



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority

**RE Update  
Autumn 2008**

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the RE update from the QCA for Autumn 2008. The purpose of this update is to keep in touch with RE partner organisations. It lets organisations and individuals in the RE community know about the ways in which the QCA is supporting RE as part of the whole curriculum. The update has links to several web pages, so it can be used electronically and hosted on the websites of RE organisations, as appropriate.

After the news items, two questions appear, designed to prompt discussion. Please feel free to use these, as appropriate.

### **1. Independent review of the primary curriculum**

Since the publication of the Children's Plan in December 2007 (see link below), QCA has been working with Sir Jim Rose on a review of the primary curriculum. The intention is to take the national framework for RE into the new primary curriculum on a non-statutory basis, as happened in the secondary curriculum review. The QCA's group of RE consultants has supported this process and begun work on it; now a set of smaller development groups have begun work on programmes of learning. The work is based on the three aims (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens), and will be organised around key concepts and key processes.

Sir Jim Rose's interim report is expected in November 2008, and his final report will be in April 2009. First teaching of the new curriculum will be in September 2011.

The key relevant documents are:

Executive Summary of the Children's Plan:  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan/>

The description of Sir Jim Rose's remit to work with the QCA on the primary review:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/primarycurriculumreview/index.shtml>

Thinking Primary: QCA's web pages reporting on our conversations with Heads and teachers, and our evidence reports:

[http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_15561.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_15561.aspx)

QCA's slides on the emerging curriculum design model:

[http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/Independent\\_Review\\_of\\_the\\_Primary\\_Curriculum\\_slide\\_set\\_July\\_08\(1\).pdf](http://www.qca.org.uk/libraryAssets/media/Independent_Review_of_the_Primary_Curriculum_slide_set_July_08(1).pdf)

## **2. New QCA documents**

The latest QCA documents that will very soon be uploaded include:

- *SACREs and community cohesion*: the 2008 annual analysis of SACRE annual reports, focusing on community cohesion. This can be found with the other QCA SACRE documents in [http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_7882.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_7882.aspx)
- *Spiritual and moral development across the curriculum*: guidance notes, principles of good practice and two case studies. This will be published on the QCA curriculum website in December 2008.
- *'I didn't know they could do that!'*: a report on the cultural understandings of science project, exploring Muslim contributions to scientific thinking and discovery and its impact on current scientific understanding. This can be found in [http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_20410.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_20410.aspx)

## **3. Work with SACREs**

QCA is in discussion with the professional associations for RE (including NATRE, AREIAC, NASACRE, SHAP and the RE Council) to explore and hopefully agree further strategic advice for SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences during a time of rapid curriculum change.

## **4. Pedagogy in RE**

This year and next, QCA will work with Ofsted and other bodies to focus on pedagogical issues in RE. There now exists an opportunity to explore issues in planning and teaching, and to engage in national debate about the nature of good pedagogy in RE. In addition to academic work by leading RE thinkers, the raw material for this debate comes from several sources: the Ofsted long report (*Making Sense of Religion*, 2007); Mary Hayward's report for Warwick University (*The Teaching of Christianity at*

KS3, 2007); the Religious Education Council's commission report (2007); and the work of more than 30 regional support advisers to give training on RE in the new secondary curriculum.

The intention is to engage in developmental debate. This is not designed to promote any particular pedagogical model(s) but to promote teachers' own awareness of their pedagogy, and their versatility in using different models appropriately.

## **5. Assessment in RE**

QCA has developed, and is presently trialling, a new model of assessment for the KS3 curriculum. The model reflects AfL approaches, embeds assessment in teaching, and underpins personalised learning. Assessing pupils' progress (APP) is designed to improve learning outcomes by providing teachers with more effective assessment approaches. RE is taking part in this trial, using concepts from the key stage 3 programme of study (evolved framework).

The project is working with pilot schools to generate exemplars and to develop assessment focuses.

The outcomes of this will shine a very useful light on effective assessment in RE. In particular, it will help us all to explore how concepts can be taught and assessed.

Information on the assessment project can be found at [http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_13581.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_13581.aspx)

## **6. Implementation and development of the secondary curriculum**

The new secondary curriculum started life in schools in September 2008. QCA is still looking for case studies in all subjects, including RE, related to one or more of the key concepts. Case studies can also address the relationship between RE and the ECM outcomes, RE and personal, learning and thinking skills, and RE and concepts in other subjects. We need further national debate and exemplification on good examples of cross-curricular collaboration.

## **7. Future of QCA**

In 2009, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority will move its office to Coventry and will become the QCDA – Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency. We will probably have a continuing and expanding role in reviewing the curriculum as a whole, partnering subject communities and other organisations, in order to develop a modern, world-class curriculum. We will be developing our work in strategic engagement

with all professionals in the children's workforce, as well as parents, faith/belief communities, governors, employers, and children themselves.