Learn Teach Lead RE newsletter

November 2026



For RE support, contact Ed Pawson at efpawson@gmail.com.
Church schools contact: Laura Harris Laura.Harris@bristoldiocese.org or Julia Watts julia.watts@bristoldiocese.org

Is RE in the NC yet?

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

WIRE Award – new format

We are excited to have re-launched the WIRE Award in an updated format.
You can now apply for WIRE at 3 different levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold.
See the flyer on P3 and access information about how to apply here.

Bristol RE conference 2027

Knowledge-rich and socially connective RE
Free for all South Glos teachers
Katie Freeman: the place of RE in an ever-changing world
Shammi Rahman: Race, Religion and the Role of RE
Plus loads of classroom-relevant workshops for primary and secondary
Fri 12th Feb 2027
New venue: St Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford
Flyer here; Booking here (See P4-6 for flyer)

Interfaith Week 2026

Interfaith Week : 8th – 15th Nov - resources here.

Primary schools: join the Interfaith Day events on Thu 12th Nov. Stories, videos and crafts, with live representative guests from various religions and worldviews. All lesson plans and guidance provided. Sign up here.

Learn Teach Lead RE

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

Oracy and Storytelling in RS
24th November 2026
Contact

Teaching Judaism in Primary and Secondary Schools
Iris Segall
Mon 11th January 2027
Contact

Going for gold: the new WIRE award
Tues 19th January 2027
Contact

HMD 2027

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2027 is 'No Place for Prejudice': how did prejudice shape and enable the Holocaust, how do prejudices impact on our everyday lives today?

Spirited Arts 2027

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

RE Hubs

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

Learning with - not just about

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

Understanding Humanism

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

British Library – take part

The British Library's Learning team is recruiting secondary RE teachers to take part in a user consultation study. The feedback will help shape the future development of their online RE resources, ensuring they continue to meet the needs of audiences. See P8

Diwali 2026

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

Any Questions

Join the open online forum to ask questions about teaching **Judaism.** Next date: Tues 17th Nov 3.45-4.45pm Zoom link (see P7)

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

Indian dance for schools

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

Community Iftar in Schools

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

Islam website for schools

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

Magnifying Magnificent Muslims

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

Farmington Scholarships open

Sign up for a Farmington scholarship to gain funding to study RE. Each teacher receives up to 30 days out of the classroom, plus a supportive research supervisor. See P10

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

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

Films for RS

A list of films and documentaries for RS



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

WIRE AWARD

Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education

WHAT IS WIRE?

Recognises inclusive RE provision in schools.

Guides schools towards broader community engagement.

Encourages global citizenship and understanding.

Promotes high-quality, meaningful RE.

The WIRE Award seeks to **encourage and support diversity** and **good practice in Religious Education**. Be recognised for your commitment to inclusivity and better RE. This is done through three key areas (visits, CPD and enrichment). The WIRE Award recognises and celebrates schools that demonstrate a commitment to promoting diversity in Religious Education.

AWARD LEVELS

Bronze Level	Silver Level	Gold Level
Start your journey.	Build your practice.	Share & lead excellence.

HOW TO ACHIEVE

Visits/Visitors

The visit or visitor needs to be to a place, or from a person, who represents a worldview which is different from your school community.

Bronze: Invite one or more **visitor** from a religious or non-religious worldview community into school.

Based on the visit, pupils complete work which links to curriculum learning topics.

Silver: Take pupils to visit one or more **places of worship**.

Based on the visit, pupils complete work which links to curriculum learning topics.

Gold: Take pupils to visit more than one **place of worship**.

Based on the visit, pupils complete work which links to curriculum learning topics.

Pupils present their responses to a wider audience.

CPD

Bronze: RE lead attends training event (CPD).

Silver: RE lead attends a training event (CPD).

Teachers include a plan or examples of pupil's work to show how they have used/implemented something they have learnt into their teaching/school curriculum.

Gold: RE lead attends a training event (CPD).

Teachers include a plan or examples of pupil's work to show how they have used/implemented something they have learnt into their teaching/school curriculum.

Sharing this new knowledge with teaching staff in their own school or more widely e.g. leading a staff meeting or a local network group.

Enrichment

Bronze: Organise a school based event - entering a competition or putting on an event e.g. participating in online Interfaith day, spirited arts or sharing learning/visits with parents.

Silver: Organise a school based event - entering a competition or putting on an event e.g. participating in online Interfaith day, spirited arts or sharing learning/visits with parents.

Based on the enrichment event, pupils complete work which links to curriculum learning topics.

Gold: Organise a school based event - entering a competition or putting on an event e.g. participating in online Interfaith day, spirited arts or sharing learning/visits with parents.

Based on the enrichment event, pupils complete work which links to curriculum learning topics.

Pupils and/or staff share their reflective learning with a wider audience e.g. parents, SLT, SACRE, or others.

HOW TO TAKE PART

Visit your local SACRE's website for the evidence form and to apply:

B&NES Bristol South Gloucestershire Swindon

SACREs in some areas are also able to offer **grants** to support your transport costs.

Find this leaflet here: https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/sacre/

Bristol, South Gloucestershire, BANES and Swindon SACREs present

Knowledge-rich and socially connective RE

Annual RE Conference 2027

9.30am – 3.30pm Fri 12th Feb

St Michael's Centre, The Green, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8PD

Cost: **£120 per delegate, £75 for second delegate**

FREE for teachers in South Glos schools

Keynote speakers:

Katie Freeman, Chair of NATRE*

Shammi Rahman, RE and Race Equality Adviser

Plus

A wide variety of workshops for primary and secondary teachers, including lived experience from diverse religion and worldviews traditions

*NATRE is the National Association of Teachers of RE

Book here

Programme

South Glos/Bristol RE Conference Fri 12th Feb 2027 St Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford Programme		
	Activity	Facilitator
9.00 - 9.30	Arrival, registration and refreshments	
9.30 - 9.35	Welcome and Introductions	Laura Harris and Ed Pawson
9.35 - 10.25	Keynote presentation 1 The Place of RE in the Curriculum	Katie Freeman
10.25 – 11.15	Workshop 1	4 parallel sessions
11.15 – 11.35	Refreshment break	
11.35-12.25	Workshop 2	4 parallel sessions
12.25 – 13.20	Lunch	
13.20 – 14.10	Keynote presentation 2 Reimagining Community Cohesion: Race, Religion and the Role of Religious Education	Shammi Rahman
14.10 – 14.35	Local updates and Hub networking	Laura Harris, Ed Pawson and LTLRE Hub leads
14.35 – 15.25	Workshop 3	4 parallel sessions
15.25	Close	

Keynotes

Katie Freeman: Curriculum Architecture, exploring the place of RE in an ever-changing world?

Katie will be speaking about the way a possible national curriculum for RE could bring a new vitality and significance for the subject.

Katie leads RE at Bickleigh Down CofE Primary school and is Chair of NATRE

Shammi Rahman: Reimagining Community Cohesion: Race, Religion and the Role of Religious Education

This talk will focus on how RE can play a transformative role in building social and community cohesion in our communities. It will centre on race, lived experience and structural inequality to offer a critical, justice-oriented approach. Attendees will gain practical insights into creating inclusive, dialogic learning spaces that foster genuine understanding across difference through high quality RE that is rigorous and accessible.

Shammi is RE and Race Equality Adviser for schools in Milton Keynes

Bristol RE Conference Workshops

Workshop	Leader	KS	Notes
Primary RE leaders' workshop (session 1)	Hannah Welch, Rachel Sian	EYFS, 1, 2	An informal opportunity to chat, to ask questions, share ideas and network. Hosted by current RE leads with a range of experience
Improve your syllabus with Oak	Adam Robertson	1, 2	Using Oak's extensive, innovative and free primary RE resources to help teach the RE syllabus
RE and SIAMS in CofE schools	Paul Marvin Tracy Katy	1, 2	This session will explore how to teach good RE in CofE schools, with insights into how to understand the expectations of a SIAMS inspection
Religion and Worldviews - adapting your RE curriculum	Rebekah Guy, Cathy Collings	1, 2	This session will show teachers how to adapt their current RE curriculum towards a RWs approach
Ways of knowing: how to adapt and embed Disciplinary Characters into lessons	Abby Needs, Mary Patterson	1, 2, 3	This session will show how disciplinary characters lend themselves to a worldviews approach, relevant to local syllabuses, Oak resources and Understanding Christianity.
It's not 'Just RE': supporting the priorities in schools that matter most	Laura Harris	1, 2, 3, 4	How excellent RE strengthens wider priorities for school improvement, including personal development, culture, character, British values, wellbeing, SMSC and inspection outcomes across the whole school.
Sacred Questions, Digital Answers	Steve Gibson	1, 2, 3, 4	Investigating the ethics and use of AI in RE: looking at a wide range of resources (good and bad), equipping ourselves to make the most of the opportunities new tech provides, while also protecting against the potential pitfalls.
Understanding Muslim Practices: Prayer, Fasting and Eid	Norah El-Gohary	2, 3, 4	Join Norah for an engaging introduction to Muslim practices. Drawing on her experiences living in the UAE, Egypt and the UK, she brings personal insight into how shared Islamic practices are expressed in different cultural contexts, including customs, food and celebrations
Engaging with Buddhism	Taranita	3, 4	Taranita is a member of the Triratna Buddhist community. He will be speaking about his Buddhist practice, and explaining the impact his worldview has on the way he lives his life, in particular, what it means to be a practising Buddhist in the 21st century.
RE through a race-equality lens	Shammi Rahman	3, 4	Shammi will present a race-equality toolkit (co-designed with the late, great Dawn Cox). This useful tool aims to help RE teachers see things through the racial equity lens
Christianity as a global faith	Victoria Omotoso?	3, 4	A personal and research-informed exploration of Christianity as a Global World Faith, drawing on Victoria's experience as a British-Nigerian third-culture Christian and her research into cross-cultural audience reception of representations of Jesus.
Making non-examined RE meaningful - ways to engage at KS4	Caroline Smith, Leanne Murley	4	This session will explore different ways in which schools have approached their non-examined KS4 RE curriculums. We will share examples from a range of units including medical ethics and philosophy.

Are you an RE teacher with questions about Judaism?

A chance to ask anything you like...

Open to primary and secondary teachers who teach Judaism

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

Tues 17th Nov 2026, 3.45-4.45pm

Any question answered

BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
ADVOCACY | DEMOCRACY | COMMUNITY

by Anna Silver,
Education Officer

Monthly informal drop in session

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

For Zoom link see attached text

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

Message from the British Library to Secondary Teachers

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

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

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

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

Which Bible?

Rev Sam Sheppard explains:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pete Ens said

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And it's been influenced by later editors.

Simplistic readings of the bible are dangerous.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



FARMINGTON INSTITUTE

HARRIS MANCHESTER COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Have you considered a Farmington Scholarship?

Farmington scholarships support and encourage teachers and Head teachers working on values and standards.

Farmington scholarships open to Secondary and Primary teachers of RE and associated subjects

TEMPLE GROVE
SCHOOLS TRUST

Temple Grove Farmington scholarships are awarded to Primary teachers in any subject to promote excellence in education

Scan the QR code for more details and an application form

Applications close 24th January 2027

https://farmington.ac.uk

https://farmington.ac.uk/farmington-institute-scholarship/