

The Surrey
Standing Advisory Council
on
Religious Education



Annual Report
Academic year 2016-17

December 2017

INTRODUCTION

Introduction by the Chairman

It is a great privilege to be the new chairman of the Surrey SACRE and it seems a little strange to introduce this report, which reflects the work over the last academic year and of which I had no part.

So, my first job must be to acknowledge the huge amount of work and commitment, over many years, of the outgoing chairman, Margaret Hicks. Thank you, Margaret. The team during this year has worked on and produced the five-year syllabus, a mammoth task which now gives us time to reflect on the forthcoming years and our statutory role.

This report is somewhat later in production than usual, for two reasons. One is my role being new to me and for me to properly understand its requirements; second is the fact that examination results needed to be up to date and included in the report.

For those who do not know me, I think a personal introduction may be useful. I trained as a secondary school teacher and taught in Leicester. I retrained in matrimonial law when I moved to Surrey in 1985. Since that time, I have been chairman of governors of a primary school and a member of the corporation of East Surrey College. I was elected to the County Council in 1997 and during that time have held various positions including cabinet member for Children and Young People.

I undertake to use my best endeavours to support Surrey SACRE and work with all members of the team. I am looking forward to the year ahead.

Kay Hammond
Chairman of Surrey SACRE

December 2017

1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A **SACRE** (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is a statutory part of a local authority and exists to:

- determine religious education content in Surrey maintained schools by producing a locally agreed syllabus and reviewing it every five years;
- advise on matters of collective worship in maintained schools and religious education in line with the locally agreed syllabus. This might include methods of teaching, choice of materials and training for teachers, or responding to requests about RE and Collective Worship within the local authority;
- assist with any complaint about religious education or collective worship in schools;
- publish an annual report on any actions SACRE has taken and any advice it has given.



SACRE can also consider requests from schools (made by the headteacher following consultation with the governing body) to allow some or all pupils to take part in collective worship that is not wholly or broadly Christian. This is called a determination.

A SACRE is made up of four groups representing: the Church of England, as the established church; Christian denominations other than the Church of England and other faith groups representing the main religious traditions of the area; teachers' associations or organisations; Surrey County Council.

SACRE can co-opt relevant other members, for example, a representative from another interested group or a religious educational specialist. Surrey SACRE has a co-opted Humanist member. A full membership list for Surrey SACRE can be found at the end of this report.

Much of Surrey SACRE's work this year has been in relation to the revision of the 2012 Agreed Syllabus, in readiness for implementation from September 2017. In accordance with legislation, an agreed syllabus must be reviewed by its local authority at least every five years. The process in Surrey featured both local consultation with schools, and recommendations made in the non-statutory **National Curriculum Framework for RE (NCFRE)**, which has been produced for SACREs' use in compiling a locally agreed syllabus. The guidance included the place of non-religious worldviews in RE, the removal of levels and, instead, recommendations for expected attainment 'benchmarks' at the end of key stages. At KS4, GCSE reforms have resulted in more challenging RS course specifications, which now require that schools study Christianity and one other religion in much greater depth.

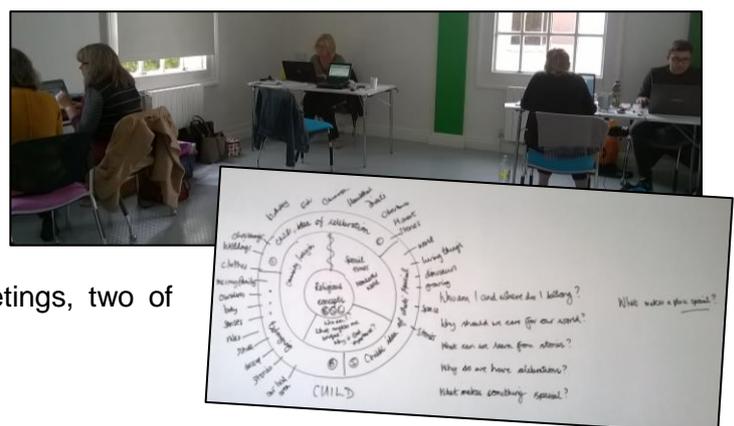
1.1 The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Surrey Schools (2017-2022)



The Agreed Syllabus is the statutory document for maintained Surrey schools, including those church schools with Voluntary Controlled status. **All schools (even academies and free schools) must fulfil their statutory duty to provide RE for all pupils. For academies and free schools without a religious character this will be an agreed syllabus (we hope Surrey's). Ofsted have recently reported on non-compliance in RE, branding schools' curricula 'inadequate' where pupils do not receive their full entitlement to RE, using a syllabus that meets the requirements of the**

1996 ERA. Aided schools, of course, follow their relevant Diocesan Guidelines. Schools are reminded that the Agreed Syllabus has the equivalent legal standing of a National Curriculum order and that RE continues to be a statutory entitlement for all registered pupils, in addition to the National Curriculum.

The process of revision continued over three days in October 2016, comprising two days each for Primary and Secondary, with an 'overlap' day in the middle. Four Primary teachers, two Secondary Heads of RE and three consultants met to create the first draft of the revised syllabus in the creative writing space provided by SCC at County Hall, which was subsequently presented to SACRE for comment at a further four ASC (Agreed Syllabus Conference) meetings, two of which were not quorate, which presented some issues.

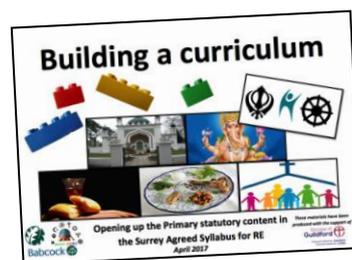


As outlined in the previous Annual Report, the agreed syllabus is now a **single online document** – one syllabus for all key stages, with clear, visible content as to what is statutory and what is guidance. It also contains;

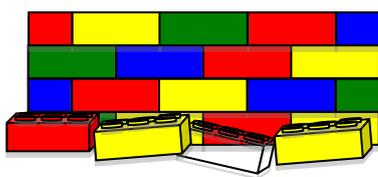
- a revised set of introductory pages for the syllabus, and for each key stage showing the wider context for the review, and outlining key changes within each section;
- broad parity of content with Guildford Diocesan Guidelines for RE used by VA schools, which will aid transition into Y7 and enable better progress during KS3;
- updated recommendations for expected attainment at the end of each key stage, removing references to 'levels', recognising that many schools will adapt how they assess in RE to line up with assessment procedures in other subjects. During the process of revision, a standardised attainment grid (based on the recommendations for expected attainment in the NCFRE) was used by the writing team to ensure that adequate progress would be made within and between key stages. units during the review to ensure that the curriculum consistently enables pupils to progress;
- new EYFS materials which are aligned with current early years practice and establish connections with the wider EYFS curriculum, allowing for schools to create more opportunities for pupil-led learning;
- a more defined order to compulsory units within the Primary phase, especially within the study of Christianity, to aid deeper learning and enable pupils to make connections both in religious education and with the wider curriculum;
- a defined flexibility at KS3 to allow for both a 2-year or 3-year model, plus adequate 'coverage' of knowledge and skills to lead pupils into KS4;
- the expectation that pupils at KS4 follow an RS GCSE course to meet their statutory entitlement for RE;
- references to non-religious worldviews, in age-appropriate ways, with Humanism as a discrete unit of enquiry for KS3;
- support materials to work alongside the syllabus – for each unit within the Primary phase, and selected units within KS3. These materials are for schools' guidance and



follow an enquiry-based approach to learning. Primary schools can also download the **'Building a Curriculum'** booklet, which outlines some of the 'big ideas' in religions studied and explains how the units within the Primary sections of the syllabus build on and connect with one another to help pupils to make links in their learning. The complete syllabus and the accompanying support materials can be found on the [Babcock 4S website](#), and in due course on the SACRE pages of Surrey County Council's website.



Eight free implementation training sessions (7 Primary, 1 Secondary) were offered to schools during the Summer term of 2017 to help introduce them to the key changes to the Surrey Agreed Syllabus and enable them to build a curriculum that both



helps pupils to make good progress and supports teachers in their planning. The session also emphasised the importance of RE in ensuring that schools are compliant with Ofsted's recommendations for a broad and



balanced curriculum that includes RE. The training was attended by subject leaders from about 35% of Surrey Primary schools, and heads of department from 33% of secondary schools, which still leaves a significant number of schools with whom we have not had face-to-face contact during this crucial time of change.

Feedback from those who did attend was overwhelmingly positive. Here's what a few teachers said:

As a result of the training, I feel more confident leading my colleagues as an authority on the subject.

I feel ready now to put the new curriculum in place and roll it out across the school.

It was great to have time to look at the new syllabus and ask questions relevant to specific situations e.g. EYFS.

I now understand the links between the years and key stages.

I'll take away the skills to build a new curriculum for RE based on the revised syllabus.

1.2. Standards

No inspections of RE by OfSTED took place in Surrey during the year 2016-17. As funding this year was required for reviewing the agreed syllabus, SACRE has not had its focus on standards in RE, other than through direct queries from schools during the review process. SACRE hopes in future to monitor mentions of RE within standard section 5 inspections, which includes a scrutiny of SMSC. In this way, we can ensure that good schools are congratulated, and that concerns expressed about the quality of RE in any Surrey schools can be followed up.

During the free implementation training that was offered to all schools during the Summer term of 2017, the recommendations for expected attainment were introduced to Primary RE subject leaders and Secondary heads of department. Further discussions at Primary level (through the regular RE subject leader networks) are planned during the first year of implementation to support schools as they work with the statements of attainment. As many schools now have more control over the assessment arrangements for other curriculum subjects, it is difficult to predict what assessment might 'look like'. It is expected that this will continue to be a focus for the Primary subject leader networks, responding to schools' queries as and when they arise.

One of the aims of the review was for an RE curriculum that created opportunities for pupils to achieve greater depth of understanding, with the approach that it is better to do this and embed the cross-curricular skills that lie at the heart of good RE, than it is to skim across the surface of vast amounts of knowledge. Only time will tell if this aim has been achieved.

1.3 Religious Studies Examinations:



Surrey SACRE, like other SACREs, recognises the importance of data as a means of identifying trends in exam results, and of monitoring standards in RS across Surrey's schools. This section was based on the provisional data released by SCC during December 2017.

It remains SACRE's recommendation, as stated in the syllabus, that all pupils should follow the full course GCSE exam course, with the expectation that pupils be entered for an exam at the end of KS4, so the data does reveal which schools are meeting these recommendations. SACRE would like to remind schools that RE is **still statutory** at KS4 for those pupils who are not taking (or have already taken) an RS GCSE, and it should be published on schools' websites how that RE is provided. Ofsted continue to use school website information as a means of monitoring whether schools are teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, **which (by law) includes RE for all pupils** and promotes fundamental British Values.

At the time of writing, and in readiness for the next full committee meeting, Surrey SACRE is further analysing the 2017 GCSE data to identify maintained schools who appear to be non-compliant with their statutory duty to provide RE for all pupils. The data will be scrutinised along with schools' website information regarding this matter and appropriate action will be taken by SACRE to ensure that schools are aware of their statutory duties.

Religious Studies GCSE results for 2017:

In 2017, 76.4% of the total number of KS4 pupils was entered for either Full course or short course GCSE Religious Studies, an increase of 4.4% on the 2016 figures. 62.3% of total entries were for Full course (compared with 46.9% nationally), 14.1% for Short course (6.2% nationally). Although there are a greater proportion of students being entered for short course in Surrey than nationally, almost 20% more students in Surrey are entered for Full course compared to the national trends. The breakdown of results across these two examinations follows below:

Full Course GCSE Religious Studies – Surrey results

	Full Course 2014	Full Course 2015	Full course 2016	Full course 2017
Pupil numbers on roll	No data	No data	10,407	10,073
Total no. of entries	6014 ↑	6329 ↑	6801 ↑	6277 ↓
Total A*-C	73% ↓	73% ↔	71.4% ↓	71.7% ↑

In total, the number of pupils entered for RS Full course GCSE has decreased quite significantly from the 2016 number of entrants. Of the total number of Surrey pupils on role (10,073), only 62.3% were entered for full course GCSE, compared with 65% last year. Surrey's results continue to be above the national results in the A*-A, A*-C and A*-G ranges.

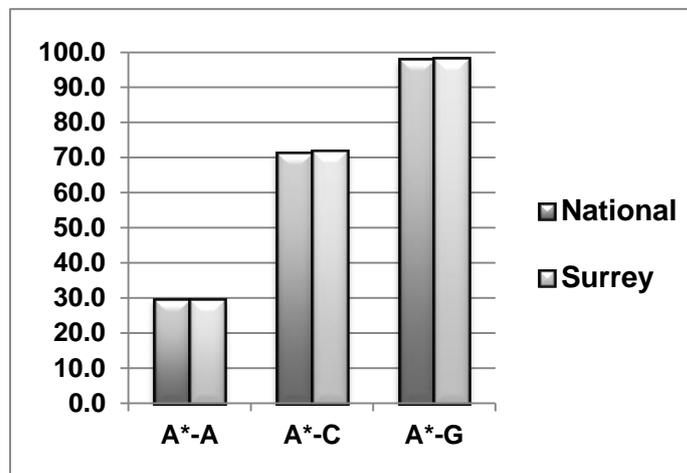
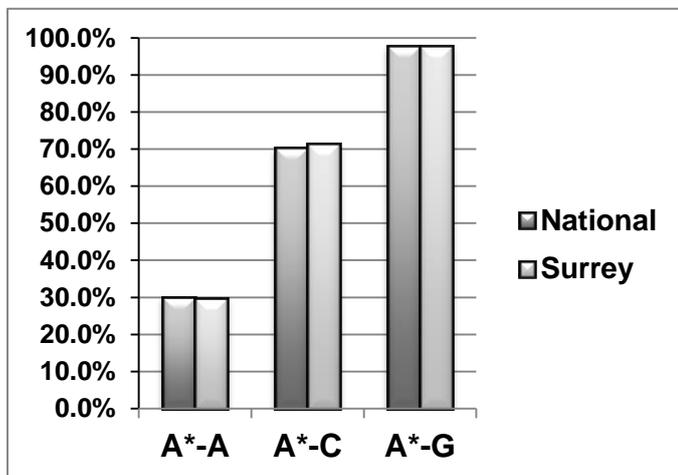
Full course GCSE results with National Comparators:

	National				Surrey			
	Entries	A*-A	A*-C	A*-G	Entries	A*-A	A*-C	A*-G
2015	295,730	30%	72%	98%	6329	29%	73%	98%
2016	252,022	27.9%	70.2%	97.7%	6801	29.7%	71.4%	97.7%
2017	248,210	27.4% ↓	70% ↓	97.9% ↑	6277	29.5% ↓	71.8% ↑	98.2% ↑

Full course 2016

compared with

Full course 2017



17 schools across Surrey entered some pupils for the short course GCSE – an increase of 3% of pupils on 2016. The 2017 results can be seen below, compared with previous years' data (no short course data was provided by SCC in 2015):

	Short Course 2013	Short Course 2014	Short course 2016	Short course 2017
Total entries	3699	235	1141	1420
Percentage of pupils on roll entered for short course	No data	No data	11%	14.1%
Total A*-C	57%	43%	56.4%	73.1% (1038 pupils)↑

AS Level & A Level Religious Studies:

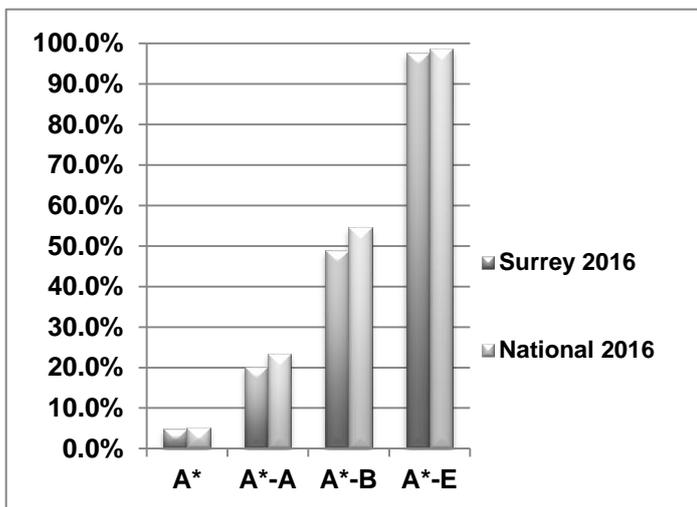
A total of 292 students were entered for **AS Level Religious Studies** in KS5, a decrease on last year's figures. There was an increase in the percentage of students being awarded the top grade, but a drop across the other grade boundaries.

	Entries	A	A-B	A-E
2015	74	4 (5%)	17 (23%)	58 (73%)
2016	433	86 (19.9%)	196 (45.3%)	401 (92.6%)
2017	292	62 (21.2%)↑	127 (43.5%)↓	266 (91.1%)↓

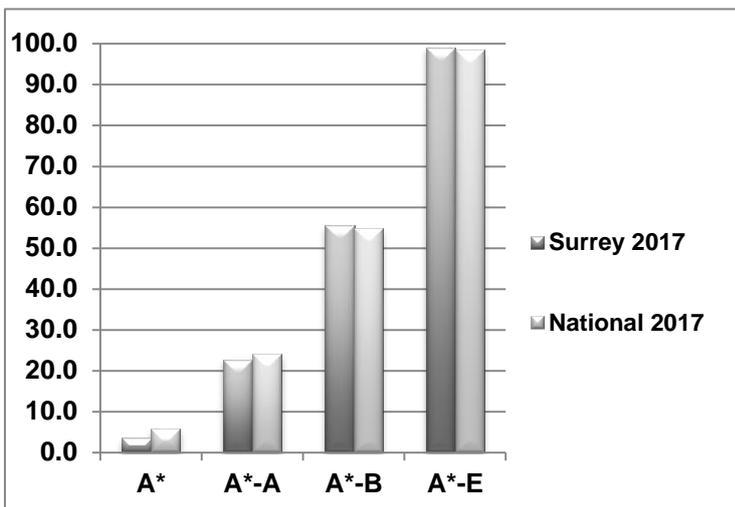
At **GCE A Level**, a total of 229 students were entered, a drop of just 34 students on the 2016 figures. Surrey's data shows an improvement in grades from 2016 in all but the A* category. It also broadly matches the national trends.

	Number of entries	A*	A*-A	A*-B	A*-E
Surrey 2016	263	13 (4.9%)	53 (20.2%)	129 (49%)	257 (97.7%)
Surrey 2017	229	8 (3.5%)↓	52 (22.7%)↑	127 (55.5%)↑	227 (99.1%)↑
National 2016	27032	5.2%	23.5%	54.6%	98.6%
National 2017	21289	5.7%↑	24.2%↑	54.9%↑	98.4%↓

Grades awarded in 2016:



Grades awarded in 2017:



1.3. Methods of teaching, choice of materials and teacher training

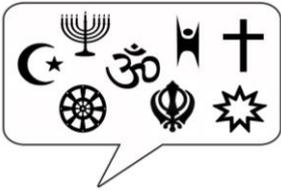
RE training for teachers offered in Surrey during the past year has included:

- The aforementioned implementation training sessions, supporting the publication of the Agreed Syllabus
- A full day course as part of the Surrey South Farnham SCITT programme, repeated for up to 30 students at each session, in four locations. Part of the day also includes an introduction to Collective Worship. This is the only input that many trainee teachers on the programme will have to equip them to teach RE and to think about the contribution of collective worship / assemblies to pupils’ SMSC development and the ‘fundamental British Values’ agenda.
- **Secondary Networks** There is a NATRE-linked Secondary network that meets in the East Surrey area, which is supported by Paula Wright, one of SACRE’s teacher-members.
- **Networking Groups for Primary RE subject leaders** in East and West Surrey met termly and are booked through Babcock 4S. These sessions have continued to be well-attended, with regular new members. The networks offer support and advice, as well as opportunities to update Primary teachers’ subject knowledge: many attendees also use the materials from the network sessions with staff teams back at school and really value the chance to share good practice, discuss concerns they have and develop their roles as subject leaders. During this academic year, focuses for Primary RE subject leaders have been:



- in the Autumn term, **‘Sharing our stories’**, considering the place of story in RE as a means of deepening pupils’ understanding, as well as strategies and approaches to story across different age ranges, and sharing great resources. A resource document was created for sharing story resources, including picture books for younger children, between the three groups of RE leaders.
- in the Spring term, we reflected on the **place of RE in the wider curriculum**, especially in relation to SMSC and British Values.
- in the Summer term, we focused on the newest element of the syllabus, **non-religious worldviews**, and thought about what benefit this perspective brings to discussions in RE. We were fortunate to be able to have some input from **Jennie Johnson, Humanist member of SACRE**, to give subject leaders some much-needed subject knowledge in this new area. She also presented a free resource for schools published by Humanists UK (the new name for the British Humanists Association) There was overwhelmingly positive feedback from this session, which also demonstrates the impact that SACREs can have at a local level. NATRE published an article based on this training opportunity, which was circulated to all local NATRE-linked groups across the country.





Speakers' Forum:

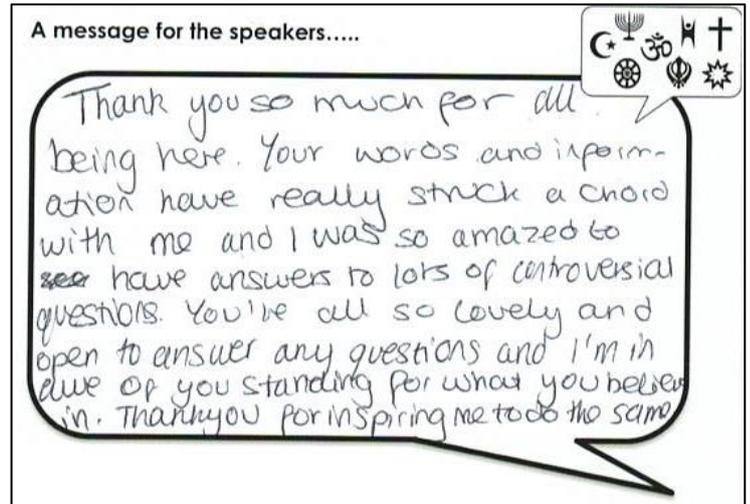
This year, Surrey SACRE's 'Speakers' Forum', venture continued to build on its successes of last year, again supporting an interfaith day for sixth form students at **Gordon's School, Bisley** in July 2017.



The model created last year was further developed, starting with more informal table talks by the speakers, encouraging informal questions / discussions with smaller groups of students, which resulted in better engagement with the panel Q&A session which followed. Feedback from the school was overwhelmingly positive, the most common comment being that students wished they'd had 'more time' to continue their discussions!

The student feedback cards (*pictured, right*) continue to be a very valuable tool to help students reflect on the session, and also as a way of capturing what had gone well during the panel's delivery. One student articulated one of the key aims of the group, in modelling respectful dialogue between people with different beliefs, saying that **'even though they all have different beliefs, they respect each other's beliefs and listen to each other.'**

The group also took on a new venue at **Hoe Valley School, Woking** in March 2017, working with Y7 students. Both events enabled some interesting discussions and confirmed how essential it is that young people in our schools have opportunities to engage face-to-face with people from different religious and non-religious groups as part of their learning in RE. SACRE is currently considering how it might respond to increasing demands for this kind of support, including some invitations from the Primary phase.



Anyone interested in the **Speakers' Forum** group should email Mary Suphi, clerk to SACRE, at: mary.suphi@babcockinternational.com

Other guidance and support:

During the past academic year, SACRE has received several communications from schools in relation to the revision of the syllabus, and for interfaith speakers. The RE advisor, to whom these queries were sent, obtained a satisfactory outcome to all emails and phone calls.

The revised Surrey Agreed Syllabus (2017-2022) can be found on the [SACRE pages](#) of Surrey County Council's website, along with Surrey SACRE's documentation, including minutes and other key guidance documents. The Agreed Syllabus and SACRE guidance documents can also be found on the Babcock 4S website: <http://www.babcock-education.co.uk/4S/religious-education-in-surrey-schools>

The information that used to be located within the places of worship database (formerly at www.surreyplacesofworship.org.uk) has been moved to a new section on SCC's website called Surrey Community Info: www.surreycommunity.info/spow/ It is an excellent tool for finding places of worship for school visits in and around Surrey.

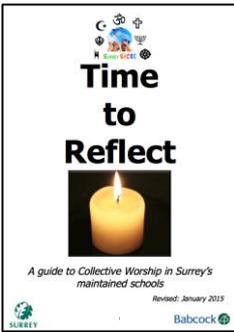
Causes for concern:

SACRE has endeavoured to make regular contact with all Surrey schools about the revision of and changes to the agreed syllabus through the Surrey County Council bulletin system. This has been less than satisfactory on many occasions, as repeated attempts to insert updates have failed. As the local authority's recommended means of communication, it is hoped that we will meet with more success in the future. SACRE has also produced update items for the quadrant Headteacher briefings – again with limited success. Concern has also been expressed at this stage about how SACRE will maintain contact with schools with the proposed changes to the structure of the LA during the academic year 2018-19, as well as changes to data protection regulations.

1.4 Complaints concerning RE

No formal complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Religious Education in Surrey schools.

2. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



'Time to Reflect' (March 2015) is SACRE's guidance for Surrey schools in regard to collective worship, which outlines what the law requires of this important element of school life, and how schools might realistically interpret these requirements. Whilst the mandate for collective worship that is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" may, to many, seem narrow, it does in fact give schools a wide scope for variety and breadth, reflecting the religious and non-religious traditions of those who form a part of the school community. OfSTED confirms the value of collective worship as part of schools' SMSC provision in their current School Inspection Handbook. Surrey SACRE hopes that 'Time to Reflect' will help schools, parents and governors to fully understand (and meet) the legal requirements for collective worship. It can be viewed and downloaded from the SACRE pages of Surrey County Council's website.



2.1. Determinations

No maintained schools currently have determinations in regard to collective worship. The two academies whose determinations were due for renewal during the previous academic year have been contacted to inform them that they will have to apply to the EFA for any future determinations.

2.2. Complaints

No complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Collective Worship in Surrey schools.

3. GENERAL

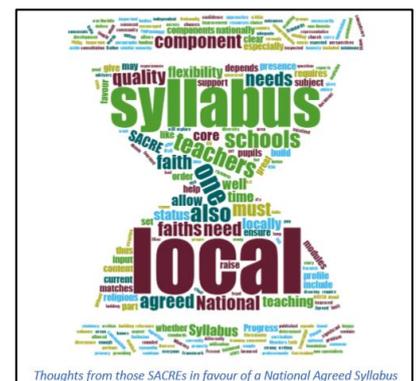
3.1. Links with other agencies – National

Surrey SACRE is a member of NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and a representative attends national meetings. A representative also attends any regional meetings for SACRE. The Babcock 4S Adviser for RE is a member of AREIAC (The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants). During this academic year, we discussed and voted on a new constitution for NASACRE, which was later adopted. We also contributed to the 'Big NASACRE Survey', sent to all SACREs in the country, and were quoted in the subsequent evidence that NASACRE presented to the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE) on June 13th 2017:

One SACRE commented:

A National Curriculum RE syllabus should be compulsory for all and properly inspected by OfSTED as a core subject, but would require local support, advice and advisers, with proper funding from the DfE to raise both the profile of and standards in RE and give adequate support to teachers. Having a comprehensive syllabus document is only part of the story: it's clear from many national reports that teachers need more training than they currently get. A Nationally Agreed Syllabus requires local relevance and learning experiences in order for pupils to explore the richness of local diversity.

This report, based on the responses of 35 SACREs, also considered questions about the strengths and weaknesses of the current settlement for RE, views about RE becoming a requirement within the National Curriculum, and compulsory content for all schools, including those with a religious character. There was also opportunity to respond to questions about ITT (Initial Teacher Training) and ongoing CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for teachers, especially for non-specialists teaching RE – which of course is the case for the majority of Primary teachers. The Commission on RE interim report will be published in November.



3.2. Governor Training

The role of the Governing Body in monitoring the coverage of the Agreed Syllabus is critical for its successful implementation. Governors also have a key role in providing a challenge to schools to raise standards in specific areas and SACRE believes that this can have a significant impact on standards in RE. Schools are encouraged to identify a governor with specific responsibility for RE.

3.3. List of organisations to which SACRE's Annual Report has been sent

A copy of this Annual Report has been sent to the Department for Education, NASACRE, Surrey County Council and Babcock 4S, as well as to SACRE members' nominating bodies. A copy of the SACRE Annual Report can also be viewed on the SACRE page of Surrey County Council's website and is distributed to all maintained schools in the County with a request that governing bodies consider the report and take any appropriate action.

3.4. Contacts

If you have any issues which you would like to raise with the Surrey SACRE, please contact Rachel Boxer, Associate RE consultant, and Adviser to SACRE, via Mary Suphi, Clerk to SACRE, by email at: mary.suphi@babcockinternational.com.

Additional copies of this annual report are available from Mary Suphi, Clerk to SACRE, by email at the above address.

Appendix 1: SACRE Membership (as at March 2018)

Chairman Margaret Hicks (SCC Member) *retired May 2017*
Kay Hammond (SCC Member) *elected October 2017*

Vice-Chairman Sarah Harris

Committee A – Other Faiths (11 members, 1 co-opted, 0 vacancy)

Rev. Allan Taylor Methodist
Tony Wenman United Reformed Church
Rev. Andy Turnbull Baptist (*elected March 2018*)
Rachael Milling Quaker (*currently unable to attend*)
Peter Ward Roman Catholic
Rajendra Pandya Hindu
Inderjeet Singh Rehncy Sikh
Kausar Akhtar Muslim (*on maternity leave until July 2017*)
Sarah Harris Jewish
Kruawan Sookchaoren Buddhist
Dr Nabil Mustapha (Group Chairman) Baha'i
Jennie Johnson Humanist (*co-opted*)

Committee B – The Church of England (3 members, 1 vacancy)

Shaun Burns Diocese of Southwark
Jane Whittington (Group Chairman) Diocese of Guildford
Canon Peter Bruinvels Diocese of Guildford
Vacancy Diocese of London

Committee C – Teachers (6 members, 0 vacancy)

Lee Herdman NAHT (*elected June 2017*)
Liz Esdon (Group Chairman) NASUWT
Deborah Drury NUT
Lorraine Abbott Secondary teacher rep. (*outgoing Secondary rep*)
Genevieve Rose Secondary teacher rep. (*elected June 2017*)
Paula Wright Representative of NATRE-linked Secondary network group (*elected June 2016*)
Rosslyn Doney Primary teacher rep.

Committee D – Local Authority (3 members, 2 vacancies)

Cllr Keith Taylor (Group Chairman) SCC Member
Cllr Colin Kemp (*until May 2017*) SCC Member
Cllr Mike Goodman SCC Member
Cllr Fiona White (*appointed Nov 2017*) SCC member
Vacancy

Officers in attendance

Rachel Boxer (Adviser) Associate Consultant for Primary RE Babcock Four S
Kim Workman / Mary Suphi (*from Sept 17*) Clerk to SACRE Babcock Four S
Melanie Harris Commissioning Officer, SCC

Member Attendance at 2016-2017 SACRE meetings (excluding Officers):

	October 5 th 2016 Full mtg & ASC	December 7 th ** 2016 (ASC)	January 11 th ** 2017 (ASC)	March 22 nd 2017 Full mtg & ASC	June 21 st 2017
Group A (10)	5 (50%)	6 (60%)	6 (60%)	7 (70%)	6 (60%)
Group B (3)	2 (67%)	3 (100%)	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
Group C (5/6*) <i>*from June 17</i>	2 (40%)	4 (80%)	5 (100%)	4 (80%)	3 (50%)
Group D (3)	2 (67%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)
% Average:	52.3%	57.1%	57.1%	67%	50%

**During 2016-17, 2 meetings of the SACRE were not quorate.