

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report September 2018 – August 2019

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1 Overview

1.1 Requirements as under the Education Act 1996

There have been no applications from Headteachers in community schools to waive the requirements that collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

2 Religious Education

2.1 Locally agreed syllabus

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE shares a locally agreed syllabus with Bristol, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. Since its adoption in 2016, SACRE has added a wealth of materials to its website to support schools in the provision of high quality RE. The programmes of study, together with all the supporting guidance, can be found at awarenessmysteryvalue.org. A link to the site is also published on the Bath & North East Somerset SACRE website: banes-sacre.com.

3 Standards in Religious Education

3.1 Local Authority Concerns

SACRE has not been informed by the Local Authority of any concerns about standards of religious education in primary, secondary and special schools.

3.2 Reports and Monitoring: Ofsted and SIAMS

SACRE accesses Ofsted reports on local schools throughout the year. During 2018-19, only three schools received inspections, but none of the reports mentioned RE (or collective worship).

In addition to Ofsted inspections, all Church of England schools are inspected as a designated church school through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The new SIAMS Inspection Schedule took effect from January 2019. Church schools are inspected every three years if the school's previous judgment was Inadequate or Satisfactory, and every five years if previously judged to be Good or Outstanding ('Excellent' in the new schedule). There are currently no schools in Bath and North East Somerset judged by SIAMS to be Inadequate with the majority being Good or Outstanding/Excellent.

3.3 Schools' Self-evaluation of Religious Education

In order for SACRE to gain information about RE and collective worship in Bath & North East Somerset schools, SACRE has begun to send a short survey to a proportion of schools on a rotational basis each year.

3.3.1 Since September 2017, replies have been received from ten schools. These responses were from eight in the primary sector and two in the secondary sector, spread across community and church schools and an increasing number of academies.

3.3.2 While six of the schools were providing an average of at least 50 minutes of RE on the timetable each week, three were not. In terms of a budget for RE, three schools said that they had no budget and had to request money as needed, three provided at least £1.50 per pupil for RE resources and only one less than 50p.

3.3.3 Only one school (a voluntary aided secondary school) reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *all* of RE by their

parents, and one other school (a community junior school), reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *part* of the RE programme.

3.3.4 Four of the schools reported average levels of attainment in RE and five above average. None of the schools reported that attainment was either high or low in relation to expectations. In terms of the standard of learning and progress in RE, three schools reported a need for improvement, six that standards were good and one (a VA secondary school) outstanding.

3.3.5 All the schools that responded to the questionnaire had an RE leader in place but there was a very mixed picture of continuing professional development (CPD) with seven of the schools not engaging in any *internal* training for staff in the previous year. At the same time, five of the schools had organised training for at least one member of staff on a course *external* to the school during the year. Two schools (both VC primary schools) reported that a teacher had received RE training of more than one day over the year.

3.3.6 Five of the schools had organised no RE visits for pupils in the previous year, though the other five had conducted two or more. All bar three had received at least one outside visitor to contribute to RE lessons. All bar one (a VC primary school) had built up their own artefact collections, and three reported use of the SACRE Resources held at Saltford School. Six schools now subscribed to RE Today, and this comes with membership of National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE). Only one school reported that it had no contact with an RE adviser (from the LA, Diocese or faith community) in support of RE during the year.

3.3.7 Two schools (both VC primaries) reported that there was insufficient time for RE in some years.

3.4 Analysis of school websites

3.4.1 Ten out of 26 schools had responded to the survey in this cohort, so SACRE decided to investigate the school websites of the other 16. The idea was to see whether schools were indicating that they fulfilled legal requirements for RE and collective worship on their website, and to credit them where further information had been uploaded regarding such aspects of programmes of study and contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

3.4.2 Results of SACRE members' analysis were very mixed. RE was mentioned on most websites, but rarely in much detail and only three gave the correct link to the locally agreed syllabus website or indeed to any other published programme. Only two of the schools contained outline programmes of study for RE and only one of these fulfilled the correct legal requirements. The other school included RE in its curriculum map but this consisted of an almost entirely Christian programme, with the exception of one term in Year 4 on Judaism (as it relates to Christianity). There was virtually no acknowledgement of an RE leader in these schools, which may explain why SACRE received no response to its request for survey

information. Only one school really fulfilled the legal requirement to provide parents with information about their right to withdraw children from RE and a curriculum overview containing information about the RE programme and how it followed the locally agreed syllabus.

- 3.4.3 As a result of the analysis, SACRE's Associate Adviser, wrote to all schools with a list of items of good practice regarding school websites and RE and collective worship. The letter also indicated some of the disappointing features of the SACRE findings. SACRE will continue to monitor school websites and provide feedback for schools.

3.5 Secondary schools' public examination results

- 3.5.1 This year there were 702 students entered for the **GCSE full course** in Religious Studies (RS). This is exactly the same number as last year, though from only 12 rather than 14 schools, now that Bath Community Academy has closed and Wellsway entered no students. This represent 41% of the cohort at the 12 schools that entered students, compared with 33.8% of the cohort at the 14 schools that entered students in 2018.

Norton Hill Academy, Saint Gregory's Catholic College, St Mark's CofE School and Somervale School Specialist Media Arts College entered nearly all their Year 11 students for the examination. Six Bath & North East Somerset schools entered no students for the Full Course: Broadlands Academy, Wellsway School, Three Ways School, The Aspire Academy, The Bath Studio School and the IKB Academy. This was the second year of the new grading system where candidates were scored on a 9-1 scale rather than A*-C, with 9 being the highest grade. Of the whole entry, 64.9% gained 9-4 grades, compared with 67.2% last year. In England, overall, there was a small decrease in the percentage of students gaining 9-4 grades (71.2%) compared with the previous year (71.8%). There was a notably excellent set of performance at St Gregory's Catholic College, where 75.2% of the 153 students entered achieved 9-4 grades. Students at Norton Hill Academy did not fare quite so well as in the previous year, with 58.3% of the 216 entrants achieving 9-4 grades, compared with 69.5% in the previous year. Excellent results were achieved also at Beechen Cliff (82.3% 9-4 grades), Writhlington (81.8%), Hayesfield Girls (75.9%), Ralph Allen (75.7%) and Oldfield (68.4%) Schools, though with a lower numbers of entries. It was also good to see that 46.8% of students from Somervale School Specialist Media Arts College achieved grades 9-4 this year, compared with 36.4% in the previous year and that both of the students entered at Mendip Studio School achieved grades in the 9-5 bracket.

- 3.5.2 There were 38 students (24 from Hayesfield, eight from Ralph Allen, two from St Mark's, two from the Mendip Studio School and one each from Wellsway School and the IKB Academy) entered for the **GCSE short course** in RS, compared with 25 in the previous year. Of the whole entry, 65.8% gained 9-4 grades. This compares unfavourably with the 92% gaining 9-4 grades last year, though favourably with the year before, when only 54.1% achieved the

equivalent A*-C grades. It was good to see that 22 of the 24 students entered for the exam at Hayesfield Girls School achieved grades 9-4.

- 3.5.3 90 students were entered for **'A' level** Religious Studies, compared with 68 last year. 66 of the total achieved an A*-B grade (14 from Norton Hill Academy, twelve from Beechen Cliff School, eleven from Hayesfield Girls School, ten from Ralph Allen School, three from Chew Valley, five from Oldfield School, seven from St Gregory's College and four from Writhlington School). It was good to see that a handful of students from Mendip Studio School and Somervale College also followed the A level course and achieved creditable grades.
- 3.5.4 Only 34 students were entered for **'AS' Level** RS this year, compared with 117 last year. AS examination results no longer count towards a student's A level results and many schools are not entering students as they cost money and take time away from class room learning. Nevertheless, it was good to see that 14 of the 21 students entered at Norton Hill Academy achieved A-B grades as did all three of those entered at Chew Valley School.
- 3.5.5 Overall, the results and numbers of entries for public examinations in Religious Studies in our local authority are encouraging. Entries at Key Stage 4 have remained stable and increased Post-16, countering the national trends, and results remain broadly in line with national averages. The ambition, however, must be to see entries for public examinations in RS for **all** Bath & North East Somerset schools and for results to improve over time as schools adapt their approaches to the recently introduced specifications.
- 3.5.6 *SACRE sends its congratulations to the staff and students for all their efforts.*

4 Methods of teaching, material and training

4.1 Teaching materials

The agreed syllabus website awarenessmysteryvalue.org contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study. During the year updates and amendments were made to the existing materials and some initial thinking about the next syllabus review was undertaken. In particular, the Associate Adviser has been involved in proposals to link programmes of study with a new national entitlement statement, as recommended by the Commission on RE in England. SACRE continues to maintain a collection of artefacts for all of the major religions at Saltford Primary School, and this year a subscription was taken out for the National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) which includes regular mailings from RE Today. The termly RE Today magazine and curriculum booklets are added to the Saltford School collection. A member of staff there receives a small stipend for managing the resources and arranging free loans to Bath & North East Somerset schools.

4.2 Teacher training

One training event for teachers took place: a seminar led by the Holocaust Education Trust. Three schools took up the offer of free places and the

event was also attended by three SACRE members and a student from Bath Spa University.

4.3 SACRE website: banes-sacre.com.

The SACRE website was maintained and updated during the year. A co-opted member of SACRE receives a small stipend for managing the site and ensuring it is kept up-to-date. As well as information about SACRE, the site contains ideas for RE specifically for Bath and North-East Somerset schools, including lists of resources available to borrow and reports on the use of local visits and visitors to support agreed syllabus RE.

4.4 Complaints about Religious Education

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints concerning RE.

5 Collective worship

5.1 Monitoring

As with religious education (see section 3.2), SACRE has initiated a survey of a selection of schools on a rotational basis over three years, providing schools with the opportunity to provide a self-evaluation of the provision and quality of collective worship.

5.2 Schools' Self-evaluation of Collective Worship

5.2.1 There were nine responses to the survey on collective worship.

Two of the schools surveyed (one VC junior and one VC primary) had between two and nine pupils being withdrawn from acts of collective worship by their parents. The others reported no withdrawals at all.

5.2.2 All the schools received support from local ministers of religion. All bar one school (a VC primary) received contributions to collective worship from visitors other than a local minister of religion.

5.2.3 Four of the schools reported that there was a genuine opportunity for pupils to participate in an act of worship every day. Two schools reported that there were, on average, only one or two genuine opportunities for pupils to participate in collective worship each week.

5.2.4 One of the schools (a VA secondary) considered that the quality of pupils' experience of assemblies / acts of collective worship was 'outstanding'. Six reported that the experience was 'good'. In two schools (one VC junior and one VC primary) the quality was judged to be 'requiring improvement', but none of the schools judged the quality to be inadequate.

5.3 Analysis of school websites

As for religious education, SACRE analysed the websites of the schools that failed to respond to the invitation to participate in the self-evaluation survey. It was found that very few schools mentioned collective worship on their websites, despite the legal requirement to let parents know of the right to withdraw children from the daily act. Only two schools really fulfilled the legal requirement to provide parents with information about their right to withdraw children from the daily act of collective worship and only three provided indications of the sorts of themes being followed.

- 5.4 Training
No training on collective worship was organised by SACRE during the year but information from other local providers, such as the Diocese of Bath & Wells was circulated to schools.
- 5.5 Complaints and determinations
The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints, and there were no requests from schools to vary the legal requirement for collective worship.

6 Links with other agencies

6.1 National

SACRE's Associate Adviser attended two Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) general meetings, in November 2018 and May 2019. He brought reports on these events to subsequent SACRE meetings and introduced discussions on the recommendations for SACREs on the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) in England.

He also attended the NASACRE AGM in May and produced a report which may be found on the Bath and North East Somerset SACRE website:

www.banes-sacre.com/#!/sacre-news-and-reports/

6.2 Regional

Three SACRE members attended the Southwest Conference for SACREs, which featured keynote addresses by Rudi Elliott Lockhart (CEO of the REC) and Paul Smalley (Chair of NASACRE). The conference included workshops on 'Making your SACRE work for you', 'How can SACREs fulfil their monitoring role effectively', 'Increasing religious prejudice post Brexit: widening participation' and 'Religious Literacy: is there any link with RE?'. Bath & North East Somerset SACRE continued to take part in the regional Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) project, with funding from Diocesan and other charities, aiming to provide training in religious education, especially through the building of communities of RE teachers across the region. This year Bath and North East Somerset SACRE also contributed £250 towards the maintenance of the project. Three SACRE members took part in the LTLRE steering group and two local teachers have acted as a Project Leaders for RE (PLREs). A third annual regional conference was held in June at Bath Spa University, with keynote addresses from Helen John, Chris Hewer, Juliet Lyall and Ajahn Jutindharo.

6.3 Local

Contact is maintained and found helpful with North Somerset, Haringey and Bristol SACREs, the Secondary Heads of Religious Education and the Bath Interfaith Group. SACRE provided a subsidy for schools to attend training led by an officer of the Holocaust Education Trust and this was taken up three schools.

Bath Interfaith Group (IFG) members are represented on SACRE (Committee A), and local interfaith events are publicised to SACRE members.

In September 2018, representatives of different faiths addressed the annual meeting with Bath IFG Patron the Mayor of Bath Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones on his theme of 'Environment'. This theme was repeated for the general public at the Mayor's Multifaith Gathering in Feb 2019.

Also in Sep, an 'Interfaith Pilgrimage' led by Bath Interfaith Group, visited local places of worship starting with the Abbey, and continuing on to the Friends Meeting House, St John's RC Church, Bath Islamic Centre, the Baptist Church and ending at the Christian Science Church.

As in each October, representatives of different faiths commemorated the Week of Prayer for World Peace, and to mark National Interfaith Week in November, the local Baha'i community shared a film to commemorate 200 Years of the Baha'i Faith.

Activities in 2019 began with Bath's annual event to honour victims of the Holocaust and other Genocides, coordinated by B&NES Council. The theme 'Torn from Home' was addressed by local artists and musicians, and also representative of the Baha'i Faith, Jane O'Hara.

A new, and very successful, type of interfaith encounter was organised by Imam Mohammed Gamal of the Bath Islamic Centre in February. In this 'Scriptural Reasoning' event, Islamic, Christian and Jewish 'experts' discussed passages from the Bible and Qur'an on Creation.

In May, Rev Jonathan Morris, Interfaith Advisor to the Bishop of Bath & Wells addressed the IFG on the topic 'Transformation and Social Change'.

July saw the IFG visit the newly-refurbished Spiritual Care Centre in Bath RUH, and meet Rev Narinder Tegally, and others of her team of Chaplains. Another new encounter happened in July when the IFG were invited to meet with members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, for a 'Q&A' evening.

The active programme demonstrates the good variety of local faith practitioners and activities available as a resource to SACRE.

7 SACRE arrangements

7.1 Chair and membership

SACRE's Chair is Dr Jane O'Hara (Group A – Bahá'i Community) and there are two Vice-Chairs, David Williams (Group B – Church of England) and Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar (Group A – Hindu Community).

SACRE is fortunate in having participation from a diverse representation from local faith communities, and these contacts are especially useful as a resource to RE teachers locally.

SACRE recorded its grateful thanks to three members who left its service this year, Dr Catherine Robinson of Bath Spa University, Balbir Kaur of the Sikh community and Kerrie Courtier of the NASUWT.

Five new members were welcomed: Andrew Avison of the Salvation Army, Imam Mohammed Gamal of the Muslim community, Gagandeep Singh of the Sikh community, Kevin Burnett of the National Association of Headteachers and Mark Quinn of Bath Spa University.

7.2 Professional and administrative support

SACRE was supported by Dave Francis, the Associate Adviser for Religious Education and Clerk to SACRE.

7.3 Finance report

(See Financial Statement below)

SACRE Financial Statement 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

Allocation	£10,850.00
Brought forward from 17-18 for resources costs	£ 141.00

Expenditure

Production of new materials for Agreed Syllabus	1,225.00
School support grants: visits/visitors and Holocaust Education training	867.87
Monitoring and training grants for two community secondary schools	600.00
Contribution to local Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) project	250.00
Resource Centre including RE Today subscription	412.99
NASACRE subscription & conference fee	205.00
Meeting costs	49.80
Members' expenses & fees	374.50
Monitoring of RE and collective worship and production of annual report	1,050.00
SACRE website management	365.47
Agreed Syllabus website hosting and management	108.00
Professional fees	5,250.00
TOTAL	10,758.63

Allocation + funds brought forward	10,991.00
Total Spend	(10,758.63)
To be brought forward 2019-20	232.37