

# Swindon SACRE Annual Report 2011 -12



Students from Commonwealth school take part in an interactive RE task to explore faith in action.

Swindon SACRE published its new Guidance on Collective Worship :  
**“Time to Breathe”**  
<http://www.bristoldiocesecyp.org/index.php/articles/item/327-new-collective-worship-guidance-for-bristol-and-swindon>

A collage of four photographs illustrating collective worship. Top left: Two students in dark uniforms smiling. Top right: A group of students in a classroom setting. Bottom left: A student looking into a fish tank. Bottom right: A large assembly hall filled with students seated in rows, facing a stage area.

## “Time to breathe”

New Guidance on Collective Worship 2012

Children from King William Street CofE VC School help others to Celebrate Harvest Festival





Councillor Doreen Dart

## Chair's introduction

It is hard to write this report as since the end of the Academic year 2011-12 Councillor Doreen Dart our committed and dedicated Chair has sadly passed away.

Doreen had served as Chair of SACRE since 2005 and her style of chairing was marked with a humour and warmth that will be sorely missed.

The Academic year 2011-12 saw an active campaigning year for Swindon SACRE who undertook a series of letter writing petitioning about the place of RE in the curriculum and in particular the its exemption from the EBacc and received many positive responses from local Politicians and Church Leaders although the responses from the DFE were not encouraging.

Exam entries for Full Course RE have risen to an all time high of 323 students (14%) and Results from the 2012 full GCSE were 84.2 % A\* - C which was considerably above the national average of 71.1% and represents the best results for full course RE in Swindon in five years

However It is recognised in the examination entry statistics at Key Stage 4, that there has been a decline of 79 students being entered for a public examination in RE in the last year. Only 47.4 % of students in Swindon are entered for a public examination in RE

Within over half of Swindon Schools the majority of students are not following a public examination course.

Churchfields, and Dorcan School as well as Swindon Academy appear to have not entered any students for a public examination in RE at KS4 ,for 2 of those schools this is a new phenomenon in 2011 . These are very worrying statistics for RE – and Swindon SACRE recognises its duty to monitor this trend.

This Academic year saw the production of new guidance about Collective Worship for all Schools and Academies in Swindon: “Time to Breathe” is a very thorough well written useful guidance document and has been well received by schools. SACRE members served the pupils of the Swindon well by working so diligently to produce such a comprehensive and useful document.

At a time of such uncertainty about RE Swindon SACRE members have worked hard to ensure that the subject has status and support within the authority.

Katy Staples  
Consultant to Swindon SACRE

Holocaust survivor Professor Ladislaus Lob visits Commonwealth



Students from St. Joseph's RC College re-enacted a wedding when exploring Why do Christians have wedding ceremonies?

## Executive Summary

The report meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Act, which states that:

- 'The council shall in each year publish a report of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council during the preceding year.'
- The report is required to specify any matters in respect of which the council has given advice to the authority, and the nature of that advice.

The key function of SACRE is to advise the Local Authority on RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus.<sup>1</sup>

The composition of SACRE is set out in legislation.

The four groups or committees represent the following interests within the local community. These are the people that have served for the year September 2011 to - June 2012

- **Committee A Christian Denominations, Other Religions or Religious Denominations**

Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance  
Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community  
Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community,  
Mr Arun Bedi, Sikh Community – Deputy  
Mr Mark Cawte, Methodist Church  
Mr David Burbidge, Baptist Church  
Mr Tony McAteer, Catholic Community  
Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte, United Reformed Church

- **Committee B The Church of England**

Reverend Norma McKemey  
Ms Steph Mundin  
Miss Janet French  
Mrs Penny Summers  
Reverend Beth Brown

<sup>1</sup> Section 391(1)(a), Education Act 1996

- **Committee C Teacher Association Representatives**  
 Mr David Easter  
 Mrs Tracy Mason  
 Ms Helen Miller  
 Mrs Mandy Sandleton  
 Miss Lottie Rowe  
 Mr Paul Sunners  
 Mrs Sara Crabb
- **Committee D The Local Authority.**  
 Councillor Doreen Dart (Chair)  
 Councillor Russell Holland  
 Councillor James Robbins  
 Councillor Raymond Fisher  
 Councillor Fay Howard  
 Councillor Claire Ellis  
 Councillor Alan Bishop

**Support Officers:**

Ms Katy Staples, SACRE Adviser, 0117 9175583, [katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org](mailto:katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org)  
 Ms Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser  
 Mr Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning  
 Miss Sarah Lawrence, Committee Officer, 01793 463603,  
[slawrence@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:slawrence@swindon.gov.uk)

Members are nominated by appropriate organisations and appointments confirmed by the Local Authority. Other members may be co-opted.

**SACRE met on four occasions during the Academic year 2011 -12**

All meetings were quorate.

Tuesday 27th September 2011

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

Agenda items were:

- Understanding Local RE: Secondary
- National Updates on RE and Collective Worship
- Feedback from the launch of the Agreed Syllabus Update
- Update on Network meetings
- SACRE Development Plan
- 

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

Agenda items were:

- Understanding local RE : Primary
- National developments for RE
- SACRE Development Plan
- Feedback from Network Meetings
- 

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Emmanuel United Reformed Church - The High Street, Haydon Wick, Swindon, SN25 1HU

Agenda items were

- A faith perspective : the work of Emmanuel United Reformed Church

- Correspondence to and from local and National Politicians about RE and the EBacc
- SACRE Annual Report and Development Plan
- Collective Worship working party report
- National Developments in RE
- Feedback from Network meetings
- 

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Crowdys Hill School, Jefferies Avenue, Swindon, SN2 7HJ

- Understanding local RE : Special Education
- Collective Worship Guidance
- Provision for RE in Swindon – ensuring entitlement
- SACRE Development Plan
- Feedback from network meetings

### **Challenges and opportunities that lie ahead**

#### **Challenges for SACRE include**

- Offering continuing support for RE within a limited budget.
- Keeping alive a local community of shared best practice and enthusiasm amongst a changing landscape of school providers
- On going need to monitor achievements in RE effectively

#### **Opportunities include**

- The enthusiasm and professionalism of SACRE members. This was exemplified by the dedication and care shown in sculpting the Guidance to Schools for Collective Worship
- Continued commitment and dedication of teachers as shown by attendance at Network meetings and other CPD opportunities offered by SACRE

### **1. Standards and quality of Religious Education (RE)Provision**

#### **1a. Compliance and time allocation for RE**

The Locally Agreed Syllabus sets out the required number of hours for each pupil in relation to the delivery of RE, which is 36 hours in Key Stage 1 and is 45 hours per year for Key Stage 2, 3 and 4.

With the lack of information available through Ofsted reporting, it is very difficult to determine whether community schools and academies are fully compliant with the statutory requirements for RE.

In order to address this lack of knowledge about the place of RE Swindon Schools SACRE commissioned a Survey of teachers in June 2012.

25/66 schools responded to this survey (37.8%) 16 primary Schools/ Academies and 9 Secondary Academies

In 76% of the schools who responded RE is taught to all pupils in all year groups. In 5 Secondary Schools the KS4 RE is squeezed into Year 10 and none is taught in Yr 11 or in one school it is only taught to those who wish to take their studies further and convert a short course qualification into a full GCSE. In one secondary school KS4 RE consists of 6 two and a

half hour conferences covering RE and PSHE covering topics such as Homosexuality, war and Peace etc.

In 60% of schools RE is taught as a separate subject, in 48 % of schools it is taught mainly as a separate subject and then sometimes in combination with other curriculum areas. On in one school is it taught totally integrated with other subjects.

The time allocated for RE in Swindon schools varies from 30 mins per week to 1 ½ hr or more if it is an option subject at GCSE. It would appear of those schools who responded that there is RE being taught at most Key stages: there is widespread compliance in 37.8% of Swindon schools. In 24/25 of the schools who responded there is at least one subject specialist for RE (whether by initial qualification or through consistent long term access to CPD).

92% of the Schools who responded use the locally agreed syllabus and two of those schools who do not are using the Roman Catholic Diocese syllabus instead. There is good reliance on the locally agreed syllabus in Swindon. In 73% of Swindon Primary schools who responded to the survey RE is taught by class teachers and also in PPA time.

In only 44% of the Swindon Academies who responded to the survey, are all students entered for a public examination in RE at KS4.

## **Public Examination Results**

It is recognised in the examination entry statistics at Key Stage 4, that there has been a decline of 79 students being entered for a public examination in RE in the last year.

Only 47.4 % of students in Swindon are entered for a public examination in RE

Within over half of Swindon Schools the majority of students are not following a public examination course.

Churchfields, and Dorcan School as well as Swindon Academy schools appear to have not entered any students for a public examination in RE at KS4 ,for 2 of those schools this is a new phenomenon in 2011

### **1b Public Examination entries in RE**

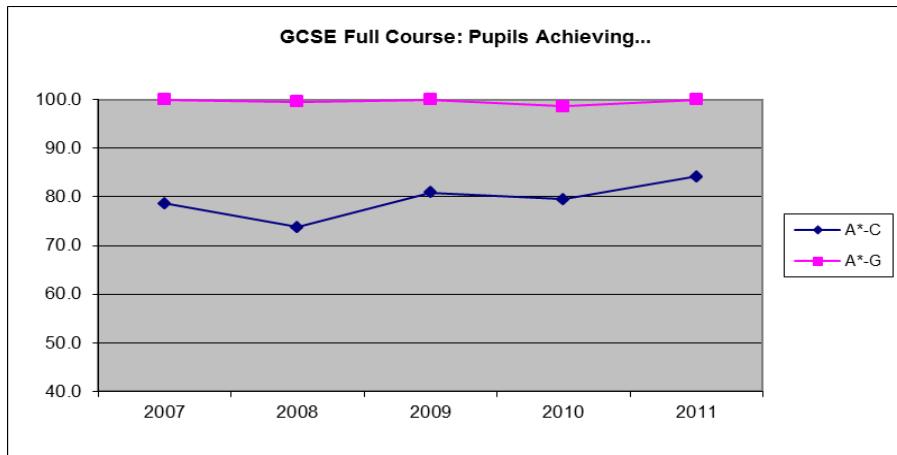
Results for the **2011 GCE and GCSE**.

323 students out of cohort of 2293 were entered for full course which is the highest number in three years. This represents a 1.5 % increase in the numbers of entrants since last year The largest number of examination entries were from St Joseph's Catholic College.

However Greendown, Kingsdown Ridgeway, and Warneford Schools, also had pupils taking full course RE examinations.

Results from the 2011 full GCSE were 84.2 % A\* - C which was considerably above the national average of 71.1% and represents the best results for full course RE in Swindon in five years.

GCSE Full Course: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A*-C	78.6	73.8	80.9	79.5	84.2
A*-G	100.0	99.6	100.0	98.6	100.0

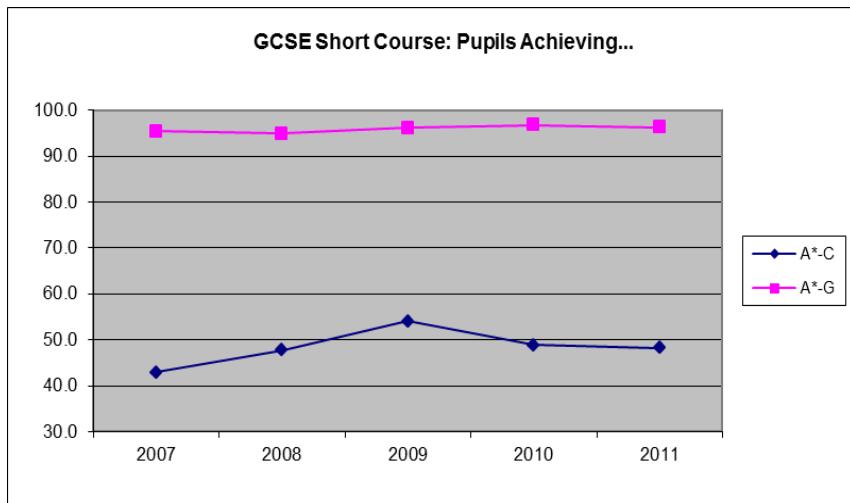


764 students from 7 schools (including 2 special schools) out of a cohort of 2293 were entered for short course RE which is the lowest number for 4 years. This represents a 5% decrease in entrants since last year.

Nova Hreod, Greendown, Commonweal Schools and Warneford School all entered the majority of their cohort for RE short course examination entries.

Results from the short course were 48.2 % A\* - C which is below the national average of 50.4% and just below the Swindon 2010 results 48.9%

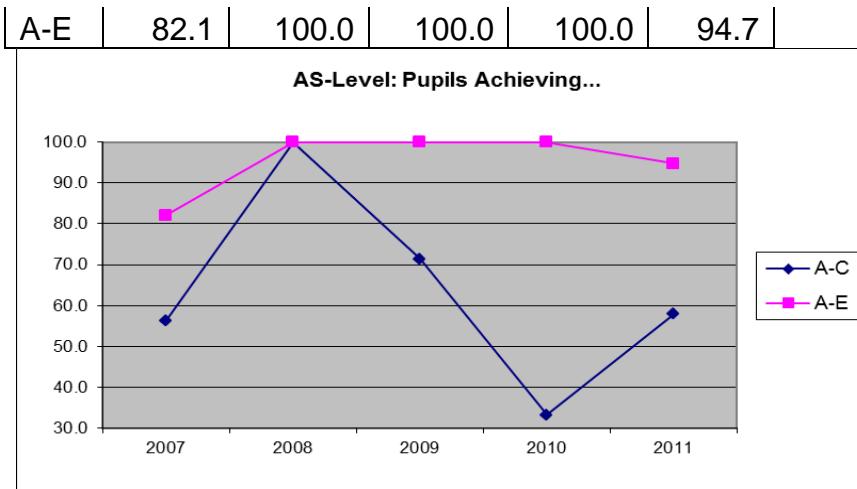
GCSE Short Course: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A*-C	42.9	47.7	54.0	48.9	48.2
A*-G	95.4	94.9	96.1	96.8	96.2



### GCE A and AS Level Religious Studies

The numbers taking AS level increased to 19 from 14 in 2010. The largest number of examination entries came from New College. With Ridgeway School also entering students. There was an increase in standards from 33% A-C grades in 2010 to 57.9% A-C grades in 2011.

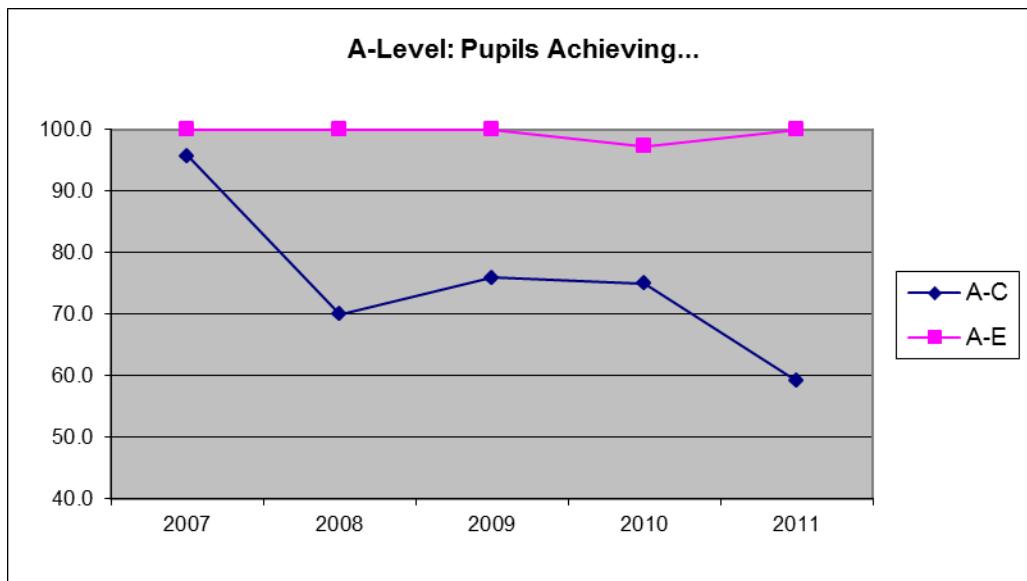
AS-Level: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A-C	56.4	100.0	71.4	33.3	57.9



49 pupils took A level in 2011 (13 more than in 2009). The highest number of examination entries came from St Joseph's Roman Catholic College and New College. The average percentage gaining A\*-C was 59.2% which was the lowest for 5 years and quite considerably lower than last year's 75%. Those gaining A\*-E was 94.7%

**A-Level: Pupils Achieving...**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A-C	95.7	70.0	75.9	75.0	59.2
A-E	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.2	100.0



### **1c Standards and achievement quality of teaching and quality of leadership and management of RE**

There are no methods for collecting verifiable evidence of levels of achievement in RE, other than through public examination results. There are no opportunities to access sufficient information to make a well-substantiated judgement on the quality of RE teaching or leadership and management of RE in Swindon schools

Support has been offered to both Primary and Secondary RE teachers about the management of RE and key National documents have been shared, modelled and discussed during network meetings.

### **2. Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders**

SACRE members have been offered training at the SW SACRE conference in Dillington House but unfortunately no members except the adviser were able to attend.

The LA officers Sarah Foulkes and Paddy Bradley have attended SACRE meetings and have been kept informed of developments such as the new Guidance for Collective worship.

Local councillors play an informed and supportive role in all SACRE meetings.

The diverse constituents of SACRE ensure that the breadths of beliefs held in Swindon are represented and links to those key stakeholders are sustained.

## **2a SACRE development**

### **CPD offered.**

During the year big changes occurred in the model of the offer of RE support to Secondary teachers as there was a widespread conversion of schools becoming academies in this sector. The academies have been working together organising teaching and learning Hubs across Swindon, these have been well attended and the adviser has been able to support staff through these meetings when she has been able to attend them. Three of these meetings were held in the academic year 2011 – 12 .

Three network meetings were also held for primary colleagues.

<b>Primary /Secondary/Venue</b>	<b>Date/Topic</b>
Secondary Greendown School	28/9/11 Key Stage 3 Syllabus and ideas  Revision Techniques Ks3 and Ks4  Raising the profile of RE
Secondary Greendown School	18/1/12 KS4 How to raise standards
Secondary Greendown School	18/4/12 National Developments and RE The New Ofsted Framework Spiritual Development and RE
Primary Oliver Tomkins CofE VA Primary	22/9/11 EYFS – what is good RE for a 4 year old?
Primary Orchid Vale Primary School	19/1/12 Spiritual Development in RE
Primary Liden Primary School	12/7/12 Raising Standards by increasing the challenge in RE

### **Further Training offered to support the Update to the Agreed Syllabus**

#### **1st May 2012 Swindon CPD Centre**

The purpose of this CPD was to further support teachers in delivering the new Update to the Locally agreed Syllabus

9 delegates attended

100% of delegates rated the training very good or excellent

Training was offered to teachers to support them in delivering effective and compelling **Collective Worship to support the publication of SACREs new guidance to Swindon Schools**

7 delegates attended

100% of delegates rated the training very good or excellent

### **3. The Effectiveness of the local Agreed Syllabus**

#### **3a**

The update for the Locally Agreed Syllabus was launched in June 2011 and so this has been a year where teachers have begun to implement the changes. It is encouraging that of the schools who returned the survey all but 1 school is using the Locally Agreed syllabus. With limited capacity to observe teaching and learning it is hard to effectively evaluate the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

### **4. Collective Worship**

The focus for SACRE 2011-12 has been to review the guidance offered to schools on Collective Worship. A small working party met twice and worked diligently and creatively to produce new guidance for all schools in Swindon about Collective worship. This has been sent to all schools electronically and has been well received.

“Time to Breathe” is a document that Swindon SACRE can be proud of.

The adviser also offered CPD to support schools in delivering Collective Worship.

There were no determinations in force during the reporting year.

No formal complaints or other matters were referred to SACRE this year.

### **5. SACRE as a representative effective diverse community**

There is an excellent ethos and sense of community within Swindon SACRE, the quality of debate, spiritual insight and meticulous attention to detail has been amply demonstrated within the Collective Worship Working Party.

2011 - 2012 has seen a year where Swindon SACREs commitment to RE has been actively demonstrated through its tireless letter writing campaign to MPs and other prominent leaders. Members of this SACRE attend well and work hard to act as guardians and propagators of exciting RE and reflective Collective Worship in Swindon Schools.



Students from St Joseph's Roman Catholic College respond to a campaign for Shoeboxes for Women's Refuge Centres