



The Diocesan
Board of
Education

RE News

Welcome to a new academic year with all the opportunities and challenges it will inevitably present!

This edition of RE News explores the recently published National Content Standard for RE and considers its implications for our work as RE leaders and teachers. It also introduces a new resource to support you to develop your approach to assessing RE effectively.

As ever, if you have anything to share in the next edition of RE News, please do get in touch. I look forward to hearing from you!

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Special points of interest

- Celebrating excellent practice in RE
- The latest news and views from around the country
- Exciting new resources to support you in the classroom

National Content Standard for RE

In September 2023, the RE Council of England and Wales launched the National Content Standard for RE. This non-statutory document seeks to provide consistency across the country and has the support of a wide range of RE-related organisations, including the National Society, the education wing of the Church of England.

Unlike other subjects on the broad and balanced curriculum, RE is designated locally rather than nationally. There are also different rules for different kinds of schools in relation to the RE curriculum. This has led to inconsistency for both teachers and pupils. It also has meant that there is a lack of agreement about what a high quality education looks like in RE. The national content standard for RE attempts to address this by providing clarity on standards in RE. It has drawn on a number of key documents including the recommendations set out by the Commission on RE in 2018, and the draft national statement of entitlement that was produced as part of the [curriculum resource](#) developed in response to this report.

The National Content Standard for RE has been set out in the same format as that of a National

Curriculum Programme of Study, but with one important difference: unlike the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, the National Content Standard does not designate what content should be taught as part of the RE curriculum. Instead, it provides principles for the selection of content that reflect the complex legal structures around this subject. As Deborah Weston puts it,

*“The expectation is not that all schools will include certain content in developing their curriculum for RE, but rather that the curriculum they develop will be comparable in **breadth, depth and ambition** to the standards exemplified in the National Content Standard.”* To put it another way, it is about the standards, not the stuff.

The document also contains several useful appendices that outline the various legal duties in relation to RE, including guidance for voluntary controlled schools, voluntary aided schools, schools of religious character and academies.

You can find the National Content Standard for RE [here](#).



— [“It’s about the standards, not the stuff...”] —

The National Content standard draws on the draft National Statement of Entitlement included in the [curriculum guidance resource](#) produced as part of the Worldviews Project:

CONTENT	
Core statements	Expanded statements
a. Nature/formation/expression What is meant by worldview and how people's worldviews are formed and expressed through a complex mix of influences and experiences	The nature and variety of worldviews, and how people's worldviews are formed through a complex mix of influences and experiences, including (for example) rituals, practices, texts, teachings, stories, inspiring individuals, the creative arts, family, tradition, culture, and everyday experiences and actions. How these may also act as ways of expressing and communicating worldviews.
b. Organised/individual How people's individual worldviews relate to wider, organised or institutional worldviews	How people's individual worldviews relate to wider, organised or institutional worldviews (e.g. how individual worldviews may be consciously held or tacit; how individual and organised worldviews are dynamic; how individual worldviews may overlap to a greater or lesser extent with organised worldviews)
c. Contexts How worldviews have contexts, reflecting time and place, are highly diverse, and feature continuity and change.	How worldviews have contexts, reflecting their time and place, shaping and being shaped by these, maintaining continuity and also changing; how they are highly diverse and often develop in interaction with each other. (This applies to organised worldviews as well as to individual worldviews.)
d. Meaning and purpose How worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions raised by human experience	How worldviews may offer responses to fundamental questions raised by human experience, such as questions of existence, meaning, purpose, knowledge, truth, identity and diversity. How worldviews may play different roles in providing people with ways of making sense of existence and/or their lives, including space for mystery, ambiguity and paradox.
e. Values, commitments and morality How worldviews may provide guidance on how to live a good life	How worldviews may provide a vision of, and guidance on, how to be a good person and live a good life, and may offer ideas of justice, right and wrong, value, beauty, truth and goodness. How individuals and communities may express their values through their commitments.
f. Influence and power How worldviews influence, and are influenced by, people and societies	How worldviews influence people (e.g. providing a 'grand narrative' or story for understanding the world) and influence the exercise of power in societies (e.g. on social norms for communities, or in relation to conflict or peace-making). How society and people can also influence and shape worldviews.
ENGAGEMENT	
Core statements	Expanded statements
g. Ways of knowing The field of study of worldviews is to be explored using diverse ways of knowing.	The field of study of worldviews is to be explored using diverse ways of knowing. Questions and methods should be carefully chosen, recognising that there are different understandings of what knowledge is deemed reliable, valid, credible, truthful etc.
h. Lived experience The field of study of worldviews is to include a focus on the lived experience of people.	The field of study of worldviews is to include a focus on the lived experience of people (e.g. religious, non-religious, embodied, diverse, fluid, material, experiential) in relation to local and global contexts, recognising the complex reality of worldviews as they are held, shared and expressed by people in real life.
i. Dialogue/interpretation The field of study of worldviews is to be shown as a dynamic area of debate.	The field of study of worldviews is to be encountered as a dynamic area of dialogue and debate, and one which engages with practices of interpretation and judgement within and between religious and non-religious communities.
POSITION	
Core statements	Expanded statements
j. Personal worldviews: reflexivity Pupils will reflect on and potentially develop their personal worldviews in the light of their study.	Pupils will come to understand their own worldview in greater depth, and how it relates to the worldviews of others, becoming more reflective and reflexive. As they develop this awareness of their positionality in relation to that of others, they will make informed judgements on how (far) this understanding prepares them for life in a diverse world
k. Personal worldviews: impact Pupils will reflect on how their worldviews affect their learning	Pupils will develop their understanding of how their encounters with the subject content of RE are affected and shaped by their worldviews, whether conscious or not, and that this is also true for everyone else. They will reflect on how (far) their learning may have an impact on their worldview.

Questions for Reflection

How far does our current RE curriculum reflect these three elements of Content, Engagement and Position?

Do we have any areas that need to be a focus of development during this academic year?

What support might we need to ensure that our RE curriculum meets the National Content Standard for RE?

IN CONVERSATION ABOUT ASSESSMENT AND RE

During the academic year 2022-23, a group of primary RE leaders and teachers across Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire took part in an action research project led by Gillian Georgiou, Diocesan RE Adviser, exploring the practices around assessing RE. This project included a review of existing research and practice in the area and then the trialling of various approaches to assessment. It sought to consider how teachers might assess progress in relation to the different forms of knowledge outlined in the [Ofsted RE Research Review](#) (2021), with a particular focus on substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

The action research team was made up of 23 RE leaders and teachers, representing church and community schools and academies. This included schools with single-form entry and those with mixed-age or –phase classes. The team split into two groups: one explored assessment in relation to substantive knowledge and the other focused on assessing disciplinary knowledge.

The project arrived at several key conclusions in relation to current assessment practices in RE. This included an acknowledgement that these practices are often too onerous, too unrelated to curriculum content and often lacking in validity. It also identified that it is very difficult to assess something if it is not explicitly taught—this was particularly pertinent to disciplinary knowledge in RE. As a result, the research team developed the use of three characters, Theo, Livvy and Sophie, who exemplified the three disciplinary fields of study in RE, and used these as part of ongoing teaching practice.

We have put together a professional development resource that engages with this research to enable you to reflect on the assessment practices used in your context. The resource includes an introduction to current research and thinking in this area, a series of video interviews with our teacher researchers including scaffolded questions for reflection, and samples of the teaching and assessment activities used during the project, along with examples of pupils' work and the teacher researchers' professional reflection.

If you would like to access this resource, please complete the order form [here](#). For further information about this work, or to participate in the next phase of action research, please email the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.



EXPLORING WORLDVIEWS

Year 6 pupils from North Thoresby Primary Academy and Utterby Primary Academy recently joined students from Waltham Tollbar Secondary Academy to participate in a joint interfaith event. They had the opportunity to meet with members of local faith communities and were able to explore a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Julie Childs (RE Subject Leader at North Thorseby and Utterby Primary Academies) and Liam Walker (Head of Humanities at Waltham Tollbar Secondary Academy) organised the event together after discussions about ways in which they might support the transition between KS2 and KS3. Liam commented, “We set the event up as a way to celebrate this year’s Interfaith Week by bringing in different voices from the local community.”

If you would be interested in finding out more or planning a similar event, please contact the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.



RE QUALITY MARK

The RE Quality Mark recognises high-quality RE and is recognised as a mark of good practice in schools and academies across the country. Schools that engage with the process have found that it raises the profile of the subject and is a useful source of professional development for RE leaders and teachers. Seeking to attain the RE Quality Mark provides schools and academies with the opportunity to celebrate commitment to excellence in RE within and beyond the classroom.

It is possible to access the application materials without cost; these materials provide an excellent

framework for measuring, planning and developing the quality of RE leadership, teaching and learning.

It is wonderful to be able to congratulate the schools across our region that have achieved the RE Quality Mark. If you would be interested in finding out more about the process, please see [here](#) or get in touch with the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.



ASSOCIATE DIOCESAN RE ADVISERS

Welcome to our Associate Diocesan RE Advisers! They are all experienced and passionate RE leaders who are here to help you. If you would like one of them to visit your school, please email gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.



Hi, I'm Sally Brooman and I work at St Peter and St Paul's CE Primary in Scunthorpe. I've worked there as RE subject lead for 10 years and I've been teaching for 20 years in church schools, leading RE for much of my time in school. It was a great RE teacher who gave me my passion for the subject and I want to inspire pupils and staff to enjoy, understand and develop their own love of RE. As a subject leader, I've worked in partnership with several schools locally, enabling them to develop their RE curriculum whilst having the opportunity to evaluate together. I often work in collaboration with one of our peer leader schools and we have worked on many areas of RE, including the dreaded "A" word - assessment! I have also been an SLE for RE with a local teaching school. As well as this, I am part of the Worldviews Project—a national project looking at developing a curriculum framework based on the draft National Statement of Entitlement for RE. I absolutely love leading RE and have been so lucky to meet many passionate leaders along the way!

Hello, I am Julie Childs and I currently work across Utterby and North Thoresby Primary Academies. I lead the primary RE network for my MAT of 32 primary schools and serve on North East Lincolnshire SACRE. I am part of the NATRE executive committee and will also be a part of the executive committee steering group from March. I have been a part of the action research project on assessment, completed a Farmington and have been a part of the CSTG leadership program. I have worked in every year group for nursery to Year 6, as well as working in both small and large school settings. I am looking forward to working alongside other RE teachers and leaders across the region as an Associate Diocesan RE Adviser.



Hello, my name is Natasha Selby. I have been the RE Lead at Barrowby Church of England Primary School for the past eleven years.

As a child, I always enjoyed RE lessons and was fascinated by different religions and beliefs. I went on to study RE further, both at GCSE level and A Level. I was fortunate enough to have been taught by some incredible RE teachers who truly inspired me. It remains my favourite subject to teach and lead and I am proud of all that we have achieved in recent years.

As RE lead, I have redesigned our RE curriculum, delivered training to staff, monitored RE throughout the school, supported teaching staff in the planning and delivery of RE, achieved gold in the RE Quality Mark, worked closely with other RE leads in our local collaboration group and led an RE cluster for schools in and around Grantham, where we continue to meet termly. I have thoroughly enjoyed this role in school and look forward to working with other RE subject leaders across the region.





RE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

[Empowering Voices](#) is a series of podcasts that explore lived examples of religious and non-religious worldviews. Each podcast includes an audio play, an 'in conversation' that explores the themes of the play and an immersive soundscape; free lesson suggestions sit alongside this to support you to use the podcasts in the classroom.



[True Tube](#) provides free, award-winning video resources to support teaching about a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews. These are regularly updated and can be used across primary and secondary settings.



The [Faith and Belief Forum](#) have created a wide range of resources to support RE teachers to explore religious and non-religious worldviews with pupils in safe and respectful spaces. This includes materials to support skills for dialogue for both primary and secondary schools.



[RE:Online](#) provides a wide range of supporting materials for RE leaders and teachers, including comprehensive knowledge overviews for a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews.



Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

Date	Time	Training
23rd November 2023	4pm—6pm	RE Curriculum Virtual Session
30th January 2024	1.30pm—3pm	RE Cluster Meeting Virtual Session
6th February 2024	1.30pm—3.30pm	Developing Knowledge in RE Virtual Session
12th March 2024	4pm—6pm	Developing Knowledge in RE (<i>repeat session</i>) Virtual Session

The Diocesan RE Adviser is happy to carry out bespoke training on:

- ⇒ RE subject leadership
- ⇒ Types of knowledge in the RE curriculum
- ⇒ RE subject knowledge (religious and non-religious worldviews)
- ⇒ Developing disciplinary knowledge in RE
- ⇒ RE and assessment
- ⇒ A worldviews approach to RE

She is also able to work alongside RE subject leaders to carry out RE reviews and provide RE curriculum support in schools, academies and MATs.

For more information, see our 2023/4 service level agreement [here](#) and our 2023/4 MAT partnership agreement [here](#).

For further details, please email the Diocesan RE Adviser at gillian.georgiou@lincoln.anglican.org.

To book, please see our [website](#).