

Introduction

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The background to the guidance

Much of the material and many of the ideas in this guidance are drawn from the report *Materials used to Teach about World Religions in Schools in England*, published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, since renamed DfE) in January 2010.

The report (hereafter 'Warwick Report') was the product of a large-scale research project carried out by a team based at the University of Warwick and led by Professor Robert Jackson. The full 223-page report, together with an executive summary and appendices, can be downloaded from www.dcsf.gov.uk/research.

The decision by the DCSF to commission and fund this large-scale research project was prompted by a number of factors, including:

- the widespread focus in school RE programmes on world religions (in particular on the six 'principal' religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism)
- a concern that the balance between 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion be maintained in RE
- an increasing global awareness of the role of religion in society in general, and in community cohesion in particular
- a growing recognition of the role of schools in promoting community cohesion through three key areas of their life and work, one of which is teaching and learning (including RE as a key contributor)
- a concern that society and its schools should have a role in combating the growth of violent extremism.

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Who produced this guidance?

In March 2010, DCSF commissioned the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) to produce 'an online resource to help teachers at both primary and secondary level to choose effective resources to use in RE'.

In compiling this resource, a wide range of people, some of whom had been involved in the original research project, was consulted, including:

Phil Albans,
NATRE Network member

Lat Blaylock,*
RE Adviser, RE Today Services

Lynne Broadbent,
Independent RE Consultant

Claire Clinton,
Independent RE Consultant,
NATRE Network member

Andrew Copson,
CEO, British Humanist
Association

Dr Harriet Crabtree,
Director, Inter Faith Network

Dr Nigel Fancourt,
University of Warwick

Dave Francis,*
Independent RE Consultant,
NATRE Executive member

Helen Harrison,
RE Adviser,
Lancashire Local Authority

Munisha,
Education Officer,
The Clear Vision Trust

Paul Hopkins,*
Independent RE Consultant,
NATRE Executive member

Christine Howard,*
Articles of Faith

Dr Julia Ipgrave,
University of Warwick

Professor Robert Jackson,
University of Warwick

Carol Khorsandyon,
Bahà'ì Faith

Anne Krisman,
RE teacher,
NATRE Executive member

Juliet Lyal,
RE teacher,
NATRE Executive member

Samina Malik,
Community Cohesion Unit,
Department for Education

Sally McCamley,
Headteacher,
NATRE Executive member

Heather Marshall,
RE teacher,
NATRE Executive member

Jon Mayled,
Independent RE Consultant,
NATRE Network member

David Morton,
Director, Stapleford Centre

Fiona Moss,
RE Adviser, RE Today Services

Professor Eleanor Nesbitt,
University of Warwick

Stephen Pett,*
RE Adviser, RE Today Services

Rosemary Rivett,
Director of Professional
Services, RE Today

Linda Rudge,
University of East Anglia

Joy Schmack,
Liverpool Hope University

Dr Stephen Vickers,
Bahà'ì Religious
Education Agency

Kathryn Wright,
Independent RE Consultant

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