

## National updates – Religious Education

### A national Plan for RE

The Religious Education Council for England and Wales has produced a one page overview of the national plan for RE in England (attached)

### Major report in to Hinduism in Religious Education in UK Schools (full report attached)

Some key areas of the report to bring to the attention of SACRE members:

In 2020, INSIGHT UK conducted a project with a team comprised of highly experienced members of the Hindu community, amongst which are well known academics, including professors and teachers. The project goal was to assess the current state of Hinduism in RE in UK schools and recommend changes to improve it.

This project was supported by Hindu Council UK, Hindu Forum of Britain, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK), National Council of Hindu Temples UK and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK). We are thankful to everyone who has contributed to this project.

#### Key Findings

The main findings from this survey concluded:

- 97% of survey respondents say it is important and paramount for their child to learn about Hinduism.
- 98% of survey respondents say the study of Hinduism in RE is low quality and deficient.
- 75% of respondents feel that Hinduism is not taught in a positive light.
- 86% of the respondents are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the teaching of Hinduism in schools within the United Kingdom.
- 76% of primary school parents are unhappy about RE teachers' knowledge of Hinduism.
- 81% of Key Stage 3 and 87% of Key Stage 4 parents are discontented about RE teachers' knowledge of Hinduism.
- There is growing evidence of inaccurate resources used by classroom teachers for teaching Hinduism.
- Hindu parents and pupils feel they do not have a choice to study Hinduism at GCSE level.

It found that the lack of awareness and an incorrect portrayal of Hinduism in RE results in:

1. Depriving students of a world view and understanding of the nature, diversity and impact of religion and belief in the contemporary world.
2. Depriving the knowledge of the world's third-largest religion which is

followed by one of the most contributing minority communities in the UK.

3. Insensitivity towards Hindu people and their beliefs resulting in bullying and hate crimes.

### Recommendations

The data is clear and unequivocal in highlighting that both the quality and availability of Hinduism in RE in the UK is poor. As a result, various recommendations have been drafted for different target groups as listed below.

#### SACRE

- Collaboration with the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (NASACRE) to ensure involvement with the newly formed Hindu board.
- Ensuring Hindu representation on each local SACRE with the involvement of Hindu temples.
- Building a pool of SACRE Hindu representatives that would help form a standardised syllabus, including training and annual conferences.
- Pushing for a syllabus that promotes a diverse portfolio of Hindu culture including Yoga, Meditation, Ayurveda and vegetarianism with a focus on teaching, not preaching.
- Ensuring Hinduism education resources are factual, credible and available in all UK schools

#### Schools

- Providing training for RE teachers to learn about Hinduism.
- Provide standardised resources for ease of teaching.
- Ensuring Hindu representation on school governing boards.
- Donation schemes for books and resources, for example, Hindu symbols, chanting beads, bells and other items to help teach.
- Encouraging cross-curricular activities like Yoga, Meditation, Vedic Maths, Sanskrit etc.
- Creation of a National Conference of Hindu Teachers.

### Context of York SACRE:

In January 2021 York SACRE through its partnership with LTLRE offered an online Hinduism subject knowledge workshop led by Iskcon services. 35 teachers from York and the surrounding areas attended.

There is currently a vacancy for a Hinduism representative on York SACRE. SACRE may wish to pursue finding a Hindu representative.

## Regional training for Schools through LTLRE and NATRE Regional Ambassador role

Due to the on-going challenges of predicting when larger gatherings can take place the LTLRE/NATRE regional conference will now be a Curriculum conversations series with a series of twilights between March and December 2021.

The curriculum conversations series is launching with Richard Kueh HMI and subject lead for RE leading a session on Ofsted and the curriculum for teachers in our region on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March

Kathryn Wright, CEO Culham St Gabriels, will follow in June with a session - Being ambitious: A religion and worldviews curriculum for all

Following these first two sessions there will be an online 'conversation' for teachers to reflect on their learning from the sessions and network regionally.

In the Autumn term there will be a primary stream and secondary stream of curriculum conversations.

Primary	Secondary
Designing an Effective RE Curriculum Gillian Georgiou	From conversation to implementation: constructing an RE curriculum Ben Wood
Engaging in research in the primary RE classroom Emma Salter	Engaging in research in the secondary RE classroom Kathryn Wright
EYFS and the RE curriculum – Catriona Card	A-level – Rachel Jackson-Royal
Anti-racist RE – Saima Saleh	Anti-racist RE – Ashish Kundi
Text and story – Fiona Moss	Diversity in Islam Zameer Hussain

The RE curriculum in special schools – Anne Krisman
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There will also be a second regional conversation for the primary and secondary streams to reflect on their learning.

For further information do contact Olivia Seymour regional ambassador for RE  
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