**Slough SACRE RE Newsletter Spring 2025**

Happy New Year! We hope that you all had a good Christmas break and arrive back at school at least refreshed if not fully rested; it is hardly a quiet time of year!

**Professional Development**

*There are plenty of opportunities for CPD for RE teachers, either in the shape of training events, or online support and resources.*

**Last chance to enrol on the Pan-Berks CPD event on the 27th March.**

To register for the conference, please contact Slough SACRE at **Democracy@slough.gov.uk** to book your place, giving your name and school. Initially places are limited to one per school, but there may be some spare available if the allocation of 26 to each SACRE is not is not fully taken up. Please also provide your dietary requirements.



**Slough RE Network meeting**

We are holding the next network meeting on **Weds 26th February** from 4-5pm. The meeting will be on Zoom so please email me (bjvmoore@justbmoore.com) for the link, stating your name and school. It is for both primary and secondary teachers and subject leads.. One of the things we will discuss is whether we look to have separate primary and secondary meetings, joint, or a combination over the year. We will also discuss the new agreed syllabus and training, issues that you wish to bring to the network and plans for the future. It might also be beneficial to consider whether some or all networks are held face-to-face in a school.

We keep repeating this, but membership of NATRE is such a good source of support and development. Individual membership runs from £90 per year and school membership from £170. <https://www.natre.org.uk/membership/schools/> This includes a termly mailing and access to materials on their website, plus discounts.

Specific aspects include:

A monthly webinar for those [new2RE](https://www.natre.org.uk/membership/early-careers-teachers/ect-free-monthly-webinar/) plus other courses, support and resources. The site is open access, but membership gives greater support and materials.

 **Strictly RE 2025** - live in Birmingham. Is anyone going? If so, I will be there and it would be good to meet. I will feed back at the network meeting.

****[**REOnline**](https://www.reonline.org.uk/research/engaging-with-research/conferences/rexchange-2024/) also provides excellent support both for subject leaders and for teachers. Have a look at **their** [**Leadership scholarship Programme**.](https://www.reonline.org.uk/2024/12/30/what-has-the-leadership-scholarship-programme-ever-done-for-you/)  Applications open on January 20th and close on 21st March. Theye will be holding a [webinar](https://www.cstg.org.uk/activities/events/leadership-scholarship-programme-webinar/) on **Thursday 13th February 4.30-5.30pm**. Is this something you feel would help in your next career move?

Here is a link to the [**Festival calendar**](https://www.reonline.org.uk/festival-calendar/?filters=%7B%22january%22%3A%7B%22term_id%22%3A%2249%22%2C%22taxonomy%22%3A%22months%22%7D%7D)on their website.



**Free Welcome to Worldviews CPD sessions in Spring Term 2025**

Jigsaw RE’s Welcome to Worldviews series is specifically designed to help empower teachers to teach high quality RE by addressing the two key issues of subject knowledge and teacher confidence. By providing free, worldview specific webinars, delivered and written by our team of specialist RE advisors, we aim to provide more teachers with the CPD they need to confidently fully embed a range of worldviews in their RE curriculum. Children will therefore gain a broader understanding of the world around them, as well as develop their own worldview, enabling them to foster tolerance and respect in their day-to-day lives.

16/1 – [Sikhi](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpcuusqjwiHNJVYIJg9CLJvIvo8081be8G#/registration); 21/1 – [Christianity](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZErdOqqqTkqHNFKx1_F_qIrrqYLOxYJJ-Zq#/registration); 23/1 – [Islam](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIpc-qvpzIjE9Z4AA6GB8qFkE6gRbbbZ3jI#/registration); 30/1 – [Judaism](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApfu6rrj0uHdfofjgD1gYtxaL4I574EArS#/registration); 13/2 – [Buddhism](https://d.docs.live.net/1d60487a34ddf149/Documents/0%20work/00%20SACREs/01%20Bucks%20SACRE/00%20RE%40Bucks/Newsletters/2024-25/RE%40Bucks%20Autumn%202024.docx); 6/3 – [Humanism](https://d.docs.live.net/1d60487a34ddf149/Documents/0%20work/00%20SACREs/01%20Bucks%20SACRE/00%20RE%40Bucks/Newsletters/2024-25/RE%40Bucks%20Autumn%202024.docx);

13/3 – [Sanatana Dharma](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUuce2tpz4pGdxnpQ3qYmOFTnMPxd1aJGrG#/registration) (Hinduism); 20/3 – Ethical Veganism; 3/4 - [Baha’i](https://jigsaweducationgroup.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUuce2tpz4pGdxnpQ3qYmOFTnMPxd1aJGrG#/registration)

**Please note that the trainings are recorded and can be accessed after the event on their** [**YouTube**](https://www.youtube.com/%40JigsawEducationGroup/videos) **account.**

**Farmington Scholarships 2025-26**

These have been career changers for some and professional boosts for everyone involved. This is probably the CPD Gold-Standard not just in the RE world, but in education as a whole. They are fully funded and allow for research into an area of interest to you. The closing date for applications is the end of January 2025.
[Scholarships - Farmington Institute](https://farmington.ac.uk/re-teachers/)

**The national RE Hub**

NATRE and the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) are collaborating to run regional hubs. These can be accessed [here](https://www.re-hubs.uk/). They will be a one-stop access to a range of support, information and training. Of particular interest are their CPD section [‘Up-Skilling’](https://www.re-hubs.uk/upskill/) , Places of interest and school speakers.

**Up-coming national events**:

**Holocaust Memorial Day 27th Jan 2025
‘For a better future’**

“This Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp complex, and the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

“There are many things we can all do to create a better future. We can speak up against Holocaust and genocide denial and distortion; we can challenge prejudice; we can encourage others to learn about the Holocaust and more recent genocides.”

**School resources can be found** [**here**](https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/schools/)**.**

**Holocaust Educational Trust**

The Holocaust Educational Trust also provides prograammes, resources and trainig. [Holocaust Educational Trust - Outreach Programme (het.org.uk)](https://www.het.org.uk/education/outreach-programme)

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**Spirited Arts 2025**

The new 2025 themes:

* Living in a Diverse World
* Stories that Change Lives
* Thinking about God
* Sacred Places
* All God's Creatures?
* Making Sense of Life

**A reminder about curriculum plans.**

Schools must publish their curriculum on their website, providing an overview of each subject curriculum for each year group along with the curriculum intent, implementation and impacts statements. This includes RE. **Sough SACRE will be monitoring schools’ curriculum so that we can identify good practice and any support that might be needed.**

**RE pedagogy**

**Socratic questioning**

‘I consider that questions are the lifeblood for RE’ (Moss F ‘Engaging Children Creatively’ in Elton-Chalcraft (ed) ‘Teaching RE creatively’ Routledge 2015 p67)

We all know that questions lie at the heart of teaching and learning in RE, especially within an enquiry approach to the subject. One strategy that many teachers use in the classroom is Socratic questioning. This was the subject of a recent editorial (28/12/24) in the TES <https://www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/general/what-is-socratic-questioning>

The following is an extract from that article.

‘Teachers facilitate (and model) meaningful dialogue that steps away from simple factual answers. They can do this by assuming a position of ignorance on a topic and challenging students to take the knowledgeable role in the exploration of an idea.

As such, all responses should be met with a further question. These questions should be used to:

* **Promote clarification of a response:** “Why do you say that?” or “Could you explain that further?”
* **Interrogate assumptions:** “Is that always the case?” or “How valid are your reasons for thinking this?”
* **Explore a variety of viewpoints and perspectives:** “Is that the only way to see this?” or “Would\_\_\_\_\_\_ agree with you?”
* **Encourage investigation into implications and consequences:** “What would be the knock-on effect?” of “Would that be the best outcome?”
* **Question the original question:** “Why do you think I asked that question?” or “What was the real question we were answering?”

Encouraging these questions in smaller group and paired discussion will build inquiring mindsets and develop students’ own critical voices, forcing them to think more independently.’

Is this something that would be helpful in your RE classroom? Is this something you already use in RE? If so, would you be willing to share how you do so and its impact in RE?

**School’s news and events!**

**Slough Eton Celebrates Interfaith Week: ‘Sharing Stories, Building Futures’**

From the 10th to the 17th of November, Slough Eton proudly celebrated **Interfaith Week 2024**, centred around the theme *‘Sharing My Story, Building Our Future.’* This inspiring week was dedicated to fostering empathy, understanding, and social cohesion while encouraging students to explore and appreciate the rich tapestry of faiths and beliefs within our school and beyond.

Engaging Activities Across Departments

Our cross-curricular approach brought Interfaith Week to life:

* **English Department:** Year 7 students showcased their creativity in a poetry competition, exploring themes of unity, diversity, and shared understanding.
* **Art Department:** Students created stunning portraits inspired by the interfaith theme, using art as a medium to celebrate harmony and connection.
* **Music Department:** The choir prepared a moving Christmas song and participated in the **William Herschel Project**, blending music with themes of interfaith respect and celebration.

Exploring the Multi-Faith Room

Key Stage 3 students had the opportunity to visit our **multi-faith room**, a dedicated space for spiritual well-being and reflection.

* Students received a presentation from **AWI** about the room’s purpose and how it supports the Slough Eton community.
* They participated in an activity to explore how the room could be used for prayer, mindfulness, and reflection.
* A favourite element of the visit was interacting with **artefacts from various faiths and traditions**, sparking meaningful conversations and curiosity.

Whole-School Initiatives

* **Get Talking Monday:** Discussions during this special session highlighted the importance of **Interfaith Week** and connected it with the themes of **Remembrance Day**, fostering reflection on unity and shared humanity.
* **Interfaith Society Contributions:** The society organized vibrant displays at reception and designed a quiz for tutor groups to encourage interactive learning about faith and beliefs.
* **Student Leadership:** Students took an active role by volunteering in the multi-faith room during KS3 visits, sharing insights and ensuring a welcoming environment for all.

A Celebration of Unity

Interfaith Week at Slough Eton was a remarkable celebration of diversity, creativity, and inclusion. Through a variety of activities, students deepened their understanding of different faiths while building connections that will shape a stronger, more unified future.

**The following is a stunning example of what can be achieved by our pupils if we provide the opportunity across the whole school. Saarah Butt you have excelled!**

**First Prize for poetry: ‘Faith’ by Saarah Butt 7 King**

In the garden of faith where hearts intertwine

Under the vast sky, our sparks align

With whispers of peace, like a gentle breeze,

We gather together, united with ease.

From the call of the Muezzin to Church bell chimes

Different paths converge, transcending all time

woven with threads of respect

We honour each story, each soul we connect

With open hands reaching and eyes that can see

In the embrace of diversity, we find unity

For in every belief, there’s a common refrain

A quest for compassion, a love that remains

*Do you have anything to share with slough schools and SACRE? If so, please email to me*

SACRE will continue its work of supporting and monitoring the provision of RE in Slough schools.

We would love to hear from you**! If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter, or have a suggestion for a pedagogical theme, or want to share something with other schools, please get in touch!**

Best wishes for the new year!

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