted has found that the lack of teachers' subject qualifications is a key factor affecting pupils' examination success. Nevertheless, nearly half of those teaching RE in secondary schools have no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject are unlikely to have the subject knowledge to meet the DfE's national teaching standards.
- b) **The inappropriate use of non specialists.** Non specialists can be effective when they receive training and are well supported by subject specialists. The APPG identified particular weaknesses in teaching where:
 - non specialists are deployed to teach RE because they have gaps in their timetables, rather than from any interest in the subject
 - several non specialists are used to teach a few RE lessons each week, rather than one non specialist who can develop subject expertise and experience
 - different non specialists are used every year, inhibiting continuity and the development of subject expertise.

The APPG found that in such cases non specialists often lacked the confidence to move beyond the predictability of a text book or work sheet and found that other commitments made attendance at departmental meetings difficult.

- c) ***Schools misunderstanding the legal position of RE.*** Some secondary school leadership teams understood the omission of RE from the EBacc as a statement that it no longer has to be taught at Key Stage 4. This is not the case and Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education has said, 'The Government is committed to maintaining the status of RE as a compulsory subject that all pupils must study throughout their schooling'.
- d) ***Insufficient continuing professional development (CPD) in RE.*** In nearly 40% of schools RE teachers have inadequate access to continuing professional development. RE teachers in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to CPD. RE Teachers' access to CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools

What are the most urgent needs of RE heads of department and teachers of RE?

The APPG identified the following needs as priorities for heads of RE:

- a) Training in the accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of RE in the school; in particular answering the questions 'Are standards in RE high enough?' and 'Is RE teaching good enough?'
- b) Training in planning for the development of RE in the school with a focus on raising standards and improving teaching.
- c) A balance of internal and external training. External training gives RE specialists access to information about such priorities as curriculum change, new resources and local faith community contacts. Courses also provide invaluable opportunities to meet and exchange experiences with subject specialists from other schools.
- d) Subject training for ***all*** non specialist teachers of RE, focusing on the development of subject knowledge.

In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:

- a) initiate a review of RE in the school to find out
 - to what extent the school is meeting legal requirements to teach RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents
 - the subject qualifications and training of all teachers of RE (including non specialists)
 - the number of non-specialists teaching RE, the number of weekly lessons taught by each and the number of years each has been teaching RE
 - where teachers of RE find support for their teaching
 - how much subject-specific CPD RE teachers have had in the last three years
 - the proportion of Key Stage 4 and post-16 pupils entered for public examinations in RE
- b) work with the school leadership to:
 - use non-specialists to teach RE only when all other possibilities have been explored
 - identify only one or two non specialist teachers who are willing to teach RE, where the use of non-specialists is necessary
 - provide training for all non-specialists teaching RE. High quality, inexpensive subject knowledge booster courses are available on line, for example see Culham St Gabriel's (www.cstg.org.uk)
 - provide high quality RE throughout the school, assessed where possible through public examinations
 - make proper provision for continuing professional development for the RE head of department and others who teach RE in order to improve its quality
 - ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from national organisations. In addition to the local SACRE, the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. Several websites (e.g. the RE Council, NATRE and REOnline) and journals (e.g. RE Today, REsource) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities and bursaries for higher degrees.

Membership Update

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

3 December 2013

Author: SACRE Advisor /
Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update the SACRE on changes in the membership as a result of the appointment of additional representatives to Group A and a co-opted representative.

2. Recommendations

The SACRE is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and welcome the appointment of:
- 2.1.1 a representative of the Buddhist faith to Group A
 - 2.1.2 a representative of the Jewish faith to Group A
 - 2.1.3 a co-opted representative of the Swindon Humanists

3. Detail

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the SACRE Constitution which sets out the composition of the SACRE and its constituent groups and at Appendix 2 is a summary of the legal position in relation to who can be included in the SACRE, taken from the NASACRE 'Handbook for SACRE Members'.
- 3.2 Members, at their meeting on 1 October 2013, recommended that Full Council increase the representation of Group A from 8 representatives to 10 representatives to include the Buddhist and Jewish faiths. Representatives in Group A reflect the principal religious traditions in Swindon referred to in the religious belief questions contained in the Census 2011, a summary of which is set out at Appendix 3.
- 3.3 Full Council, at its meeting on 7 November 2013 approved the increase to Group A and therefore representatives from the Buddhist and Jewish faiths would be attending future SACRE meetings.
- 3.4 SACRE also asked officers to approach the British Humanist Association – BHA for a co-opted representative to serve on SACRE. The BHA have been contacted, who in turn have contacted Swindon Humanists. A nomination from Swindon Humanists is awaited.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org, 0117 906 0100 and Stuart Figini, Law and Democratic Services, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk, 01793 463612

Membership Update

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 3 December 2013

- 3.5 The term of office for all the additional representatives was agreed by SACRE at the last meeting on 1 October 2013 to run until Annual Council in 2015 and therefore comes into line with all other terms of office for Groups A, B and C.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The alternative option for the SACRE was to retain the current Membership for Group A.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications relating to this report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no specific legal or human rights implications relating to this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The work of the SACRE seeks to support the Theme 5 of the Community Strategy, for Swindon to be a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report, as it does not relate to a specific policy or strategy change.

Risk Management

- 5.6 There are no risk management factors which have been identified in relation to this report.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org, 0117 906 0100 and Stuart Figini, Law and Democratic Services, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk, 01793 463612

Membership Update

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

3 December 2013

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – SACRE Constitution.
- 8.2 Appendix 2 –NASACRE Membership of SACRE as set out in the NASACRE Handbook.
- 8.3 Appendix 3 – Census 2011 – Religious Belief Results.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor, katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org, 0117 906 0100 and Stuart Figini, Law and Democratic Services, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk, 01793 463612

This page is intentionally left blank

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education

CONSTITUTION

Last Reviewed: March 2004
Updated: June 2010

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Local Education Authority is required by Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). The SACRE shall operate in line with legislation and guidance. This Constitution sets out the framework within which the SACRE should operate, in accordance with the Education Act 1996, the School Standards Framework Act 1998 and RE Guidance in English Schools 2010 – Non Statutory Guidance, including the requirement for the SACRE to broadly represent the proportionate strength of local religious groups.

2. Functions of the SACRE

- 2.1 The broad role of a SACRE is to support the effective provision of RE in schools in order to enrich the experience of RE for all pupils, and to support the provision of Collective Worship. SACREs have a range of functions, some of them advisory, and some of them executive.

Advisory Functions:

- a) To advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with:
 - i) Religious worship in community schools or in foundation schools which are not defined as having religious character.
 - ii) The religious education to be given in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.
 - iii) Matters the Council may refer to the SACRE or the SACRE itself may think fit, including methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- b) To provide advice and support to schools on the effective teaching of the agreed syllabus, and how RE can contribute to the duty to promote community cohesion.
- c) To monitor the provision and quality of the RE taught, and the overall effectiveness of the syllabus and to consider with the Local Authority any changes required to the syllabus or support on the effective teaching of RE.

Executive Functions:

- a) To consider and determine in accordance with Section 394 of the Education Act 1996 applications from the Head Teachers of community schools or foundation schools which are not defined as having religious character in relation to the requirement of Christian collective worship to apply at their school.
- b) To consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus as adopted by the local authority.
- c) To publish an annual report on its actions and on actions taken by its representative groups.

3. Membership of the SACRE

3.1 The SACRE shall include representative members as detailed in 3.2 below and may include co-opted members as set out in 3.3 below. Substitute members can attend in accordance with 3.4 below. The total membership of the SACRE shall not at any time exceed 30, excluding the number of co-opted members.

3.2 Representative Members:

3.2.1 The Council shall determine from time to time the number of representative members of the SACRE and the individual appointments shall be made by the Council after taking all reasonable steps to assure itself that the individual is representative of the denomination or association concerned.

3.2.2 It is suggested that there be four groups of representative members appointed by the Authority and these be constituted as follows:

- i) GROUP A - Eight representatives of such Christian Denomination (other than the Church of England) and other religions and religious denominations faiths as will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in Swindon and the number of representative members reflects broadly the proportionate strength of that denomination or religion in the area. These are determined as a result of consultation.
- ii) GROUP B – Five representatives of the Church of England.
- iii) GROUP C - Eight representatives of those associations of teachers as, in the opinion of Council, ought, having regard to the circumstances of Swindon, to be represented; to include at least 3 teachers of religious education of whom at least one must be a primary school teacher.
- iv) GROUP D - Five representatives of the Local Authority

3.2.3 The representative members, except the five Council representatives, shall hold office for a period of 4 years expiring in the first instance 4 years from the date of the establishment of the SACRE and every 4 years thereafter. The five Council representatives shall be appointed on an annual basis.

3.2.4 Any representative member appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired period of office of the member in whose place she/he was appointed.

3.2.5 An individual representative member may be removed from membership by the Council if in the opinion of the Council she/he ceases to be representative, as the case may be, of the denomination or associations which she/he was appointed to represent on the SACRE.

3.2.6 Any individual representative member shall cease to hold membership if failing to attend 3 consecutive meetings of the SACRE or representative group, but may be reappointed.

3.3 Co-opted Members

- 3.3.1 There shall be no more than 4 co-opted members of the SACRE.
- 3.3.2 The co-opted members shall be appointed only by those members of the SACRE who have not themselves been co-opted ('the representative members').
- 3.3.3 Co-opted members shall hold office for a specific purpose, on such terms, and for a period of time as may be determined at the time of co-option by the representative members and shall hold office at the pleasure of, and may be removed at any time by, the representative members.
- 3.3.4 Co-opted members shall not be entitled to vote.
- 3.3.5 No representative group shall be entitled to co-opt additional members.

3.4 Substitute Members

- 3.4.1 A named substitute may attend a meeting in place of a representative member of the SACRE in accordance with the following provisions, but Members of the SACRE are encouraged to use this facility infrequently in view of the need to maintain continuity.
- 3.4.2 The substitute member must have been appointed by Council for a particular body, denomination or association or for a particular representative Group, and can only attend in place of the appropriate representative member. The Secretary to the SACRE shall maintain a list of those named substitutes appointed by the Council. A substitute member shall hold office and may be removed from office in the same way as if she/he was a representative member.
- 3.4.3 The substitute member shall have the same voting rights at a meeting as the representative member in whose place she/he is attending.
- 3.4.4 It shall be the responsibility of the relevant representative member to a) determine whether or not it is necessary for the relevant named substitute to attend a meeting in their place, b) notify the named substitute of the time and place of the proposed meeting, c) brief the named substitute on the proposed meeting and d) notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting that the named substitute will attend the meeting in his/her place.

3.5 Resignation

- 3.5.1 Any member of the SACRE may at any time resign his/her office.

3.6 Persons Ineligible to be Members of the SACRE

- 3.6.1 No person who has not attained the age of 18 years shall be eligible for appointment as a member of the SACRE.
- 3.6.2 A person shall be disqualified for holding, or for continuing to hold, office as a member if, within 5 years before his or her appointment would otherwise have taken

effect, or since his or her appointment, he or she has been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on him or her a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine. Where, by virtue of this paragraph, a person becomes disqualified for holding office as a member that person shall give notice of that fact to the Clerk to the SACRE.

4. Chair and Vice-Chair of the SACRE

- 4.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SACRE shall be appointed annually by the SACRE from among the representative members. The Vice-Chair should not be appointed from the same representative group as the Chair.
- 4.2 The Chair shall preside at meetings of the SACRE. The Vice-Chair of the SACRE shall preside at meetings of the SACRE during the absence of the Chair. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair at a meeting of the SACRE, the members of the SACRE shall elect one of their number who is a member of a representative group to preside at the meeting during such absence.
- 4.3 The person presiding at a meeting of the SACRE shall have a second or casting vote only in relation to questions concerning co-opted members in accordance with paragraph 5.4 below.

5. Voting at Meetings of the SACRE

- 5.1 Any question to be decided by the SACRE shall require a majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote.
- 5.2 Only the representative groups shall be entitled to vote on any questions and each group shall have a single vote.
- 5.3 If the question before the SACRE is whether or not to require a review of an Agreed Syllabus (see paragraph 2.1 b(ii)) the representative groups entitled to vote shall not include Group D (Local Authority representatives).
- 5.4 If the question before the SACRE is concerned with the appointment of a co-opted member then the Chair shall be entitled to a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.

6. Representative Groups

- 6.1 Representative Groups shall be free to arrange their own rules for the conduct of business, and may if they wish appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair annually from amongst their number.
- 6.2 Any question to be decided by a representative group shall require a majority of the votes cast by those present and entitled to vote. Each member of a representative group shall be entitled to one vote.
- 6.3 A meeting of any representative group may be convened (on a majority vote of those members of the representative group then present) during the progress of a meeting of the SACRE, for the purpose of determining or reviewing the view of that representative group on a question then before the SACRE and upon which that

group may cast its vote. The SACRE may adjourn its own meeting for a period that it determines when this occurs.

- 6.4 A separate meeting of a representative group may be convened in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 10, or may be requisitioned in writing, specifying the business to be transacted, by such number of members of that group as equals or exceeds the quorum for that group plus one.

7. Validity of Proceedings

- 7.1 The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE or of any representative group shall not be affected:
- i) By any vacancy in the office of a representative member;
 - ii) On the grounds that a member of the SACRE appointed to represent any denomination or associations does not at the time of the proceedings represent the denomination or associations in question;
 - iii) By reason of an individual not having received written notice of a meeting or a copy of the agenda; or
 - iv) By reason of any failure to comply with the provisions of paragraph 11.1.
- 7.2 The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE shall not be affected by the failure of any representative group to agree on how its vote should be cast on any particular issue before the SACRE.

8. Secretary

- 8.1 The Chief Education Officer or his/her representative shall be Secretary of the SACRE and to each of the representative groups. The Director of Education, their representative or any Officer designated by them shall serve as Clerk to the SACRE.
- 8.2 Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the SACRE. The decisions of representative groups shall be reported to the SACRE.

9. Quorum

- 9.1 The quorum for a meeting of the SACRE shall be not less than two members each of not less than three representative groups.
- 9.2 The quorum for a meeting of a representative group shall not be less than one third (rounded up to a whole number) of the membership of that representative group when complete.
- 9.3 If within a period of ten minutes after the time fixed for the start of the meeting of the SACRE or a representative group a quorum is not present, the meeting shall not be held. If during the course of a meeting, a quorum is no longer present, the meeting shall be terminated. If a meeting is not held or is terminated before all the proposed business has been transacted, a further meeting shall be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable.

10. Agenda

- 10.1 No issue shall be discussed at a meeting of the SACRE or of any representative group, unless notice of the intention to discuss that issue is given in the agenda for the meeting.
- 10.2 Any SACRE Member or Representative Group can at any meeting of the SACRE propose agenda items for the next meeting.

11. Convening meetings of SACRE

- 11.1 A meeting of the SACRE shall be convened by the Secretary (or clerk acting in their place) after consultation with the Chair or in their absence, the Vice Chair. The Secretary shall comply with any direction given by the SACRE at a previous meeting or given by the Chair (if consistent with a direction of the SACRE).
- 11.2 A meeting of the SACRE may be requisitioned in writing specifying the business to be transacted by a representative group, with the agreement of the Chair and Secretary.
- 11.3 Every member (including every named substitute) of the SACRE shall be given, not less than 5 clear days before the date of the meeting, written notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda for the meeting; provided that where the Chair, in their absence, the Vice-Chair, so directs on the grounds that there are matters demanding urgent consideration, it shall be sufficient if the written notice convening a meeting and a copy of the agenda, are given within such shorter period as (s)he specifies.

12. Attendance of the Public and Media at meetings

- 12.1 The attendance of the general public and representatives of the news media at meetings of the Agreed Syllabus Conference or Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education are subject to the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.
- 12.2 The public and media may not attend meetings of any representative group.

13. Approval and Amendment of Arrangements

- 13.1 The arrangements for the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education were approved by the Swindon Education Committee at its meeting on Thursday 20 February 1997, and have been amended by the SACRE subsequently in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- 13.2 These arrangements may not be amended so as to make them inconsistent with the provisions of the 1988, 1996 and 1998 Acts.
- 13.3 To the extent that these arrangements may be amended, those arrangements that relate to the SACRE may only be amended by a decision of the SACRE and those arrangements that relate to a representative group may only be amended by the representative group concerned.

- 13.4 In order to ensure a consistent approach to meetings and that changes to these arrangements are not made without full notice and proper consideration of the implications of any proposed change, any change shall only be made as follows:
- i) in case of the SACRE, only a representative group may propose a change to these arrangements;
 - ii) in the case of a representative group, only a member of that representative group may propose a change to these arrangements;
 - iii) at the first meeting when a proposal to change the arrangements is made there shall be no debate, and the proposal shall stand adjourned to the next meeting of the SACRE (or appropriate representative group) for determination.

The Composition of a SACRE

There are four groups or committees, as below:

A: The Christian denominations and other religions and their denominations, reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area	B: The Church of England
	C: Teacher and head teacher associations
	D: The Local Authority

On the rare occasions when a formal vote is taken, each of these groups or committees has equal voting rights; there is one vote per group.

Who are the representatives?

Group A

This group is made up of representatives of Christian denominations, (other than the Church of England). It may include, for example, representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, the Free Churches (e.g. Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed Church, Pentecostal, The Salvation Army) and The Society of Friends. It also has representatives from other faiths in the area, e.g. Buddhists, Baha'is, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Muslims, Parsees, Sikhs.

The make-up of Group A will vary from SACRE to SACRE as it reflects the diversity of the various faith communities in the locality.

Group B

This is made up of representatives nominated by the local Church of England diocese or dioceses.

Group C

The teacher members of this group are usually representatives of teacher associations. It is usual for there to be representation also from the head teacher associations. It is the local authority that decides which associations will be invited to be represented. They will usually approach the teacher unions, but local associations of RE teachers may also be asked to provide a representative. Sometimes someone from a local teacher training establishment is also invited to be a member of this group.

Group D

It is the local authority's responsibility to provide their own representatives for this committee. Usually these are elected members or other political nominees. The LA may wish to have all parties and viewpoints from across the political spectrum represented on the SACRE. In some LAs, a representative of school governors may also be in this group.

Co-options

SACREs are at liberty to co-opt other members who have a particular expertise or represent a small community. Many bring in a Humanist representative, currently technically prevented by law from becoming full members of Group A. Co-opted members do not have voting rights.

This page is intentionally left blank

Census 2011 – Religion in Swindon

<u>Total Population:</u>	<u>209,156</u>	% of Population:
Christian	120,287	57.65%
Muslim (Islam)	3,538	1.69%
Hindu	2,597	1.24%
Sikh	1,228	0.59%
Buddhist	1,209	0.58%
Jewish	151	0.07%

<u>Other religion: Total</u>	<u>1,061</u>	
Other religion: Pagan	338	0.16%
Other religion: Spiritualist	198	0.09%
Other religion: Wicca	77	
Other religion: Spiritual	68	
Other religion: Mixed Religion	65	
Other religion: Baha'i	51	
Other religion: Other religions	42	
Other religion: Ravidassia	31	
Other religion: Druid	25	
Other religion: Rastafarian	24	
Other religion: Heathen	23	
Other religion: Satanism	15	
Other religion: Jain	12	
Other religion: Taoist	9	
Other religion: Unification Church	9	
Other religion: Zoroastrian	9	
Other religion: Scientology	7	
Other religion: Believe in God	7	
Other religion: Deist	6	
Other religion: Pantheism	6	
Other religion: Theism	5	
Other religion: Own Belief System	5	
Other religion: Occult	4	
Other religion: Universalist	3	
Other religion: Witchcraft	3	

Other religion: Shamanism	3	
Other religion: Shintoism	2	
Other religion: Reconstructionist	2	
Other religion: New Age	2	
Other religion: Chinese Religion	2	
Other religion: Church of All Religion	1	
Other religion: Animism	1	
Other religion: Mysticism	1	
Other religion: Thelemite	1	
Other religion: Traditional African Religion	1	
Other religion: Vodun	1	

<u>No religion: Total</u>	<u>64,780</u>	30.5%
No religion: No religion	63,730	
No religion: Jedi Knight	788	0.38%
No religion: Atheist	109	
No religion: Agnostic	87	
No religion: Humanist	48	
No religion: Heavy Metal	13	
No religion: Free Thinker	3	
No religion: Realist	2	

<u>Religion not stated</u>	<u>14,305</u>	6.84%
----------------------------	---------------	-------

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT:-

Group A:
Christian Denominations and
Other Religions or Religious
Denominations

Mr David Burbidge (Baptist Church), Mr Mark Cawte (Methodist) (Chair), Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte (United Reformed Church), Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Alliance), Mr M S Khan (Muslim Community) and Mr Tony McAteer (Catholic Community)

Group B:
Church of England

Reverend Norma McKemey and Ms Steph Munda

Group C:
Teacher Organisations

Mrs Mandy Sandleton and Mr Paul Sunners

Group D:
Councillors

Councillors Fay Howard, Alan Bishop and John Haines

Also in attendance:

Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor) and Sarah Foulkes (School Improvement Adviser)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Robbins, Miss Janet French, Mrs Penny Summers, Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Lottie Rowe (Vice-Chair) and Councillor Fionuala Foley

12. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

13. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

14. Chair's Announcements

i) Stuart Figini

The Chairman welcomed Stuart Figini, Committee Officer and new Clerk to the SACRE, to the meeting. SACRE were informed that Stuart had just started at Swindon Borough Council and came from Wiltshire Council where he was also a Committee Officer. The Chairman wished him well for his time at Swindon.

ii) RE Review

The Chairman reported that the SACRE responses to the national developments in RE had now been forwarded to the Religious Council for England and Wales.

iii) New NASACRE Website and Log-on Details

The Chairman explained that NASACRE had a new website and informed SACRE of the log-on and password details.

iv) Agreed Syllabus – Electronic Version

It was noted that the current version of the agreed syllabus was available on the Swindon Borough Council website at the following link:

<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13113&path=0>

v) South West Conference for SACRE's

The Chairman reported that the South West Conference for SACRE's would be held on Thursday 20 March 2014 at Dillington House, Ilminster.

Paul Sunners expressed an interest in attending the conference on behalf of SACRE.

vi) Annual Report 2013

The Chairman explained that the SACRE Advisor, Katy Staples was due to start drafting the SACRE Annual Report for 2013 and asked members to forward any relevant items from schools or pupils, including photographs and pupils work that could be incorporated within the report to either the SACRE Advisor or the Chairman.

15. Minutes

Resolved:

That, subject to the letter 's' being removed from David Howell's name on pages 3 and 4, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

16. Membership Update

The SACRE considered a report of the SACRE Advisor about proposed changes in the membership of SACRE.

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reminded SACRE that at their last meeting on 25 June 2013 they had asked for the British Humanist Association to be approached for a representative to serve on SACRE. It was noted that a Humanist representative could only be co-opted to serve on SACRE as currently they were prevented by law from being full members of Group A.

It was noted that representatives from Group A, Christian Denominations and other Religions or Religious Denominations, Group B, The Church of England and Group C, Teacher Associations had one and a half years remaining on their term of office and it was suggested that a Humanist representative should be appointed for the same term.

SACRE also considered the appointment of Buddhist and Jewish representatives to Group A. The Chairman explained that he had been in touch with the Jewish Board of Deputies and also the Network of Buddhist Organisations for nominations.

Resolved:

1. That Council be recommended to increase the representation of Group A, Christian Denominations and other Religions or Religious Denominations on SACRE from eight to ten, to include two additional representatives from the Buddhist and Jewish faiths.
2. That a Humanist representative be co-opted to attend future meetings of SACRE with a term of office up to Annual Council 2015 to coincide with the remaining term of office of those representatives from Group A and B.
3. That the British Humanist Association be asked to nominate a representative to attend future SACRE meetings following consultation with the local Humanist grouping.

17. Debate on the Future of SACREs

The SACRE considered the report of the SACRE Advisor updating members on the debate on the Future of SACRE's in response to a presentation from Dr Mark Chater, Director of the Culham Institute at the NASACRE 2013 AGM.

A copy of the presentation by Dr Chater was circulated and the SACRE were asked to split into groups to respond to a number of questions in relation to i) the extent to which members concurred with Dr Chater's analysis of SACRE's and ii) did SACRE's need new structures to transform and sustain RE for today and tomorrow.

SACRE in considering the above points on the whole concurred with the majority of the analysis made by Dr Chater. It was suggested that SACRE's had a huge amount of responsibility but lacked power. The support received from the SACRE Advisor was very welcome and made a significant and valuable contribution, especially in the support given to teacher's professional development. It was noted that there was a need for SACRE to be more proactive and to raise awareness of its role within the school environment at every opportunity.

SACRE suggested that a Sub-Group be established to develop a strategy and actions to promote the role of Swindon SACRE in schools and academies for Headteachers , Teachers and Pupils.

Resolved:

1. That the report and the presentation by Dr Mark Chater be noted.

2. That a Sub-Group be established to develop a strategy and actions to promote the role of Swindon SACRE in schools and academies for Headteachers , Teachers and Pupils, with the following membership:

- Mr Mark Cawte
- Steph Mundin
- Mr Paul Sunners
- Any other volunteers to contact the SACRE Advisor as soon as possible

18. Examples of Work at network Meetings

SACRE received a report from the SACRE Advisor who provided examples of activities carried out at the most recent RE Cluster and Network meetings and updated Members on the Network meetings for RE Teachers and Co-ordinators in Swindon.

The SACRE split into groups to undertake an example of an activity provided to primary school children who had the opportunity to visit places of worship. Members then discussed their responses to the activity.

Resolved:

To note the report.

19. Development Plan

SACRE considered the report of the SACRE Advisor which provided updates to the SACRE Development Plan 2012-2014.

The SACRE Advisor referred to priority 2b of the SACRE Development Plan and suggested that a Sub-Group meeting was necessary to look at developing new distinctively local Swindon RE units of work for Swindon schools and academies.

It was suggested that there needed to be an evaluation of the RE material available for schools, especially as some schools may have already developed some material for their own use, which could be made available for wider school use. It was also noted that many people with a faith background were involved in charitable and faith based work and it would be useful to have a profile of those involved along with the type of activity undertaken.

The SACRE members also proposed other avenues for sourcing information about how people have and continue to make a difference in their local area.

Resolved:

1. That the report and Development Plan 2012-14 be noted.

2. That a Sub-Group be established to look at developing new distinctively local Swindon RE units of work for Swindon schools and academies, with the following membership:
 - Mr Mark Cawte
 - Mr David Burbidge
 - Rev David Howell
 - Mr M S Khan
 - Mr Tony McAteer
 - Any other volunteers to contact the SACRE Advisor as soon as possible
3. That the Sub-Group be asked to report their findings back to the next meeting of SACRE on 3 December 2013.

20. National Developments

The SACRE considered a report from the SACRE Advisor which provided information about national developments in relation to religious education.

In particular the SACRE Advisor highlighted the following:

- RE Review 2013: New Guidance - updates were available on the Religious Education Council of England and Wales website, with a launch of the RE Review being held at 5:30pm on Thursday 28 November 2013 at the Graduate School of Education at Bristol University.
- Inter Faith Week: 17-23 November 2013 – The Chairman asked for information about any school events linked with the Inter Faith Week and encouraged SACRE members to attend any events being held during the week
- The Swindon Interfaith Group Annual Civic Celebration 'More than enough?' being held on Wednesday 23 October 2013 at the Pilgrim Centre, Regent Street, Swindon at 7:30pm.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

21. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

It was noted that meetings of the SCARE would be held on:

- Tuesday 3rd December 2013 commencing at 6:00pm; and
- Tuesday 18th March 2014 commencing at 6:00pm

Meetings would be held in the Civic Offices, Euclid Street unless an alternative venue was volunteered.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report summary

Religious education: realising the potential

Religious education (RE) should make a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world.

The past 10 years have seen some improvements in RE in schools. More pupils recognise its value and nearly two thirds of them left school with an accredited qualification in the subject in 2012. The range and quality of resources to support teaching in this subject are much better than they were.

However, evidence from the majority of schools visited for this survey shows that the subject's potential is still not being realised fully. Many pupils leave school with scant subject knowledge and understanding. Moreover, RE teaching often fails to challenge and extend pupils' ability to explore fundamental questions about human life, religion and belief.

Ofsted's previous report on RE in 2010, *Transforming religious education*, highlighted key barriers to better RE and made recommendations about how these should be overcome. The current survey found that not enough has been done since 2010.

The structures that underpin the local determination of the RE curriculum have failed to keep pace with changes in the wider educational world. As a result, many local authorities are struggling to fulfil their responsibility to promote high-quality religious education. In addition, other changes to education policy, such as the introduction in 2010 of the English Baccalaureate (the EBacc), have led to a decline in RE provision in some schools.

Part A of this report discusses eight major areas of concern:

- low standards
- weak teaching

- problems in developing a curriculum for RE
- confusion about the purpose of RE
- weak leadership and management
- weaknesses in examination provision at Key Stage 4
- gaps in training
- the impact of recent changes in education policy.

Part B of this report provides examples of effective practice in using enquiry as a basis for improving pupils' learning, high-quality leadership and management in primary and secondary schools, and effective approaches in special schools. Overall, however, such good practice is not sufficiently widespread.

The report is based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012. It also draws on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of standing advisory councils on religious education (SACREs) and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. The sample of schools did not include voluntary aided schools or academies with a religious designation, for which separate inspection arrangements exist.

Key findings

- Weaknesses in provision for RE meant that too many pupils were leaving school with low levels of subject knowledge and understanding.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 90 primary schools visited were less than good in six in 10 schools.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 91 secondary schools visited were only good or better in just under half of the schools. The picture was stronger at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form than at Key Stage 3.
- Most of the GCSE teaching seen failed to secure the core aim of the examination specifications: that is, to enable pupils 'to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion'.
- The provision made for GCSE in the majority of the secondary schools surveyed failed to provide enough curriculum time for pupils to extend and deepen their learning sufficiently.
- The teaching of RE in primary schools was not good enough because of weaknesses in teachers' understanding of the subject, a lack of emphasis on subject knowledge, poor and fragmented curriculum planning, very weak assessment, ineffective monitoring and teachers' limited access to effective training.

- The way in which RE was provided in many of the primary schools visited had the effect of isolating the subject from the rest of the curriculum. It led to low-level learning and missed opportunities to support pupils' learning more widely, for example, in literacy.
- The quality of teaching in the secondary schools visited was rarely outstanding and was less than good in around half of the lessons seen. Common weaknesses included: insufficient focus on subject knowledge; an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies that focused simply on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations; insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect and work independently; and over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with a limited focus on promoting effective learning.
- Although the proportion of pupils taking GCSE and GCE examinations in RE remains high, in 2011 nearly 250 schools and academies did not enter any pupils for an accredited qualification in GCSE.
- Around half of the secondary schools visited in 2011 and 2012 had changed, or were planning to change, their curriculum provision for RE in response to changes in education policy. The impact of these changes varied but it was rarely being monitored carefully.
- Assessment in RE remained a major weakness in the schools visited. It was inadequate in a fifth of the secondary schools and a third of the primary schools. Many teachers were confused about how to judge how well pupils were doing in RE.
- Access to high-quality RE training for teachers was poor. Training had a positive impact on improving provision in only a third of the schools visited; its impact was poor in a further third. Many of the schools surveyed said that support from their local authority and SACRE had diminished.
- Leadership and management of RE were good or better in half the schools visited; however, weaknesses were widespread in monitoring provision for RE and in planning to tackle the areas identified for improvement.
- The effectiveness of the current statutory arrangements for RE varies considerably. Recent changes in education policy are having a negative impact on the provision for RE in some schools and on the capacity of local authorities and SACREs to carry out their statutory responsibilities to monitor and support it.

Main report published 6 October 2013
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130068

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130068.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 130068



Religious education: realising the potential

Religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. It also plays a key role in promoting social cohesion and the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. However, the potential of RE was not being realised fully in the majority of the schools surveyed for this report.

The report identifies barriers to better RE and suggests ways in which the subject might be improved. The report is written for all those who teach RE, for those who lead the subject, and for headteachers of primary and secondary schools.

Age group: 5–18

Published: October 2013

Reference no: 130068

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130068.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 130068

© Crown copyright 2013



Contents

Executive summary	4
Key findings	5
Recommendations	7
Part A: Religious education in schools – the eight key challenges	8
Low standards	8
Weaknesses in teaching	9
Curriculum problems	12
A confused sense of purpose	14
Limitations in leadership and management	15
Weaknesses in examination provision at Key Stage 4	17
Gaps in training	18
Impact of recent education policy changes on RE in schools	19
Part B: Learning from the best	23
Placing enquiry at the heart of learning	23
High-quality leadership and management in primary schools	27
Forward-thinking leadership and management in secondary schools	31
Effective RE in special schools	34
Notes	37
The survey	37
Examination data	37
Summary of inspection data	38
Further information	39
Ofsted publications	39
Other publications	39
Annex A: Context and recent developments in religious education	40
Annex B: Providers visited	43

Executive summary

Religious education (RE) should make a major contribution to the education of children and young people. At its best, it is intellectually challenging and personally enriching. It helps young people develop beliefs and values, and promotes the virtues of respect and empathy, which are important in our diverse society. It fosters civilised debate and reasoned argument, and helps pupils to understand the place of religion and belief in the modern world.

The past 10 years have seen some improvements in RE in schools. More pupils recognise its value and nearly two thirds of them left school with an accredited qualification in the subject in 2012. The range and quality of resources to support teaching in this subject are much better than they were.

However, evidence from the majority of schools visited for this survey shows that the subject's potential is still not being realised fully. Many pupils leave school with scant subject knowledge and understanding. Moreover, RE teaching often fails to challenge and extend pupils' ability to explore fundamental questions about human life, religion and belief.

Ofsted's previous report on RE in 2010, *Transforming religious education*, highlighted key barriers to better RE and made recommendations about how these should be overcome. The current survey found that not enough has been done since 2010.

The structures that underpin the local determination of the RE curriculum have failed to keep pace with changes in the wider educational world. As a result, many local authorities are struggling to fulfil their responsibility to promote high-quality religious education. In addition, other changes to education policy, such as the introduction in 2010 of the English Baccalaureate (the EBacc), have led to a decline in RE provision in some schools.¹

Part A of this report discusses eight major areas of concern:

- low standards
- weak teaching
- problems in developing a curriculum for RE
- confusion about the purpose of RE
- weak leadership and management
- weaknesses in examination provision at Key Stage 4

¹ The DfE describes the EBacc as follows: 'The English Baccalaureate... is not a qualification in itself. The measure recognises where pupils have secured a C grade or better across a core of academic subjects – English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences and a language.' For further information, see:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/englishbac/a0075975/the-english-baccalaureate.

- gaps in training
- the impact of recent changes in education policy.

Part B of this report provides examples of effective practice in using enquiry as a basis for improving pupils' learning, high-quality leadership and management in primary and secondary schools, and effective approaches in special schools. Overall, however, such good practice is not sufficiently widespread.

The report is based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012.² It also draws on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of standing advisory councils on religious education (SACREs)³ and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. The sample of schools did not include voluntary aided schools or academies with a religious designation, for which separate inspection arrangements exist.

Key findings

- Weaknesses in provision for RE meant that too many pupils were leaving school with low levels of subject knowledge and understanding.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 90 primary schools visited were less than good in six in 10 schools.
- Achievement and teaching in RE in the 91 secondary schools visited were only good or better in just under half of the schools. The picture was stronger at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form than at Key Stage 3.
- Most of the GCSE teaching seen failed to secure the core aim of the examination specifications: that is, to enable pupils 'to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion'.
- The provision made for GCSE in the majority of the secondary schools surveyed failed to provide enough curriculum time for pupils to extend and deepen their learning sufficiently.
- The teaching of RE in primary schools was not good enough because of weaknesses in teachers' understanding of the subject, a lack of emphasis on subject knowledge, poor and fragmented curriculum planning, very weak assessment, ineffective monitoring and teachers' limited access to effective training.
- The way in which RE was provided in many of the primary schools visited had the effect of isolating the subject from the rest of the curriculum. It led to low-level

² For details of the schools visited, see Annex B.

³ Every local authority must set up a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE) to advise the authority on matters connected with RE.

learning and missed opportunities to support pupils' learning more widely, for example, in literacy.

- The quality of teaching in the secondary schools visited was rarely outstanding and was less than good in around half of the lessons seen. Common weaknesses included: insufficient focus on subject knowledge; an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies that focused simply on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations; insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect and work independently; and over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with a limited focus on promoting effective learning.
- Although the proportion of pupils taking GCSE and GCE examinations in RE remains high, in 2011 nearly 250 schools and academies did not enter any pupils for an accredited qualification in GCSE.
- Around half of the secondary schools visited in 2011 and 2012 had changed, or were planning to change, their curriculum provision for RE in response to changes in education policy. The impact of these changes varied but it was rarely being monitored carefully.
- Assessment in RE remained a major weakness in the schools visited. It was inadequate in a fifth of the secondary schools and a third of the primary schools. Many teachers were confused about how to judge how well pupils were doing in RE.
- Access to high-quality RE training for teachers was poor. Training had a positive impact on improving provision in only a third of the schools visited; its impact was poor in a further third. Many of the schools surveyed said that support from their local authority and SACRE had diminished.
- Leadership and management of RE were good or better in half the schools visited; however, weaknesses were widespread in monitoring provision for RE and in planning to tackle the areas identified for improvement.
- The effectiveness of the current statutory arrangements for RE varies considerably. Recent changes in education policy are having a negative impact on the provision for RE in some schools and on the capacity of local authorities and SACREs to carry out their statutory responsibilities to monitor and support it.

Recommendations

The Department for Education (DfE) should:

- review the current statutory arrangements for RE in relation to the principle of local determination to ensure these keep pace with wider changes in education policy, and revise or strengthen these arrangements as appropriate
- ensure that the Key Stage 4 examination specifications for RE promote better learning by focusing more strongly on deepening and extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
- ensure that the provision for religious education is monitored more closely, particularly in secondary schools.

The DfE should work in partnership with the professional associations for RE to:

- clarify the aims and purposes of RE and explore how these might be translated into high-quality planning, teaching and assessment
- improve and coordinate the provision for training in RE, both nationally and locally.

Local authorities, in partnership with SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences, should:

- ensure that sufficient resources are available for SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences to carry out their statutory functions with regard to RE and provide schools with high-quality guidance and support
- review their expectations about arrangements for RE, particularly at Key Stage 4, to ensure that schools have sufficient flexibility to match their provision more effectively to pupils' needs
- work in partnership with local schools and academies to build supportive networks to share best practice.

All schools should:

- ensure that learning in RE has a stronger focus on deepening pupils' understanding of the nature, diversity and impact of religion and belief in the contemporary world
- improve lesson planning so that teaching has a clear and straightforward focus on what pupils need to learn and engages their interest.

Primary schools should:

- raise the status of RE in the curriculum and strengthen the quality of subject leadership by improving the arrangements for developing teachers' subject expertise, sharing good practice, and monitoring the quality of the curriculum and teaching

- improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum to increase opportunities for pupils to work independently, make links with other subjects and tackle more challenging tasks.

Secondary schools should:

- ensure that the teaching of RE at GCSE level secures good opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning, and extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
- ensure that the overall curriculum provision for RE is challenging and has greater coherence and continuity
- improve their monitoring of RE to ensure that any changes in provision are carefully evaluated in terms of their impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

Part A: Religious education in schools – the eight key challenges

Low standards

Too many pupils leave school with scant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief.

1. In three fifths of the lessons seen, both in primary schools and throughout Key Stage 3, a key weakness was the superficial nature of pupils' subject knowledge and understanding. While pupils had a range of basic factual information about religions, their deeper understanding of the world of religion and belief was weak. For example, as pupils moved through primary and secondary education, inspectors noted that most pupils had had insufficient opportunity to develop:
 - an ability to offer informed responses to a range of profound religious, philosophical or ethical questions
 - an understanding of the way in which the beliefs, practices, values and ways of life of specific religions and non-religious world views are linked
 - an understanding and interpretation of the distinctive nature of religious language
 - a deepening understanding of the diverse nature of religion and belief in the contemporary world
 - a more sophisticated understanding of the impact, both positive and negative, that religion and belief can have on individuals and society.
2. The heavy focus on philosophical, social and moral issues in GCSE and GCE A-level RE meant that, in most of the schools visited, pupils at Key Stage 4 or in the sixth form did not redress this weakness in subject knowledge. As a result, too many pupils were leaving school with a very low level of religious literacy.

3. The weaknesses in pupils' achievement that were highlighted in the 2010 report were also evident in the schools visited for this survey.
 - Pupils rarely developed their skills of enquiry into religion: to ask more pertinent and challenging questions; to gather, interpret and analyse information; and to draw conclusions and evaluate issues using good reasoning.
 - Pupils' understanding was fragmented and they made few connections between different aspects of their learning in RE.
 - Evidence that pupils were making any meaningful links between 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion was very limited.
4. The 2010 report highlighted the concern that too many pupils were leaving school with a very limited understanding of Christianity. Many of the schools visited for the previous report 'did not pay sufficient attention to the progressive and systematic investigation of the core beliefs of Christianity'. The development of this understanding remains one of the weakest aspects of achievement. The current survey included a specific focus on the teaching of Christianity in 30 of the primary schools inspected, and the evidence suggests this is still a major concern. Inspectors judged pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity to be good or outstanding in only five of the schools. It was judged to be inadequate in 10 of them, making teaching about Christianity one of the weakest aspects of RE provision.
5. The lack of knowledge and understanding of religion inhibited pupils in considering how the study of religion and belief might have implications for exploring purpose, meaning and value in their own lives.
6. Local authorities are required by law to produce an agreed syllabus for RE for their schools. A key objective of many agreed syllabuses is to foster pupils' ability to 'learn from' their study of religion and belief. This includes reflecting on and responding to their own and others' experiences in the light of their learning about religion and belief. A key indicator of pupils' success in meeting this objective is that they can bring a deepening subject knowledge and understanding to their reflections. Where this depth was lacking, the principle that pupils should 'learn from' religion and belief was impoverished.

Weaknesses in teaching

Too much RE teaching lacks challenge and does not extend pupils' thinking sufficiently.

7. RE teaching in primary schools was less than good in six in 10 schools visited because of:
 - weaknesses in teachers' understanding of the subject
 - poor and fragmented curriculum planning

- weak assessment
 - ineffective monitoring
 - limited access to effective training.
8. In the secondary schools visited, the quality of teaching was rarely outstanding and, at Key Stage 3, was less than good in around half of the lessons observed. Common weaknesses included:
- an over-emphasis on a limited range of teaching strategies, which focused mainly on preparing pupils for assessments or examinations
 - limited opportunities for pupils to reflect and work independently
 - over-structured and bureaucratic lesson planning with insufficient stress on promoting effective learning.
9. The previous report highlighted the skills of enquiry as key to improving teaching in RE. Inspectors saw some evidence that enquiry was being used more, but the teachers using such approaches were not always aware of their purpose.
10. Inspectors noted a number of factors that inhibited the use of enquiry in enhancing pupils' learning.
- **Not capitalising on a good start.** Elements of enquiry were used at the start of a topic but were not sustained. For example, pupils were asked to identify questions but teachers rarely extended these into a genuine investigation.
 - **Rushing too quickly to 'learn from' religion.** Teachers had gained the impression that every lesson should include some element of personal reflection, so the opportunity to sustain the enquiry was limited by rushing pupils towards a personal response before they had investigated it properly.
 - **Not taking risks.** Teachers were unwilling to open up enquiry in case pupils asked challenging or controversial questions with which they felt ill-equipped to deal.
 - **Not being clear enough about the focus of the enquiry.** Teachers adopted an enquiry approach but did not intervene to make sure that the pupils maintained a focus on the key questions driving the enquiry.
 - **Not giving pupils enough time to process their findings and extend their enquiry.** Teachers provided opportunities for gathering and summarising factual information but then moved the pupils quickly to a superficial summary instead of extending and deepening their understanding of the material.
 - **Limiting enquiry by directing pupils to a 'happy end'.** Teachers signalled to pupils that they wanted a positive 'right answer' about the value

of religion, limiting the opportunity to explore more controversial possibilities.

- **Focusing too much on the product of the enquiry rather than the process.** Teachers drew attention to the way in which the pupils presented what they had found out rather than extending the enquiry into more challenging areas of evaluation and reflection.
11. In the secondary schools visited inspectors identified a wider range of factors that limited the effectiveness of teaching, including the following.
- **Learning objectives communicated mechanistically.** At the beginning of many of the RE lessons observed, teachers expected the pupils to copy the objectives for the lesson into their books. Too often this process was highly formulaic and took up too much time. Rather than opening up the 'story' of the learning, it reduced pupils' interest. Frequently, teachers did not tell the pupils how the lesson would develop. In the best practice, however, the teacher and pupils discussed what the lesson would be about and where it was leading.
 - **Over-complex lesson planning.** Many teachers used a generic form for lesson planning. While seeking consistency is understandable, many of the plans seen required teachers to refer to a large number of cross-curricular and whole-school issues. Because teachers were more anxious to complete the plan than concentrate on securing high-quality RE learning, the focus on RE was often sacrificed. One lesson plan seen, for example, required teachers to provide information on: reading and literacy strategies, including key words and literacy objectives; numeracy skills; links to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; higher-order Bloom's questions; and progress indicators.
 - **Over-use of assessment levels to review progress in lessons at the expense of genuine reflection on learning.** A common weakness, allied to the mechanistic use of learning objectives, was teachers' constant requests to pupils to review their progress by referring to RE levels or sub-levels of attainment, rather than asking them to reflect on and discuss whether they had gained a deeper insight into the topic. Assessment for learning became formulaic: simply the checking of progress against the level descriptions.
 - **Learning driven by too many tasks.** The most recent Ofsted report on English, *Moving English forward*, noted that: 'some teachers appear to believe that the more activities they can cram into the lesson, the more effective it will be'.⁴ This was also common in many RE lessons seen. Superficially, pupils were active throughout the lesson, but the tasks did not build their understanding progressively. The purpose of, and links between, tasks were often not made clear.

⁴ *Moving English forward* (110118), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110118.

- **Narrow use of digital technology.** Teachers were using digital technology increasingly, especially presentation slides. While sometimes this technology was used effectively to engage and focus pupils, too often it left pupils little scope to think for themselves. In many cases the presentation slides defined the outcome of the lesson, leaving little or no opportunity for pupils to explore their own ideas or questions independently: all the thinking had already been done for them. Generally, technology in secondary schools was limited to the teacher's use, with little use of it by the pupils for research or presentation.
- **Too much unstructured discussion and group work.** Providing opportunities for discussion was a common feature of many of the RE lessons seen. However, too often the tendency was to allow any opinion or viewpoint to stand unopposed, reinforcing a view among pupils that, in matters related to religion or morality, one opinion was as valid as any other. There was insufficient focus on exploring weaker or stronger lines of argument. It was rare to find teachers establishing a climate in which pupils recognised that their opinions needed to be underpinned by good reasoning, and that some points of view were better supported and argued for than others.

Curriculum problems

Weaknesses in the curriculum limited the effectiveness of RE

12. A recurring theme from the survey visits was that many subject leaders found it difficult to develop a curriculum for RE that was effective in securing progression, continuity, coherence, breadth and balance in pupils' learning.
13. The quality of the curriculum was less than good in nearly two thirds of the primary schools visited. It was good or better in just under two fifths of the secondary schools and inadequate in 11.
14. Almost half of the primary schools visited had tried to develop new approaches towards RE, often through a more creative approach to curriculum planning that was also being developed to teach other subjects, such as history or geography. However, for a number of reasons, headteachers and subject leaders found it difficult to incorporate RE within this approach. They rarely chose RE content to drive a topic and the subject was therefore always trying to fit in with the other subjects. In addition, the schools often found it difficult to incorporate the prescription of the locally agreed syllabus within their more integrated curriculum.
15. The reasons for the lack of progress in improving the RE curriculum in primary schools included the following.
 - **Providing RE teaching through short topics led to fragmented rather than sustained learning.** This was reported in detail in the 2010 report and it remains a factor that inhibited progress in improving the

primary RE curriculum. The majority of the primary schools visited organised RE in six half-termly units a year, taught in weekly 45-minute or 60-minute sessions. Few schools could explain clearly why they had adopted this provision.

- **The selection and sequencing of RE topics often lacked a clear rationale.** Many of the primary schools visited did not use clear criteria when planning the RE curriculum. They frequently relied on published schemes of work, but these varied in quality and were not always easy to understand. Teachers were rarely able to explain how any unit of work built on previous learning. The narrow content of too many units failed to engage pupils in broader key ideas or questions. It was common for older pupils to say that they were repeating work they had done previously. Greater challenge in the learning was not obvious.
- **Many RE topics lacked a clear structure.** Weak planning commonly meant units of work lacked coherence. This usually reflected the lack of subject expertise of those involved in planning or the tendency for teachers to choose tasks at random from the scheme of work. It often involved confusion about how to link and integrate 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion.
- **Very little thought was given to assessment when planning the curriculum.** In the schools where the RE curriculum was not good enough, it was rare to find any consideration of how pupils' progress would be assessed. As a result, teachers were often unclear about the level of challenge they needed to provide and how this might extend pupils' earlier learning.
- **RE was sometimes confused with the school's wider contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Some schools still confused RE with other subjects or aspects. It was not uncommon, for example, to find schools presenting evidence in RE portfolios about pupils 'learning from' religion that included work from the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, charity activities, visits to old people's homes, Christmas pantomimes or literacy work on topics such as 'feelings'. While these were worthwhile activities, they were not evidence of 'learning from' religion.
- **Many agreed syllabuses and guidance did not provide effective models of curriculum planning.** Some recent agreed syllabuses and their accompanying guidance provided examples of good practice in using enquiry, but these were not sufficiently widespread and it was taking time for them to have an impact. While some new syllabuses aspired towards an enquiry-based approach, they lacked the necessary detail and guidance. Some examples of planning that accompanied agreed syllabuses were poor, often compounding teachers' confusion about RE.

16. In the secondary schools, weaknesses in the curriculum often related to a lack of clarity about the purpose of the subject at Key Stage 3. A persistent problem

was that planned work was not sufficiently challenging. Too often it failed to capitalise on the higher levels of thinking that pupils can bring to their learning from Key Stage 2. Pupils frequently commented that the work they did when studying religions was not challenging enough.

17. In order to tackle this, an increasing number of departments visited were moving towards a Key Stage 3 curriculum which concentrated more heavily on GCSE-style, 'issues-based', social, moral or philosophical topics such as 'Rights and Responsibilities' or 'The Environment'. However, these changes often resulted in a lack of balance and continuity in the overall secondary RE curriculum. In practice, it meant that pupils were not developing a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. As a result, when they came to try to apply religious perspectives to various moral or social issues they did not have the depth of knowledge they needed.
18. Many RE subject leaders to whom inspectors spoke commented that they did not have enough guidance about ways of developing more challenging topics about religion and belief. Too often they moved to study social and ethical issues because they could not see a way of making the direct study of religion challenging and engaging. It was rare to find topics related to, for example, the study of deeper aspects of religious belief, the controversial nature of religion, or the changing patterns of religion and belief in the contemporary world.

A confused sense of purpose

Confusion about the purpose and aims of RE had a negative impact on the quality of teaching, curriculum planning and the effectiveness of assessment.

19. The 2010 report highlighted that a key factor limiting the effectiveness of RE teaching was many teachers' uncertainty about the rationale for, and the aims and purposes of, RE. In particular, the report noted the need to produce further guidance for teachers about defining attainment and progress in RE, and how to structure learning and assessment.
20. The current survey found further evidence of teachers' confusion about what they were trying to achieve in RE and how to translate this into effective planning, teaching and assessment. In many of the schools visited, the subject was increasingly losing touch with the idea that RE should be primarily concerned with helping pupils to make sense of the world of religion and belief.
21. The confusion about the purpose of RE is exemplified in a number of ways.
 - Many primary teachers, including subject leaders, were finding it difficult to separate RE from the more general, whole-school promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Many schools showed a strong tendency to detach learning in RE from the more in-depth study of religion and belief. Too often teachers thought they

could bring depth to the pupils' learning by inviting them to reflect on or write introspectively about their own experience rather than rigorously investigate and evaluate religion and belief.

- In the primary schools visited, considerable weaknesses in teaching about Christianity frequently stemmed from a lack of clarity about the purpose of the subject. For example, Christian stories, particularly miracles, were often used to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience without any opportunity to investigate the stories' significance within the religion itself.
 - Much GCSE and, increasingly, Key Stage 3 work focused primarily on the study of philosophical, moral and social issues. The work lacked any significant development of pupils' understanding of religion and belief – and frequently distorted it.
22. Assessment of RE was inadequate in a third of the primary schools and a fifth of the secondary schools visited. A key reason for this was a lack of clarity about defining attainment and progress in RE. Widespread misunderstanding of the levels of attainment led to poor practice in assessing pupils' progress.
23. Inspectors found that the rationale for RE in much of the guidance teachers were using lacked coherence and was too complex or blurred. A key factor preventing RE from realising its potential was the tension between, on the one hand, the academic goal of extending and deepening pupils' ability to make sense of religion and belief and, on the other, the wider goal of contributing towards their overall personal development. Teachers will struggle to plan and teach the subject effectively while this tension remains unresolved.
24. There is still an urgent need to clarify the purpose of RE for teachers and to promote this through straightforward guidance. Such guidance should set out, clearly and coherently, the subject's rationale, its core aims, the content to be studied, appropriate approaches to learning, and the way in which attainment and progress are defined.

Limitations in leadership and management

The leadership and management of RE are not strong enough to secure the improvements that are needed.

25. The effectiveness of the leadership of RE was a crucial factor affecting standards and the quality of provision. However, inspectors also found that too many schools were not giving a high enough priority to RE and this was having an impact on the progress that pupils were making.
26. Many schools showed some strengths in the leadership of RE. Subject leaders often had a high level of commitment and many headteachers, notably in primary schools, saw RE as playing a key role in promoting their school's values. However, too often, this aspiration was not translated into high-quality provision. In practice, RE often had a very low priority, and its provision and effectiveness were not carefully monitored and improved.

27. The low priority given to RE in many of the primary schools visited was reflected in a variety of ways.
 - Monitoring of the quality of teaching was often superficial and did not focus sufficiently on the quality of the pupils' learning.
 - RE lessons were often squeezed out by other curriculum areas. It was not uncommon for inspectors to find long gaps in pupils' RE books when no work had been done. However, monitoring of the teaching of RE frequently did not identify or tackle this problem.
 - Very little provision was made for staff training in RE or for subject leaders to work alongside colleagues to develop their practice.
 - In over half of the schools visited, some or all of the RE was taught by someone other than the class teacher.
 - Subject leaders often had no clear idea about the relative strengths and weaknesses of pupils' progress in RE. As a result, improvement plans for RE rarely focused on raising standards.
 - RE was often isolated from developments in the wider curriculum.
28. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of RE in many of the secondary schools visited was also a concern. Inspectors found too much variability in the nature, quality and effectiveness of their provision for RE. The overall allocation of time for RE and the deployment of staff and resources to the subject were being reduced in around a quarter of the schools visited. This is considered in more detail later in the report.
29. There were also weaknesses in the quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning. There was a more positive picture of subject leaders' use of data to track pupils' progress at Key Stage 4; most of the schools visited had detailed evidence about performance at GCSE. However, in most cases, these data were not being analysed or used effectively; very often the subject leader had not had enough guidance in interpreting the information. There was little effective use of data to evaluate the quality of provision at Key Stage 3.
30. Improvement planning often focused on identifying ways of boosting the examination results of specific groups of pupils at GCSE. However, it failed to identify more fundamental problems in teaching and the curriculum that needed to be tackled in order to improve provision and raise standards.
31. A standard model for timetabling RE within the curriculum of secondary schools no longer existed: schools were exploring a variety of models. However, few of the schools had a clear rationale for the changes they made in their provision or had a robust programme of monitoring to evaluate the impact of the changes on pupils' progress and attainment.

Weaknesses in examination provision at Key Stage 4

Most GCSE teaching in RE failed to achieve the core aim of the examination specifications, that is, to enable pupils to 'adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion'.

32. The 2010 report highlighted concerns that the GCSE specifications and examinations were not providing a good enough platform for extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion. The findings of this survey confirm that this remains a significant concern.
33. Many of the GCSE specifications in religious studies focus heavily on the study of philosophical, moral and social issues, with pupils being expected to apply religious perspectives to them. This approach frequently leads pupils to a superficial and often distorted understanding of religion. In the schools visited, work related to investigating religions and beliefs was often too easy. One pupil expressed a common view: 'We don't really need to understand the fundamental beliefs and practices of a religion in order to take this exam; we just have to repeat what the religion teaches about various issues.'
34. Often, pupils' understanding was not only superficial but involved a distorted understanding of religious life. While pupils could usually identify, for example, that Catholics and Protestants had different views about a range of ethical issues, they could rarely explain why these differences existed, discuss how a member of each denomination would approach a moral decision, or describe the diversity within the traditions.
35. Teaching in many of the GCSE lessons observed placed too much emphasis on ways of passing the examination rather than focusing on extending pupils' learning about religion and belief. Two related factors contributed to this.
 - Curriculum provision for GCSE in many of the schools left insufficient time to deepen pupils' understanding of the subject. A number of the schools visited had recently switched to providing a full-course qualification in the time they had previously allocated to a short course.
 - Many course specifications and examination questions encourage formulaic learning because of the superficial connections pupils are forced to make between religious perspectives and philosophical, ethical or social issues.
36. The current reforms to qualifications at Key Stage 4 provide an opportunity to reshape the examination specifications for RE to ensure they provide a better, more rigorous basis for extending and deepening pupils' subject knowledge and understanding. Schools need to consider carefully the time they allocate to examination study in RE to protect this important aim.

Gaps in training

The quality of specialist expertise and access to training to support teachers' professional development in RE are often weak.

37. The 2010 report highlighted concerns about the low level of subject expertise and the limited training opportunities in RE in many of the schools surveyed. The evidence from this survey indicates that access to high-quality training in RE is a continuing – and growing – concern. Training had a positive impact on improving provision in just over a quarter of the schools surveyed, and was inadequate in about a third.
38. The high proportion of non-specialist teaching of RE in secondary schools remains a problem. In around a third of the schools visited, a lack of subject expertise limited the effectiveness of the teaching of RE.
39. The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) survey of RE in secondary schools, carried out in July 2012, found a quarter of the 625 schools responding to its survey reported a decline in the level of specialist RE staffing.⁵ It also found that, in nearly half of the schools that responded, at least one in 10, and in some cases one in five, RE lessons were taught by teachers whose main time was spent in another curriculum area. The most recent DfE workforce survey also reported that only 73% of RE lessons in secondary schools were taught by teachers with a subject-related post-A-level qualification, compared with 87% in history and 84% in geography.⁶
40. In many of the primary schools visited, the senior leadership or RE subject leader acknowledged that the level of subject expertise among the staff was generally weak. Many of the teachers to whom inspectors spoke did not feel confident about teaching RE. They were often worried they might 'say the wrong thing' or were unsure about what they were trying to achieve in RE. Discussion with newly qualified or recently qualified primary teachers confirmed that very few had had any significant RE training during their initial training and sometimes had had little opportunity to teach RE in their placement schools.
41. Some primary headteachers openly acknowledged that because of a lack of confidence about RE, some staff preferred to take their planning, preparation and assessment time during these lessons, handing responsibility for the subject to a qualified teaching assistant or supply teacher.

⁵ *An analysis of a survey of teachers on the impact of the EBacc on student opportunity to study GCSE RS*, NATRE, 2012; www.natre.org.uk/free.php.

⁶ Full data can be found in the Statistical First Release (see table 14) ; www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s001062/index.shtml.

42. The evidence indicates a link between access to training in RE and the overall effectiveness of the subject, particularly in primary schools. In the majority of cases, this was directly linked to the capacity of the local authority to provide such training and support. In nearly every case where such support was not available, it had a direct and negative impact on the effectiveness of the teaching and subject leadership. RE was generally better where the locally agreed syllabus was well conceived with clear accompanying guidance, but too often the capacity of local authorities to provide this support was diminishing.
43. These findings about weaknesses in access to training to support teachers of RE are reflected in the conclusions of the 2013 report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE. Its report, *RE: the truth unmasked*, noted:
- ‘in nearly 40% of schools RE teachers have inadequate access to continuing professional development.’⁷

Impact of recent education policy changes on RE in schools

Recent changes in education policy have significant negative implications for the provision and support of RE.

44. Since 2011, a range of RE professional associations including the RE Council for England and Wales (REC), National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE), the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE), and the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) have expressed concerns to Ofsted that recent changes in education policy have been having a negative impact on the provision of and support for RE, both nationally and locally. These concerns have been reinforced by the 2013 APPG report which concluded:

RE has been the unintended victim of a combination of major policy changes rather than the subject of a deliberate attack. Nevertheless, the combined impact of so many severe setbacks in such a short time has been to convey the message that, even though it is a statutory subject, RE is of less value than other subjects.

45. The policies referred to have included:
- the decisions to exclude RE from the list of EBacc subjects and to remove short courses from the headline measures of school performance
 - the reduction in teacher training places for RE and, in 2013, the withdrawal of bursaries for RE trainee teachers

⁷ The All Party Parliamentary Group on Education, *RE: the truth unmasked – the supply of and support for religious education teachers*, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013; <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>.

- the way in which the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and SACREs for RE have not kept pace with wider changes: these include the expansion of the academies programme and reductions in local government spending
 - the decision not to fund an RE subject review in England to run in parallel with the DfE review of the National Curriculum and the loss of publicly funded national support for curriculum development work in the subject.
46. The professional associations and the APPG cited a range of evidence to support their concerns that these changes were having a considerable and detrimental impact on RE. For example, the 2012 NATRE survey reported widespread concerns about secondary schools that were reducing GCSE provision, failing to meet their statutory responsibilities for the subject, and reducing curriculum time and staffing for RE.⁸
47. Ofsted's current survey of RE and an analysis of recent GCSE data have substantiated some of these concerns, although the evidence is not always conclusive, partly because of the relatively small sample of schools visited. In addition, Ofsted does not directly monitor the work of SACREs and local authorities in relation to RE. However, in around half of the secondary schools visited between January 2011 and July 2012 headteachers described pressures to reduce provision for RE because of what they perceived were the demands of recent changes in education policy.
48. In relation to the exclusion of RE from the list of EBacc subjects and the removal of short courses from the headline measures of school performance, it is too early to come to a definitive conclusion about their impact on GCSE entries. Ofsted's survey evidence is inconclusive. However, the overall numbers entered for a GCSE qualification in religious studies in England fell from around 427,000 in 2012 to 390,000 in 2013. There has also been a significant shift away from short-course to full-course GCSE. In 2013 full-course GCSE numbers in England rose by around 10% in 2013 to nearly 240,000, but short-course numbers fell by almost 30% to 150,000.
49. There is evidence, however, of a more significant reduction in the provision for RE in some schools. The headteachers of these schools cited decisions about the EBacc and short-course GCSEs as reasons for the changes they were making.
- In school A, pupils taking the full range of EBacc subjects were no longer taught any RE; this failure to meet statutory requirements was coupled with reduced staffing for RE. The result was that more pupils in Key Stage 3 were taught RE by non-specialists and the quality of the teaching had declined.

⁸ *An analysis of a survey of teachers on the impact of the EBacc on student opportunity to study GCSE RS*, NATRE, 2012; <http://www.natre.org.uk/free.php>.

- In school B, RE was no longer a timetabled subject. It had been replaced by the tracking of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the curriculum.
 - In school C, provision for RE at Key Stage 4 had been reduced by two thirds and pupils could no longer take a full-course GCSE as an option.
 - In school D, RE at Key Stage 4 had been removed from the curriculum and replaced by termly RE conferences. Planned visits to places of worship in Years 8 and 9 had been dropped because pupils would no longer be taking RE at GCSE level.
 - Throughout school E, RE was no longer taught by specialists; instead it was taught by tutors in tutorial time, along with PSHE and citizenship, with a negative impact on the quality of the pupils' learning.
50. In addition, a growing number of schools were adjusting their curriculum to increase the number of pupils taking a full-course GCSE, but without considering the impact on the pupils' learning and the overall balance of the RE curriculum, as in the following examples.
- In some schools pupils were being prepared for the full-course GCSE in the time previously given to a short course. This time was insufficient to deepen and extend pupils' subject knowledge and understanding.
 - Other schools were starting GCSE early – in Year 8, in one school. This gave insufficient time for the subject at Key Stage 3, meaning that many of the pupils did not have the necessary maturity and basic subject knowledge to engage effectively with some of the challenging issues at GCSE level.
51. The capacity and effectiveness of SACREs to undertake their pivotal role in determining, supporting and monitoring RE is under increasing pressure in many local authorities.
52. The successful expansion of the academies programme means that a growing number of schools are moving outside local authority control and are therefore no longer required to follow the locally agreed syllabus. Some authorities now have very few, if any, secondary schools but they are still required to resource and produce a locally agreed syllabus for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.
53. Many SACRE members have reported deterioration in the quality of professional expertise they receive as well as declining financial support from their local authority. The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) reports that financial pressures make it increasingly difficult for many SACREs to find the expertise and resources to fulfil their statutory duties for RE effectively. A 2012 survey by NASACRE found that an increasing number of SACREs described reduced professional development opportunities in RE, a loss of professional advice and consultant posts for RE in local authorities, and a reduced number of advanced

skills teachers for the subject. These were among the major challenges facing the SACREs.⁹

54. In addition, the loss of publicly funded national support for curriculum development work in RE has further isolated RE from wider changes in education and reduced the support for SACREs in addressing the need for curriculum development work highlighted in the previous Ofsted report.
55. The reduced capacity of SACREs was reflected in the increasing difficulties faced by many of the schools visited in obtaining guidance and support from their SACRE. Schools in a number of local authorities reported that they had had no support or guidance for implementing their new agreed syllabus.
56. The 2013 APPG report found, similarly:

The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions and the impact of the academisation programme.¹⁰

57. Ofsted's 2010 report recommended a review of the current legal arrangements to ensure that they provided the best basis for securing high-quality RE. In particular, the report questioned whether the principle of local determination was working effectively. It also recommended that if the current arrangements were maintained, stronger mechanisms should be established for supporting local authorities and SACREs, and holding them to account for their work in relation to RE.
58. The DfE has reaffirmed its policy that RE is locally determined, but has taken no specific action in relation to the 2010 recommendations. However, the gulf between local authorities that support and monitor RE effectively and those that find this role impossible continues to widen. Whether local determination still provides the best basis for improving the quality of RE in schools should therefore be reviewed urgently.

⁹ NASACRE survey of local authority support for SACREs, 2012; www.nasacre.org.uk/media/file/NASACRE_QtoS_apl11.pdf.

¹⁰ The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Education, *RE: the truth unmasked – the supply of and support for religious education teachers*, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013; <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>.

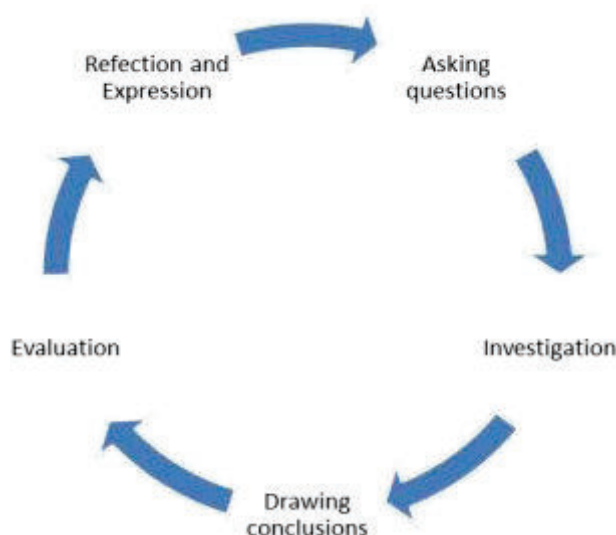
Part B: Learning from the best

59. Underlying the eight challenges in Part A of this report is the fundamental need to improve the teaching, curriculum and leadership of RE in schools to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. Part B provides examples of good practice in four key areas:

- placing enquiry at the heart of learning – as a key to improving teaching
- high-quality leadership and management in primary schools – as a key to improvement and raising the status of RE
- forward-thinking leadership and management in secondary schools – as a key to securing provision for RE for the future
- effective RE in special schools – adapting RE to meet the distinctive needs of pupils who have learning difficulties.

Placing enquiry at the heart of learning

60. The current report highlights, as did the 2010 report, that in the most effective RE teaching, enquiry is placed at the heart of learning. However, few of the schools visited had a well-defined approach to this. Enquiry was most effective and consistent where it was based on a straightforward model – for example:



61. Effective enquiry in RE:

- **is not age limited** – effective enquiry was found at all ages
- **involves sustained learning** – in which pupils set up the enquiry, carry it out, evaluate their learning and revisit the questions set
- **starts by engaging pupils in their learning** – making sure they can see the relevance and importance of the enquiry and how it relates to their own concerns

- **allows pupils time to gather information and draw conclusions before asking them to reflect on or apply their learning** – the focus on ‘learning from’ usually comes later as they ask the key question – so what?
- **enables pupils to reconsider their initial thinking and extend their enquiry as they begin to see new levels of possibility** – if pupils have identified key questions at the outset, they reconsider these, add more, or re-prioritise them
- **allows pupils to use their creativity and imagination** – ensuring that experiential learning and opportunities to foster spiritual and creative development are built into the process of enquiry
- **emphasises ‘impersonal evaluation’** – asking pupils to give well-founded reasons and justify their conclusions or views rather than simply expressing their personal feelings or responses to the enquiry.

Good examples of learning based on enquiry are described in the case studies below.

Using ‘big questions’ to give a context for enquiry

62. Engaging pupils from the outset in ‘big questions’ provides a context for carrying out an investigation.

In history, **Year 5** pupils had been studying the impact of a sea disaster on a fishing community. In RE they used a worry box to record any things that distressed them about life today. This led to a discussion about bereavement and how different religions make sense of death. The teacher used a range of resources (such as Michelangelo’s *Last Judgement*) to stimulate questions about life after death. One pupil said, ‘I thought heaven was supposed to be nice!’ Pupils investigated the response of two religions (Christianity and Hinduism) to the question: ‘What happens when we die?’ They showed exceptional independence in completing the task, quickly gained a good range of viewpoints about life after death, and engaged seriously and sensitively when sharing their ideas and findings.

A **Year 7** class with lower-attaining pupils was investigating the five pillars of Islam. The teacher used the game of Jenga to explore the idea of creating strong foundations and introduced the question: ‘Why are pillars so important to Muslims?’ The pupils were introduced to the idea of being a detective – looking for clues, trying to work out motives, weighing up evidence, in-depth investigations – to set up mini-research tasks into the five pillars. The pupils engaged themselves with this very effectively and made excellent progress. By the end they were able to explain how the pillars related to the idea of strong foundations, how commitment was important, how duties can be enjoyed, and understood the idea of the ‘power of five’.

Using reflection and creativity effectively to deepen pupils' understanding of religious material

63. The most effective RE teaching integrated opportunities for reflection and creativity effectively within the process of enquiry which arose directly from pupils' engagement with religious material.

In a **Year 3 class** studying the topic of angels, the teacher gave the pupils a range of images to help them decide on words they would use to describe an angel. Their ideas included 'shy', 'secretive', 'protective', 'powerful' and 'frightening'. An atmosphere of reflection was skilfully created using music and silence. Pupils were given a series of scenarios to extend their ideas: how would they greet an angel; what questions would they ask an angel? The topic led to an extended study of the idea of angels.

A **Year 8** class focused on why Buddha is often portrayed sitting down. After examining a series of *mudras* (bodily postures of the Buddha), pupils considered their initial responses: 'What can I see?' 'What might it mean?' This task was undertaken in an atmosphere of stillness which prompted the pupils to move beyond their initial ideas to offer observations such as 'he appears tranquil', 'a good listener', and so on. Subsequent discussion probed these ideas further in terms of pupils' ideas about peace and tranquillity, and explored the symbol of the lotus, ideas of darkness and light, and the imagery of the Bodhi tree. The session set the scene for subsequent study of the life and impact of the Buddha by engaging pupils' interest through personal responses to Buddhist imagery.

Using enquiry effectively when investigating religions

64. Where RE worked well, teachers gave pupils carefully structured opportunities to find out for themselves, make their own connections and draw their own conclusions.

In a highly effective **Year 2** lesson on Diwali, following work on the story, the teacher distributed a wide range of resources (including artefacts, DVD clips, books, ICT links) about the festival across a number of work stations. The pupils' task was to visit each work station to find out as much as they could about the festival, seeing if they could make links between the different resources and the story they had been studying. The pupils found the tasks exciting and quickly worked together using a wide range of skills. They were able to speculate about possible meanings of objects (for example, the templates for mehndi patterns) and then revise their ideas when they gathered more information. They made important links between the features of the celebration and the story (diva lamps and the celebration of Sita's return), and identified the symbolism of the artefacts (the way Rama is shown to be a god).

Using enquiry approaches to promote questioning and discussion about religious material

65. Using the approach of philosophical enquiry can deepen and extend pupils' investigation into religion.

One school successfully employed a Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach in the teaching of aspects of RE. Pupils were set problems to solve as a feature of work in RE. For example, in a topic on ritual, Year 4 pupils generated key questions for further investigation, including: 'Would it matter if you missed a ritual?'; 'What is the difference between a ritual and a routine?'; 'What rituals are important to me?'; 'Are there any bad rituals?'; 'How would I feel if my ritual was taken away from me?'¹¹

In another school, a Year 7 class used a similar approach to explore the design argument for the existence of God. Pictures of a flower and a computer were used to explore the idea of 'design'. What do we mean by 'designed'? Are only human products designed? Is the natural world designed? The approach was developed with pupils building on each other's ideas ('I agree/disagree with you because ...'). The story of Paley's watch led a further discussion of God as a designer. Pupils made outstanding progress, were very engaged throughout the lesson and demonstrated high levels of insight into the argument.

Using digital technology to support enquiry

66. Particularly in primary schools, teachers were increasingly using high-quality, web-based resources to stimulate pupils' learning and provide examples of living religious practice. Similarly, pupils made greater use of technology to research RE topics and present their findings.

In one school, **Year 6** pupils had laptops with access to the school's Wi-Fi and intranet. They used the laptops for a task on Judaism, a religion which they had not studied before. Each of six groups had a named Jewish artefact connected to Shabbat. The task was to carry out a mini enquiry into its nature and use. Each group was challenged to research information and produce a digital presentation to summarise its findings. The technology was integral to the learning, easily accessed, and provided information that the pupils could not have found from books.

Building the skills of effective argument into the process of enquiry

67. In the following example, the processes of enquiry were built systematically into GCSE work.

¹¹ More details about this example can be found on the Ofsted good practice website. www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-practice-resource-enquiry-based-religious-education-%E2%80%98philosophy-for-children%E2%80%99-practice.

In a school where GCSE provision was highly effective, the teaching focused strongly on developing the skills of argument, embedding these skills into pupils' thinking rather than simply asking them to practise examination techniques. Pupils used the WAWOS technique, described below, to sharpen their learning. This involved a five-stage approach:

What do you think and why?

Apply religious teaching as an example.

What is another point of view?

Offer religious teachings for another point of view.

Suggest how your response might impact on your life or learning.

This five-fold approach was used to shape class discussions, develop written work, focus assessment and set targets for improvement.

68. Despite these and many other examples of effective practice, teachers need further support to translate the principles of good enquiry into curriculum planning, teaching and assessment. In particular, guidance is needed on:
- a clear rationale for the place of enquiry in RE – for example, how the principle of asking open-ended critical questions about religion is balanced with the need to respect differences of opinion and lifestyle
 - breadth and balance in selecting enquiries, based on a clear, shared understanding of the rationale for RE
 - an appropriate repertoire of approaches to learning that match different types of enquiry, for example:
 - using experiential and creative activities where pupils need to develop their insight into the 'experience' of religion
 - using reasoned argument and debate when pupils are exploring controversial issues
 - using investigative and interpretative skills when pupils need to gather, analyse and present information
 - how to sequence enquiries to make sure pupils build effectively on prior learning and can see the relevance of their investigations
 - how the process of enquiry can be built into the way pupils' progress in RE is defined and assessed.

High-quality leadership and management in primary schools

69. Effective RE in primary schools was invariably the result of high-quality leadership and management.

Effective subject leadership

70. Senior leaders took an active interest in RE, discussed priorities with the subject leader and provided a wider whole-school context to promote improvement. Effective subject leaders had a clear vision for RE. They kept themselves fully abreast of current developments and maintained strong links with local support networks. They took an active approach to planning, monitoring and improving the subject, and they routinely briefed senior leaders and governors about it.

In a school judged 'satisfactory' by Ofsted in its whole-school inspection, teaching and learning had been identified as priorities for improvement. The headteacher chose RE as a context for development work to promote pupils' independence and more effective discussion. The subject leader undertook training in thinking skills, introduced these within RE and then shared them more widely across the school. As a result, the pupils' RE improved significantly and the subject took the lead in promoting good learning across the school.

In another school where RE was highly effective, the subject leader had worked closely with the staff to identify a set of 'Top Ten' expectations so there would be a shared understanding of the key features of effective RE teaching:

- encouraging pupils to ask 'why' questions
- posing challenging questions
- insisting on openness and understanding
- seeking to challenge stereotypes
- promoting 'subject dispositions'¹² throughout the day
- having high expectations about discussion
- using key vocabulary
- using previously assessed work to plan learning
- giving pupils time to discuss gritty [sic] issues
- providing opportunities to talk about spirituality.

As a result, the quality of RE provision was highly consistent across the school.

Effective monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement planning

71. Monitoring and improvement were effective when they focused clearly on raising standards and improving provision. Staff and pupils were actively involved in evaluating the subject and identifying improvement priorities.

¹² This term was used by the school, reflecting a feature of their local Agreed Syllabus.

Responding to the 2010 Ofsted report, a subject leader identified the need to evaluate the quality of the pupils' understanding of Christianity and the effectiveness of the provision for teaching about it. Monitoring activities had this as their focus. The outcome of the evaluation was shared with the staff and led to significant improvements in the teaching about Christianity across the school.

In another school, the subject leader carried out an annual 'mind-mapping' exercise with all the staff to explore the subject's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and identify areas for improvement. A small group of pupils met regularly to discuss their experience of RE and contribute to improvement.

Effective professional development

72. Where professional development was effective, the subject leader discussed training priorities with the senior leadership team and ensured that these were incorporated into the subject improvement plan. A strategic approach was adopted towards training for RE, capitalising effectively on opportunities as they arose.

The subject leader had identified that the provision for RE (six mini-units a year, taught weekly) tended to fragment learning and isolated the subject from the rest of the curriculum. She recognised a professional development need in terms of helping staff rethink their approach to planning RE. She worked in collaboration with two colleagues who were confident about teaching RE to trial a different approach for one term. They taught RE as a single topic over three weeks. This led to much more sustained learning and forged stronger cross-curricular links. The outcomes were shared at a staff meeting as part of wider staff training in RE.

In another school, the subject leader recognised that the newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and other new staff often arrived at the school expressing low levels of confidence about teaching RE. In response, she targeted the CPD opportunities on these staff, building a strong RE component into their induction programme and, as a result, strengthening subject expertise across the school.

Effective curriculum planning

73. The subject leader established a clear approach to planning RE which was discussed by and agreed with the staff. They were clear about their responsibilities for planning and assessment. Planning was carefully monitored and discussed routinely with the relevant staff.

The subject leader worked with the staff to develop an agreed enquiry-based approach to planning the RE curriculum. The principles behind effective enquiry were shared to ensure staff understood how to build

these into their teaching of RE. The principles were then translated into a model for planning, with examples of good practice to guide the staff.

The initiative was followed up, both with regular meetings with year groups to discuss the emerging planning and also at staff meetings where good practice was shared. As a result, teachers' confidence about planning independently rose sharply and the overall quality of RE improved across the school.

In another school the subject leader met the year-group teams each term to discuss the following term's plans; to identify, for example, how RE would link to other areas of the curriculum and to ensure the focus for any topic was clearly defined and understood. The focus of the meetings was to ensure that varied opportunities to incorporate RE within the curriculum were understood and exploited. Well-coordinated, rich and imaginative RE developed across the school as a result, including:

- focus days when the whole school took time out to concentrate on an RE theme, often related to a festival
- specific RE topics taught weekly or in a short block
- wider topics where RE-related work could be effectively integrated such as work on Judaism as part of a World War 2 history-led topic.

Effective assessment

74. Assessment was effective when:

- RE subject leaders had agreed clear procedures and practices to support it
- arrangements were manageable and realistic
- planning clearly identified expectations and opportunities to assess pupils' progress.

The subject leader clearly identified assessment opportunities, both formal and informal, in each unit of work. All plans had a set of clearly identified and differentiated expectations for what pupils would be able to do by the end of the topic. Pupils had 'I can' statements and routinely assessed their own RE work. Teachers recorded pupils' progress by annotating the plans with evidence of pupils' achievement, including their oral contributions. A carefully annotated portfolio of work in RE was maintained to exemplify standards. A wide variety of monitoring strategies was used, including scrutiny of RE books, checks of marking and planning, and pupil voice surveys, as well as direct observations of teaching and learning. These all helped to ensure consistency and provided a way of evaluating the impact of the arrangements on provision. The findings were summarised to provide 'the big picture', thus sharing good practice as well as raising points for improvement.

Forward-thinking leadership and management in secondary schools

75. Part A of the report highlights concerns about the provision for RE in secondary schools. Schools are being encouraged to design a curriculum flexibly to best meet the needs of their pupils. RE needs to explore this flexibility, since leaders and managers who look ahead are key to securing the provision of RE in the future.
76. In responding to recent education policy, almost half of the 51 secondary schools visited between January 2011 and July 2012 had changed or were in the process of changing how they provided RE. Many of these changes were not well thought through and represented a deterioration in the quality of RE. However, a number of the schools visited had responded to the challenges by developing innovative approaches. Not all of these would work in all circumstances, but each one worked well in the context of the individual school.
77. In all cases, two factors were crucial:
 - Decisions about the RE curriculum were based on a carefully considered rationale, taking account of the school's distinctive context, the needs of its pupils and the subject.
 - The school monitored and reviewed the impact of the changes on standards and the quality of the pupils' learning.

Creating a coherent approach to RE

78. A characteristic of good leadership in RE was a clear and consistent approach.

A school that wanted to ensure that RE at Key Stage 3 was more challenging and coherent used the publication of a revised agreed syllabus as a springboard for developing a more rigorous approach towards the study of religion and belief.

For example, a well-structured unit in Year 7 enquired into the idea of Jesus as the son of God and explored a variety of viewpoints. In Year 8, a unit exploring the place of religion in the contemporary world led pupils to a task in which they investigated whether religions could get on well together. Work in Year 9 included a unit on liberation theology, investigating whether the church should campaign actively for social justice in the modern world.

The pupils explained how each unit of work built on their previous learning and they clearly grasped the idea that RE involved developing their ability to ask questions, find things out, evaluate different opinions and draw conclusions. They became more enthusiastic about the subject, valuing the significant opportunities it provided to develop their skills of argument and express their own opinions.

Developing new models of curriculum provision

79. Some subject leaders were successfully exploring different ways of organising RE within the curriculum.

One school had combined a number of different approaches to construct a highly innovative curriculum for RE.

In Year 7 it was taught by a team of primary-trained teachers as part of an integrated programme incorporating three themes: Believing in God, The Origins of the World, and a study of the teachings of Jesus. In Year 8 it was taught as a discrete subject with a focus on the study of world religions. In Years 9 and 10 all pupils followed a Humanities GCSE course which included work on Islam in the West, Judaism and the Holocaust, and Christianity and Apartheid. In Year 11 all pupils took a short-course GCSE in RE as part of English and taught by the English team.

The students were enthusiastic about how RE helped them to clarify and think through their own beliefs and values; to begin to deal with moral dilemmas that they faced in everyday life; to show respect for other people's views, as well as to challenge those with which they disagreed; and, to value and celebrate diversity as an opportunity rather than to regard it as a problem.

Rejuvenating RE

80. Inspectors visited a number of schools where the subject leadership had successfully revitalised RE.

A school which had limited previous success in RE went about renewing the subject by resetting the vision for it, establishing a new name – 'Social and Religious Studies' (SRS) – and a set of key aims to spell out what they wanted students to achieve by the time they left.

The curriculum started from the social context of the pupils' learning to aid their understanding and engagement. The RE department produced a strapline to reflect this – 'One world where we all fit in' – and the curriculum was designed to take this vision forward. It moved into the study of religions and how they have an impact on the world, personally, locally, nationally and globally. It showed the valuable contribution religion can make and how it might challenge pupils' thinking.

Each year had a key question, prominently displayed in classrooms and driving the learning, with GCSE taking the lead from Year 9 onwards.

- Year 7: Where does community fit?
- Year 8: How does religion fit in locally, nationally and globally?
- Year 9: Where do we look for meaning? In God? In the world? In suffering? In others?

- Year 10: Where does religion fit in... to conflict... to society... to medicine?

Creating effective examination provision at Key Stage 4

81. A number of the schools visited were exploring new ways of securing GCSE provision for RE.

One school decided to restructure its provision to secure RE in the Key Stage 4 curriculum. Previously, all pupils had taken a short-course GCSE, but the success of this was limited. The school decided to balance the priorities of sustaining high-quality GCSE RE provision for a substantial cohort of pupils with securing a reasonable level of provision for core RE for all pupils.

Key Stage 3 was reduced to two years and the school introduced a series of substantial 40-hour taster courses in Year 9 across a range of optional GCSE subjects, including RE. Many pupils opted to take the RE taster, which focused on GCSE-style topics. The quality of teaching on the taster course was excellent. The school predicted that, on the basis of pupils' early option choices, a cohort of over 60 pupils was likely to take full-course GCSE in Year 10.

Pupils not taking the taster course or the GCSE course did not study RE in Year 9, but would have the equivalent of one period a fortnight of core provision across Years 10 and 11 as part of a 'carousel' of PSHE, citizenship and RE.

Developing positive attitudes towards RE

82. Inspectors visited a number of schools that had developed new and effective approaches to RE.

A school which had been in special measures, with a very challenging set of improvement priorities, took the bold step of developing a new approach to RE. Pupils' attitudes towards RE had been very negative, particularly at Key Stage 4, where GCSE results in the subject had been very poor.

The school decided to introduce a series of 'Viewpoint' day conferences on RE-related topics throughout Years 10 and 11 to rebuild the subject and forge links with a range of local religious communities. When inspectors visited, the Year 10 pupils had just been involved in a highly successful Viewpoint day on prejudice and persecution. They spoke very positively about the event as a memorable experience which had opened their eyes to issues they had not thought about much before. A representative from a local religious community who contributed to the day was very impressed by the pupils' high levels of interest: they were not afraid to ask very searching questions.

83. Inspectors found some of the most innovative thinking about the future of RE within the secondary curriculum in academies, where the freedom to develop new models of provision was evident. This finding highlights the value of local authorities, and SACRES, working with academies to strengthen local support networks to share good practice.
84. A theme that ran through discussions with senior leaders in secondary schools related to the requirement in some, but not all, locally agreed syllabuses that all pupils should follow an accredited course of study as part of the statutory requirements for RE at Key Stage 4. Some senior leaders saw this as inflexible. In an educational climate that encourages the tailoring of a school's curriculum to the needs of its pupils, this was seen as unhelpful and as stifling innovation.

Effective RE in special schools

85. A key strength in all the special schools visited was the recognition of RE's potential to contribute considerably to pupils' learning and personal development.
86. Leadership of RE was a strength in most of the special schools visited and in particular:
 - the commitment and enthusiasm of the subject leader
 - strong training and professional development
 - effective and creative teaching approaches, with an emphasis on experiential and practical learning
 - the good use of links with local religious communities to enrich the pupils' learning.
87. In one school, for example, the inspector reported:

Pupils enjoy RE very much. They are encouraged to be active partners in learning. This ensures the subject makes a powerful contribution to pupils' personal development, including their self-knowledge and self-esteem. They grow in confidence and respond positively to learning about and from religion.

The use of a wide range of resources, particularly sensory artefacts, contributes significantly to pupils' good progress in lessons. The provision of practical, visual and first-hand experiences enables pupils to engage effectively with the material and ideas they are exploring. Teachers use a variety of approaches to enable pupils to communicate their thoughts and feelings, and demonstrate what they know and understand. Interactive whiteboards enliven learning and good use is made of photographic evidence to record pupils' learning in RE.

88. A key limiting factor was the difficulty of adapting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus to ensure that it met the pupils' specific learning needs,

particularly where their needs were complex and profound. Subject leaders found this process very challenging. The principle of 'making it simpler' did not work effectively. Although, in most of the schools, subject leaders attended RE training or support groups, they reported that these did not usually provide effective guidance about adapting the syllabus.

89. However, the 'good practice' visit to a secondary special school provided an example of a more radical approach to the teaching of RE which placed the distinctive needs of the pupils at the heart of learning. The subject leader had developed 'Five Keys into RE': a structure for planning the subject for pupils who have special needs.¹³ This placed the pupil rather than the mainstream agreed syllabus content at the centre of what was taught. The subject leader said:

'As pupils in our school need time to process RE themes, we should select only the pure essence of what should be taught.'

90. The Five Keys help teachers to focus their planning.

Key 1: Connection – what links can we make with our pupils' lives?

A bridge is created between the religious theme and the child, meaning that learning is deeper: 'The story of Diwali begins with the idea that sometimes we go away, but it is good to be back home. We establish the link between pupils' experiences of respite care, their daily journeys home, and the story of Rama returning from exile.'

Key 2: Knowledge – what is the burning core of the faith?

It is important to look into the heart of the religious theme to understand precisely what needs to be taught: 'Key knowledge includes pupils' understanding that Jesus loved everyone, especially if they were poor or unhappy; or that Sikhs have special teachers called gurus. By cutting out peripheral information and going straight to the core, we teach what is central and powerful.'

Key 3: Senses – what sensory elements are in the religion?

It is important to include sensory experiences that are linked to RE. For example, a theme about Jewish prayer could involve wrapping a child in a large *tallit*, taking Makaton signs from the Shema, such as 'heart', 'gate', 'children', 'love'; and signing these to Jewish liturgical music, or touching a favourite picture between the eyes to show its importance.

¹³ Details of the good practice visit can be found on Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-practice-resource-inclusive-approach-religious-education-special-school-little-heath-school.

Key 4: Symbols – what are the symbols that are most accessible?

Symbols are an important way of conveying the spirituality of religion. They can be held like a brass *Ek Onkar* (the Sikh idea of the unity of God). They can be the focus of art work or experienced directly using a hoop to represent the *kara* (the Sikh bracelet), and travelling around it again and again by walking or in a wheelchair. This would show the eternity of God.

Key 5: Values – what are the values in the religion that speak to us?

While pupils who have special needs may face many challenges, like other young people they have a strong sense of values. They are aware of others helping them in their lives and the importance of saying thank you. So, for example, a unit on the life of the Buddha might use a traditional Buddhist story to focus on the importance of patience. This links with pupils needing to wait for help with their work, or waiting for the school transport to arrive.

The 'Five Keys' reflect the fact that some pupils who have special needs need time to discover the deeper meaning of RE.

Notes

The survey

The report is based on evidence from inspections of RE between September 2009 and July 2012 in 90 primary schools, 91 secondary schools, including six special schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, hearing impairment, complex learning needs, or profound and multiple learning difficulties. In addition, evidence was gathered from five visits made to schools in which good practice in RE had been identified, including a secondary special school. In all, inspectors observed 659 lessons, or parts of lessons.

The sample did not include schools that had been judged to require special measures or had been given a notice to improve. The number of schools in the survey that had been judged satisfactory at their previous section 5 inspection was also limited, because a proportion of such schools were being monitored by inspectors and were therefore not available for subject inspections. In autumn 2012, a telephone survey was undertaken of 30 secondary schools which had not entered any pupils for a GCSE qualification in RE in 2011. The survey explored the reasons for this.

The report also refers to evidence from other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of SACREs and other RE professionals, examination results, and wider surveys carried out by RE professional associations.

Examination data

The past four years have seen a continued rise in the number of pupils entered for A- and AS-level examinations in religious studies (RS), building on the success of the subject at GCSE. In 2013, around 19,000 pupils in England took A-level GCE RS compared to just over 17,000 in 2009. Nearly 30,000 pupils were entered for AS-level courses in 2013 compared with around 22,000 in 2009. The performance of pupils in these examinations has remained fairly stable over that time and results compare well with other subjects. In 2013, 25.8% of A-level pupils gained A* to A grades and around 21% of AS-level pupils gained a grade A.

The past four years have seen a change in the number and pattern of entries for GCSE courses in RS in England. In 2009 just over 425,000 pupils were entered for a GCSE in RS. Of these around 165,000 were entered for the RS full course and just over 261,000 for the RS short course. In 2013, the number of pupils taking an RS GCSE had fallen to around 390,000 and the balance had changed. Full-course entries had risen significantly to nearly 240,000 while numbers taking the short course had fallen to around 150,000. The most significant change occurred between 2012 and 2013 when short-course GCSE numbers fell by nearly 30%. GCSE results are broadly similar to those reported in 2010. In 2013 in England, 72.1% of full-course pupils gained A* to C grades, with 30.6% receiving the highest A* or A grades. In the short course in England in 2013, 53.5% gained A* to C grades with 18.3% achieving the highest A* or A grades.

Summary of inspection data

Primary

	Judgement (number of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness (90)	2	36	50	2
Achievement (90)	2	34	53	1
Teaching (90)	1	42	45	2
Assessment (87)	1	16	42	28
Curriculum (90)	2	30	55	3
Leadership and management (90)	5	42	41	2
Subject training (85)	1	21	38	25

Secondary

	Judgement (number of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness (91)	4	40	37	10
Achievement (91)	4	40	36	11
Teaching (91)	5	44	36	6
Assessment (77)	5	18	40	14
Curriculum (91)	5	29	46	11
Leadership and management (91)	6	40	37	8
Subject training (81)	2	20	31	28

Further information

Ofsted publications

Making sense of religion (070045), Ofsted, 2007;
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/070045.

Moving English forward (110118), Ofsted, 2012;
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110118.

Transforming religious education (090215), Ofsted, 2010;
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090215.

Other publications

An analysis of the impact of the EBacc on student opportunity to study GCSE RS, National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, 2012;
www.natre.org.uk/free.php.

Face to face and side by side: a framework for partnership in our multi-faith society (9781409803157), Department of Communities and Local Government, 2008;
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/facetofaceframework>.

NASACRE survey of local authority support for SACREs, National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education, 2011;
www.nasacre.org.uk/media/file/NASACRE_QtoS_apl11.pdf.

RE: the truth unmasked – the supply of and support for religious education teachers, report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Education, Religious Education Council of England and Wales, 2013;
<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>.

Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010 (DCSF-00114-2010), Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010;
www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00114-2010.

Religious education: the non-statutory framework, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2004;
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090605160101/qca.org.uk/qca_7886.aspx.

Annex A: Context and recent developments in religious education

The legal requirements governing RE were set out in the Education Reform Act of 1988 and confirmed by the Education Acts of 1996 and 1998. Although RE is a statutory subject, it is not part of the National Curriculum. The content of RE in maintained schools is determined at local authority level and each authority must review its agreed syllabus every five years. An agreed syllabus should 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.¹⁴

Each local authority must set up a standing advisory council on religious education (SACRE) to advise the authority on matters connected with RE. Each council comprises four representative groups: Christian and other religious denominations, the Church of England, teachers' associations and the local authority.

RE must be provided for all registered pupils in maintained schools and academies, including those in Reception classes and sixth forms.

Academies must provide RE in accordance with their funding agreements. The model funding agreements broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. In the case of academies that do not have a religious designation, this means they must arrange for RE to be taught to all pupils in accordance with the general requirements for agreed syllabuses. In other words, they should also 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'. Academies are not, however, required to follow any specific locally agreed syllabus.

RE in voluntary aided schools must be provided in accordance with the trust deed of the school and the wishes of the governing body. In community and voluntary controlled schools, it must be provided in accordance with the local agreed syllabus. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RE and this right should be identified in the school prospectus.

The survey evidence on which this report is based includes academies, community and voluntary controlled schools, but does not include voluntary aided schools with a religious character, for which there are separate inspection arrangements for RE. It is for the governing body of voluntary aided schools with a religious character to ensure that their RE is inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.¹⁵ The

¹⁴ Education Reform Act 1988, section 8 (3); www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/section/8/enacted.

¹⁵ Education Act 2005, section 48; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/section/48/enacted.

GCSE and GCE examination statistics quoted in this report relate to all schools in England.

In 2004, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority produced, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, *The non-statutory national framework for religious education*.¹⁶ Its purpose was to support those with responsibility for the provision and quality of RE in maintained schools. The intention of the Framework was to give local authorities, SACREs and relevant authorities with responsibility for schools with a religious character a shared understanding of the knowledge and skills that pupils should gain through their religious education at school.

The Framework incorporated two attainment targets: 'learning about' religion and belief (AT1) and 'learning from' religion and belief (AT2). These set out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. The majority of local authorities, but not all, incorporated these targets into their locally agreed syllabuses.

In January 2010, the then Department for Children, Schools and Families published new non-statutory guidance on RE entitled *Religious education in English schools*.¹⁷ Although the publication is still available, following the change of government in May 2010, the Department for Education's website states that it is no longer deemed to be a definitive statement of the Department's guidance on RE.

In 2011 the Religious Education Council for England and Wales (REC)¹⁸ introduced a strategic plan designed to:

- promote high-quality RE
- influence public policy and understanding of RE
- promote a coherent professional development strategy for RE
- secure adequate and sustainable resources for RE.

In 2012, as part of this strategy, the REC launched an RE subject review in England to run in parallel with the DfE review of the National Curriculum.

Also in 2012, an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE was formed to provide a medium for parliamentarians and organisations with an interest in RE to discuss the current provision of RE, press for continuing improvement, promote public understanding and advocate rigorous education for every young person in religious

¹⁶ *Religious education: the non-statutory framework*, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2004; http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090605160101/qca.org.uk/qca_7886.aspx.

¹⁷ *Religious education in English schools: non-statutory guidance 2010* (DCSF-00114-2010), Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010; www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00114-2010.

¹⁸ The Religious Education Council of England and Wales was established in 1973 to represent the collective interests of a wide variety of professional associations and faith communities in deepening and strengthening provision for religious education.

and non-religious world views. The APPG's first major area of investigation has been into the supply of, and support for, teachers of RE.

Annex B: Providers visited

Primary schools

Adel Primary School
 Anderton Park Primary School
 Annesley Primary and Nursery School
 Aston Springwood Primary School
 Bathampton Primary School

 Beamont Community Primary School
 Bevington Primary School
 Bigland Green Primary School
 Bilton Grange Community Primary School
 Brackenbury Primary School
 Brandhall Primary School
 Brettenham Primary School
 Brook Field Primary School
 Broughton Primary School
 Brown Clee CofE Primary School
 Burnley Brow Community School
 Chiltern Primary School
 Churchtown Primary School
 Clayton Village Primary School
 Cotwall End Primary School
 Courtney Primary School
 Crackley Bank Primary School
 Darley Churchtown CofE Primary School
 Digby the Tedder Primary School
 Eastcombe Primary School
 Eden Park Primary School Academy
 Elson Junior School
 Fairburn Community Primary School
 Farmilo Primary School and Nursery
 Farnborough Road Junior School
 Farsley Springbank Junior School
 Ford Primary School

Local authority

Leeds
 Birmingham
 Nottinghamshire
 Rotherham
 Bath and North East Somerset
 Warrington
 Kensington and Chelsea
 Tower Hamlets
 North Yorkshire
 Hammersmith and Fulham
 Sandwell
 Enfield
 Swindon
 Northamptonshire
 Shropshire
 Oldham
 Kingston upon Hull City of Sefton
 Bradford
 Dudley
 South Gloucestershire
 Staffordshire
 Derbyshire
 Lincolnshire
 Gloucestershire
 Torbay
 Hampshire
 North Yorkshire
 Nottinghamshire
 Sefton
 Leeds
 Plymouth

Forest View Junior School
 Frodsham Manor House Primary School
 Galton Valley Primary School
 Ghyllside Primary School*
 Godwin Junior School
 Gomeldon Primary School
 Gotham Primary School
 Grange Junior School
 Greatham Primary School
 Greenacres Junior Infant and Nursery School
 Heron Cross Primary School
 Herons Moor Community Primary School*
 Holbeach Bank Primary School
 Holden Lane Primary School
 Hollyfield Primary School
 Hope Primary School
 Hutton Rudby Primary School
 James Watt Primary School
 Kempsey Primary School
 Kentmere Primary School
 King Charles Primary School
 Kings Worthy Primary School
 Ladybrook Primary School
 Long Row Primary School
 Lostock Primary School
 Mayfield Primary School
 Middlewich Primary School
 Morton Primary School
 Mossfield Primary School
 Normanton Junior School
 Queen Victoria Primary School
 Rhyl Primary School
 Richard Durning's Endowed Primary School
 Rillington Community Primary School
 Salisbury Road Primary School

Nottinghamshire
 Cheshire West and Chester
 Sandwell
 Cumbria
 Newham
 Wiltshire
 Nottinghamshire
 Swindon
 Hampshire
 Oldham
 Stoke-on-Trent
 North Somerset
 Lincolnshire
 Stoke-on-Trent
 Birmingham
 Derbyshire
 North Yorkshire
 Birmingham
 Worcestershire
 Rochdale
 Cornwall
 Hampshire
 Stockport
 Derbyshire
 Bolton
 Cambridgeshire
 Cheshire East
 Derbyshire
 Salford
 Wakefield
 Dudley
 Camden
 Lancashire
 North Yorkshire
 Plymouth

Scout Road Primary School*
 Seaham Trinity Primary School
 Seaton Primary School
 South Wonston Primary School
 Spooner Row Primary School, Wymondham
 St John's CofE Primary School
 St Paul's Church of England Primary School
 St Thomas Community School
 Stivichall Primary School
 Tirlbrook Primary School
 Trewidland Community Primary School
 Ugborough Primary School
 Walesby CofE Primary School
 Wensley Fold (VC) Church of England Primary School*
 Westfield Primary School
 White Rock Primary School
 Wilberforce Primary School*
 Worsley Mesnes Community Primary School

Calderdale
 Durham
 Devon
 Hampshire
 Norfolk
 Salford
 Gloucestershire
 Manchester
 Coventry
 Gloucestershire
 Cornwall
 Devon
 Nottinghamshire
 Blackburn with Darwen
 Halton
 Torbay
 Westminster
 Wigan

Secondary schools

Abraham Moss High School
 Alder Community High School
 Alderman White School and Language College*
 Banbury School*
 Bartley Green School A Specialist Technology and Sports College
 Beckfoot School*
 Belgrave High School*
 Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School*
 Bournemouth School for Girls
 Bramhall High School
 Broadoak Mathematics and Computing College
 Calderstones School
 Canons High School
 Capital City Academy
 Carlton Bolling College

Local authority

Manchester
 Tameside
 Nottinghamshire
 Oxfordshire

 Birmingham
 Bradford
 Staffordshire
 Hertfordshire
 Bournemouth
 Stockport
 North Somerset
 Liverpool
 Harrow
 Brent
 Bradford

Cheney School*	Oxfordshire
Cheslyn Hay Sport and Community High School	Staffordshire
Chesterfield High School*	Sefton
Chipping Campden School	Gloucestershire
Clayton Hall Business and Language College	Staffordshire
Countesthorpe Community College*	Leicestershire
Crown Woods School	Greenwich
Didcot Girls' School*	Oxfordshire
Dorcan Technology College*	Swindon
Downend Comprehensive School*	South Gloucestershire
Finham Park School*	Coventry
Fitzharrys School	Oxfordshire
Fullbrook School	Surrey
Goffs School*	Hertfordshire
Grangefield School and Technology College	Stockton-on-Tees
Hamilton Community College	Leicester
Hasland Hall Community School	Derbyshire
Haven High Technology College*	Lincolnshire
Haybridge High School and Sixth Form*	Worcestershire
Highfield Humanities College	Blackpool
Highfields School	Derbyshire
Hyde Technology School and Hearing Impaired Resource Base	Tameside
James Calvert Spence College	Northumberland
John Cabot Academy	South Gloucestershire
John Ruskin School	Cumbria
John Spendluffe Technology College	Lincolnshire
Joseph Swan School*	Gateshead
Kenton School*	Newcastle upon Tyne
King's Grove School	Cheshire East
Lutterworth College*	Leicestershire
Marsh Academy	Kent
Martley, the Chantry High School*	Worcestershire
Maryhill High School*	Staffordshire
Monkwearmouth School	Sunderland
Moreton Community School	Wolverhampton

Mount Grace School	Hertfordshire
Myers Grove School*	Sheffield
New College Leicester	Leicester
Oasis Academy Immingham	North East Lincolnshire
Park High School*	Harrow
Portchester Community School	Hampshire
Prospect School*	Reading
Queen Elizabeth's Community College*	Devon
Quintin Kynaston School*	Westminster
Ralph Thoresby School	Leeds
Redcar Community College A Specialist Visual and Performing Arts Centre*	Redcar and Cleveland
Regents Park Community College	Southampton
Severn Vale School*	Gloucestershire
Shireland Collegiate Academy	Sandwell
Sir Thomas Rich's School	Gloucestershire
Smestow School	Wolverhampton
St James School	Devon
Stockport School	Stockport
Sutton Centre Community College*	Nottinghamshire
Tarporley High School and Sixth Form College*	Cheshire West and Chester
The Bishop David Brown School	Surrey
The Bulmershe School	Wokingham
The Burton Borough School	Telford and Wrekin
The Chauncy School*	Hertfordshire
The Corsham School A Visual Arts College*	Wiltshire
The Dearne High – A Specialist Humanities College	Barnsley
The Heath School	Halton
The Nobel School	Hertfordshire
The Tiffin Girls' School*	Kingston upon Thames
The Warwick School	Surrey
The Wye Valley School	Buckinghamshire
Thomas Mills High School	Suffolk
Thurston Community College	Suffolk
Tytherington High School	Cheshire East
Wardle High School*	Rochdale

West Park School*
 Whickham School
 William de Ferrers School
 Wrockwardine Wood Arts College*

Derby
 Gateshead
 Essex
 Telford and Wrekin

Special schools

Ashgate Croft School
 Northern House School*
 Phoenix Primary EBD School
 Royal Cross Primary School
 Stanley School
 Windlehurst School

Local authority

Derbyshire
 Oxfordshire
 Walsall
 Lancashire
 Wirral
 Stockport

Good practice case study

Little Heath School
 Rushey Mead School
 Smannell and Enham Church of England (Aided) Primary School
 The Bankfield School

Local authority

Redbridge
 Leicester
 Hampshire
 Halton

* The provider has closed or converted to an academy since it was visited.