



**CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S**  
CHAMPIONING RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS EDUCATION

## **Leadership Scholarship Programme 2025-26**

### **Participant handbook**

The programme has already helped me become more aware of my strengths and helped me developed my leadership skills within RVE. It's also given me the space to reflect on the purpose of RVE, and how I can help others.

*Carrie, current Year 1 participant*



## Helping you find your voice as a leader

The programme aims to help key influencers in the RE/RVE/RME/R&W community to find their voice and to shape a leadership community for the future to help bring about systemic change.

This programme not only equips leaders but builds a leadership community. The programme takes into account the following four areas of leadership:

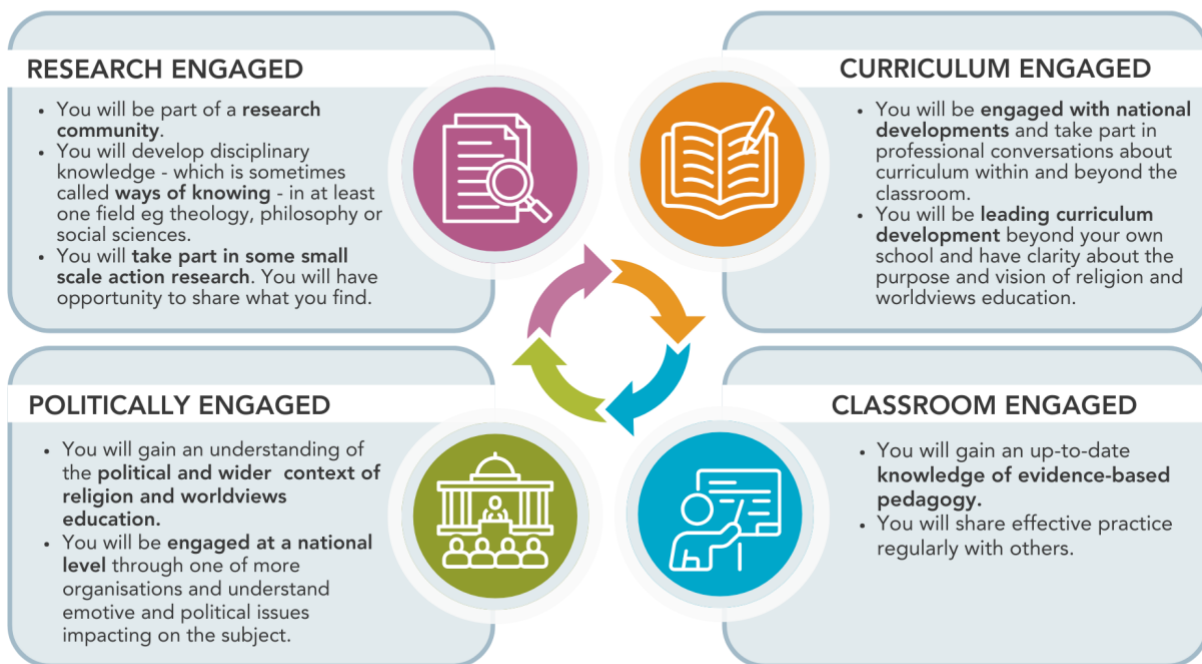
- Research engaged: The power of knowledge
- Curriculum engaged: The power of the subject
- Classroom engaged: The power of practice
- Politically engaged: The power of influence.

The programme enables teachers/advisers to become skilled in all four areas but acknowledges that each leader may have one or two areas of passion and expertise. Teachers would bring these areas of focus to the leadership community of practice. The aim is that the leadership community of practice effectively utilises the expertise of each leader to bring about systemic change.

The programme helps Culham St Gabriel's fulfil three of its current strategic objectives and therefore as a charity fulfil its obligations to the public benefit:

- Advocating for the importance of high-quality religion and worldviews education within the education world
- Empowering the current and next generation of RE/RVE/RME/religion and worldviews education teachers and leaders
- Fostering and nurturing collaborative partnerships within the religion and worldviews education community

## DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES



### What are the aims of the programme?

To provide opportunities for emerging RE/RVE/RME/R&W leaders to expand and deepen their reflections on educational leadership in the subject, through receiving mentoring, structured challenges, research insights, inspirational networking events, and experience of professional development delivery.

### Who is the leadership programme for?

The programme is for those who are working beyond their own school. It is designed for those who are already working or aspire to work across a MAT, local area, region or in a national capacity. For example, you might run a local group or hub for RE/RVE/RME/R&W teachers, you might lead the subject across a MAT, support teachers in a particular region or chair a local SACRE.

**The programme is focused on leadership of RE/RVE/RME/R&W regionally and nationally, not on leading the subject within a school.**

## How is the programme managed?

The programme is led and managed by Fiona Moss, Education and Programmes Manager Culham St Gabriel's Trust, with support from a small steering group.

The steering group includes key people from each of the following organisations: NATRE, LTLRE, AULRE, AREIAC, RE Council and NASACRE. The current steering group members are:

- Stacey Burman (RE Hub Lead: London, AREIAC Exec)
- Claire Clinton (Former Leadership Scholarship programme lead, NASACRE Exec, Lead Director for RE Hubs, AREIAC Regional lead)
- Angela Hill (NATRE Director, also RE Policy Unit)
- Ed Pawson (LTLRE and RE Hub Lead: South West)
- Fiona Moss (Education and Programme manager Culham St Gabriel's Trust)
- Deborah Weston (REC Board, Chair REC policy unit, NATRE research officer)
- Sean Whittle (AULRE Exec, also ACTRE)

The steering group meet approximately once a half term to plan, develop and oversee the programme. They also review and agree all new applicants for the programme.

## Why join the programme? Comments from past and current participants.

*The leadership programme offers opportunities to engage in academic research and reading. It provides teachers with a forum to discuss professional reflections and writing - something we don't get to do in our busy classroom roles. Although it may initially seem daunting to take on an extra responsibility, the community of practice meetings and the reading groups provide you a safe space to share ideas and develop new pathways for your professional and personal development! If you are a classroom teacher who wants to do and be more, the leadership programme is perfect for you.*

Nadia

The CSTG Leadership programme gave me dedicated time and space to focus on how I could best progress with my RE leadership journey. As well as gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding of the past and current landscape of RE, I gained a much better sense of purpose. I am now much more proactive locally, and within the regional and national community of RE.

Jane

The leadership programme has been transformative for my professional practice and leadership journey. A direct consequence of the opportunities from the CSTG programme means my work is having a wider impact on the subject community. The programme led me to join the AREIAC executive committee which has enabled me to work alongside other RWV national advisors. The programme has also enabled me to support other RE leaders and share my knowledge and experience as others have done with me.

Claire

I have gained so many leadership skills from the programme. I now provide much better CPD and manage teams more efficiently. I am more assertive and know I have made an impact within my trust, county and school. I have learnt to nurture all in our community for our subjects greater good, whether that be ITT, ECT or experience teacher. I have a renewed confidence that RE is a challenging and essential subject which can and will improve over the next decade. The programme made me feel I was part of the solution and part of a wonderful community of positive and inspiring teachers, advisors and academics.

Michelle

I gained confidence and I have found my RE voice – many of the people I now talk to and work with on a regional and national level were people I had looked up to for many years and now I get to work with them. It's been great for networking and bouncing ideas off others – primary and secondary, and sharing our thoughts and seeing how we can run with them.

Matt

The programme enabled me to re-engage with pedagogical questions surrounding RE concerning the purpose, aims and outcomes of the subject. In my leadership journey, the programme allowed me to reflect on the research in RE around its role within education and how what we do in the classroom reflects this. I found it really fruitful to have a mentor who could share from their own experiences in RE leadership and how current developments in our subject sit alongside the history of the subject.

Joe

A fantastic opportunity to look into all the current thinking in the RE community. It gives you the opportunity to meet with and have dialogue with people with similar subject passions.

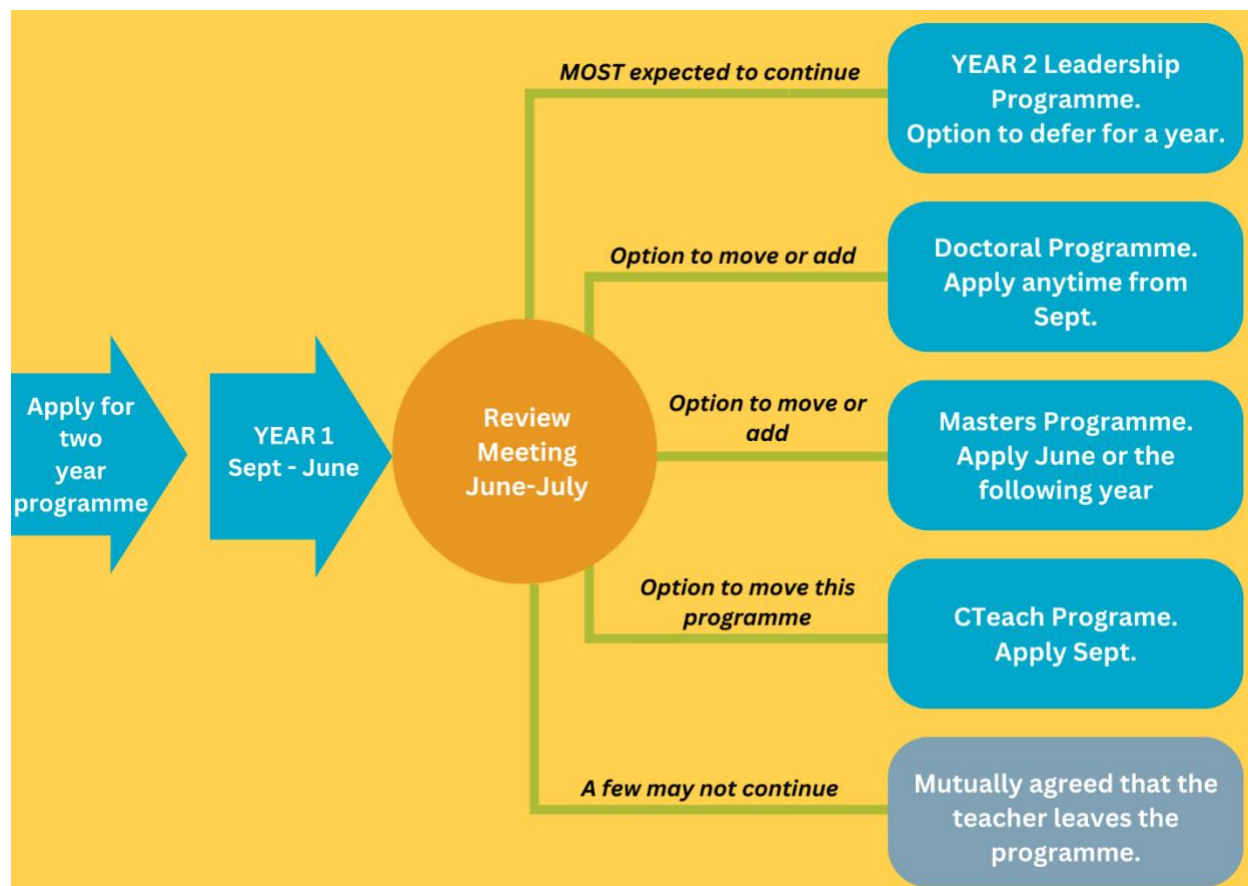
Paul, current Year 1 participant

Through completing the leadership programme, I realised that I actually enjoyed the new challenge of reaching new heights and achieving new goals outside of the classroom and in an area that I love and thrive in. I loved the challenge of embarking on some class-based research during the Leadership programme. I then realised that I could still 'do hard things', even after all these years of being in the classroom! I have since co-founded an anti-racist film club, become a member of the NATRE Steering group, become a member of my local SACRE as well as leading national cpd. I am indebted to the Leadership programme: it gave me so much!

Saima

## What am I committing to?

In 2025-26, when you apply you will be signing up with the intention of committing two years to the programme, but with flexibility built in. We have found the majority of our participants benefit from the programme most when they have two years of mentoring. The diagram below explains how the two-year programme process will work, and as you can see there is still an option to finish after one year.



## The Review Meeting

In this meeting you will chat through with your mentor your next steps. This might be:

- Deciding together with your mentor that you will continuing on the leadership programme for a second year.
- Taking a 'gap' year 2026-27 and returning to the leadership programme in 2027-28 to do the second year. This might be because you want to consolidate on your learning, and/or because you have change in your personal or professional circumstances.
- Moving to one of Culham St Gabriel's other programmes e.g. the Masters Scholarship Programme.
- Deciding together with your mentor that one year has been of great benefit, but that for good reasons you wish to withdraw from the programme and not take up any of the other opportunities at the current time.
- Your mentor might feel that the second year of the programme is not appropriate and suggests that you end the programme in July 2026.

## **What is involved in the programme?**

### **Mentoring**

- You will be allocated a mentor who is already an adviser and/or national leader in the RE/RVE/RME/R&W community. You are expected to meet regularly with your mentor as part of this programme.
- You will complete an audit of need with your mentor and a development plan created which you will use as a focus for the first 12 months. You will use progress against this as a basis for your review meeting.
- Mentoring will take place for 12 hours between September and June. The time can be split in any way the mentee/mentor choose. These mentoring sessions will take place virtually.

### **E-Learning Courses**

- During your first year, you will undertake at least three Culham St Gabriel's Professional Development Short Courses of your choice which will be linked to your development plan. <https://courses.cstg.org.uk> Your mentor will support you through the course(s) providing professional dialogue. You should discuss with your mentor which courses to do and you can discuss your progress in mentor sessions.
- If these courses have already been completed the participant will, with their mentor, find other free on-lines courses that will help you in your leadership development.

### **Community of Practice**

- You will take part in a virtual Community of Practice. This Community of Practice will include being part of a WhatsApp group and taking part in a series of four virtual meetings during the year, each taking 1.5 hours. These usually take place as twilights.
- In your first year you will have an extra face to face full day meeting In the Autumn term with your fellow participants focused on getting to know each other better and on understanding key developments In the world of RE/RVE/RME/R&W. Please note this day will be held in London and the school will need to cover cost of supply for this day. Travel costs can be covered by Culham St Gabriel's if needed.
- The Community of Practice may agree to hold further virtual conversations as a group to share course outcomes and present work or ideas to one another.
- There is a final 'end of first year' online gathering for feedback about the programme.

### **Research Reading Group**

- You will take part in a virtual research reading group. This takes place over one term in Year 1 (in the summer term), and over two terms in Year 2 (in the Autumn and Spring terms). The sessions are as twilights or evenings.



## **Other Opportunities**

- Membership of AREIAC (Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants) In Year 1
- Membership of AULRE (Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education) in Year 2

### **In Year 2 the following elements will continue:**

- Mentoring
- Community of Practice
- Research Reading Group
- Other opportunities, including attendance and presentation at national conferences.

In addition, in Year 2, you will also be supported by your mentor to carry out some small-scale action research within your setting and have the opportunity to shadow your mentor or another suitable person for a day.

In Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme participants are expected to attend the AREIAC/AULRE joint conference, currently held in June. Culham St Gabriel's will partially fund attendance up to £300 per participant which can be used for travel, the conference ticket cost and/or supply cover.

## **What are the expected outputs?**

Outputs are connected to the four areas of leadership development.

### **Year 1**

- Complete actions against bespoke development plan
- Complete CSTG short course on curriculum
- Complete CSTG short course on research
- Complete one other CSTG short course of own choosing
- Blog about one of the four areas of leadership (curriculum, pedagogy, policy, research) for RE:ONLINE or another website such as NATRE/STARME
- Share new knowledge with a least two different professional groups e.g. a local network, SACRE, AREIAC group, conference
- Attend at least one SACRE, RE Council or other meeting which is policy related
- Join in with the WhatsApp group to help colleagues and deepen learning opportunities
- Participate in at least 75% at community of practice sessions and reading group sessions
- Report to CSTG about the impact of the programme on your leadership development.

### **Year 2**

- Complete actions against bespoke development plan
- Shadow your mentor (or other national leader) for a day and work with them
- Complete a small-scale action research project
- Present at a national conference on your research or other new learning
- Write for a national publication or journal e.g. RE Today, Professional Reflection, Chartered College Impact magazine
- Join in with the WhatsApp group to help colleagues and deepen learning opportunities
- Participate in at least 75% at community of practice sessions and reading group sessions
- Report to CSTG about the impact of the programme on your leadership development.

## **What are the expected outcomes for the participant? What will I get out of it?**

By the end of the two-year programme, we expect you to have:

- Enhanced your regional/national profile within and beyond the RE/RVE/RME community
- Increased confidence to lead RE/RVE/RME/R&W regionally and/or nationally
- Increased understanding of the importance of research, pedagogy, curriculum and political dimensions in leading the subject at a regional and/or national level
- Increased your contribution to national events
- Widened your horizons beyond the 'classroom' e.g. thinking beyond own circumstances
- Increased your ambition for what is possible professionally
- Increased confidence and authority to speak into the public space about RE/RVE/RME/R&W e.g. through social media, events
- Increased your forward-facing communication in one or more of the following areas of RE: pedagogy research, policy development, and curriculum.

If you leave the programme after one year, we expect you to have made progress against some of these outcomes.

### **Timeline**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2025:** Applications open.

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2025:** Applications Close.

**April 2024:** Steering group decide on who will participate in the programme and notify applicants accordingly.

**June 2025:** Allocation of mentors to participants.

**June 2025:** Notification of all community of practice and reading group dates for 2025-26.

**Early Sept 2025:** Virtual welcome gathering for participants.

**October- Dec 2025:** First mentor session, first virtual community of practice, year 1 participant's complete first Culham St Gabriel's short course.

**November 2025:** Face to face Community of Practice in London for Year 1 participants

**Jan- March 2026:** Mentor sessions, Community of practice sessions, year 1 participants complete second and third Culham St Gabriel's short course.

**April - June 2026:** Mentor sessions, community of practice, year 1 reading group sessions

**June 2026:** Review meeting with mentor and submit report to Culham St Gabriel's.

**July 2026:** Outcome of review meeting confirmation.

In Year 2, the programme will follow a similar pattern. However, there will be two reading groups' series, rather than one. In addition, the focus will be more on small-scale action research of your own choice, rather than the Culham St Gabriel's short courses. If you decided to take a 'gap year' before you begin Year 2 of the programme you will be invited an online keeping in touch session.

### **What is expected from your school?**

The programme needs the agreement of your headteacher and line manager. We want to ensure that your school is fully supportive of all parts of this programme and that they formally agree to you being part of the programme. There is money available for cover (when you bid for it) to allow you to attend AREIAC or SACRE meetings, for example as part of the programme.

The exceptions to this are that we expect your school to pay for your supply cover for the Year 1 face-to-face Community of Practice. This will be held in London in November 2025.

In Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme participants are expected to attend the AREIAC/AULRE joint conference, currently held in June. Culham St Gabriel's will fund attendance up to £300 per participant which can be used for travel, the conference ticket cost and/or supply cover.

Your mentor will also contact your line manager to have a conversation about the programme and your bespoke development plan at the start and towards the end of the programme.

### **How much does it cost?**

Culham St Gabriel's covers the cost of mentoring, and adviser time to lead each community of practice session and the reading group. This is approximately £2000 per participant per year. AREIAC provides membership free for one year. Culham St Gabriel's covers the cost of membership of AULRE in Year 2.

Culham St Gabriel's holds a supply cover fund for this programme which participants can apply to on a first come, first served basis. There is a very little financial cost to your school however, it is expected that you may need to join virtual meetings during or after the school day. The exception to this is that we expect your school to pay for your supply cover for the Year 1 face to face Community of Practice. This will be held in London in November 2025. In Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme participants are expected to attend the AREIAC/AULRE joint conference, currently held in June. Culham St Gabriel's will partially fund attendance up to £300 per participant which can be used for travel, the conference ticket cost and/or supply cover.

You may also wish to attend a SACRE or AREIAC meeting during school time, for which supply cover cost can be claimed from Culham St Gabriel's.

The total cost of the programme for Culham St Gabriel's Trust is approximately £2000 per year per participant.

## How do I apply?

Places on the programme are limited. We expect there to be ten places.

- Complete the online [Leadership Scholarship application form](#)
- Ask your headteacher to sign the [Headteacher Agreement](#) and return via email. If you are an adviser or self-employed you do not need to obtain this undertaking.

The deadline for applications is 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025

- Applicants will be notified of the Steering Group decision by end of April 2025
- A virtual welcome meeting will take place in Early September
- The programme will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

## Appendices:

Application form for drafting purposes only and headteacher agreement/information for your headteacher- also available online as separate document

**Appendix 1**  
**Application Form Questions (Please apply online [here](#))**  
**A word version of this form is available to download [here](#)**  
**The application deadline is 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

You can use this page to **draft your responses** before completing the form online.

- Your experience working beyond your own school (200 words max.)
  
- Which of the four leadership areas do you think is a strength for you and why? (100 words max.)
  
- Which of the four leadership areas do you most want to develop and why? (100 words max.)
  
- Explain why you should be chosen to become a participant on the leadership programme (200 words max.)
  
- What was the last book, blog or article you read about education and what impact did it have on your practice? (200 words max.)
  
- In terms of your career, where do you see yourself in five years' time? (200 words max.)
  
- Please tell us which organisations in the religion and worldviews community you are a member of. E.g. NATRE, STARME, ACTRE, AULRE, AREIAC.

Please note your headteacher will be required to sign an agreement regarding your participation on the programme before your application is considered. The agreement can be found on our website and should be emailed to [fiona@cstg.org.uk](mailto:fiona@cstg.org.uk)  
You are also required to name a referee on the application form who **must be** someone outside of your school. E.g. a SACRE member, RE adviser, MAT CEO...

## Appendix 2

The Headteacher Information Sheet is available as a separate document [here](#)

The Headteacher Agreement is available as a separate document [here](#)

### Headteacher Agreement Leadership Scholarship Programme

To: Culham St Gabriel's Trust and Leadership Steering Group,

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (first name and family name)

confirm that I am happy for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of applicant) to take part in the Leadership programme 2025-2027.

I confirm that I understand and agree to the commitment that the named teacher and the school are making to this programme.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (can be electronic, but not typed): \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this agreement to [fiona@cstg.org.uk](mailto:fiona@cstg.org.uk)**

If you have any questions about the leadership programme please contact Fiona Moss, Education and Programmes Manager, Culham St Gabriel's Trust [fiona@cstg.org.uk](mailto:fiona@cstg.org.uk)

## Appendix 3

### Leadership Scholarship Programme: Headteacher Information Sheet 2025-27

We are delighted that one of your teachers is interested in our national funded leadership programme. We hope your teacher has shared with you the vision and aims of the programme and the benefits for them and your school. This short information sheet explains the commitment required from your teacher and your school, as well as the funding that is being offered.

This is a two-year programme, but the teacher's participation is reviewed after the first year. It is then by mutual agreement whether they continue to the second year. We expect most teachers to continue to the second year of the programme.

#### Teacher/School Commitment required:

- During Year 1 of the programme, the teacher is required to complete three Culham St Gabriel's short e-learning courses. This may be equivalent to an hour a week of study time for some or part of the year. We would largely expect a teacher to undertake this study in their own time.
- During both years of the programme, the teacher is required to attend 12 hours of mentoring between September to June. As this takes place largely virtually, we would expect this to occur after the school day in most cases. However, schools may wish to provide release time for a teacher to attend these sessions.
- The teacher is required to attend local SACRE or AREIAC meetings. In most cases these are half days, some are held in evenings.
- During both years of the programme, the teacher is required to participate in four virtual community of practice sessions between September to June. These are usually held after school as twilights.
- During Year 1 of the programme there will be a face-to-face full day meeting in the Autumn term with fellow participants focused on getting to know one another better and on understanding key developments in the world of RE/RVE/RME/R&W.
- During Year 1 of the programme the teacher is required to attend four reading group sessions, and in Year 2 eight reading group sessions. These are usually held after school as twilights.
- The teacher will write blogs and articles over the year in discussion with their tutor/mentor. They would largely do this in their own time.

Please note, a list of all dates will be provided to participants before the start of the academic year to help with planning.



**Funding provided:**

- The cost of the programme is approximately £2000 per participant per year. This is covered by Culham St Gabriel's Trust and includes:
  - The cost of mentoring/tutoring
  - The cost of the professional learning community, including speakers
  - The cost of a facilitator for the reading group
  - Membership Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education in Year 2
  - Administration costs
- Your teacher can apply to Culham St Gabriel's for supply cover to attend daytime shadowing that is part of the programme.

In addition, AREIAC provides free membership for participants in Year 1 of the programme.

**Funding you need to provide**

During Year 1 of the programme there will be a face-to-face full day meeting in the Autumn term with fellow participants focused on getting to know one another better and on understanding key developments in the world of RE/RVE/RME/R&W.

*Please note this day will be held in London and the school will need to cover cost of supply for this day. Travel costs can be covered by Culham St Gabriel's. All other costs relating to this day are covered by Culham St Gabriel's.*

In Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme participants are expected to attend the AREIAC/AULRE joint conference, currently held in June. Culham St Gabriel's will fund attendance up to £300 per participant which can be used for travel, the conference ticket cost and/or supply cover.

**Benefits for your school:**

- Increased understanding of effective middle and senior leadership
- Enhanced regional or national profile for your teacher and your school
- Increased confidence to lead RE/RVE/RME/R&W in your school and beyond
- Widening of horizons beyond the 'classroom' e.g. thinking about local, regional and national contexts, OfSTED, ESTYN, OfQUAL, DfE, etc.
- Increased ambition for what is possible professionally within and beyond RE/RVE/RME/R&W as a curriculum subject.

Headteachers are required to sign an agreement before an applicant is offered a place on the programme to acknowledge these commitments.