

LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Lincolnshire

Standing Advisory Council

on

Religious Education

(SACRE)

ANNUAL REPORT

2013 – 2014



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Introduction from the Chairman

During 2013-14, with a few changes in membership, Lincolnshire SACRE has maintained its monitoring functions, receiving regular updates and reports on the quality of RE and acts of collective worship in local schools. Members have remained heavily reliant on the work of the RE Adviser, who despite a reduction in hours has still been able to provide information and advice based on visits to schools and involvement in training.

SACRE continues to receive information about Ofsted's evaluation of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although members remain concerned about the lack of consistency in many of these reports. Co-operation with the Diocese, including information about Section 48 inspections has been invaluable, although members are sensitive to the increased pressure on time and resources within the Diocese.

The growth in the number of Lincolnshire schools seeking academy status has inevitably weakened SACRE's direct contact with them. Many still use the Agreed Syllabus as the basis of their work, and they are offered the opportunity of continuing to make use of training activities provided and the guidance of the Adviser.

There is an awareness of the special needs of many of our schools, especially those in rural areas with largely mono-cultural communities, and members remain committed to supporting every initiative which will give our young people a better awareness of the beliefs and practices of others in the wider world.

Neville W McFarlane.
Chairman of Lincolnshire SACRE

1. Background

The Education Reform Act (1988) established Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACRE). The main function of a SACRE is to advise the Local Authority (LA) on matters connected with RE and collective worship. SACREs also oversee the five yearly revision of the Religious Education (RE) locally Agreed Syllabus and consider any complaints about the provision and delivery of RE referred to it by the LA. The next review of the syllabus will begin in summer 2015 and be in schools for September 2017.

The membership of SACRE comprises four groups together with nominated Advisers. The groups are:

- a) Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations;
- b) The Church of England;
- c) Teachers' associations;
- d) The Local Authority.

2. Meetings of SACRE

There were three meetings of Lincolnshire SACRE during the academic year 2013/2014 - in November 2013, April 2014 and July 2014. However, the April and July meetings were inquorate. As a result there were no formal minutes and no voting took place – but relevant issues were discussed. For the majority of meetings fixed items on the agenda include the monitoring of inspection reports in relation to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, feedback about Section 48 inspection reports, reports on the RE Adviser's monitoring visits to schools and an ongoing review of SACRE's Action Plan.

The strength of debate has ensured that issues have been dealt with efficiently and that the priority areas of the Action Plan have been addressed.

3. Membership

In November 2013 Neville McFarlane was elected as Chairman to SACRE and Cllr Chris Burke was elected as Vice Chairman.

Vacancies arose during the year from the United Reform Church, the National Association of Headteachers and from primary school representatives. Sarah Thornton and Elizabeth Moore attended the July 2014 meeting. Both attended as observers with a view to joining SACRE as primary school representatives, following Council approval. Efforts continued to be made to find a replacement for a Muslim representative.

The RE Adviser's new line manager for the next academic year, Jill Chandar-Nair, was also welcomed as an observer during the July meeting. She outlined her role, which includes responsibility for safeguarding issues, Traveller and Ethnic Minority education/support and issues relating to equality and diversity. She confirmed the LA's support for RE and confirmed that centralised training for teachers would be offered by the RE Adviser during 2014-15.

4. Standards: Key stages 4-5: Examination results [see Appendix 1 for tables]

Background – national picture

- Full course entries increased by 7% from 251,063 in 2013 to 269,494 in 2014
- Short course entries fell dramatically by 30% from 169,088 in 2013 to 118,421 in 2014

- Research carried out by the National Association of Teachers of RE (published in November 2013) found that a third of community schools and over a third of academies without a religious character were still failing to meet their legal or contractual agreements to provide religious education for this key age group.

National/Lincolnshire results

GCSE Full Course

In Lincolnshire the number of pupils entered in 2014 was 3308 – this is an increase on 2013 numbers (2769).

	National 2014	Lincs 2014	Lincs 2013
A*-C			
All pupils	71.5%	67.0%	72.1%
Girls	76.7%	74.0%	80.5%
Boys	62.6%	60.0%	66.6%
A*-G			
All pupils	97.9%	97.0%	98.3%
Girls	98.7%	98.4%	99.1%
Boys	98.7%	95.6%	97.4%

Lincolnshire results for A* - C are below the national average and below results for 2013. Girls out-performed boys and both boys and girls were below the national average.

Lincolnshire schools achieving in line/above the national average at A*-C (71.5%):

- Boston Grammar School (100% - entries: 1)
- Caistor Grammar School Academy (100% - entries: 44)
- Donington The Thomas Cowley High School (100% - entries: 6)
- Kirton Middlecott School (100% - entries: 1)
- Lincoln The Priory Academy LSST (100% - entries: 11)
- Louth Monks' Dyke Technology College (100% - entries: 1)
- North Somercotes The Birkbeck school (100% - entries: 1)
- Skegness Grammar School (100% - entries: 18)
- Sleaford Kesteven & Sleaford High School (100% - entries: 11)
- Spalding High School (100% - entries: 48)
- Stamford Queen Eleanor Community School (100% - entries: 6)
- The Phoenix School (100% - entries: 1)
- Welbourn Sir William Robertson High School (100% - entries: 1)
- Gainsborough Queen Elizabeth's High School (97.5% - entries: 36)
- Grantham Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School (97% - entries: 172)
- Horncastle Queen Elizabeth's Grammar (96.5% - entries: 45)
- Grantham The King's School Selective Academy (96% - entries: 66)
- William Farr CE Academy (95.5% - entries: 193)
- Bourne Grammar School (91.5% - entries: 23)
- St George's Academy (90.5% - entries: 39)
- Lincoln Christ's Hospital Academy (89% - entries: 101)
- Alford Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (83% - entries: 83)
- Sleaford Carre's Grammar School (83% - entries: 115)
- Spalding Queen Elizabeth Royal Free Grammar (83% - entries: 121)

- Trent Valley Academy (80% - entries: 5)
- Lincoln Castle Academy (79.5% - entries: 54)
- Boston High School (77.5% - entries: 120)
- North Hykeham North Kesteven Academy (77.5% - entries: 93)
- Branston Community Academy (74.5% - entries: 108)

Although this appears to be quite a long list it must be noted that for a number of schools the numbers of pupils entered is very low.

GCSE Short course

Number of entries in Lincolnshire - 2188. This is a significant fall of 832 from 2013 (3020) and reflects the national picture.

	National 2014	Lincs 2014	Lincs 2013
A*-C			
All	56.8%	59.0%	51%
Girls	64.8%	68%	60.3%
Boys	49.3%	48%	42.8%
A*-G			
All	95.8%	97%	96%
Girls	97.4%	98.8%	97.3%
Boys	94.4%	95%	95.9%

Lincolnshire results for A* - C are above the national average and above results for 2013. Girls significantly out-performed boys - girls were above the national average, boys almost in line.

GCE A Level

Number of entries in Lincolnshire: 240 in 2014 compared to 229 in 2013.

	National 2014	Lincs 2014
A*-A		
All pupils	24.8%	23.75%
Girls	25.4%	22.8%
Boys	23.4%	26.7%
A* - C		
All pupils	79.5%	84%
Girls	81.0%	84%
Boys	76.2%	82%
A* - E		
All pupils	98.5%	100%
Girls	98.7%	100%
Boys	98.0%	100%

Overall, all pupils performed close to the national average, slightly higher at A* - C. Girls significantly out-performed boys nationally – in Lincolnshire results for boys and girls are close. Both are above the national average at A*-C.

GCE AS level

Number of entries in Lincolnshire: 412 students were entered for AS level compared to 351 in 2013.

AS level

	National	Lincs 2014
A		
All pupils	22.1%	21.1%
Girls	23.1%	22.1%
Boys	19.7%	18.0%
A-C		
All pupils	67.3%	73.0%
Girls	69.0%	73.0%
Boys	63.7%	66.0%
A-E		
All pupils	92.2%	94.9%
Girls	92.8%	95.1%
Boys	90.9%	94.0%

Lincolnshire results are above the national average at A-C with girls out-performing boys.

5. School reviews: report from RE Adviser

The main focus of the RE Adviser's work remains that of monitoring teaching and learning in schools and the quality of provision for collective worship. Systems for monitoring remain unchanged since the last Annual Report. During 2013-14 the RE Adviser visited twenty-two primary schools, two secondary schools and five special schools. The number of secondary schools is low due to a significant number having become academies. Based on the outcomes of schools visited the following strengths and areas for development can be identified.

Areas of Strength:

- Enthusiastic subject leadership shown through the way co-ordinators ensure that the subject has a high profile in the school – e.g. displays, high quality planning, effective support for teachers.
- Good support from headteachers.
- Pupils' positive attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils engaged through enquiry based learning.

Areas for improvement:

- Assessment could be used more effectively to provide a clear picture of the achievement and progress of groups and individuals as well as for targeting areas for improvement. There is confusion in some schools about how assessment should be managed by class teachers.
- Schools need to continue to provide pupils with first hand experiences of religions other than Christianity (links with churches are generally good) through more visits out and visitors in. The RE Adviser has set up links with schools in Leicester for some Lincolnshire primary schools. This has enabled both sets of teachers and pupils to learn first hand about different religions and cultures.
- Overall there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning, e.g. of pupils' work, pupil interviews. It is not used rigorously enough to provide evidence for continuity and progression.

Schools with significant areas for development are re-visited to monitor progress. Dates of visits and outcomes are recorded in a comparative format. Schools are selected based on the outcome of previous visits and the period between visits.

6. Ofsted

6.1: Correspondence with Ofsted

During the year the Chairman wrote to Ofsted (as well as various MPs and the Secretary of State for Education) about issues arising from the Ofsted report, 'Religious Education: Realising the Potential.' The point was made that Ofsted itself may have contributed to low standards and weak teaching in RE due to its emphasis upon maths and English in inspections. SACRE noted that Ofsted did not always necessarily identify where schools were not meeting statutory requirements for RE. Responses from Ofsted did not directly address these concerns. (See also p.9, under APPG).

6.2: Analysis of judgements on SMSC in Ofsted Section 5 reports

During 2013-14 SACRE was provided with an analysis of SMSC development in eighty-six schools (including academies): seventy-five primary, seven secondary and four special. In twenty-two of these schools SMSC was judged to be better than good and in a very small number there were comments about the need to develop pupils' understanding of diversity in the UK. This suggests that schools need more guidance about how to achieve outstanding outcomes for SMSC overall. Letters are sent out from SACRE to schools where SMSC development is judged to be outstanding.

Examples of positive comments

'Pupils work extremely well with others, consider what is right and wrong, and study a range of faiths and cultures...'

'The range of subjects taught and the effective way they are organised and assessed result in outstanding academic outcomes and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.'

'The excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a strong contribution to the positive attitudes and good behaviour around the school.'

Areas for development

'Pupils' cultural development is limited because they have little understanding of people from backgrounds different from their own.'

'Pupils do not have a broad knowledge of the diversity of cultures that make up today's UK.'

7. Section 48 inspections

Members considered reports by the Diocese of Lincoln which set out summaries of church schools' inspections. These show examples of the good and positive practice that exists and also highlight areas for development which help schools to become more effective as church schools with a distinctive Christian ethos.

8. Support for schools

8.1: Local Authority

During 2013/14 there was no centralised training but support was offered in house to individual schools.

Line management of the RE Adviser was taken over by Sue Ashe (Head of Leadership Development with particular responsibility for recruitment training) during 2013-14.

Discussion about the role of RE Adviser took place during the November SACRE meeting. It was agreed that the Adviser had made a significant difference to provision and outcomes in RE across the county. Members supported the continuation of this role through funding from the County Council so that SACRE could continue its statutory role in monitoring the quality of RE and collective worship.

8.2 Diocese

8.2.1: New appointment

A new RE Adviser, Gillian Georgiou, was appointed to the Diocese from 1st January 2014. Her role is divided between supporting church schools and as schools' officer at Lincoln Cathedral.

8.2.2: Secondary Church Schools' Festival

In October 2013 year 9 students from the West Grantham Academy St Hugh's enjoyed this festival held at Lincoln Cathedral. They participated in numerous activities including art, drama and stone masonry. Guided tours provided interesting information about the building. Students gave very positive feedback about the day.

8.2.3: Special Schools' RE Day

Also held in October, the theme for this day was, 'Let's Celebrate' and workshops included drama, dance, Godly Play and sensory tours of Lincoln Cathedral. The day concluded with an act of celebration. Students representing ten special schools from the county took part.

8.2.4: RE Cluster Meetings

These meetings, held regularly throughout the year provide an opportunity for teachers of RE and co-ordinators to get to know each other, share good practice and resources and keep up to date with local and national initiatives in RE.

9. Acts of Collective Worship

The RE Adviser's monitoring visits include discussion about acts of collective worship. In the majority of primary schools visited there are assemblies but not all these could be described as collective worship (CW). There are examples of outstanding practice identified by Ofsted but judgements are not made about compliance. In most primary schools there is a different type of assembly/CW each day, with many having a 'celebration assembly' on Fridays. Representatives from local churches and occasionally other faiths make positive contributions and churches are used well to celebrate key festivals.

It is more difficult to obtain information about the situation in secondary schools, as it is rare to meet with headteachers during visits.

In addition to set agenda items SACRE also considered the following during 2013/14.

Religious Education Council (REC) review of RE

Members were kept up to date with this subject review and the non-statutory guidance produced for schools.

The All Party Parliamentary Group review of RE (APPG)

The RE Adviser summarised the report produced by The All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education entitled "The Truth Unmasked". The main findings of the report were that:

- In over half of the 300 primary schools which participated in the inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than their class teacher. In a quarter of primary schools, RE was taught by teaching assistants. (APPG report p.4, 1a, ref: 2.2-2.5)
- Half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lacked confidence in teaching RE.
- Over 50% of secondary school teachers of Religious Education had no qualification or expertise on this subject.
- Applications for secondary RE teacher training courses were currently 143 down on a similar time last year. It was felt that the loss of bursaries for RE were amongst one of the reasons for this.

The inquiry's recommendations were discussed and emphasis was given to the finding that RE was now regularly taught by non-specialists. Teachers felt unsupported in this subject as CPD in RE was not often seen as a priority.

It was agreed that a letter from the Chair of SACRE should be sent to all MPs for Lincolnshire as well as to HMI with responsibility for RE, Alan Brine. The letter outlined concerns, i.e. that whilst SACRE welcomed the recommendations in the report (and those found in the Ofsted report on RE, see p. 8), members were very frustrated that one of the main obstacles to fulfilling the statutory function of monitoring RE in schools was the lack of rigorous inspection of RE under the present framework. Members were disheartened that subject inspections no longer appeared to take place and that during Section 5 inspections there appeared to be an inconsistency in the way statutory requirements for RE and acts of collective worship were investigated. Members were encouraged that the Secretary of State had at least admitted that RE had become a casualty of recent curriculum reforms and had mistakenly believed that 'the special status afforded to RE by law' should have protected it. SACRE members acknowledged that neither this statement nor the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) recommendations were of any value unless they were followed up by actions. The Chairman received a response from Ofsted but this did not directly address the main issues of concern.

SACRE conference 2014

It was agreed to defer this event until autumn 2015. This was due to a lack of capacity in terms of peoples' time and administrative support.

Determinations and Complaints

No requests were received from schools for determinations that collective worship should not be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. No complaints have been received by SACRE about collective worship.

Appendix 1: Examination results

GCSE Religious Studies 2014

Gender	Course	*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	Total	No. of A*-C	% of A*-C
F	GCSE Full Course	189	328	427	298	198	111	67	27	26	1671	1242	74%
	GCSE Short Course	102	189	245	269	147	110	59	46	14	1181	805	68%

M	GCSE Full Course	63	196	365	365	234	164	107	71	72	1637	989	60%
	GCSE Short Course	37	92	155	197	158	154	101	63	50	1007	481	48%

2014 KS4 Religious Studies Results

Course	*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	Total	No. of A*-C	% of A*-C
GCSE Full Course	252	524	792	663	432	275	174	98	98	3308	2231	67%
GCSE Short Course	139	281	400	466	305	264	160	109	64	2188	1286	59%

2014 KS5 Religious Studies Results by Gender

Gender	Course	*	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total	No. of A*-C	% of A*-C
F	GCE A level	10	32	65	48	22	7	-	184	155	84%
	GCE AS level	-	69	88	78	44	18	15	312	235	75%

M	GCE A level	2	13	12	19	7	3	-	56	46	82%
	GCE AS level	-	18	23	25	14	14	6	100	66	66%

2014 KS5 Religious Studies Results

Course	*	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total	No. of A*-C	% of A*-C
GCE A level	12	45	77	67	29	10	-	240	201	84%
GCE AS level	-	87	111	103	58	32	21	412	301	73%

Appendix 2: SACRE Action Plan

Lincolnshire SACRE Action Plan 2014-2016

Objective: To increase the effectiveness of SACRE

Priority	Actions	Responsibility	Begin	End	Success criteria	Resources
1. To continue to fund RE Adviser post		SACRE	April 2015		Contract renewed from April 2015	LCC funding
2. To recommend key actions for the RE Advise	2.1 To monitor RE provision and collective worship in cross-phase non Church maintained schools	SACRE/ RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going 3x per year	Written reports prepared for Schools. Composite report for SACRE.	
	2.2 To provide analysis of SMSC in Ofsted reports	RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going 3 x per year	Written summary provided for SACRE. Good and outstanding practice identified. Schools with areas for development visited by RE Adviser to ensure improvement.	
	2.3: To promote the locally Agreed Syllabus and support teachers by providing high quality CPD	SACRE/RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going	AS promoted in schools through training and support. Improved teaching and learning.	
	2.4: To respond to national initiatives in RE	SACRE/RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going	SACRE members kept informed. Representatives of national bodies such as Ofsted, local MPs, etc. are made aware of SACRE's views on key issues.	
	2.5. To update and address any changes in the OFSTED Inspection Framework	SACRE/RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going	Members kept up to date about Information about the impact of Ofsted on RE, acts of collective worship and SMSC.	

Priority	Actions	Responsibility	Begin	End	Success criteria	Resources
	2.6: To provide training for SACRE members	RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going	SACRE members better informed about RE, acts of collective worship, SMSC and as a result feel more confident about their role.	
	2.7. To advise on and participate, where appropriate, in INSET	SACRE/ LCC	April 2014	On-going	INSET programme drawn up and delivered, positive impact in schools.	
3. To produce Annual Report	3.1: To write report, distribute where appropriate.	RE Adviser	Annually	On-going	Schools and other bodies kept informed about the work of SACRE.	LCC
4. To support schools not meeting legal requirements	4.1: To receive report from RE Adviser (see 2.1 above)	SACRE/RE Adviser	April 2014	On-going	Reports received, impact of RE Adviser's actions seen, schools meeting requirements.	
5. To maintain effective liaison between SACRE and the Diocesan Authority	5.1: To convene meetings between Diocesan and LCC Religious Advisers	Diocese/SACRE	April 2014	On-going	Collaborative arrangements strengthened still further.	
	5.2: To consider specific projects for shared funding	Diocese/SACRE	April 2014	On-going	Projects successfully identified.	
	5.3. To hold a SACRE conference every 18 mths.	Diocese/RE Adviser	November 2014	On-going	Improved networking for schools, positive impact upon classroom practice.	

Appendix 3: Membership of Lincolnshire's SACRE

GROUP A

Christian and other religions and religious denominations

Mr B Ahmed	Muslim Community
Mr F Sperring	Religious Society of Friends
Mrs C Dring	
Mrs L Gaylard	Baptist Church
Ground Level Network	
Professor B Winston	Jewish Community
Mrs S Sreenivasan	Hindu community
Mr A Hornsby	Methodist Church
Rev E McDonald	United Reformed Church
Mr N McFarlane	Salvation Army
Mr C Burke	Roman Catholic

GROUP B

The Church of England

Mr D Clements
Mr D Scoffield
Mrs J Sheldrake

GROUP C

Associations representing teachers

Miss C Turner: Primary
Mrs C Williamson: Secondary

GROUP D

The Local Authority

Cllr Mr CL Strange
Cllr Mrs E Sneath
Cllr Mrs J Brockway

Advisers/Officers in attendance

Wendy Harrison: Religious Education Adviser - CfBT
Gillian Georgiou: RE Adviser - Diocese
Mark Plater-Bishop Grosseteste University College
Judith Gilbert (Clerk to SACRE)

Appendix 4: Links with other Bodies and Agencies

Links have been maintained with the following bodies and agencies:

- The National Association of SACRE (NASACRE)
- Diocese of Lincoln Board of Education
- Religious Education Today/NATRE
- All main stream faith organisations
- Lincoln Inter-Faith Forum
- AREIAC (Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants)