



Open House: welcome to 'my place'!

Ofsted say in their recent report: 'Although a few teachers had received subject-based professional development in RE, the overwhelming majority had not. Given the complexity of the subject and the kind of misconceptions that pupils were left with, this is a significant concern.' Here's how Surrey SACRE can help you – for FREE!

Members of Surrey faith and belief communities warmly invite you to come and experience their places of worship and gain valuable curriculum insight for Primary RE leaders and class teachers. Each experience will include a meet and greet by the community, a tour, a short presentation and plenty of time for questions and answers, as well as the opportunity to take photographs for use in school.

It's an ideal way to boost subject knowledge in RE and invest in teachers' CPD – and establish some links with local faith and belief communities.

These sessions must be booked on GDBE-elevate, for which you will need to be registered first. You can do this here: <https://gdbe-elevate.org/register>

Please ensure that each person attending books their own place so that we can advise the venues of numbers, and please carefully note the closing date for bookings and the times and venues of sessions on offer, as they are not all the same.

So, where are we going?!.....



'Open House' session 1: Islam EVENT CLOSED

Shah Jahan Mosque, Woking: Thursday 27th June, 4.30-6.00pm

This mosque is the first in Britain (and Northern Europe), designed and built by Dr. Gottlieb Willhelm Leitner in 1889, and is now a grade 2 listed building. The 'old' mosque is extremely beautiful, but for Friday prayers, it is too small, and so two larger prayer halls are used for this purpose – one for men, the other for women. There is also a beautiful Islamic garden on the south side of the Old Mosque, created in 2001. More information can be found on their [website](http://www.shahjahanmosque.org.uk).

We will be welcomed by **Kawther Hashmi**, former Muslim SACRE member, an experienced interfaith speaker and adviser, and team lead on Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum – but also wife of the Head Imam!

During this visit, we will have a tour of the mosque (both 'small' and large prayer halls), find out more from Kawther about Islam, and also be given an opportunity to ask questions, so do come prepared!

How do I get here? <https://shahjahanmosque.org.uk/home/contact/>

There is plenty of parking on site. Madrassah (Mosque School) takes place from 4.30-6.30pm, so you are advised that arriving at drop off or leaving at pick-up times might mean a queue!

Code of conduct for Muslim places of worship

- Shoes are removed on entering the prayer halls
- Head covering is required
- Females should be dressed modestly, with arms and legs covered
- Please don't bring any food, especially meat products, into the mosque



'Open House' session 2: Humanism as a non-religious worldview

Thursday 4th July, on Zoom, 4.00-5.30pm [BOOK HERE](#)

For this session, we will meet **Jennie Johnson**, who is the Humanist representative of Surrey SACRE. Jennie has been an enthusiastic advocate for the place of non-religious perspectives in RE and many of you may recognise her from her video resources supporting the recent syllabus. In this session, we will be introduced to the principles

of Humanism, address some common misconceptions and discuss things to think about when talking in your RE classroom. There will also be a chance to ask Jennie questions, so please come prepared!

The Zoom link for the session will be emailed once you register.



'Open House' session 3: Buddhism [BOOK HERE](#)

Woking Dhammakaya Buddhist Temple: Tuesday 9th July, 4.30-6.00pm

The Buddhist Centre in Woking is a former hospital chapel, so is a very interesting 'conversion' which has hosted a Buddhist community since 2007. The Dhammakaya movement is a distinct tradition of [Theravada Buddhism](#) that has had a pioneering role in establishing Buddhist practice in England since 1954. This unusual temple is a very calming and peaceful place, and they have since also built a beautiful garden in the temple grounds.

During this session, we will have a tour of the venue, hear from **Patrick and the temple volunteers**, and have an opportunity to learn more for ourselves how to support learning about Buddhist beliefs and ways of life in the classroom – and of

course, please do bring any questions that you have!

How do I get here?: [Map](#)

Code of conduct for Buddhist places of worship

- Shoes are removed on entering the temple
- Attendees should be dressed modestly, with arms and legs covered
- Please don't bring any food, especially meat products, into the temple

NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR: 2024-2025



'Open House' session 4: Sanatana (Hindu) Dharma [BOOK HERE](#)

Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple, Epsom: Monday 30th September, 5.30-7.00pm

Established in 1994, Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple serves the Hindu community in south-west London and Surrey, and is devoted especially to worship of the deity Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman (Shakti). Shakti embodies feminine energy and is often depicted as the consort of Shiva.

We will be welcomed by **Sai Raviendrakumar** and members of the Temple community, who will talk to us about the traditions in this branch of Sanatana (Hindu) Dharma, originating in Sri Lanka, help us to better understand how to help pupils learn about Hindu beliefs in the classroom, and give us insight into what pupils might experience in a school workshop

here – and of course, please do bring any questions that you have!

How do I get here?: [Map](#)

The Temple has limited parking, so they ask visitors to park mindfully, respecting local parking restrictions.

Code of conduct for Hindu places of worship

- Shoes are removed on entering the temple. Shoe shelves are provided outside the front entrance.
- Attendees should be dressed modestly, with arms and legs fully covered
- Please don't bring any food, especially meat products, into the temple



'Open House' session 5: Judaism

North-West Surrey Synagogue, Weybridge: AUTUMN TERM DATE TBC 4.30-6.00pm

The NWSS, a synagogue linked to the Reform tradition in Judaism, has a very well-established programme for school visits. In the U.K. Jews will talk about going to shule (Yiddish) or synagogue. The synagogue fulfils 3 distinct purposes: Beit T'filah (House of Prayer), Beit Midrash (House of study) or Beit Ha –Kneset, (House of Meeting) and is very much an extension of life in a Jewish home. Essentially, Jews can pray in any place and as a community, anywhere there is a minyan and a Torah scroll. Scrolls at the NWSS are about 200 years old!

We will be welcomed by **Sarah Harris**, Chair of and Jewish representative on Surrey SACRE (and a former Surrey headteacher) and members of the synagogue community: the synagogue will be open from 4pm, so please do go straight in as soon as you arrive.

This session will include a tour, with a reading from the Torah (which is one of the most magical experiences ever!) and a chance to meet several members of the schools' team who regularly are involved in leading visits for Surrey schools.

How do I get here?: [North West Surrey Synagogue - Google Maps](#) It's in the middle of a residential estate, so don't think you've made a mistake! Parking can sometimes be tricky: there is a small car park on site, but plenty of on-street parking in the roads surrounding the synagogue. Further information can be found on the synagogue website.

Dress code for Jewish places of worship

- Head covering is required for men, but caps are provided
- Modest dress is appreciated
- Please don't bring any food, especially meat products, into the synagogue



'Open House' session 6: Christianity

Guildford Cathedral: DATE EARLY SPRING TERM 2025 TBC

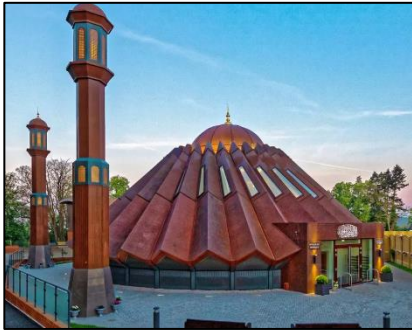
Guildford Cathedral is one of the most iconic buildings in Surrey and is the last Church of England Cathedral built on a new site, physically constructed around the dates of WWII, and consecrated in 1963.

During this session, we will be treated to a tour – potentially with some free musical accompaniment, as the choir may be rehearsing during this time! As the visit is during Epiphany, there is also opportunity to view artwork produced by pupils across the Diocese, marking this important time in the Christian calendar. Realistically, we are aware that for many schools, their local parish church will be the first port of call for a visit to a Christian place of worship, so with this in mind,

this visit will also include some input by **Jane Whittington**, Diocesan RE Officer (and CoFE member of Surrey SACRE) on making the most of your parish church and community, as well as insight into the school workshops that the Cathedral Education Team offer, many of which support the Christianity units in the syllabus.

How do I get here? [Guildford Cathedral - How to Find Us \(guildford-cathedral.org\)](#)

There is plenty of parking on site, and we will be requesting to have the 2-hour parking restriction removed for the session so that you can linger and enjoy the music!



‘Open House’ session 7: Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Mubarak Mosque, Tilford: SPRING TERM DATE TBC

The land on which Mubarak Mosque was built was purchased by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 1984 and since then has been imaginatively redeveloped to serve the growing community, which is now their global HQ. The new mosque, pictured here, has many sustainable features to improve energy efficiency.

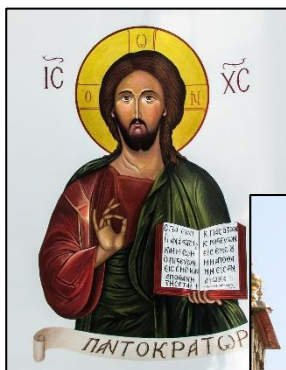
We will be welcomed by **Rashida Nasir**, SACRE member & Primary teacher, and members of the mosque community. Our session will include a tour of the mosque, input from the community about their beliefs, and of course there will be an opportunity to ask questions, so do come prepared!

How do I get here? [Map](#)

There is plenty of parking on site, but you will need to arrive a few minutes early to get through the on-site security.

Code of conduct for Muslim places of worship

- Shoes are removed on entering the prayer halls
- Head covering is required
- Females should be dressed modestly, with arms and legs covered
- Please don't bring any food, especially meat products, into the mosque



We are also hoping to create Open House events featuring the **Sikhi religion** and an **Orthodox Christian** place of worship – discussions are in progress, but likely to be late Spring or early Summer term 2025. Watch this space!

