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## Introduction

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In this newsletter we provide further details of the forthcoming CViE National Event on Saturday, 9 September 2017 at Caddington Village School, near Luton, LU1 4JD. We do pray that the Lord will go before in the final stages of organising this event, and grant safe journeys and His presence on the day.

A review of the book 'Transgender' is included. This book is a very accessible background to the subject of transgenderism which is being pushed by the LGBT lobby, and sadly a subject that is causing confusion in the minds of young children and great concern among Christian parents. Alongside this we have included articles on Sex and Relationship Education and the intended statutory changes together with an overview of the school curriculum in England.

Finally, the CViE website has been redesigned; in addition to the information previously available a new web page has been added called *Latest News and Posts*. This webpage is intended to provide news and information on matters of interest regarding Christian values in education. Please take time to look at the new website and sign up to email updates. (Those who are already on our email lists don't need to do this.)

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## CViE National Event

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The focus of the CViE 21st year national event is Biblical foundations and their importance in educating children. The event is seen very much as an opportunity to help equip parents for the challenges faced in their children's education. We firmly believe that the education of children is the responsibility of parents; however this is easier said than done against the backcloth of humanistic and secular thinking that pervades society, government and in turn education and the curriculum.

The committee of Christian Values in Education have organised the programme for the event based on feedback received from parents, teachers, young people and other interested parties. We have also structured the event to hopefully encourage those attending to meet with others and discuss matters of concern.

In addition to hearing contributions in the morning from Simon Turpin (*Answers in Genesis*) and Dr John Ling (author and speaker) there will be an opportunity to visit the bookstalls provided by *The Christian Bookshop*, Ossett, *Answers in Genesis*, and *Gospel Standard Trust* as well as CViE. A range of activities have been organised for different age groups and a crèche will be available.

There is no charge for the event. Cold drinks, tea and coffee will be available and those attending are reminded to bring a packed lunch.

Details of the speakers, content of the sessions and arrangements for the day are available on the website under *Latest News and Posts* (See: [http://cvie.org.uk/Latest/August-2017-\(1\)/CViE-National-Event-Saturday-9-September-2017](http://cvie.org.uk/Latest/August-2017-(1)/CViE-National-Event-Saturday-9-September-2017))

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## **Book Review: 'Transgender'**

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Transgenderism is the latest topic of discussion and is regularly making headlines and dominating social media. As Christians, we find ourselves faced with different views and explanations regarding this topic which can be overwhelming. This little book, written by Vaughan Roberts, Rector at St Ebbes Church in Oxford, covers some important issues and provides the reader with some 'talking points'.

It starts with introducing the topic and provides us with a list of definitions – particularly helpful as many of the definitions used around the topic of transgenderism are new to the English language. In the introduction two interesting concepts are covered – the stock response and 'the iWorld'. The stock response challenges us on how we think and how we often automatically respond to controversial topics. It reminds us how we need to think before we speak and to be governed by the Bible. The 'iWorld' is a novel but memorable definition of today's culture whereby the world is perceived to revolve around the individual and any challenges to individualism are resented.

The bulk of the book is divided into three sections: Creation, Fall and Rescue. As the book states, it is important for us to start at creation to understand the topic of transgenderism. We have all been created by God and our gender is determined by God. As the psalmist states, we are 'fearfully and wonderfully

made'. God has created our identity, however as the book acknowledges in the second section, because of the Fall and sin we try and find our own identity. Leaving us to lead a life that is bent on proving our own identity, be it pleasure-seeking or living as the opposite gender, drawing parallels to the Corinthian church. However, it is because of the Fall that we all have disordered minds, bodies and hearts. It is sin that causes us to turn from our Creator and His will for us – it is sin that causes perverse thinking and rebellion against the natural division of gender that He has created. We cannot save ourselves from these sinful desires but instead we are to look to Jesus, who came to this earth to live as we should have done before the Fall. All the time we live in this fallen world we will be subject to sin and temptation. However, God can touch the lives of those who have identified as transgender and can renew their heart and mind, for God is omnipotent.

The last section is entitled 'Wisdom' – it gives words of advice regarding how to respond, personally and at a church level, to those close to us and to the wider community. It gives some advice on how to approach the subject sensitively and to avoid confrontation. It reminds us that we are all fallen and that it is not for us to judge.

This little book is a good starting point on the topic of transgenderism and although there may be aspects that you may question, it does provide the reader with enough material to be able to hold an informed discussion on the subject and give a measured response.

Details: 'Transgender' by V. Roberts, *The Good Book Company*, 2016, ISBN 978-1-78498-195-2 (Bible quotations are NIV). The book can be obtained from good bookshops and is stocked by the Christian Bookshop, Ossett.

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## Sex and Relationship Education in Schools (England)

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The following information has been extracted from the House of Commons Library Briefing Paper (June 2017) *Sex and Relationships Education in Schools (England)* and has been included as a response to a question raised, by a parent, on the rights of parents to withdraw their children from Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) classes. Two points of note are that parents do have, currently, a right to withdraw their children from SRE classes and that the written policy on sex education must be made available to parents for free. Asking for a copy of this policy may well be a useful starting point for a parent concerned about what is being taught in SRE. Reference is also made to the intention to put Relationship and Sex Education on a statutory footing.

### What must be taught and the parental right to withdraw their children.

Local authority maintained schools in England are obliged to teach SRE from age 11 upwards, and must refer to the Government's SRE guidance. Academies and Free Schools, the majority in secondary education in England, do not have to follow the national curriculum and so are not under this obligation. If they do decide to teach SRE, they also must have regard to the guidance.

Parents are free to withdraw their children from SRE if they wish to do so. The only exceptions to this are the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction that are essential elements of national curriculum science.

### Children and Social Work Act 2017: Statutory RSE

On 1 March 2017, the Education Secretary, Justine Greening, announced her intention to put 'Relationships and Sex Education' – rather than SRE – on a statutory footing. She also announced her intention to create a power to make Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) statutory in future.

Following consultation, the RSE proposals would be put in place for teaching to start in September 2019. The proposals involve:

- All primary schools in England teaching 'Relationships Education';
- All secondary schools teaching 'Relationships and Sex Education';
- Reformed statutory guidance, following consultation;
- Retaining the parental right of withdrawal from sex education;
- Flexibility for schools in their approach, including for faith schools to teach within the tenets of their faith.

Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 provides for Relationships and Sex Education to be taught in all schools in England.

CViE will be following these developments and, if the Lord will, seeking to make a response to the consultation later this year.

The full briefing can be found at: <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06103>

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## The School Curriculum in England

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This article has been included to provide an overview of the national curriculum and to act as a starting point for parents in their understanding of what, when and how subjects are taught and assessed in maintained schools.

# Christian Values in Education

Maintained schools in England must teach the national curriculum to pupils aged approximately 5 to 16 years old. The national curriculum is divided into four key stages. Maintained schools are also required to offer other subjects, including Religious Education (RE) at all ages and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) at secondary level.

Academies and Free schools don't have to follow the national curriculum. They must, however, offer a broad and balanced curriculum that covers English, maths, sciences and RE. Primary academies must also take part in national curriculum assessments, commonly referred to as SATs.

In addition to the national curriculum, maintained schools in England also have to offer:

- At secondary level, a programme of sex and relationships education (SRE) for all registered pupils, providing the parents have not withdrawn their child from such provision;
- Religious education (RE) for all registered pupils. Content will depend on the type of school, the locally agreed syllabus or, for some types of school, the policy adopted by the Governing Body.

These elements, plus the national curriculum, comprise the statutory curriculum for maintained schools. Additionally, secondary schools have to offer impartial careers advice to those in school years 9 to 13.

The structure of the national curriculum, in terms of which subjects are compulsory at each key stage, is set out in the table opposite:

	Key stage 1	Key stage 2	Key stage 3	Key stage 4
Age	5-7	7-11	11-14	14-16
Year groups	1-2	3-6	7-9	10-11
Core subjects				
English	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓
Science	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foundation subjects				
Art and design	✓	✓	✓	
Citizenship			✓	✓
Computing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Design and technology	✓	✓	✓	
Languages		✓	✓	
Geography	✓	✓	✓	
History	✓	✓	✓	
Music	✓	✓	✓	
Physical education	✓	✓	✓	✓

A useful briefing on the school curriculum in England can be found at:

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06798>

and more detail at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>