

## Conclusion of the RE Review

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This RE research review outlines the factors that can contribute to the quality of education in RE. This document has drawn on a range of research, evidence and other literature to identify features of high-quality RE at primary and secondary level. As such, it explains the research basis for how we look at RE in schools (where RE falls within our inspection remit). This review is not a simple checklist of activities that we expect to see in school RE, since there are various ways that schools can construct and teach high-quality RE. Rather, it outlines a conception of quality of education in RE viewed through the lens of the EIF.

RE is vital in preparing pupils to engage in a diverse and complex multi-religious and multi-secular society. However, this review has also identified that there are significant challenges that limit high quality in RE, including:

- insufficient time to teach an ambitious RE curriculum
- school decisions that are not taken in the best interests of all pupils, such as decisions concerning the statutory teaching of RE, the opportunity to take a qualification in religious studies, or early examination entry
- a lack of consideration about what it means to 'be scholarly' in objective, critical and pluralistic RE
- a lack of clarity on what constitutes reliable knowledge about religion/non-religion, leading to teachers embedding unhelpful misconceptions
- teaching approaches that do not support pupils to remember the RE curriculum in the long term
- approaches to assessment that are poorly calibrated to the RE curriculum
- insufficient development of RE practitioners to address gaps in professional subject knowledge

That said, this review shows that there are well-warranted and constructive ways forward that could support improvements in RE. The literature suggests that many of these are already taking place in the sector in subject communities and in some schools. The significant interest that RE attracts from a range of organisations and associations may also indicate that there is sufficient capacity to support improvements in RE in primary and secondary schools for the benefit of pupils.

We hope that this research review will be useful for all those involved in the design, support and inspection of high-quality RE in schools in England, including agreed syllabus conferences, advisers, curriculum designers, ITE providers, local authorities, local standing advisory councils on RE (SACREs), other inspectorates of RE, researchers in RE, school leaders, subject organisations and teacher subject associations.