

East Riding of Yorkshire SACRE Report 2012/13

Introduction from Chair

It is my pleasure to present the annual report of the East Riding SACRE. This report summarises my first year as Chair and I would like to begin my introduction by thanking our previous Chair, Bob Duerden, for his many years of service with our group both as Chair and committee member.

This has been a year of challenges and opportunities for RE and the work of the East Riding SACRE. In the words of the Secretary of State for Education, RE has been an ‘unintended casualty’ of the many reforms to the curriculum, qualifications and accountability framework. RE teachers report that they have struggled to retain sufficient curriculum time for their subject, are coping with reduced budgets and fewer opportunities for training. This has not, however, deterred the East Riding SACRE from restating at every opportunity its belief that the subject is pivotal to the development of the whole person, and at the core of what we believe education to be. There has been frequent and passionate discussion at our meetings about how best to support RE teachers, and how we can ensure the reformed national curriculum enhances rather than restricts opportunities for children to think about the big questions in life. We have begun to develop different ways of working so that we can engage more directly with practitioners, and used elements of our budget to facilitate subject leader networks across the county and with our neighbours in Hull, with whom we share the local agreed syllabus (2011).

Structural changes within education – for example the expansion of academies and the introduction of Free Schools, which are outside of statutory LA control – have prompted us to re-evaluate our role and impact and to think of how we can focus less on compliance and more on support and co-ordination. Restructuring within the local authority has left the SACRE with no specialist support. However, we have retained a budget to support our activities and our professional officer and our consultant have established a very constructive method of working together. We have also strengthened our relationship with our neighbours, particularly the Hull SACRE and as a result embarked on a number of exciting joint ventures, including organising a well-attended and highly successful regional conference with national speakers held at Hull University in April.

Members’ attendance at meetings remains committed and we have welcomed a number of new members who have brought a fresh perspective and new ideas. We are currently seeking to build capacity in local faith groups and the diversity represented on the SACRE committees.

I believe that curricular and budgetary pressures have actually strengthened the resolve and commitment of our members to work together in new ways to support the

teaching of RE in any way we can. I hope this report not only outlines our main actions but also provides examples of this resolve and commitment.

Councillor Phil Davison, Chair of the East Riding SACRE

1. Standards and quality of RE provision

1. Analysis of examination entries and GCSE/A level results

More students are following GCSE, AS and A level courses in RE in more East Riding schools.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4, although slowly improving overall, remains below average.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 5 has improved and is well above average.

Full GCSE

	2013 1836 students from 13 schools (National results in brackets)	2012 1516 students from 13 schools (National results in brackets)
A* - A	22.3% (28.8%)	23.8% (29.1%)
A* - C	69.7% (72.1%)	66.8%(72.1%)
A* - G	98.6% (98.4%)	98.8%(98.4%)
Average points score	40.9 (41.7)	40.8 (41.8)

Short GCSE

	2013 1494 students from 18 schools (National results in brackets)	2012 1448 students from 18 schools (National results in brackets)
A* - A	19.9% (15.2%)	16.7% (15.7%)
A* - C	40.3% (50%)	46.4%(50.4%
A* - G	94.5% (94.6%)	95.8% (94.7%)
Average points score	16.3 (17.6)	17.6 (17.7)

AS Level.

	2013 19 students from 6 schools (National results in brackets)	2012 10 students from 3 schools (National results in brackets)
A - B	42.1% (28.7%)	40% (29.8%)
A - E	78.9% (85.2%)	90% (86.5%)
Average points score	86.8 (87.7)	102(89.4)

A Level

	2013 49 students from 9 schools (National results in brackets)	2012 32 students from 5 schools (National results in brackets)
A* - A	34.7% (22.2%)	6.3% (22.1%)
A* - B	67.3%(51.4%)	31.3% (52.1%)
A* - E	100%(99.8%)	100% (99.9%)
Average points score	237.6 (224.7)	212.8 (225)

2. Quality of teaching

Over the year, there were three SIAMS inspections of Voluntary Controlled Schools. As such, there was no specific inspection of Religious Education. Overall, two schools were judged Good and one Satisfactory.

There were three inspections on behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough – all three schools were judged to be Good overall.

The Local Authority no longer has the capacity to directly support the SACRE to monitor the quality of teaching of RE, and although Ofsted inspectors are required to evaluate how schools promote pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural development (SMSC), inspection reports rarely refer directly to the quality of RE teaching.

Challenges reported by schools at network meetings include:

- Reduction in curriculum time
- Teaching at KS3 by non specialists
- Lack of 'status' and therefore lack of emphasis for the subject compared to eBacc subjects.
- Lack of prioritisation of RE as a lead subject in the primary curriculum
- Teachers' difficulty in getting out of school to access CPD for RE

3. Quality of leadership

Leaders of RE report feeling increasingly isolated and beleaguered. At primary school the focus on improving outcomes in English and maths limits the capacity available to support RE. At secondary, the failure to include RE in the eBacc suite of subjects has led to a perceived fall in 'status' for the subject, reductions in curriculum time, budget and training.

However, attendance at after-school network meetings is strong and growing - evidence of the commitment of subject leaders and their willingness to seek out support to find imaginative and innovative solutions to their problems.

2. Managing SACRE, partnership with LA and other organisations

2.1 Dates of meetings, attendance patterns

The East Riding SACRE met on the following dates:

11 October (Attendance 63%)

27 February (Attendance 63%)

19 June (Attendance 69%)

The February meeting was also attended by Graham Gardner, Head of RE at The Snaith School, who talked to members about the new RE Quality Mark (REQM). The Snaith School was the first in East Yorkshire to achieve the REQM, being awarded Bronze in Autumn 2012.

Mark Dixon, Head of RE at Headlands School, attended the January meeting. Mark provided an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing RE teachers in schools.

Members of the SACRE also met with partners from the Hull SACRE to discuss common issues.

2.2 Membership

Committee A: Christian and other Religions / Denominations		
Tina Grant	Beverley Community Church	
Mr Michael Westerman	Jewish Orthodox	
Dennis Young	Yorkshire Baptist Association	
6 Vacancies		

Committee B: Church of England		
Diocese of York	Vacancy	
Diocese of York	Mrs I Butterfield	
Diocese of York	Mrs S Steel	
1 Vacancy - 1 x Sheffield Diocese		
Committee C: Teacher Associations		
Mr Howard Nind	NASUWT (Headlands School)	
Rev Steven Knapton (Vice-Chairman)	ATL	
4 Vacancies		
Committee D: Local Authority Elected Members		
Councillor Josh Newlove	Labour Group	
Councillor Philip Davison (Chairman)	Liberal Democrat Group	
Councillor Chad Chadwick	Conservative Group	
Councillor David Rudd	Conservative Group	
Co-options		
Mr John Alder	School Improvement Adviser	
Mr Tim Stephenson	Humanist Representative	
Mrs Sue Holmes	Independent RE Consultant	

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2.3 Initiatives, activities and support for teachers of RE

The SACRE Action Plan, which runs until 2014, has driven our actions this year.

a) Network meetings

SACRE has supported the establishment and development of network meetings for teachers of RE. These take place each term across the county and are facilitated by Sue Holmes, our consultant. There were a total of 8 meetings attended by 50 teachers/leaders. Topics included:

- Government-stated position on RE and collective worship
- The work of the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE
- The implications of current national curriculum & RE reviews (RE Council)
- Ofsted and RE
- Promoting pupils' Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural development – key Ofsted judgments
- SACRE action plan 2012-14
- Review and examination of new resources
- RE Quality Mark
- RE for Early Years Foundation Stage
- RE for children with Special Educational Needs
- Examinations update
- Quiet places and prayer spaces

b) REaction events

SACRE supported the spring and summer programme of REaction events. In total 1485 children and adults from 27 schools took part in events held in churches across the county. SACRE helps to subsidise each event and SACRE members attend and participate as appropriate. REaction is fronted by Label of Love, a Christian charity working with young people in Hull and the surrounding area. The aim of the charity, and a fundamental aim of the REaction day is 'To bring RE to life'.

REaction allows pupils to experience RE in a fun and challenging way. It uses an imaginative mix of rhythm and movement, enabling reflection through storytelling and film clips to explore social action and responsibilities. Each year, REaction picks up a topical theme linked directly to the East Riding Agreed Syllabus for RE: *Going for Gold* (2012), *Justice & Freedom* (2013) and for 2014, the centenary of WW1 will offer *Peace & Conflict*.

Set in church and with the ecumenical support of local Christian communities who host the day and help deliver the workshops, REaction is a happy marriage between core religious education and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Schools are provided with lesson plans, stimulus materials, teaching & assessment resources to explore the East Riding RE curriculum units, so that teachers may design

relevant cross-curricular activities for the term. REaction allows local communities to support pupils and further their understanding of the school curriculum. Partner churches value REaction as an aspect of their mission to children and youth.

c) RE Conference

In collaboration with a colleague from Hull, our consultant organised a well attended and successful regional RE Conference *RE: Making a Difference*. Guest speakers included Lat Blaylock, editor of REtoday and Alan Brine, HMI. About 60 delegates from Hull, East Riding and further afield attended the conference.

d) Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day was hosted by Withernsea High School. Students and staff presented a memorial ceremony which included readings and musical performance, as well as a talk by a member of staff who is the grandson of a holocaust survivor. Guests were also given the opportunity to visit a comprehensive related exhibition. Following the commemoration event, SACRE member Stephen Knapton visited the RE department in the school.

2.4 Financial and other support from the LA

Despite the challenging financial climate, the LA has continued to provide financial support for SACRE. This has enabled us to commission work on appendices to the agreed syllabus and to support the establishment of RE networks across the county. As well as clerical support, the LA provides the support of an officer who works closely and productively with our consultant.

2.5 Information and advice

SACRE revised its leaflet “What is SACRE?” which was distributed to all schools. A more detailed reminder of the role and function of SACRE was issued via the weekly Headteachers’ Bulletin. There was one request for advice: a parent had expressed concerns to a primary school on the content of RE lessons for very young children. SACRE advised the school on how to respond.

SACRE also distributed a leaflet advising schools on approaches to collective worship.

2.6 Partnerships with other key organisations

The Hull and East Riding SACREs meet together formally once a term. Their respective consultants meet more frequently and regularly work together to deliver joint training sessions to teachers from both local authorities. We have a shared Agreed Syllabus and both SACREs commissioned the production of two appendices (SEN and EYFS) this year.

Members attend meeting of HERI (Hull and East Riding Interfaith) to inform and draw other faith members into the work of schools.

Events this year were as follows:

- 27 November 2012 – Religion and Science.
- 29 January 2013 - Multiculturalism.
- 19 March 2013 - Ethics of Suicide
- 21 May 2013 – Happiness
- 25 June 2013 – Annual General Meeting & Open Forum

3. Effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

This was launched in 2011 and is due for review from 2014, to be revised or readopted for 2016.

A survey of schools showed that all schools were using the syllabus.

Two appendices were written this year: SEN and EYFS.

4. Collective worship

SACRE members have attended schools to observe and take part in collective worship, but we are no longer able to conduct detailed audits to confirm that all East Riding schools are fulfilling their statutory requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship.

5. Overall impact of the work of SACRE

It is our view that SACRE continues to have an impact on the teaching of RE in East Riding schools. We believe we are able to support and subsidise network meetings, conferences and RE-focussed activities, to continue to promote and develop the Agreed Syllabus and to provide a voice for RE at a time of rapid change and great challenge.