

Coventry Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Annual Report 2011/2012

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Introduction

This is the annual report of the Coventry Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for 2011/2012 and is published in accordance with the requirements of section 391(6) of the Education Act 1996. It provides an account of the activities of SACRE during this period.

The report will be circulated to:

Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of Coventry schools
Coventry City Councillors
Diocesan Schools Commission
Diocesan Board of Education
NASACRE

Coventry Standing Advisory Council On Religious Education (SACRE) met formally three times in the period of this report (April 2011 to March 2012) on the following dates:

30 June 2011
22 September 2011
20 February 2012

Information on administrative and organisational matters is available from Denise Ryan ; Children, Learning and Young People Directorate; New Council Offices; Earl Street; Coventry; CV1 5RS - Telephone 024 7683 1507 or email 'denise.ryan @coventry.gov.co.uk'.

Message from Chair of SACRE

This is the first Annual Report since David Pritchard relinquished the Chair of SACRE in November 2010. David had been invited by the City Council to become the Chair of SACRE in June 2005. David brought a wealth of skills and understanding to this role, which he undertook with great professionalism, dedication and humour. David continued to chair SACRE meetings after he had formally retired, and this was greatly appreciated by all SACRE members. I would like to place on record the sincere thanks of Coventry SACRE to David for his outstanding contribution to the promotion of RE in Coventry Schools, and wish him a happy and well deserved retirement in Ludlow.

I am very grateful to the two Advisory Teachers for Humanities, Jas Dhillon and Richard Green, who supported the work of SACRE so effectively over a number of years until the end of the summer term in 2011. Jas has moved on to a senior school based post in the city, and we all wish her every success in her well deserved promotion. Richard retired at the end of the Summer Term and we send him all our best wishes for the future.

I would also like to thank Dave Simpson, who was Clerk to SACRE since its original formation many years ago, until his retirement at the end of 2011. Dave was responsible for supporting the work of SACRE in an organisational and administrative role, and had a wide range of knowledge of procedures and protocols, which ensured that SACRE was able to properly fulfil its role. Dave undertook his responsibilities quietly and professionally, prompting and advising the group, and formally minuting all the meetings of SACRE – no small accomplishment. I would like to convey all our very best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement to Dave. SACRE will miss you.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of Coventry SACRE who have attended meetings regularly and contributed to the various activities outlined in this report.

I would also wish to express my personal thanks to Manjit Kaur, who has chaired SACRE since David's retirement, and has kept SACRE moving forward with her drive and infectious enthusiasm, and is so generous with her help and support.

The report includes details of events undertaken in 2011 to 'Celebrate RE' and the conferences for RE teachers. The feedback from both of these initiatives was very positive.

I would like to welcome Dilwyn Hunt to SACRE as a professional advisor to the group. We are very fortunate to have secured the services of Dilwyn, who brings an acknowledged national perspective of RE to Coventry SACRE, at a challenging time for RE nationally.

I hope that you find this report helpful and informative, and commend it to you.

*David Stanier
May 2012*

SACRE's Role and Function

SACRE has a statutory duty:

- To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and Religious Education in Community Schools and Foundation schools which do not have a religious character. Religious education in these schools must be delivered in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.
- To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and methods of teaching, choice of materials and teacher training in Religious Education and collective worship
- To provide an annual report
- To require Coventry City Council to periodically review the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (at least every 5 years)

In addition the SACRE can:

- Consider applications made by a headteacher to release some or all of the pupils in a particular school from the requirement for collective worship to the wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (a Determination).

Membership of SACRE:

Coventry SACRE comprises four statutory groups:

- Group 1 – The Church of England (Christianity)
- Group 2 – Christian Denominations and other religions and religious denominations that appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions of the area. Currently Coventry SACRE has provision for representatives from the following faiths – Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity (Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Non Conformist)
- Group 3 – Teacher Associations
- Group 4 – Coventry City Council

Additional members including people with particular expertise in areas of religious education or who represent perspectives not included in the statutory groups are co-opted by SACRE. The currently co-opted members include a representative of the University of Warwick and the British Humanist Association.

In February 2012 members were informed that Colin Green (Director of Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate) had confirmed Dilwyn Hunt's support in his capacity as a nationally accredited RE Advisor to Coventry SACRE, in response to SACRE's request for high quality professional support, following local re-organisation.

Detail of the current membership are shown in Appendix A

Determinations

During 2011- 2012 Coventry SACRE received no applications from schools seeking a complete or partial exemption from acts of collective worship that are wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

In 2010 a guidance note was sent out to all the local authority's schools clarifying the statutory requirement and including a list setting out what schools would be expected to include in a submission to vary the act of collective worship.

Complaints

SACRE received no formal complaints concerning religious education or collective worship during the period of this report.

Review of the Year 2011/2012

Celebrating RE Month

In June SACRE welcomed Judy Ryan and Manjeet Ohri from Joseph Cash Primary School to the meeting. Joseph Cash Primary School had been successful in winning a competition demonstrating their effectiveness in promoting all faiths and cultures within the school environment. They had celebrated RE month by organising a multi faith afternoon which included events such as exhibitions, demonstrations, displays, assemblies and hands on activities.

Judy and Manjeet shared pictures of the event with the group. The group were informed that the event had been fully supported by parents, Governors and the wider community and could only continue to promote the cohesive agenda embraced by the school.

Celebrating RE Event

A joint event was held with Solihull and Warwickshire SACRE's to highlight the profile of RE. John Keast, RE consultant to the DfES was asked to speak at the event. 36 people attended and Lizzie McWhirter and Gyll Brown supported the event.

SACRE RE Conference

Dilwyn Hunt presented a key note speech along with a workshop on practical strategies to use in the classroom. Overall the feedback to the conference was positive, the only reservation was that the presentation was not aimed at secondary aged pupils only primary.

SACRE response to national/local issues

Lizzie McWhirter reported on national developments with regard to RE being marginalised as a consequence of being left out of the 2010 English Baccalaureate and the likelihood of it disappearing altogether from the curriculum of many secondary schools. NATRE (National Association of teachers of RE) reported that:

RE's exclusion from the EBacc had already caused an avalanche of protest including:

- An Early Day motion in the Commons signed by 111 MP's from all parties
- Tabled questions and debates in both the Commons and the Lords
- Strong disquiet being expressed by the parliamentary select committee on Education
- A 130,000 signature petition to the Prime Minister

The group suggested a possible response from SACRE expressing their discontent with developments and highlighting with local MPs. They were yet

to receive a response from Bob Ainsworth. The Bishop of Coventry had offered to also highlight concerns.

Members discussed the new initiative with regard to schools becoming Academies. A significant number of Coventry Secondary schools were either at Academy status or were progressing through the process. In order for a school to convert they must have been deemed Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. Primary schools in a category could be linked to an outstanding Secondary school. Schools would have more flexibility over the curriculum, finance and staffing. Consultation with staff, parents, community and stakeholders would need to take place before an application was submitted.

Jas Dhillon informed colleagues that the LA had cut back on secondary Advisory Support to schools due to the economic government funding cut backs. Services and support were historically bought as a package under a Service Level Agreement. It was thought services may become more bespoke and subject specific with schools working in clusters and networks supporting each other. The group discussed concerns with regard to the future of RE not being highlighted and its profile within the City being jeopardised.

Religious Education at Alice Stevens School

In September 2011 Myra Pitcairn gave a presentation to SACRE on the teaching of religious education at Alice Stevens School.

Alice Stevens was a special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and had some children with complex needs. The vision for the future was for the school to become a broad spectrum school and had been linked with the now cancelled BSF programme. Pupils at Alice Stevens had one hour of RE a week and in that time it was a challenge to enable these children to access learning.

The school largely covered the Coventry Agreed Syllabus at KS 3. The focus was on reinforcing the 6 main World Religions. It was difficult for many of the pupils to grasp some of those ideas and often it was only by Year 9 that it was possible to move on to some of the more challenging concepts such as human rights. The school made use of a wide range of artefacts in teaching RE at this stage and artefacts were often a significant catalyst for their learning. There was also significant use of interactive materials especially visual material. Myra tabled a curriculum map and examples of schemes of work.

Key Stage 4 – the entry level certificate had changed and Year 10 pupils were using the new entry level. It was not yet clear how the school would assess this. In theory it was meant to enable students to progress from entry level to a GCSE but that was really challenging for most of the pupils at Alice Stevens. The reality was about seeking to move issues from black and white into shades of grey and focussing on issues they may face in their daily lives and which had some relevance to them. SACRE noted the specification for entry level certificate in RE.

There was a daily act of collective worship at Alice Stevens and the school had close links with the Vicar at St James' Church which worked well.

There were some issues some related to inclusion. It was difficult to establish how far to take some strands of work because of the variability in terms of the pace at which the children were able to learn.

There were issues around peer teacher support because it was difficult to find or meet with another RE teacher working in a similar school with a similar profile of pupils. The appropriateness of Government initiatives to SEN was also problematic and there were issues around CPD and training. INSET may be appropriate in terms of age range for a special school but often the level and issues were not. SEN tended to be a forgotten area of education nationally. There had been a determined effort to retain the statement in the Coventry Agreed Syllabus that schools could adapt the Syllabus for pupils with SEN.

The SACRE noted that any plans for CPD could be constructed within the local authority offer. It may also be appropriate to include SEN in the offer across the sub region to improve the opportunities for links with similar schools with a similar profile of students.

Members thanked Myra for her informative and enthusiastic presentation.

Review of Constitution

The Constitution for Coventry SACRE was tabled for members to consider. A discussion ensued regarding the members, quorum and voting procedures and future developments to move things forward. The following groups were confirmed:

- Group 1 Church of England (5 members)
- Group 2 Other denominations (minimum of 12 maximum 14)
- Group 3 Associations representing teachers
- Group 4 Authority (5 members)

Priorities for 2011/20112

Key areas for development into 2011/12 included:

- Self evaluation
- Monitoring collective worship
- Monitoring standards of achievement
- Work on levels of assessment

SACRE members considered using the SACRE RE self evaluation toolkit perhaps once a year to check their progress as a SACRE.

SACRE RE Toolkit October 2011

Members considered the toolkit which focussed on five aspects of the work of SACRE's. Members discussed at what stage of development they felt Coventry SACRE were at, either developing, established or advanced. They **agreed** to examine Aspect 1 and 2 as priority.

Aspect 1: Promoting Improvement in the standards, the quality of teaching and provision in RE

- 1a. RE provision across the LA - Developing
- 1b. Standards of achievement and public examination entries – Established
- 1c. Quality of learning and teaching – Established
- 1d. Quality of leadership and management, including the provision and management of resources. - Developing
- 1e. Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff – Developing
- 1f. Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools - Developing

Aspect 2: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

- 2a. The review process – Developing
- 2b. The quality of the local Agreed Syllabus - Advanced
- 2c. Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus – Advanced
- 2d. Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) – Developing
- 2e. Developing the revised agreed syllabus – Advanced
- 2f. Making best use of National Guidance – Advanced

Aspects 3, 4 and 5 would be considered at the next meeting in May 2012.

School Reviews and Ofsted Inspections

RE Inspections

A copy of the Ofsted Subject report on RE at Stivichall Primary School had been circulated. SACRE welcomed a very good and positive report on the provision of RE at the school.

Coventry had been proactive in involving teachers in writing the Agreed Syllabus and associated schemes of work which made the Syllabus accessible and had contributed to its effective use in schools. This was reflected in recent RE subject inspection reports which SACRE had received.

SACRE noted that there were issues for RE in relation to the new Ofsted inspection framework. It was felt that the inspection of RE could be lost within the new arrangements where it would be included as part of social, cultural and moral education and could get lost as a subject.

Examination Results

Religious Studies Examination outcomes 2011

GCSE Full and short course

- In 2011 2362 Coventry Y11 students were entered for Religious Studies qualifications .This is approx 67% of the Y11 cohort. There were 1747 entries for the full GCSE and 593 for the short course GCSE and 22 for entry level qualifications.
- 14 of the 19 Coventry schools offered the full GCSE course and 16 schools the short GCSE course. Some schools (our church schools and Coundon, President Kennedy and Tile hill Wood) enter the vast majority of their students for Religious Studies, In other schools the proportion entered for GCSE ranges from zero upwards.
- The numbers entered for the full course have increased from 2010 and the numbers taking the short course has declined, both reflecting the national situation.
- The proportion of students attaining a C grade or above in their GCSE dropped slightly in 2011 to 59.6% which is well below the national figure of 72.7%. The numbers attaining the high A*A grades in Coventry declined by 4% in Coventry and is now well below the national figure of 43%. Girls attain significantly higher than boys.
- Schools with high numbers entered where students performed particularly well include Bishop Ullathorne, Cardinal Newman, Blue Coat and Sidney Stringer.
- Schools where relatively fewer students are entered where attainment was high include Caludon, Finham and Stoke Park.

The table below gives further information

	Full GCSE Coventry	Full GCSE National	Short Course GCSE Coventry	Short Course GCSE National
Number of Entries	1747 (1479)	199752 (170767)	593 (889)	233998 (254698)
A*-G passes	97.4% (97.4%)	98.2% (98.7%)	92.7% (94.2%)	94.9% (96%)
A*-C passes	59.6% (61%)	73.2% (72.7%)	52.4% (52.6%)	51.8% (54%)
A*A passes	16% (20.6%)	43.4% (43.3%)	16.9% (16.9%)	22.9% (23.4%)

Data in brackets are the 2010 results for comparison

- The Fisher Family Trust analysis of student progress indicates that in 2011, based on the prior attainment of at age 11 students performed less well than expected on the full GCSE course at both A*A and A_C but better than expected on the Short course at both A*A and A_C.

Post 16

At Post 16 there were 194 Y12 students entered for AS Religious Studies and 123 for A level. About two thirds are girls. 12 Coventry schools enter students for these qualifications.

At AS level 91% attained A_E grades including 63% at C and above. The national figures were 98.5% and 80.4% respectively.

At A level all the Coventry students passed with 13.8% attaining A*A (national 27.3%)

Ian Rye May 2012

Appendix A

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP 2011/2012

GROUP 1 - THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

NOMINATING BODY

MEMBER

Coventry Diocesan Board of Education

Canon Margaret Sedgwick
Mrs Emma Griffiths
Reverend Paul Messam
Mr Chris Mellers
Reverend Nicholas Scott

GROUP 2 - OTHER FAITHS & OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

NOMINATING BODY

MEMBER

Archdiocese of Birmingham (1)

Claire Rutter (from February 2012)

Free Church to be nominated by Faith Groups determined by SACRE (up to three members)

Miss Pauline Luckett (from February 2012)

Greek Orthodox Church (1)

Mrs Helen Maoudis

Sikh Faith (2)

K S Mandair
Balwant Singh

Muslim Faith (2)

Nasreen Akhlaq
Vacancy

Hindu Faith (2)

Harish Dhokia
Ramesh K Renati

Buddhist Faith member nominated in accordance with arrangements agreed with SACRE (1)

Ven Manapo (from June 2010)
Ven Ajahn Khemadhammo (from March 2012)

Black Churches member to be nominated in accordance with arrangements agreed with SACRE (1)

vacancy

Jewish Faith member nominated from the Jewish Faith community (1)

Mr Jonathan Passman

GROUP 3 - ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTING TEACHERS**NOMINATING BODY****MEMBER**

Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) Steven Spriggs

National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) vacancy

National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) Mr David Stanier (until February 2012)

National Union of Teachers (NUT) Miss Pauline Lockett (until February 2012)

Secondary Heads Association (SHA) Mary Armstrong

GROUP 4 - THE AUTHORITY**Coventry City Council****Member**

Councillor Joe Clifford
Reverend Terry Colling
Manjit Kaur
Gyll Brown
Councillor Christian Cliffe

Co-opted Members

Ms Judith Everington (University of Warwick, Institute of Education)

Lizzie McWhirter (Coventry DBE)

Karen Steele (Coventry Secondary School Teacher)

Sandra Durkin (British Humanist Society)

Tarina Slater (Coventry Primary School Teacher) (from June 2010)

Chair of SACRE

Miss Manjit Kaur (until February 2012) *Mr David Stanier (from February 2012)*

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE SERVICING OF SACRE 20011/12

1. *SACRE was chaired by Manjit Kaur and David Stanier*
2. *SACRE was served by the following officers of Coventry City Council*
 - 2.1 *Clerking and Administrative Support:
David Simpson, Committee Officer, Children, Learning and Young People Directorate, Coventry City Council, and Denise Ryan –Governor Support Unit - Children, Learning and Young People Directorate, Coventry City Council*
 - 2.2 *Advisory Support: Until July 2011
Jas Dhillon; Advisory Teacher Humanities – secondary
Richard Green: Advisory Teacher Humanities – primary
Dilwyn Hunt: Independent RE Advisor (from 2012)*
3. *SACRE was also supported by the Coventry Diocesan Board of Education’s Religious Education Adviser Mrs Lizzie McWhirter who is a co-opted member of SACRE.*

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
SACRE EXPENDITURE DURING 2011/2012**

EXPENDITURE

	£	£
<i>Clerking and Administrative/ Meeting Support including room hire</i>	611	
<i>Support Services Contribution</i>	1157	
<i>Catering (including conferences)</i>	548	
<i>Subscriptions to professional organisations and NASACRE</i>	112	
<i>Subscription to publications</i>	150	
<i>Course Fees</i>	521	
<i>SACRE sponsored exhibitions</i>	600	
<i>Professional fees</i>	95	
<i>Travelling expenses</i>	20	
		3814
<i>Budget 2011/12</i>		8838
<i>Difference (underspend)</i>		(5024)

As this is a centrally held budget, underspends are not carried forward, and are subsumed into the central budget as a contribution towards corporate savings.