

# **Wiltshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)**

## **Annual Report September 2017 – August 2018**

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## Letter from Chair of SACRE

Thanks to the commitment of our volunteer members and the support of LA Officer, Wiltshire SACRE has been able to continue to provide support and guidance for the teaching of Religious Education across Wiltshire during the year.

We are grateful for the continued support of Wiltshire Council and determined to use the limited resources available to make a positive difference to the teaching of RE. The main focus of this has been to continue to offer support to schools through the provision of training, which this year was on 'Getting to grips with Assessment for primary schools'. As a result of feedback from teachers, for the next academic year, SACRE intends to re-introduce local network meetings.

In our SACRE meetings, it has been interesting to reflect on the changing political landscape and SACRE's role, which is now to signpost schools to providers such as teaching schools, which are playing an important role in providing support for RE. RE is not high on the governments agenda and their solution seems to be to use teaching schools to provide CPD.

A challenge for SACRE is to ensure that it is still a key channel for the communication of RE. Information regarding the Learn, Teach and Lead RE projects led by the Dioceses of Bristol and Salisbury will continue to come from SACRE via the new website, 'Right Choice'.

We are very aware of the results of the consultation by the RE Commission. This is a useful document which proposes: clear aims are set for a national entitlement for RE; schools are held more to account for the provision and quality of RE; a national plan is put in place to improve teaching and learning in RE and SACREs are to have a renewed and expanded role. However, the results of this exercise are yet to be seen in any statutory changes to the teaching of RE or the role of the SACRE.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Simone Kermodé, Clerk to Wiltshire SACRE, who carries out her role with utmost efficiency and ensures that SACRE is always well organised and supported.

**Simon White**  
**Chair of SACRE**

## OVERVIEW – SACRE meetings

## The key functions of SACRE can be found in Appendix A.

At the SACRE meeting on 18 October 2017, Simon White, Headteacher of Shaw Primary School accepted the role of Chair.

The Constitution and Terms of Reference of February 2010 are still in force.

SACRE usually meets 3 times per year to regularly review, as well as other items, the:

- National developments in RE from specialists or members attending conferences.
- The quality of teaching in RE from members and teachers attending network meetings and training.

This academic year, to fulfil its statutory duty, SACRE limited its meeting period to one hour to hold a subsequent Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) to refine the proposal for amendments to the current Agreed Syllabus for 2011–16.

### 18 October 2017, the main focus of the SACRE meeting & Agreed Syllabus Conference was to review the:

- **Diocese of Bristol's Lead, Teach and Learn RE (LTLRE)** conference. There were not any offers from teachers (from the few schools under the Bristol Diocese) to become a LTRE lead.
- **Impact of RE provision and its compliance with legislation.** As SACRE cannot enforce compliance, SACRE discussed how it can communicate more to schools the value of RE?
- **Feedback from March & June 2017 primary network meetings.**
- **Commission on RE Interim Report Consultation.** SACRE members were advised to respond to the consultation. A discussion took place on the impact of either a national or local curriculum for RE?
- **Salisbury Diocese's LTLRE project.** SACRE member volunteered to be on the steering committee.

### Key actions agreed were: -

- LA Officer and Chair are to enquire into the possibility of SACRE commissioning teaching schools to undertake CPD for RE at the next teaching school meeting.

### 07 March 2018, the focus was to review local and national updates from the SW SACRE Conference (05 March 2017) on:

- **Understanding Christianity** (Stephen Pett): Church of England has produced teaching materials based on a 'spiral curriculum' where concepts are introduced in each year group. Chair recognises the importance of his teachers, rather than staff covering for PPA, are fully trained on using Understanding Christianity and questioned how SACRE could monitor the quality of RE when there are so many non-specialists delivering RE?
- **The Big Ideas report** from Exeter University, Putting Big Ideas into practice - Butlin (Barbara Wintersgill): RE syllabi should be built around understanding 6 areas to offer a more enriched RE curriculum.
- **RE Commission Recommendations Update (Denise Cush):** Commission recommends that: clear aims are set with a national entitlement for RE; schools are held more to account for the provision and quality of RE; a national plan is put in place to improve teaching and learning in RE and SACREs are to have a renewed and expanded role.
- **Importance of the role of councillors on SACRE** – Butlin (Justine Ball and Ross Chad): The positive impact Councillors' have on the work of SACREs.
- Representative for Buddhism gave an overview of the presentation on **Approaches to teaching Buddhism in KS3** - Cameron (Neil Apps) which included the 4 level truths or 3 gems and ideas on how to engage philosophically with students using the 'big ideas'.

### Key actions:

- For the next academic year, SACRE will signpost schools to the LTLREs of the Dioceses of Salisbury and Bristol in place of SACRE having a RE Consultant.
- SACRE is to welcome potential applicants for the role of RE Consultant to join SACRE as co-opted members.

#### 12 June 2018 SACRE reviewed local and national updates:

- **Salisbury Diocese's (Wiltshire/Dorset) LTLRE** project meeting that took place on 04 May 2018 confirmed that a LTLRE conference would take place on 13 June to recruit RE Leaders. SACRE confirmed that they will promote the work of the LTLRE via a link from the Right Choice website.
- **Salisbury Diocese's work to support RE teachers/ LTLRE project.** Diocese has a 5-year plan to work with and train 10-12 hub leads to provide CPD to all schools in their area.
- **Changes to the SIAMS inspection from September 2018** with an increase in expectations. SIAMS inspections will have a more Christian focus where schools will have to show evidence of their values in, i.e. charity work and engagement in the community.
- **RE Quality Mark** offering 10 schools the opportunity to apply for the award at free of charge.
- **Diversity of Religion and Belief (Cardiff University).** A discussion took place on the objective and value of the guidance and resource pack for teachers.

#### Key actions:

- SACRE is to review the new SIAMS inspection framework at either the October or March meeting.
- SACRE is to promote the offer from the Quality Mark for RE.
- SACRE is to organize 2 network meetings (at a reduced rate) for both primary and secondary schools for 2018-19 with the Sikh member presenting on teaching Sikhism.

#### Development of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

The Agreed Syllabus for RE was originally adopted in 2011 and was due for renewal by Autumn 2016. The Agreed Syllabus with all teaching support materials can be accessed on 'Right Choice' <http://rightchoice.wiltshire.gov.uk/>

The revision of the Agreed Syllabus has followed a pattern of setting up an Agreed Syllabus Conference every four years. Since 2011, teacher learning resources have been produced, in particular the key concepts for each religion and advice regarding the assessment of RE.

## Training provided for schools

Instead of network meetings, SACRE organised a training day on 'Getting to grips with Assessment of RE for primary schools on 22 May 2018. This was led by a teacher and a local teacher.

Date	Venue	Number of attendees
22 May 2018	The Corn Exchange, Devizes	13

The training covered:

- Explore progression and assessment in RE through the core concepts based on the recommendation from SACRE as well as the Diocese of Salisbury and Discovery RE.
- Review practical ways of assessing RE in the classroom.
- Meet and work with other RE leaders to share good practice.

Teachers feedback on the successful aspects were:

- Practical ideas for staff to use in RE
- Good range of resources to create age related expectations
- Ideas to create end of unit tasks as point of assessment
- Idea that all assessment must be purposeful and manageable
- Discussion about right choice and shared resources
- A bank of practical ideas
- Meeting other RE Leads and the conversation with them was valuable
- Lovely to talk to other course participants for ideas and share concerns
- Talk from the teacher of a local school was interesting and practical
- Talk from the teacher of a local school demonstrated how assessment could be tackled with interesting resources
- I had the opportunity to consider assessment and its worth
- All very helpful, especially the Right Choice demonstration

A summary of teachers' responses to '**How could the day have been improved?**' :-

- Although I appreciate the hard work put in by the presenter I think there was a lack of clarity as to what we were assessing against. It would have been better to look at key concepts perhaps and produce a range of assessment statements
- Have had no communication regarding Right Choice but relieved to know that the RE starter are there. £160 is very expensive for our tight budget
- I do not feel much further forward in terms of assessment, which is shame considering the amount of money the course cost
- Practice of assessing and moderating – more time or detail
- Miss network meetings
- More SEN support for assessment for cognitive challenged pupils
- A clear assessment framework is needed.
- More ideas for assessment tasks/opportunities linked to the Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus.

## Compliance for RE

- There were no formal complaints about RE.
- No determinations have been made to SACRE. (A determination is an application by a headteacher to make a determination for pupils of faiths, other than Christianity, that they will not be required to attend daily worship of a Christian character. As a result of such a determination the headteacher must make arrangements for daily worship that is appropriate for those pupils.)
- The monitoring of church schools via the SIAMS inspections of Anglican indicates that there is full compliance within VC and VA areas. Diocese of Salisbury confirmed the following outcomes for SIAMs for 14 schools:
  - 7 Outstanding
  - 7 Good

## Overview of GCSE and A & AS level results

Religious Studies GCSE level	2017 No. of entries	2018 No. of entries	2017 A*-C	2018 9-4	2017 A*-G	2018 9-1
National (All entries)	263,974	196,680	71%	72%	98%	98%
<b>Wiltshire LA &amp; Academies</b>	<b>2,471</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>

The results from 2018 cannot be directly compared to 2017's results due to a swap of the old U-A\* system with 1-9 grades. The new GCSEs have been designed to be harder and under the new system, grades 7-9 are equivalent to the old A and A\* marks. Numbers 4-6 cover the old B and C grades, while 1-3 cover the old D, E, F and G grades.

Religious Studies A level	2017 No. of entries	2018 No. of entries	2017 A*-A	2018 A*-A	2017 A*-B	2018 A*-B	2017 A*-E	2018 A*-E
National (All entries)	21,289	16,560	24%	23%	55%	52%	98%	98%
<b>Wiltshire LA &amp; Academies</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>98%</b>

Church Times reported: [Church Times A level results 2018](#)

Religious education bodies have expressed deep concern over a 20-per-cent drop in the number of students sitting A-levels in religious studies in the UK. More than 20,000 students sat A-level exams in religious studies this year — 2.5 per cent of the total number of students — down from more than 26,000 (3.1 per cent of the total) the previous year. (Numbers overall were down, though certain other subjects showed a growth in students.) As last year, most of the religious studies candidates were female: 14,690 compared with 5,837 males.

### Quality of teaching

The feedback forms completed by teachers who attended the training day on Assessment (22 May 2018) gives SACRE an insight into the teachers' understanding of areas of teaching that require development and support and this can vary from school to school.

### Quality of leadership and management of RE

SACRE does not have access to sufficient in-depth information to enable a well-substantiated judgement on this. However, regional network meetings and training days support the professional development of those leading RE in Wiltshire schools.

### Membership of SACRE

The LA has worked hard to recruit members to SACRE that represent a cross section of the religions and beliefs held by the people of Wiltshire and of those taught in Wiltshire schools. The SACRE is well supported by the Chair, Simon White, LA Officer, Helen Southwell and Clerk, Simone Kermode.

SACRE welcomes observers to their meetings and is made up of the following members –

#### Group A: Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations.

Votes	Faith Group	Representative
10	<b>Free Churches:-</b> Salisbury Assemblies of God Church Melksham United Church Methodist	Tony Wilson (Pastor) Revd Simon C Edwards <i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Buddhist Community</b>	Jo Backus
	<b>Muslim Community</b>	Wali Rahman
	<b>Roman Catholic Church</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i> <i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Hinduism Community</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Sikhism Community</b>	Bal Kaur
	<b>Judaism Community</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>

#### Group B: Church of England

Votes	Faith Group	Representative
5	<b>Diocese of Salisbury</b>	Verity Holloway ( <i>resigned mid-year</i> ) Simon White, HT - Shaw Primary School (Chair) <i>Membership vacant</i> <i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Diocese of Bristol</b>	Julia Harle



**Group C: Headteacher /Teacher Representatives**

Votes	School position	Representative
5	<b>Primary Headteacher</b>	Karen Walker, Laverstock St Andrew's CE VA Primary School ( <i>resigned mid-year</i> ) Rebecca Carson, Woodford Valley Primary School ( <i>March 2018</i> )
	<b>Secondary Headteacher</b>	Vicky Bunting (Head of RS) representing Mrs Edwards, HT Kingdown, Warminster
	<b>Primary Teacher</b>	Amanda Garton, Woodlands Primary School
	<b>Secondary Teacher</b>	Mark Perraton, The John of Gaunt School <i>shared with</i> Lorraine Marlow, St Laurence School
	<b>Special Teacher</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>

**Group D: The LA**

Votes		Representative
6	<b>Conservative</b>	Mary Douglas
	<b>Labour</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Liberal</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	<b>Rep' for the Corporate Director for Children and Education</b>	Helen Southwell
	<b>Equality and Diversity Manager</b>	<i>Membership vacant</i>

**SACRE officers (non – voting)**

LA Senior Officer	School Improvement Co-ordinator	Helen Southwell
Clerk to SACRE	School Improvement Officer	Simone Kermode

**Training opportunities for SACRE members**

- One SACRE member is encouraged to attend the annual South West SACRE conference.

## SACRE development

Website development has taken place to provide access to support materials:

- Since 2017 a new website has been developed by the LA – ‘Right Choice’. A lot of work has taken place to update the Agreed Syllabus for RE, SACRE minutes and SACRE constitution on Right Choice website, as detailed below:-

The screenshot shows the 'Right Choice' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Services, Training, Communication, Resources, and Setup. Below this is a header area with the 'Right Choice' logo and a user profile for Simone Kermode. The main content area is titled 'Resources | Page' and shows a resource for 'Key Stage 1'. The resource includes a list of 10 Enquiry Based Questions (EBQs) for KS1, such as 'What do some people believe about God?' and 'The beginning of the world: what can we learn from special Christian and Jewish stories?'. A right-hand sidebar contains a 'Publisher' section for 'Religious Education' and a 'Navigation' menu with links to 'Religious Education Resource Home Page', 'Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus', and 'KS1 10 Enquiry Based Questions'.

## Financial support

Currently SACRE is supported by the LA, which enables the continuous review of the membership and recruitment to SACRE as well as allowing for SACRE to be engaged with national events and pay NASACRE membership fees.

SACRE has been vigilant in keeping its running costs to a minimum and actively seeks support from SACRE members to host SACRE meetings and network meetings at their schools. SACRE appreciate their on-going support and commitment to improving the teaching of RE across the county.

Teachers are currently charged £160 for a day's training to cover the costs of a specialist RE consultant and venue etc.

## Partnerships with other key stakeholders

- The LA has commissioned a teacher to undertake a training day on Getting to grips with Assessment for RE for primary schools on 22 May 2018.
- SACRE monitors and informs the range of training provided by the LA.
- Wiltshire SACRE is a member of NASACRE.

## Appendix A: SACRE functions

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

- 'The LA shall in each year publish a report of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the LA during the preceding year.'
- The report is required to specify any matters in respect of which the LA 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. This includes:

1. Monitoring the provision and quality of RE and providing advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus. This includes advice on
  - methods of teaching
  - choice of teaching material
  - provision of teacher training
2. Monitoring the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus, including whether any changes need to be made to improve the quality of teaching and learning in RE, whether in the syllabus itself or the support offered in implementing the syllabus. Central to this is the review of the locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review.
3. Maintaining a partnership between SACRE, LA and other bodies. This includes preparing an annual report for the LA.
4. Supporting and monitoring collective worship in schools. This includes dealing with applications from headteachers for a total or partial exemption from providing Christian worship.

In addition, SACRE has two powers which are binding on the local authority:

- at any time, it may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus for RE;
- following an application by the headteacher, it may make a determination for pupils of faiths other than Christianity that they will not be required to attend daily worship of a Christian character. As a result of such a determination the headteacher must make arrangements for daily worship that is appropriate for those pupils.

The composition of SACRE is set out in legislation. The four groups or committees represent the following interests within the local community.

- Committee A Christian Denominations and other faiths;
- Committee B The Church of England;
- Committee C Associations representing teachers;
- Committee D The local authority.

Members may be nominated by appropriate organisations but are appointed by the LA. Other members may be co-opted.

## Appendix B: Contact addresses of SACRE officers

### **Chair of SACRE - Simon White**

Headteacher – Shaw Primary School  
Shaw CofE Primary School  
Corsham Road  
Shaw  
Melksham  
Wiltshire  
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### **Clerk to SACRE - Simone Kermode**

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### **LA Officer - Helen Southwell**

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