

Commission on Religious Education, *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward* QSD on 17 December 2018

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

Lord Alderdice to ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Commission on Religious Education *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward*, published in September; and whether they intend to publish any response.

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

Key Information

- Commission on Religious Education, [Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward](#), September 2018, pp 3–20

Foreword and executive summary of the report from the Commission on Religious Education (RE) which is the subject of this debate. It “reaffirms the central importance of learning about religious and non-religious worldviews for all pupils, regardless of their background, personal beliefs or the type of school they attend”. It proposes a “statutory national entitlement to the study of religion and worldviews” applying to pupils in all publicly funded schools. It sets out a national plan to ensure that pupils receive this entitlement, including eleven specific recommendations.

- Religious Education Council of England and Wales, '[Religious Education Council Comment on the Final Report from the Commission on Religious Education](#)', 9 September 2018

Press release from the RE Council, which established the Commission for RE in 2016. The Council welcomes the Commission's “ambitious vision [...] that could mark the most significant developments in the subject in over 40 years”. It also notes a recent drop in exam entries for religious studies.

- House of Commons Library, [Religious Education in Schools \(England\)](#), 7 July 2016

Briefing which provides an overview of RE in state-funded schools in England (schools policy being a devolved topic). It includes the rules and guidance around RE, distinguishing between academies, free schools and those maintained by local authorities, and comments separately on faith schools. It also includes a summary of the inspection regime for RE, as well as information on specialist RE teachers in England. Finally, it provides brief summaries of other earlier reports on RE.

- Religious Education Council of England and Wales, [The State of the Nation: A Report on the Religious Education Provision Within Secondary Schools in England](#), 2017

Executive summary of a report on the extent to which secondary schools in England meet their statutory obligations to teach RE. It provides a range of statistics, including that 28 percent of schools provide no dedicated curriculum time for RE. It also reports “widespread variation” of provision across the country.

Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- House of Lords, '[Written Question Religion: Education](#)', 13 November 2018, HL11182
- [Oral Question on 'Religious Freedom'](#), HC Hansard, 18 October 2018, col 782
- House of Commons, '[Written Question Religion: Education](#)', 12 October 2018, 175786
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education](#)', 16 April 2018, 135196
- House of Commons, '[Written Question: Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education](#)', 16 April 2018, 134698
- [Oral Question on 'Schools: Religious Education'](#), HL Hansard, 30 June 2016, cols 1661–3

Press Articles and Comment

- Harriet Sherwood, '[Call for Atheism to Be Included in Religious Education](#)', *Observer*, 9 September 2018
- National Secular Society, '[Replace Religious Education With "Religion and Worldviews", Says Commission](#)', 9 September 2018
- Hattie Williams, '[Commission Calls for Overhaul of Religious Education in Final Report](#)', *Church Times*, 9 September 2018
- Board of Deputies of British Jews, '[Commission on Religious Education Report is Fundamentally Flawed](#)', 12 September 2018
- Church of England, '[Response to Religious Education Commission](#)', 9 September 2018
- Humanists UK, '[Humanists UK Welcomes Landmark Commission on RE Recommending New Subject "Religion and Worldviews"](#)', 9 September 2018
- National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, '[Extended NATRE Response to the Commission Report](#)', 9 September 2018

Further Information

- National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, '[An Analysis of the Provision for Religious Education in Primary Schools—Autumn Term 2016](#)', 2016
- Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, '[Religious Education: Realising the Potential](#)', October 2013

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