

Religion and Worldviews in schools

A resource pack for
Community Groups
(Religious and Non-Religious)

The
Faith
& Belief
Forum



inform



The Open
University

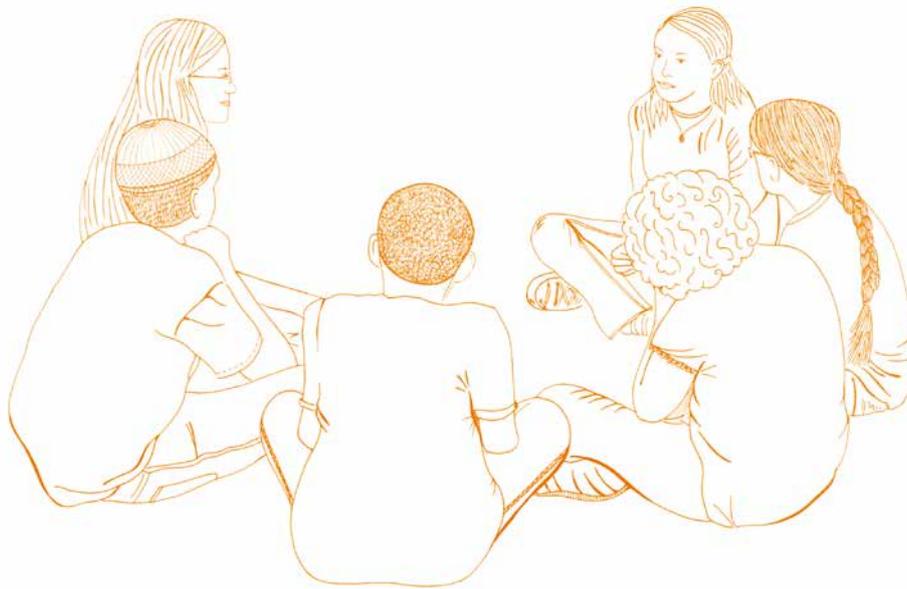
Get involved with RE in schools

Our research suggested that community groups really wanted to work with schools and parents to promote community cohesion and a greater appreciation of the variety of lived beliefs and practices in their local community. This booklet has some specific suggestions on how to make that happen.



Local Schools

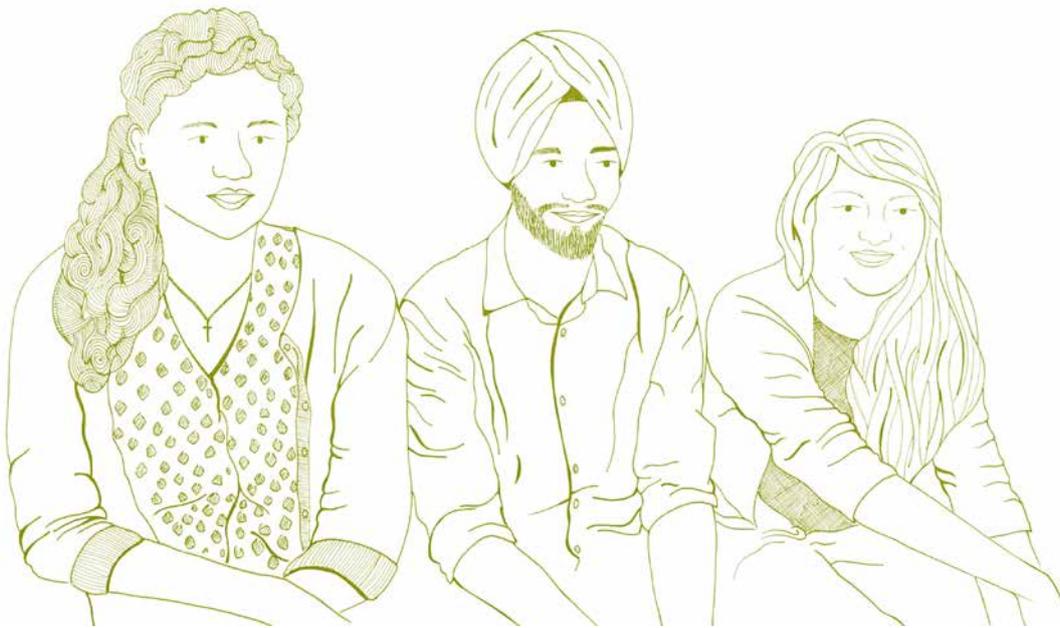
If you're a parent or have a connection to a local school, you could get in touch to see if you can help share resources, or organise field trips or events. Many teachers do welcome interest and involvement in their subjects and building connections to the local community but they can be pressed for time. Don't be afraid to find out who is in charge of teaching Religious Education at your local school and ask to have a chat with that person and / or the head of the school.



If you are a local religious or non-religious organisation you could offer to:

- Come into the school to talk about how your beliefs and practices are important in your decisions
- Offer places of worship for student field trips
- Explore how diverse communities of multiple faith and belief backgrounds can work together on a shared social problem or doing an enjoyable activity

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)



Get in touch with your local **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)** to find out more about what they do and the relationship with your local school. Every local authority area has a SACRE in order to ensure that what is taught best reflects the local community and works to improve the teaching of RE and collective worship in a local area.

Your SACRE consists of people from the local community, representatives of different local faith groups, as well as non-religious groups and local teachers. You can find the contact details of your local SACRE listed by local authority area [here](http://www.nasacre.org.uk/database) (www.nasacre.org.uk/database).

National Networking

You could look into what local organisations promote community spirit in your local area and enquire about their efforts at improving the quality of understanding of religion and worldviews.

A leading national organisation which facilitates best practice networking and the promotion of social cohesion in local areas is the **Faith & Belief Forum** (www.faithbeliefforum.org/join). Even if you're a community group that is not 'religious' in nature, but work to promote social cohesion in a multicultural context, they can help with building connections to local schools. There are also likely to be grassroots interfaith groups in your local area.



One of the major national networks for mainstream faiths is the **Interfaith Network** (www.interfaith.org.uk) which works to promote understanding, cooperation and good relations between organisations and persons of different faiths in the UK. Their regular newsletter carries information about inter faith projects, relevant national updates, research projects, funding opportunities, and upcoming inter faith events and they have a number of resources to assist those working to build good interfaith relations on their **Publications** page.

Support wider campaigns to improve RE in schools:

The Religious Education Council is campaigning to improve the standards of RE in schools. Take a look at their 2022 report card [here](http://www.rethinkre.org/re-report-card) (www.rethinkre.org/re-report-card), a five year state of RE report, grading the performance of schools, government and the subject itself.

You can write to your local MP to ask them to support Religious Education in Parliament. Explain why working together as part of a diverse society is a crucial skill valued by employees and community organisations. You can find your MP and their contact details by entering your postcode [here](http://www.theyworkforyou.com) (www.theyworkforyou.com).

A [sample letter to your MP](#) to adjust:

You can write to your local MP to ask them to support Religious Education in Parliament. Please copy this message and contact your MP directly by entering your postcode in the box below the message.

Sample letter to your MP to adjust:

My name is [insert name] and I [am one of your constituents]/[have children that go to school] in [insert name of constituency]. I am concerned about the lack of government investment and oversight in ensuring high-quality education in religion and worldviews for my children. Did you know that:

- Nearly two thirds (64%) of the UK adult population think that an education in religion and worldviews (or RE) is an important part of the school curriculum today
- A further 65% agree that the subject has an impact on people's ability to understand each other in wider society.

Despite this clear expression of value by the UK public:

1. No government money has been spent on projects specifically designed to support RE in the last five years.
2. The Department of Education has missed its recruitment target for secondary RE teachers in 9 of the last 10 years.
3. In 2020-21 the Department of Education has failed to include RE in the list of subjects attracting Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Bursaries giving trainee teachers for RE no financial support.

I would appreciate your attention in Parliament to supporting efforts to ensure the provision of high-quality, specialist teaching in this important area which facilitates tolerance, critical reflection and social cohesion in our society.

Find and email your MP using this form:

Contact Your Politician
Enter your Postcode below:

Thank you for your support!