

Sefton SACRE

Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education



Annual Report 2011 - 2012

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Letter from the Chair of Sefton SACRE

I commend this report to all those with an interest in Religious Education in Sefton schools. I look forward to working with you and all SACRE committee members throughout 2013.

My personal thanks are due to Eddie Sloan, the consultant for SACRE, and to Joe Flatman, the clerk to SACRE. They have ensured its smooth operation and have made the task of running SACRE an enjoyable experience.

Membership is still an issue. It is crucial that we have a mix of religious ideas if we are to be at our most effective and that is why we are hoping to recruit members of the Jewish, Hindu and Islamic faiths to the committee this year. If anybody working in education from those faith groups is interested in joining our committee, I should be delighted if they would contact Joe Flatman on Joe.Flatman@sefton.gov.uk

This year members of SACRE, together with teachers, have completed a revision of the Sefton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, and this will be launched early in 2013. It has been designed to be easily accessible to the staff and students who will be using it. Any feedback on the new syllabus will be warmly appreciated.

Changes in education are taking place rapidly and I urge you to hold on to the sure knowledge that the effective teaching of Religious Education in schools will allow children and young people to explore the thoughts and beliefs of others, develop confidence and self assurance, leading to a greater tolerance and understanding of the world around them.

With my very best wishes,

John Smith
Chair of Sefton SACRE

SEFTON STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL REPORT 2011 - 2012

What is SACRE?

The Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education or SACRE is a body that every Local Authority is required to set up as a requirement of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

What does SACRE do?

The main purpose of SACRE is to advise the Local Authority on matters concerned with Religious Education and Collective Worship in community schools. It also has a responsibility to monitor and support provision in these areas.

RE must be taught in schools but it is not part of the National Curriculum, and the syllabus is determined locally. SACRE must require the Local Authority to create and keep under review an Agreed Syllabus in Religious Education. A revised Agreed Syllabus for 2012 has been finalised and printed based upon the National Framework for Religious Education (2004).

SACRE also has a role to play in the complaints procedure of the Local Authority (LA) in relation to Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Membership of SACRE

The legal requirement is that SACRE should consist of four groups:

Committee A: Christian and other principal religious traditions

Committee B: The Church of England

Committee C: Teachers' Associations

Committee D: Sefton Council

Additional members may be co-opted.

SACRE meetings

Sefton SACRE meets termly, with meetings taking place in schools throughout the borough. This report covers the period from January – December 2012.

Meetings were held on the following dates

7th February 2012

22nd May 2012

9th October 2012

ACTIVITIES 2012

Revision of the Agreed Syllabus

This year saw the completion of the revised Sefton Religious Education syllabus, in accordance with SACRE regulations to undertake this task every four years. We are extremely grateful for the knowledge, experience and efforts of the two primary and two secondary teachers (led by the LA officer for SACRE, Eddie Sloan) to produce a refreshed syllabus which we are confident will meet the needs of the community schools in the borough.

As planned the syllabus package consists of three documents:

- Syllabus
- Guide to the syllabus
- Glossaries

We still plan to enhance the syllabus by compiling a resource bank of web-based and paper-based resources suggested and contributed by Sefton teachers.

We believe the new syllabus addresses the issues highlighted through extensive consultation with schools:

Primary

- A clearer and simpler framework which is more readily available/accessibile.
- Greater clarity around progression through Foundation Stage / Key Stage 1 / Key Stage 2 to eliminate potential gaps in knowledge.

Secondary

- The main syllabus and key assessment materials needed to stand out.

General

- The syllabus is not overburdened with content at the expense of opportunities for spiritual development and clearly represents a framework for the teaching of RE.
- The revised KS1 and KS2 syllabus is organised so that there are no gaps in progression and there is continuity from KS2 to KS3.

Sections of the syllabus are prefaced with expressions of pupils' art work which reflect their concept of spirituality and worship. The pictures were collected through a competition with the following headings:

Foundation – Special People In My Life

Key Stage 1 – Belonging

Key Stage 2 – Special Celebrations In My Life

Key Stage 3 – Things I Believe In

The competition was run in late June/early July 2012 proving to be a popular end of term activity in schools and, pleasingly, generated an excellent number of entries. Prizes of gift cards were awarded to the winning entrants.

Plans are now being finalised for the formal launch of the revised syllabus which will take place in the Spring Term 2013.

Collective Worship

The monitoring responsibility of SACRE to ensure that schools adhere to their legal responsibility surrounding collective worship continued to be a major focus at meetings this year. It was agreed that SACRE should write to Headteachers, Heads of RE and Chairs of Governors stressing their responsibilities and it is planned to link this issue with the launch of the revised syllabus. In addition, a member of the committee will attend a Primary Headteachers' meeting to back up any written communication and a reference to this issue will be included in the LA Director's termly report.

There were further discussions around the lack of specialists within primary, the need for courses for teaching of 'other' faiths and reminding of the cross-curricular opportunities. Individual faith exhibitions such as Jewish way of life were acknowledged as a valuable resource.

Collective Worship Training

There was a plan to repeat the training early in the Autumn Term 2012. However, as efforts were geared towards the finalising of the revised syllabus this has been postponed until 2013 so that sufficient emphasis can be given to this training, which it undoubtedly deserves.

Membership and Attendance

The capacity of Sefton SACRE continues to be adversely affected by lack of members in some committees. Efforts continued to be made during 2012 to recruit members and this work is ongoing with possible avenues for recruitment identified:

- Contacting colleagues in Liverpool regarding representatives from Eastern religions.
- Following up named potential representatives for the Jewish and Hindu faiths.
- Local and national multi-faith networks.
- Considering the parents of children in schools.
- Approaching the Liverpool Archdiocese as they provide support and speakers from different religions to Sefton schools.
- Approaching the Education Business Partnership and local Chamber of Commerce.

It should be acknowledged that Sefton does not have a multi-cultural population which makes it more difficult to recruit the desired range of religious representatives but this issue will not be sidelined.

Other topics

During the year the committee received information and/or visitors to highlight:

- The Farmington Institute – which supports and encourages teachers of RE in schools and Headteachers working on standards and values.
- The Virtues Project International – created to develop a culture of character, build self-esteem and empower those involved to make responsible, moral choices individually, in families, organisations and communities.

Complaints

We are not aware that any complaints were received during the period covered by this report in respect of Religious Education or Collective Worship.

Future plans

The intentions for the future are consistent with previous years:

- To formally launch the 2012 Sefton Religious Education agreed syllabus.
- To continue to monitor the quality of RE and Collective Worship as capacity allows.
- To support the provision of RE and Collective Worship within available resources.
- To continue efforts to recruit members from a broad range of faiths.

SEFTON STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MEMBERSHIP 2011 - 2012

Committee A: Christian and other principal religious traditions

Dr John Smith (Chair)	Free Church Federal Council
Mrs Deborah Albon	Liverpool Catholic Archdiocese
Mrs Sue Kendall	Liverpool Catholic Archdiocese
Mrs Sylvia Miley	Baha'i
Rev. Jonathan Oatridge	Free Church Federal Council
Mr. Geraint Davies	Free Church Federal Council
Vacancy	Islam
Vacancy	Hindu
Vacancy	Judaism

Committee B: The Church of England

Mrs Lesley Deninson	Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education
Ms Julie Ferguson	Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education
Vacancy	Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education

Committee C: Teachers' Associations

Mrs Beryl Drury	Joint Teachers' Committee
Mrs Rebecca Woods	Joint Teachers' Committee
Vacancy	Joint Teachers' Committee
Mr David Thomas	Sefton Association of Primary Headteachers
Dr. Simon Hulme	Sefton Association of Secondary Headteachers

Committee D: Sefton Council

Cllr Sean Dorgan	Sefton Council
Cllr Maureen Fearn	Sefton Council
Cllr Victoria Bennett	Sefton Council

Officers of Sefton Children's Schools and Families

Mr Eddie Sloan	Consultant to SACRE
Mr Joe Flatman	Clerk to SACRE