

Item 5C - ANNUAL REPORT
of the Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

September 2019 – August 2020

Celebrating Religious Education in Cheshire East



RE Project work on community cohesion display at
Cheshire East Westfields

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This is the annual report for Cheshire East SACRE covering the academic period **from September 2019 to August 2020.**

St Annes RC Primary School, Nantwich hosted the first meeting of the academic year on November 12th, 2019 which included pupil presentations from both primary and secondary pupils based on the Westhill Award Project completed during the academic year of 2019.

In mid-March, we were due to be hosted by Sandbach high School but unfortunately the pandemic Co-vid 19 meant all face-to-face meetings were cancelled at short notice. Our Spring term meeting was due during the week the first national lockdown was announced. Unfortunately also due to lockdown, shielding and various illness, no formal SACRE meeting was then held until we could arrange a full online meeting in November 2020.

During the second half of the summer term and early into Autumn 2020 some administration meetings were held with RE Consultants, a few SACRE members and LA officers to consider how the work of SACRE could continue to support religious education in schools during the present climate. Obviously, the unprecedented nature of the last academic year has meant all areas of education life have changed and advice and provision of RE resources has been achieved through more of an online presence.

It is against this backdrop of the pandemic that RE Consultants and SACRE members have found new and innovative ways to support teachers in schools. Through ongoing investment in resources and through our two consultants who have advised SACRE, led online network meetings and supported subject leaders we have remained in touch with our schools and continued to champion religious education.

The retirement of the headteacher at St Annes RC Primary who had previously given much support in assisting in the oversight of the consultants work meant a further change and we are delighted that St Marys in Crewe agreed to help support the work of SACRE in a similar way. Meanwhile we are delighted that Hazel Brown from St Annes has stayed on the SACRE committee and remains a valuable supporter of our work. The ongoing support of Mark Bailey our local authority officer and Louise Collinge our clerk has provided excellent administrative support.

Gillian Merry
Chair of CE SACRE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHESHIRE EAST SCHOOLS

2:1 Locally Agreed RE Syllabus

2.1.1 Engaging Encounter & Reasoned Response Agreed Syllabus

The Cheshire East Religious Education Agreed Syllabus was launched Cheshire East schools in September 2016. The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory syllabus for RE in Cheshire East schools prepared under schedule 31 of the Education Act 1996. This current syllabus will be followed from 2016-2021 and will be due for review during the academic year 2020/21. This review has begun during this year, and schools have been asked for a response to current syllabus.

This syllabus must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination and all church voluntary controlled schools within the local authority.

Many academies and free schools also choose currently to follow this syllabus and attend SACRE networks.

The existing syllabus is supported by networks led by two part-time consultants who are also available to lead INSET for staff in response to requests from schools, if schools can buy in their support. Telephone and email advice is also regularly sought and provided by the consultants.

Occasionally SACRE will suggest a consultant visits a school who have shown they have a specific need in relation to implementing the agreed syllabus. Copies of the syllabus and new supplementary materials can be found on the webpage: <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

Ofsted use the local syllabus as the yardstick by which the inspectors make their judgements on the delivery of the RE curriculum in individual Cheshire East schools.

2.2 Monitoring the Agreed Syllabus

SACRE have a statutory duty to monitor the impact of the locally agreed syllabus.

Analysis of Ofsted Reports – Please refer to minutes of SACRE meetings for full details which can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website. Analysis of Section 5 Ofsted inspection reports identifies the performance of schools with respect to spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum and continues to give a simple indicator and pointer to school performance in RE. The reports for schools in the authority which have been visited by Ofsted are analysed for each SACRE meeting and reported upon. If concerns are raised then advice and support is offered by the two advisory consultants, Sue Glover (Primary) and Chris Cooney (Secondary).

SACRE members remain concerned about the lack of contact with diverse communities or other cultures within the local area which is often an issue for schools and makes it difficult for schools to fully demonstrate a developed understanding of other faiths and cultures. **There is now a new Visit and Visitors guide on the SACRE web page complete with protocols.**

Last year's Westhill project this year gave teachers lots of resource and ideas teachers can draw upon and these have highlighted with colleagues at network meetings. Visiting places of worship and encouraging visiting guest speakers normally a regular part of the RE curriculum has been severely hampered this year by restrictions caused by the pandemic Co-vid 19. Instead teachers have been directed to online opportunities to visit places of worship and to meet people of different worldviews.

2.3 Standards in Religious Education

2.3.1 Examinations in Religious Studies

NB Due to the Co-vid Pandemic no formal examinations took place during the summer of 2020.

There is no data available for teacher assessments which replaced the examinations.

2.3.2 Monitoring of Secondary RE Departments

Support was offered by Chris Cooney through telephone calls, emails and network meetings. The **network meetings** covered areas of concern such as assessment, lack of curriculum time and changes to option arrangements which have adversely affected RE, options at GCSE, changes to examinations at A-level and GCSE, as well as allowing colleagues to share good practice and resources.

Subject strengths

- Teachers of RE are very passionate and committed (some are the sole teacher for the entire school).
- Teachers of RE are very self-sufficient and such are up to date with any changes or new pedagogy within RE.
- Interest in the use of remote technology for network meetings is high and can be rolled out and used in the future,

Areas for development

- Ensuring that the centre assessed grades are consistent with previous years and Cheshire East's standing in relation to the national average.
- Ensure that changes/updates to the locally agreed syllabus are available and accessible for all.
- Develop networks to increase participation – use of remote networks is a positive way to do this. More input from subject leads will help focus areas/topics to cover in future meetings.
- Structure of KS3/KS4 (3 Year GCSE) is still a concern for some schools.

2.4 Teaching Methods, Advice, Materials, Training

2.4.1 Advice Support and Inset Training for Teachers- Provided by Primary RE Consultant

Primary Schools

Telephone and/or email support of behalf of Cheshire East SACRE was given to approximately 70 primary schools during the academic year. Queries ranged from new subject leaders asking for support in developing the agreed syllabus to more experienced subject leaders asking for support on online visits and visitors, online support for RE teaching, planning and resources. A small number of queries about faith visitors and collective worship were made by parents and schools.

Cheshire East Proposal for RE Leaders Network/Hub Development

It was agreed previously that Cheshire East would be split into Cheshire East North and South for the purpose of developing a hub in each area.

South Cheshire

September 2019

Sue Glover our primary consultant met with RE Leaders from Underwood Academy, from Goostrey Primary and from Monks Coppenhall Academy to plan 3 RE Leaders network meetings over the course of the academic year. The new extra Sector improvement funding supported this with supply cover for a half day. The first meeting was held on December 3rd at Monks Coppenhall. The network teachers and RE Consultant shared the delivery of the meeting. The assessment materials were introduced, and resources modelled based on the end of key stage statements. Feedback from one teacher on seeing the assessment materials:

'Having the unpicking of the End of Key stage statements is incredible. It has given me confidence to trust my judgement especially in differentiating between expected and exceeding.' Lindsay Monks Coppenhall

A second meeting was held in February 2020 at Underwood West Academy and included sharing the Shared Space Project, the new Visits and Visitors document and modelled ENKSS statements assessments from KS 1/2.

Unfortunately due to the pandemic the May meeting was cancelled.

North Cheshire

Our Primary Consultant continued to stay in touch with Rachel Long RE Head of Dept Poynton High School regarding planning and handing over the RE network primary school group in that area. Rachel was given a supply days from our sector led improvement funding to prepare and lead a network for primary teachers in the Autumn term based on resources. In consultation with our Primary consultant Rachel prepared the meeting for the Spring term inviting a range of representatives from religious/non-religious world views to meet with a group of primary leaders in a faith carousel. The summer meeting was cancelled due to lockdown.

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Secondary Schools

Chris Cooney has continued to support the RE in Secondary Schools through monitoring, surveys, emails & phone calls. Ofsted reports have also been monitored and letters of congratulations sent to schools that received positive comments regarding areas of RE.

Networks:

R.E. Network Meeting: 11th December 2019 @ Brine Leas School

Following the survey done last academic year, dates and venues for this year's network meetings had been set and distributed to all schools.

Reminders of this specific meeting were sent out via email 3 weeks prior and also 2 days prior.

Emails confirming attendance were received (5 in total), as well as some apologies.

Final attendance at the meeting was 1 – Mark from Shavington. This is very disappointing, given the fact that there had been responses confirming attendance, and a very useful agenda looking at how to implement the new Ofsted Framework in RE.

Despite the low attendance the meeting still took place, and both Mark and I shared some excellent ideas with each other and shared how our schools are working on the 'intention' element of the framework. All resources from the meeting were emailed out to all schools the day after the meeting.

R.E. Network Meeting: Thursday 19th March 2020 @ The Oaks Academy

Agenda: Preparing for GCSE and A-level examinations.

Cancelled due to Co-vid

Additional Support & Tasks

Chris Cooney has also offered support regarding GCSE assessment to Head of Subject at Eaton Bank, The Oaks Academy and Alsager. The sharing of teaching resources at A-level, such as a literacy list and suggestions for further reading.

CC has had meetings with SG to assist with the review of the locally agreed syllabus.

Secondary Schools Support

Notices about courses, networks and 'twilights' initiatives are given via the Cheshire East Bulletin or by emails supplied by the schools.

2.4.2 REQM Awards

In addition, schools of all types have been encouraged to apply for the REQM award. Few schools have applied due to the cost of the award.

2.4.3 Artefact Bases- Materials

A substantial collection of religious artefacts purchased previously by SACRE are held at Knutsford Academy who will lend it to local primary schools on request. Please contact the Head of Humanities 01565 633294.

There is another collection of artefacts in the south of the authority at Sir William Stanier Academy. Please contact Head of Humanities 01270 68536

2.4 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of RE, requiring the LA's Special Appeal's Committee to be convened.

3. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

3.1 Supporting Collective Worship

All previously published material giving guidance for collective worship still stands in respect of the law. The School and Standards Frameworks Act 2006 continues to reflect the current law governing collective worship. NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Council for RE) have produced a paper giving further insights into collective worship which is available on request.

Under the Ofsted framework, inspectors do comment on the opportunities for spiritual development in schools.

Further advice and materials are available from both the primary and secondary RE consultants. The revised Cheshire East Collective Worship guidelines accepted by SACRE in September 2014 can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website. Some enquiries have been made during 2019/20 with respect to the law governing collective worship in Cheshire East schools.

3.2 Determinations

The SACRE has not been called upon during the past year to make any determinations concerning collective worship. Due to several enquiries it has been decided that a review of some of this guidance will take place during 2020. This has not fully taken place due to the lockdown.

3.3 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of collective worship requiring the LA's special Appeals Committee to be convened.

4. LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

4.1 National and International

The Cheshire East SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE).

The NASACRE Newsletters 'SACRE News' are much valued by SACRE members, providing useful insight into the activities of SACREs and the teaching of RE across the country.

Several letters have been written from Cheshire East SACRE members to NASACRE, DfE, Ofsted and local MPs this year to raise concerns about the ongoing marginalisation of RE. There has been some response to SACRE to reassure members that RE is still statutory and will remain so in the future.

4.2 Local and Regional

Cheshire East SACRE has links with the local Macclesfield Interfaith Group. The Cheshire East faith audit producing local data is of valuable assistance in the SACRE's work. Cheshire East SACRE continues to have some links through the in-service programme with the University of Chester and Chester Diocese.

As well as supporting Cheshire East primary schools as a consultant, Sue Glover also serves on Cheshire West SACRE and works as an independent consultant for the Diocese of Chester which has continued to fund religious education and collective worship support in Cheshire East church primary schools as part of their work in schools. Sue is also an accredited REQM Assessor.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Examination Statistics 2016-2019 (NO data exists for 2020)

| | Cheshire East 2016 | Cheshire East 2017 | Cheshire East 2018 (national averages shown in brackets) | Cheshire East 2019 (national averages shown in brackets) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>GCSE Short Courses in RE</u> | | | | |
| Number of candidates entered | 787 | 941 | 149 | 436 |
| Number of grades A* -C/ grades 9-5 | 454 | 503 | 65 | 222 |
| Percentage gaining A* -C/ grades 9-5 | 57.7% | 55.2% | 14% | 50.9% (47%) |
| Percentage gaining A* -G/ grades 9-1 | 89.2% | 97.4% | 92.7% | 96.6% (95.1%) |
| Percentage of cohort entered | 21% | 26% | 4.2% | 11.7% (2.4%) |
| <u>Full Course GCSE Religious Studies</u> | | | | |
| Number of candidates entered | 1483 | 1528 | 1221 | 1295 |
| Number of grades A* -C/ grades 9-5 | 1138 | 1148 | 791 | 794 |
| Percentage gaining A* -C/ grades 9-5 | 76.8% | 75.5% | 64.8% (58.4%) | 61.3% (59.2%) |
| Percentage gaining A* -G/ grades 9-1 | 98.8% | 98.1% | 98.6% (97.9%) | 98.5% (98.2%) |
| Percentage of cohort entered | 39.5% | 42.5% | 34.5% (28.8%) | 34.7% (29.7%) |
| <u>GCE 'A' Level Religious Studies</u> | | | | |
| Number of candidates entered | 78 | 67 | 70 | 75 |
| Number of grades A-E | 78 | 66 | 69 | 75 |
| Percentage gaining grades A-E | 100% | 98.5% | 98.6% | 100% (97.7%) |
| Percentage of cohort entered | unknown | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| <u>GCE 'A/S' Level Religious Studies – Year 12</u> | | | | |
| Number of candidates entered | 131 | 94 | 11 | 10 |
| Number of grades A-E | 123 | 87 | 11 | 6 |
| Percentage gaining grades A-E | 93.9% | 92.6 | 100% | 60% (90.8%) |
| Percentage of cohort entered | unknown | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Appendix 2 LA Publications

The locally agreed syllabus and the accompanying handbook and all other documentation for religious education in primary and secondary schools is available on the Cheshire East SACRE website. <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

Other queries regarding publications should be made in first instance to the clerk to SACRE, Louise.Collinge@cheshireeast.gov.uk

LA guidance on Collective Worship

Guidance on Collective Worship for community schools can be found under 'SACRE documents' on the Cheshire East SACRE website and can also be obtained from Sue Glover.

SACRE Annual Report

Further copies of the annual SACRE reports are available from the Clerk to the SACRE, as above.

Appendix 3 SACRE Development Plan

This year 2019-20 the main areas of activity were:

1. To support teachers in dissemination of good practice, teaching/resources especially during Co-vid.
2. To help teachers and schools to raise standards in the quality of RE teaching.
3. To help schools improve the quality of collective worship.
4. To contribute towards understanding and respect between different religious groups within the community.
5. To discharge its responsibilities effectively.
6. To begin a review of the agreed syllabus and publish revised materials for schools September 2022.

Implementation

To support the implementation of the agreed syllabus 2018/19 a budget of £9,100 was made available by the LA and this included the funding of the work of two RE consultants who were directed by the authority to facilitate the work of SACRE, (one primary consultant and one secondary consultant each for a specific number of days).

Recent Ofsted school inspection reports were studied on Religious Education and Collective Worship for evidence of standards and reported to SACRE. Support was offered where considered necessary.

Appendix 4 Statutory Functions

These continue to remain the same in line with government legislation:

- To advise the LA on matters relating to RE and collective worship; methods of teaching; choice of teaching material; provision of teacher training.
- To determine any applications from head teachers for dis application in relation to the general requirements for collective worship.
- To monitor the effective provision for RE in community and controlled schools.
- To consider whether changes need to be made in the Agreed RE Syllabus or the support offered to schools.
- To support the effective provision for collective worship in schools.
- To monitor the provision of daily collective worship in schools and consider how to improve such provision.
- To publish an annual report on its work.

Appendix 5 Attendance figures for members at Cheshire East SACRE meetings 2019/20

| Committee | St Annes RC Nantwich | March 2020 & Summer 2020 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A Christian Denominations & Other Religions | 3 | CANCELLED DUE TO CO-VID |
| B Church of England | | |
| C Teachers Associations | 1 | |
| D Local Authority | 3 | |
| Humanist member (co-opted) | 1 | |

Instead of full SACRE meetings some smaller admin meetings were held to continue to move SACRE's work forward during the summer term 2020. In attendance at each meeting were: Louise Collinge Clerk, Sue Glover, Primary Schools Consultant, and Chris Cooney Secondary Schools Consultant. Mark Bayley, Head of Service: Education Infrastructure & Outcomes attended all meetings on behalf of the local authority.

Regular items on the agenda included: NASCRE news including discussion of local and national news about RE; local Ofsted reports; a summary of the consultants' work during the term and the current budgetary position.

Dates for the Cheshire East SACRE meetings for the academic year 2019/20 are:

November 2020 Online meeting via MS Teams

March 11th 2021 Online meeting via MS Teams

July 6th 2021 to be confirmed.

Appendix 6 Distribution

The CE SACRE report is sent to the following:

- NASACRE (National Association of SACREs)
- Cheshire East Schools and colleges
- Members of the Cheshire East SACRE & Representatives of local faith communities
- Lead Member for Children's Services and the members of the Children's Services Strategic Panel
- Diocesan Education Associations
- DfE

The report will also be made available on the Cheshire East website www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Appendix 7 – Membership of the Cheshire East SACRE for 2019-2020 Academic Year

| Committee A – Christian Denominations and Other Religions | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name | Denomination/Religion | Address |
| Les Biddulph | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints | Bridge Cottage, Buxton Road, Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffs ST13 8TT |
| Mr J Vaja | Hinduism | 1 Marlborough Close, Macclesfield, SK10 2LA |
| Cathy Smeaton | Unitarian | c/o Poynton High School, Poynton |
| Gillian Merry | Methodist Ecumenical | 217 Middlewich Road Sandbach CW11 3EL |
| Frank Vigon | Judaism | 122, Windmill Street, Macclesfield, SK11 7BL |
| Hazel Brown | Catholic | c/o St Anne's RC Primary School, Nantwich |
| Irene Faseyi | Christian Baptist | 53 Ford Lane, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 3EQ |
| Michael Melville | Baha'i | michael.melville@waitrose.com |
| Committee B – Church of England | | |
| Name | | Address |
| Fiona Pulle | Church of England | c/o Brereton CE VA Primary School, Brereton |
| Dean Steve Clapham | Church of England | steveclapham@outlook.com |
| Rhoda Bailey | Church of England | 15 Woburn Drive, Congleton, CW12 3SS |
| Co-opted Member: Humanist representative | | |
| Mr G Nicholson | Osborne House Trafford Road Alderley Edge SK9 7DN | |
| Committee C – Teachers' Associations | | |
| Name | Association | Address |
| Mr Matthew Hayhurst | NASUWT | matthew.hayhurst@brineleas.co.uk |
| Committee D – Local Authority | | |
| Name | | Address |
| Cllr Brian Puddicombe | CEC | 2 Sherwood Road, Macclesfield, SK11 7RR |
| Cllr Allen Gage | CEC | 3 The Grove, London Road, Nantwich, Cheshire, CW5 6LW |
| Cllr Brendan Murphy | CEC | 6 Hilton Road, Disley, Cheshire, SK12 2JU |

Officers Name

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------|
| Mrs S Glover Primary Consultant | 8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL | Mr Chris |
| Chris Cooney Secondary Consultant | Brine Leas Academy, Nantwich | |
| Mark Bayley Head of Service: | Education Infrastructure & Outcomes | |