

A National Plan for RE in England

In its Final Report, The Commission on RE (2018) proposes that a **new National Plan for RE** (Religious Education) should be enacted to ensure that learning in this area remains academically rigorous and a knowledge-rich preparation for life in a world of great diversity of religion and belief..

There are three components to the National Plan for RE.

1. A new vision. The subject should explore the important role that religious¹ and non-religious² worldviews play in all human life. This means enabling all pupils to become open-minded, critical participants of public discourse, who make academically informed judgements about important matters of religion and belief which shape the global landscape. It is a subject for all pupils, whatever their own family background and personal beliefs and practices. To reflect this new emphasis, we propose that the subject should be called **Religion and Worldviews**.

2. All pupils should have access to high quality teaching, whatever school they attend. For this reason it is proposed that a statutory **National Entitlement** [see summary below] should apply to all state-funded schools and that this should be subject to inspection. Schools should be required to publish details of how they provide this Entitlement. This Entitlement encapsulates a common vision within which schools will be able to develop their own approach appropriate to their character. Furthermore, national programmes of study should be developed to support schools in their work.

A summary of the proposed National Entitlement to Religion and Worldviews

Pupils are entitled to be taught, by well qualified and resourced teachers, knowledge and understanding about:

- a. what religion³ is and worldviews⁴ are, and how they are studied;
- b. the impact of religion and worldviews on individuals, communities and societies;
- c. the diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews in society;
- d. the concepts, language and ways of knowing⁵ that help us organise and make sense of our knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews;
- e. the human quest for meaning, so that they are prepared for life in a diverse world and have space to recognise, reflect on and take responsibility for the development of their own personal worldview

3. There should be a significant investment in ensuring two essential structures for this new way forward:

First, **highly qualified, and knowledgeable teachers** will be required to achieve this new vision. A sustained programme of investment in teacher education, linked to the early career framework, and ongoing professional development is essential to achieve this.

Second, local communities have played a significant role in supporting RE in the past. We propose that the **structures that made this possible should be re-envisioned** to enable this important contribution to continue.

The Commission on RE (2018) National Plan can be read in full here:

<https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/final-report-religion-and-worldviews-the-way-forward-a-national-plan-for-re/>

¹ An example of a religious worldview could be a Muslim worldview

² An example of a non-religious worldview could be a Humanist worldview

³ Religion is used here as a concept. i.e. pupils study the nature of religion itself, as a concept.

⁴ Worldviews refers to religious and non-religious worldviews, both organised and personal. The complex, diverse and plural nature of worldviews is implied in this term.

⁵ For example, different disciplines such as social sciences, history, theology and philosophy