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The experiences of non-religious children in religious education

Anna Strhan[1] · **Rachael Shillitoe**[2]

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Abstract

There is growing recognition of the need for pupils to have the opportunity to engage with both religious and non-religious worldviews in religious education (RE). This recognition is bound up with issues of social justice and equality, underpinned by a desire to ensure that all young people should have the opportunity 'to understand the worldviews of others and reflect on their own' (Commission on Religious Education 2018: 26). In thinking about how best to provide non-religious pupils with opportunities to reflect on their own worldviews, beliefs, and moral commitments, we should take into account their current experiences in RE. This article therefore offers original insight into the experiences and perspectives of non-religious primary school children in relation to RE. We draw on data from a qualitative study exploring what it means to be 'non-religious' for primary school children in three different areas of England. Through presenting how these children reflect on RE, we see that they care about social justice but also that their own experiences of RE can be seen as perpetuating a 'hermeneutic injustice' (Fricker, 2007) as they are not being given interpretive resources to make sense of their own experiences and worldviews. We argue that giving children the opportunity to explore the kind of 'emerging worldview' (Beaman, 2017) that they themselves express might be one way to overcome this inequality and provide them with a language to reflect on their beliefs and values and enter into meaningful conversation with others.

Keywords Non-religious children · Non-religion · Worldviews · Commission on Religious Education · Non-belief · Atheism · Hermeneutic injustice

✉ Anna Strhan
anna.strhan@york.ac.uk

[1] Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of York, York, UK

[2] Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

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1 Introduction

Within religious education (RE), there is growing recognition of the need for pupils to engage with non-religious worldviews, as exemplified in the proposals in the Commission on Religious Education report, *Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward* (CORE 2018). These recommendations are rooted in the UK's changing religious landscape, where 'non-religion' has now replaced Christianity as the cultural default – especially for the young (Lee, 2015; Woodhead, 2016, 2017; Voas & Bruce, 2019). Alongside this growth of the non-religious, Britain, like many other countries in Europe, is also becoming increasingly religiously diverse: the fastest growing forms of religion are associated with minority groups (Davie, 2015), who, like the 'nones', are youthful and look set to increase further as a proportion of the population (Woodhead, 2017). Current proposals for Religion and Worldviews in England reflect that pupils are living in a world of growing religious *and* non-religious diversity. Questions of social justice are important here. The Commission on Religious Education report emphasizes that all young people need to be given the opportunity both 'to understand the worldviews of others and reflect on their own' (CORE 2018: 26). This is about 'understanding the human quest for meaning, being prepared for life in a diverse world and having space to reflect on one's own worldview' (p. 73). The report also notes that 'pupils deserve to know that their own and their family's worldview and community are acknowledged… If your own worldview is never mentioned, it is easy to conclude that you don't count' (p. 74).

This question of social justice in relation to RE is also a matter of epistemic justice. Miranda Fricker's concept of 'epistemic injustice' refers to the idea of 'a wrong done to someone in their capacity as a knower' (Fricker, 2007: 1). She develops the idea of 'hermeneutical injustice' to describe when someone has an unfair disadvantage in terms of 'making sense of their social experiences' due to a lack of 'collective interpretive resources'. Referring to adult RE, Joyce Ann Mercer notes that religious educators may sometimes be responsible for acts of hermeneutical injustice, for example, 'by not making available in an accessible manner the resources of contemporary scholarship that could help adult learners make sense of troublesome matters like scriptural inconsistencies or clashes between ancient and contemporary cosmologies' (Mercer, 2022: 2).[1] But this might also apply to non-religious children if they are not offered interpretive resources to make sense of their own worldviews in a way that members of religious communities currently are. In thinking about how non-religious perspectives might practically be included within RE, it is important to reflect on non-religious pupils' current experiences. To what extent does RE offer them meaningful opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and worldviews? Are their own worldviews actually mentioned? To what extent are they being prepared well for life in a society with a growing plurality of religious and non-religious worldviews?

Questions of social justice are also implicated in considering whose voices are amplified when we talk about non-religion. There have been numerous critiques of how the 'world religions paradigm' (WRP) which has been influential in shaping RE curricula constructs

[1] The concept 'epistemic injustice' has been relatively under-explored in relation to religion. For an insightful discussion of how the concept of 'epistemic injustice' is useful in relation to understanding religious disciplinary processes, see Chloe Gott's *Experience, Identity and Epistemic Injustice within Ireland's Magdalene Laundries* (2022). See also Stones & Fraser-Pearce (2021) on epistemic injustice in relation to epistemic literacy and RE.

'religion' according to a Protestant Christian model, entangled with colonial histories and technologies of power (Cotter & Robertson, 2016: 8). These critiques have explored how the WRP focused on the religion of elite male actors and communities, while experiences located further from the 'colonial centre' were rendered invisible (ibid.). As Suzanne Owen notes, 'Hinduism as a World Religion does not include Hinduism as a village religion' (Owen, 2011: 255, cited in Cotter & Robertson 2016: 8). With growing moves to include non-religion in the study of Religion and Worldviews, building on these valuable critiques of the WRP, it is important to reflect on whose non-religion pupils should encounter. The question of which voices we amplify is a political and moral choice. Often the non-religious voices heard most loudly in the media and public debate are those of elite anti-religious figures, for example, 'New Atheist' commentators such as Richard Dawkins (Lee, 2017). But their views offer only a partial account of what it means to be non-religious and do not necessarily reflect the beliefs and worldviews of non-religious pupils. In this article, we therefore seek to open up understanding of the beliefs and worldviews of non-religious children in the UK and how these relate to their experiences of RE. We argue that many non-religious children are not being given meaningful opportunities to explore their own worldviews, and suggest that allowing them opportunities to explore an 'emerging worldview' (Beaman, 2017) that is focused on an ethic of respect and equality may provide one route into speaking to their experiences and concerns.

2 The study

We draw here on a qualitative study exploring what it means to be 'non-believing' and 'non-religious' for primary school children. In using the term 'non-believing', we follow other studies in this area in referring to a lack of belief in traditionally religious phenomena such as belief in God rather than the idea of having no beliefs (Lee et al., 2017). Our broader study examines how, when, where, and with whom children grow up non-religious, and considers what this means both for children, and for their parents.[2] Situated in conversation with interdisciplinary literature on non-religion and on childhood and religion, our study focuses on non-religious children's experiences across three contrasting geographical 'micro-climates' (Voas & McAndrew, 2012) of religion/non-religion in England. We conducted ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with children, parents, and teachers in three primary schools, with Shillitoe spending between six and seven weeks with each school between October 2017 and July 2018. The first school, St Peter's,[3] is a Church of England primary academy in an urban area in the southwest of England, which we chose as a fieldsite because of the high proportion of religious 'nones' and its diverse religious and non-religious population. Our second fieldsite, Waterside Primary Academy, is located in a largely middle-class suburban setting in the north of England, chosen to allow insight into suburban cultures of non-belief. Our third fieldsite, Sunnybank Community Primary School, is located in a predominantly rural setting in northwest England, which we chose to deepen understanding of predominantly working-class non-religious children in a setting in which a low proportion of the population identify as 'non-religious'. Shillitoe spent most of her time during participant

[2] The findings from this wider study will be explored in *Growing Up Godless: Nonreligious Childhoods in Contemporary England* (under contract with Princeton University Press).

[3] All names and locations have been anonymized and names replaced with pseudonyms.

observation with Key Stage Two children, observing daily school life, particularly focusing on RE, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), and collective worship/assemblies. She also carried out paired interviews with 30–40 children per school ($N=115$), with the parents of fifteen of these children per school ($N=45$), and with four teachers per school ($N=12$). We sampled children using a worksheet activity asking children about their belief or non-belief in God. Prior to this, she had spent two weeks in each school informing children about our study and answering any questions they had, and gave a child-friendly presentation about the research to each class explaining that no particular definition or religious understanding of God was being used, and that there were no right or wrong answers. Worksheets were then distributed, and children who gave the answer 'no' or 'I'm not sure' to the question 'do you believe in God?' were invited to participate.

3 Narratives of non-religion and RE

How then did the children talk about what it meant to them to be 'non-religious' and/or 'non-believing'? And how did that relate to their experiences in RE? During their interviews, the children were asked what they believed or did not believe in. Many of them launched into discussing things they believed in, usually beginning with supernatural or magical entities such as Santa Claus or the tooth fairy, or unicorns or ghosts, and then reflecting on why they did not believe in God. Lewis and Dan, Year 5 pupils from Waterside, said that they believed in ghosts and Santa but they didn't believe in God or Jesus. Dan said: 'I believe in Santa, because people have actually got proof, like videoing, because some people have actually caught Santa on video… I don't believe in Jesus… There's no proof.' Both boys articulated a sense of belief in life after death, saying that your spirit might 'stay somewhere', and then discussing the possibility that, as Dan described, 'you can have a second life as a different thing, because… you could be reborn with the same spirit'. These kinds of exploratory beliefs in some kind of afterlife together with beliefs in supernatural beings, held alongside non-belief in traditional religious figures, was a common thread amongst the children. Both Lewis and Dan emphasized the idea that children – and others more widely in society – should be able to determine their own beliefs, and that everyone should be treated equally regardless of belief:

> Lewis: I think you can have different opinions in God or not.
> Dan: Yes, you should like, even if they don't agree with you, you should still treat them the same.

Lewis and Dan were typical of most of the children in our study in terms of describing religion as something they rarely talked about except when it came up in relation to RE lessons. Lewis said it only came up as a topic for discussion at home if he or one of his siblings had 'done it in a lesson'. Rachael then asked them whether they like or dislike RE, and they elaborated:

> Dan: I dislike it.
> Lewis: It depends. I don't really like it though.
> Interviewer: And what is it about it that you don't really like?

Dan: It's learning about- it's kind of boring for me.
Lewis: Yes, because if I don't really believe in God, so I don't find it really interesting.

While this exchange might imply that non-religious perspectives were not being discussed in RE, when asked about whether non-belief in God was ever talked about, they replied:

Dan: Yes, it is quite a lot, actually.
Lewis: Well, sometimes it is. Sometimes there are big discussions about if you believe or if you don't believe.
Dan: And there's usually quite a lot of arguments after.
Lewis: Yes.
Interviewer: So, what have you discussed and what would you talk about?
Dan: Well, I wouldn't go into the arguments. I don't really want to argue about stuff like that. So, I just stay away.
Lewis: I don't know really. We, probably, have like a discussion about, like, have agreements and disagreements. So, someone would probably give their opinion and then someone who didn't believe will probably give their opinion.

Lewis and Dan were not entirely negative about RE. They mentioned a lesson in which they had learnt the terms 'theist', 'atheist' and 'agnostic'. The teacher had read out some statements and they'd had to identify which stance the statement aligned with and stand by the sign with the correct term on it in the classroom. Dan described the lesson as 'pretty good', and Lewis concurred.

Their narrative is revealing of how some non-religious children experience RE in primary schools. While the school was giving them the opportunity to learn some ideas about atheism and agnosticism, they were turned off by lessons featuring debates about belief and non-belief. Their comments suggest that such debates are perhaps more likely to exclude those children who are perhaps uncertain about their beliefs, or who lack confidence to articulate them, or those for whom questions about belief in God are of little relevance. Lewis expressed this latter sentiment:

I don't believe in a God and I'm not really – I'm not too bothered… If someone said, 'You have to believe in a God,' I'd be like, 'Okay, that's fine.' Because I don't really mind if I believe in a God or not. But I don't really think that I do believe in a God.

Many children linked their non-belief in God to their belief in science, and held this non-theism alongside somewhat uncertain beliefs in life after death. Pearl, a Year 5 girl from Waterside, discussed her belief in reincarnation and added: 'I don't know what happens when you die… I'm just trying to look on the bright side, in a way, because I just don't know what happens.' She linked her non-belief in God to her belief in science, stating: 'I believe in the more scientific version… the Big Bang and stuff like that… I don't want to offend anyone, but Christians, the person who said that God made the world, they don't have any proof whatsoever if Jesus was actually real, if God made the world or about anything else either… But scientists actually have proof. So yes, I'm just going with the scientific one.'

Like Dan, Pearl and her friend Rhiannon both indicated that they would prefer not to discuss their own beliefs in RE:

Interviewer: Would you say that your own beliefs are taught about in RE?
Rhiannon: Well, I wouldn't say, because people would probably go against me.
Interviewer: Oh, so you wouldn't tell people in your class?
Rhiannon: Well only my really close friends I would tell because they would not go against me because they have their own beliefs as well.
Pearl: Yes, well I think friends… respect each other and respect each other's beliefs. I would only say what I believe in if I'm 100% sure that they won't get offended.
Interviewer: So that is why you perhaps keep beliefs more private?
Rhiannon: Yes
Pearl: Yes, but if we happen to have a conversation about it and everyone's respecting each other, I might join in.

Pearl described how disagreements in RE lessons sometimes, in her view, violated this ethic of respect for difference of belief. She described how in one RE lesson they had been learning about Mecca, and one of the children [who was Christian] had said, 'That isn't true':

Pearl: I don't think he should've said that. That isn't really that nice to say, even if there was a Muslim in the room or not. It just isn't that nice to say it, because people believe in lots of different things… We all have different beliefs, don't we, so it isn't nice to say, 'That isn't real,' because it can offend a lot of people.

As well as not enjoying debates about belief, some children experienced the dominant focus on religion during RE lessons as excluding. Gia, a Year 3 pupil at Sunnybank, said they didn't discuss being non-religious in RE. When asked how that made her feel, she said, 'It makes me feel not really cared about really, because I don't believe in it and I have to be taught it. I have to be taught something that I don't believe in'. Isabella and Emma, Year 5 pupils at Sunnybank, said that they would like non-religious viewpoints to be included:

Isabella: I don't like RE at all. We just learn about Muslims and Jewish.
Emma: And Hindus.
Isabella: And Hindus. Other religions. And people really don't have religions, they don't speak about them. It's like, you're leaving them out. I just don't like it…. It upset me because it makes other people upset when you leave those people who don't have a religion out… Some people might want to know about people who don't have religions, what they do, or something.
Emma: That would be very interesting… Or it could be very interesting. That should be something that we do in RE.
Isabella: I know.

Will, a Year 5 boy from Waterside, also expressed his sense of the irrelevance of the current curriculum to him:

I don't believe in anything that any religions really believe in… Sometimes I don't like RE and sometimes I like it. Because I'm not Christian and I'm not any like religion, and I find it a bit annoying that I have to do something that's not really that important to me.

> Because all you need to do is like, you know what they do, and just respect them, and not like make fun of them. That's all you really need to do. And like, really, it's kind of being nosey about what their gods are called and stuff, doing RE. So, technically, I really don't like it.

Tim, his friend, commented that he had enjoyed learning about Roman gods, and Will concurred, adding, 'if it's history, really, I'm fine with it'. In relation to what they were currently learning, he stated:

> All you need to know, is literally, like it's alright what they believe, it's not like wrong or anything. And you can teach like don't be mean to them because they're in that religion. Like, show respect.

Will's comments indicate that he – like other children we spoke to – had internalized an ethic of respect for difference, and in his view, RE was primarily about inculcating this ethic. In this sense, we might see RE as supporting social justice. Yet his words also imply a sense of hermeneutical *in*justice, that he is not currently being given interpretive resources to reflect on his own worldviews in a way that is meaningful to him. Because of his sense of the irrelevance of the subject, his experience is not measuring up to the aspiration that *all* students are enabled to reflect on their own worldviews, as well as understanding those of others.

This sense of irrelevance was not the case for all the children we spoke with. Some children did like RE – often linking this to an inspiring teacher. And in some cases, children were given opportunities to reflect on aspects of non-religion and non-belief and found this meaningful. Ryan, a Year 5 pupil at Sunnybank, spoke about how he had begun to identify as a humanist after learning about humanism in RE:

> Interviewer: So you were saying before you learnt about humanism, you didn't know it was there…
> Ryan: I didn't think there was such thing as like humanists. When you didn't believe in God or anything, you just had no religion whatsoever. So until we actually did learn about humanists, I didn't know.
>
> …
>
> Ryan: I am happy about being a humanist but I didn't really know about humanists until we learnt about it. I was a bit, you know, wobbly before we thought about humanists because, like, I didn't really believe in God in the first place but I just… it's a bit hard to say and stuff

Ryan's words indicate how learning about non-religious perspectives can give pupils a vocabulary through which to be able to express their worldviews in a way that is currently not happening for many.

3.1 'Post-secular' social justice

In thinking how RE might better engage with non-religious pupils, it is worth noting the significance to them of concerns related to social justice, equality, and care for the environment, which were issues of considerably more salience for them than belief or non-belief in God(s). Although we did not specifically ask the children about these issues, many articulated their thoughts about these matters. Alex and Gabby, Year 4 pupils at Waterside, discussed how their non-belief in God related to gender equality:

> Alex: The way that we learn about Christians, if you were to read the Bible - I'm not a Christian myself, I think I've made that clear already – Christians, if you were to read the Bible, or we were learning about them in class, you'd probably hear them as the Father. Fathers are normally the strong ones in the family. They have a lot of power because they're adults as well.
> Gabby: I don't see why men should be more important than women.
> Alex: Yes, it's like when you go back…
> Gabby: Women wouldn't vote and men would.
> Alex: I think people should also believe that there should be another God that's a woman, for example, instead of just being the man God.
> Gabby: Yes, it's because when you think of Christianity you never hear any mention of other gods. It's just the one main God. It's a man, and it's the same with Jesus, it's a man. It's kind of going back again. Women weren't allowed to vote. We don't think that's fair, especially as girls.

Their words indicate how their belief in gender equality led to their perception of Christianity as bound with a patriarchal imaginary which should – in their view – belong in the past. While this might be seen as contributing to their rejection of religion, it perhaps at least partly shaped their attitude towards RE as also outdated.

Almost all the children we spoke with also expressed a strong sense that it was wrong to discriminate on grounds of religion and emphasized ideas of equality and respect for difference. Henry, a Year 5 pupil from Waterside, stated: 'I don't mind it [religion]. I don't care if anybody else is this religion. They can be it, but then I've decided not to because I just don't have that idea', and he commented that if someone was 'being rude about Christians, I wouldn't like them'. At times, the children talked about ideas of religious discrimination as akin to discrimination on grounds of race, gender, or sexual orientation. Alex said, 'we don't have racists in our school, which is very good. We don't have, "Oh you're not my friend because you believe in this and I don't.' This ethic of religious equality could lead them to dislike RE if they felt it excluded children from minority religious communities. Rebecca and Clay, Year 4 pupils from St Peter's, both said they didn't like RE:

> Interviewer: You were saying you don't like RE, Rebecca. What do you not like about RE?
> Rebecca: I feel for Imran, because he's a – is he a Muslim?
> Clay: No, he's a Christian, I think… or a Hindu. I don't know. I don't really know.
> Rebecca: He's one of those, and he doesn't like RE because it isn't about his religion. He doesn't know what they mean… I just feel for him in my heart.

Thus, for some children, RE could be experienced as violating their own commitment to principles of equality and fairness.

Teachers at all three schools also emphasized these ideals of equality and respect for difference as important aims for RE. Mrs Hampson, a teacher at Waterside, talked about how although the syllabus focused on world religions, she did try to also include non-religion. She described a lesson in which she had sought to encourage the children to think about belief and non-belief in God:

> We talked about people who believe in God, people who don't believe in God at all and people who believe in different gods. So we weren't saying, 'Christian', 'Islam' – it was more 'believe in God', 'don't believe in God' and we looked at the reasons for why some people believe in lots of gods… It just comes back to that respect of – it doesn't matter, everybody is entitled to believe but let's try and understand it and gain some knowledge and just respect it, in general, and why people believe things.

These moral positions underpinning RE – especially respect for difference – were interwoven more broadly in the school ethos and were being taken up by the children (Strhan & Shillitoe, 2022), even if they did not like RE.

Some children's ideas about social justice also extended to ideas about economic inequality, while many also expressed a strong sense of care and concern for animals. Coco, a Year 4 pupil at St Peter's, described animals as one of the most important things to her in her life: 'I love helping in any way I can with animals. Animal charities, anything like that'. Talking later in the interview about ideas of morality, she said:

> Everyone's got a bit of good inside them. If you steal, you've still got a good bit inside you… If everyone didn't have any money, only one person had money, but that person doesn't want to share its money, the world would just be … just be really, really bad stuff. Also, … I love to work with, you know, stuff like eco things. Every time I see rubbish on the floor, I pick it up, and I put it in the bin. Even if animals, if they try and eat it, and like, plastic bags, if they get stuck in their throat, they could die, and I don't like seeing animals die.

Pearl also described animals as important to her:

> I just love animals. … I think that all animals should have a better life, because some are getting treated, well, they're not getting treated fairly.

Lewis, like several other children, expressed concerns about harm to wildlife, saying, 'I think it's really mean to kill all the wildlife, because … there isn't as much as there was', to which Dan added, 'Bees have started to become extinct.'

While there has been little research to date on non-religious children's worldviews, our findings reveal that these children's concerns with equality and fairness – extending often to animals – align with broader emerging worldviews, especially among younger age groups, that are often shared by both the religious and non-religious. In her study of the worldviews of both religious and non-religious sea turtle rescue volunteers, Lori Beaman argues that with these broader shifts towards accepting difference we are seeing 'an emerg-

ing worldview', which is 'more inclusive and recognizes interdependence, based on both scientific evidence and an ethic of respect that invokes a reformulated understanding of equality… Engagement is layered and fluid. Relations are respectful, imbued with humility and focused on connection' (Beaman, 2017: 25–26, cited in Strhan, 2019: 195). While in the United States, relative to the religious, the non-religious are more likely to be 'left-leaning' and 'progressive' in their outlooks on issues such as gender equality, gay rights, animal rights and environmentalism (Zuckerman, 2011; Baker & Smith, 2015; Smith & Cragun, 2019), in the UK, where the non-religious make up a larger proportion of the population, their political views range 'from moderate left-wing to moderate right-wing in much the same way as the British population as a whole' (Woodhead, 2016: 251). Therefore, in the UK, the 'emerging worldview' may define not the worldviews of the non-religious *per se*, but rather of younger generations, as suggested by the work of Roberta Katz, Sarah Ogilvie, Jane Shaw and Linda Woodhead in their study of the culture of Gen Z in the UK and the US. They argue that respect and acceptance are central values for postmillenials, including both non-religious and religious: they 'champion the values of diversity and freedom (Katz et al., 2021: 201) and their belief that everyone in society should be treated equally is perhaps their 'most widely shared worldview' (ibid., p. 193).

4 Conclusion

From a social justice perspective, there is much to be hopeful about listening to non-religious children talk about their concerns, experiences and (non)beliefs. They care about respect and equality. They are concerned about the environment. They want to see diversity respected in school and in society. And the resonances between what the children and their teachers are saying suggests that RE feeds into this ethic. However, if we think about RE as a site of social justice, their words suggest that the subject needs to change, and supports current proposals to include non-religious worldviews in the curriculum. We have written elsewhere about how RE lessons do often lead children to become aware of their non-religious identities, for example, through activities that ask children to categorize festivals as 'religious' or 'non-religious' (Strhan & Shillitoe, 2019). But for many of these children, it was not offering them opportunities to *meaningfully* engage with non-religious worldviews or helping them make sense of their own non-religious experiences and commitments, and this is a hermeneutic injustice (Fricker, 2007).

As these non-religious children represent 'the new normal' in the broader religious landscape in the UK, finding ways to better engage them in RE is an urgent task for the future of the subject. We are aware that there are particular challenges facing primary school RE in terms of both resourcing teachers and curriculum time. Yet it is also worth considering whether another factor in play here may be that primary school teachers – like the children they teach – are increasingly likely to be non-religious and may share with the children a sense that the subject doesn't acknowledge their own perspectives. We interviewed a number of teachers who described organized religion as hypocritical or immoral, especially in relation to issues related to gender and sexuality. Therefore, finding ways to ensure that the curriculum is one in which they themselves feel invested and which speaks to their own experiences is vital.

Giving children the opportunity to explore the kind of 'emerging worldview' we described above might be one route into this, in which ideas of respect, equality, and acceptance of difference are defining features, and acknowledging how these perspectives might be shared across – and challenge binary understandings of – the religious and the non-religious. As well as enabling children to learn concepts such as 'atheism' and 'humanism' in the way that is already happening, it is also important to acknowledge that children may often hold their non-belief in God(s) and other sacred figures with uncertainty or ambivalence, and alongside beliefs in some supernatural or other traditionally religious ideas, such as belief in life after death. The way that children described their inhibitions around discussing their own perspectives in RE – whether due to polarized debates or due to worries that sharing their views might risk disrespecting others – suggests that they are not currently being given a language to articulate their perspectives or a grammar to enter into meaningful conversation with others. With the growth of the non-religious set to continue alongside increasing religious diversity, finding ways to enable this plurality of voices to be heard so that each can reflect on and gain deeper understanding of others' – often shared – concerns and worldviews is a challenging but necessary task.

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