

## Regional and National updates

### Kim Leadbeater, MP for Batley and Spennings Dale asked the following Parliamentary Question on RE

NATRE were very pleased to see that after their joint meeting with Kim Leadbeater MP, with the REC and RE Today she asked a series of questions of the DfE. The new Minister for School Standards; Robin Walker MP, gave an extremely fulsome and positive reply. We will continue to press for a meeting with him. Good to see he is clear on the value of RE and it will be interesting to teachers to note the change in focus from the current DfE Ministerial Team in relation to the value of our subject.

#### Question from Kim Leadbeater, MP for Batley and Spennings Dale

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the societal value for young people of religious education; and if he will make a statement.

#### Answered by Robin Walker, MP for Worcester and Minister of State for School Standards, on 9 November 2021

The government firmly believes that religious education (RE) is important. Good quality RE is essential in developing children's knowledge of British values and traditions, and those of other countries. RE is a vital part of fostering understanding among different faiths and beliefs, which is why it is a compulsory subject for all state-funded schools up to the age of 18.

Department officials engage regularly with key RE stakeholders, including the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education as the main subject association for RE in England. When teaching RE, schools should consider how their curriculum can develop social skills and empathy, as well as equip children and young people with the skills for living and working in a diverse society. For older pupils, RE should also focus on developing skills that are useful in a wide range of careers and adult life, and in particular the skills of critical enquiry, creative problem-solving and communication in a variety of media.

In school life, RE can develop and nuance the skills required for other parts of the school curriculum such as history, citizenship, and personal, social, health and economic education.

RE is an important subject, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society, as well as serving to inform their own values and behaviour. RE can also contribute to pupils' personal development and well-being by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. It is an important contributor to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, which schools are required to facilitate as per the Education Act 2002. Studying RE can also serve to improve community cohesion, providing a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination.

### Muslim Council of Britain Visiting a Mosque resource



The “**Visiting a Mosque: RE Teachers Resources**” pack is intended to support and empower Religious Education (RE) Teachers in organising and delivering school visits to Places of Worship such as mosques.

Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, “in-person” visits to Places of Worship such as mosques were paused. As a result, signposting to “virtual” mosque tours has been included in this pack as an additional resource and to increase familiarity and

confidence when organising in-person visits. To find out more visit the website here:  
<https://www.visitmosque.org/for-re-teachers/>

### Cambridge in the Classroom

Experts from the faculty of divinity and the faculty of education have put together films answering some big questions of religion, philosophy and ethics. Whilst designed for use with secondary students aged 14-18 they are also useful for teacher subject knowledge. To find out more visit the website: <https://www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/study-here/open-days/cambridge-your-classroom>



### Farmington Fellowships



Applications for the 2022/23 Farmington Scholarships are now open. These are Scholarships available to teachers of religious education and associated subjects in UK secondary, primary, and special needs schools. Head teachers who wish to undertake research into either religious education or values education are also eligible to apply.

Scholarships cover the cost of tuition, essential local travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale. Scholarships last for a maximum of 30 days and can either be taken at a local university (we have links with 13 throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) or can be home-based with a local tutor. Further information and an application form can be found on our website  
<http://www.farmington.ac.uk/index.php/farmington-scholarships/>