

Annual SACRE Report 2017-18

The SACRE has several aspects to its role. These include:

- ❖ Advising the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- ❖ Advising on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- ❖ Considering requests for determinations from any schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- ❖ Identifying and revising an Agreed Syllabus for religious education

In principle, every pupil is entitled to RE of the highest quality... A core duty of the SACRE is to gain an overview of the quality of the RE provision in LA Maintained schools and to develop effective strategies to promote the highest standards." - National Association of SACRES (NASACRE)

To help with this endeavour the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACRES), the Diocese of Oxford and the five other SACRES in Berkshire.

This report sets out a summary of the work of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE over the academic year 2017-18. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_index.htm

The constitution and terms of reference can be found at:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/members_constitution.htm

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

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Introduction from the Chair

This year saw a very active discourse at the national level about the future of SACREs with essentially two overlapping but distinct visions emerging.

The independent Commission on Religious Education (CoRE), established to review the legal, education, and policy frameworks for religious education (RE) in schools in England, released its interim report in September 2017. It called inter alia for a renewed and expanded role for SACREs, properly funded, in supporting and resourcing RE, and possibly even a duty to advise on all matters relating to religion and belief in schools.

The Westminster Faith Debates initiative, founded by Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead, was also moving towards an expanded role for SACREs, though with no role in a locally Agreed RE Syllabus, which would be superseded by a national RE Syllabus. SACREs, properly funded and resourced, would continue to play an important role in helping resource RE, in connecting schools to local faith and belief communities, in promoting community cohesion - and would participate in the consultations about the content of the national RE curriculum, as well as in helping local implementation of the national RE syllabus.

What is common between these emerging visions is agreement that the current role of SACREs needs substantially re-defining, within the wider context of policies relating to RE and Collective Worship. There seems to be general agreement that SACREs as currently constituted struggle to be effective and to make a significant contribution.

Against this backdrop, which has had no immediate impact on our activities, we have done our best. Though technically not a SACRE responsibility¹, the priority this year has been the renewal of the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus. We decided to collaborate again with the five other Berkshire SACREs, concluding that pooling our resources would deliver a better outcome. After many rounds of discussion and consultation, the Locally Agreed Syllabus 2018-2023 was finalised and launched at an event for RE teachers in Cookham in July 2017.

We also continued to collaborate with the other Berkshire SACREs – through the Pan-Berkshire Hub – on the development of the ‘Crossing the Bridges’ project, to better connect the RE classroom with local faith communities.

Finally, we should thank all those involved – RE teachers and Heads, faith community and local authority representatives - for their support over the past year, and particularly to Anne Edwards, our RE Adviser, for her unfailing enthusiasm and efforts.

Michael Gammage

RBWM SACRE Chair 2017-2018

¹ It is in fact managed through an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) appointed by the Local Authority. The ASC members though were in fact the SACRE members.

Advice Offered

a) Local Authority:

- It was advised that the proposed merger of the ATL and the NEU would require a change to group C, and it was proposed to increase the categories of teachers, headteachers and heads of department to cover all key stages.
- The local authority was advised to accept the revised syllabus and produce a suitable foreword for the document.
- They were advised to renew the NASACRE subscription and send two members to the NASACRE AGM.
- They were advised to continue SACREs involvement with the Pan-Berkshire hub and to host the Crossing the Bridges material on the LA website.
- The LA was informed that there should be sufficient funds for SACRE, according to a letter from the minister for education shared by NATRE/NASACRE

b) Schools

- Advice is offered to schools mainly through the termly newsletters and the termly RE network meetings;
- Topics covered included the purpose of RE, creative and engaging activities, concepts in the new syllabus, sharing good practice, exam season and Ramadan and resources for the subject leader
- The new syllabus was launched at a one-day training event attended by teachers and head teachers, as well as SACRE members.
- The Crossing the Bridges project was shared more widely at this event.
- No schools have requested specific advice on any RE or CW issues.

c) Government:

- no advice has been offered to the government this year.

d) Response:

- The changes to the constitution have been approved;
- The syllabus has been approved and an appropriate foreword provided.
- The money has been made available for SACRE to remain in NASACRE and attend the AGM and remain in the Pan-Berkshire hub.
- Sufficient funds were made available to offer the syllabus launch conference free of charge to the 45 people who attended.

Standards, quality & provision of RE

a) Public exams:

- GCSE headlines
 - i. The percentage of entries, 41%, is slightly lower than the national average of 48%
 - ii. Results across grades 9-4 are slightly higher than the national average at 80% compared to 71% and at grades 9-5 70% compared to 60%
 - iii. Two schools entered no pupils for GCSE RS
 - iv. Three schools (two of which are C of E schools) entered almost all the cohort for GCSE RE.

- v. One school entered pupils for the first time, and though only a small percentage of the school, scored 100% pass rate at grades 9-5.
- vi. Overall, results are broadly in line with those of previous years, despite the change to the exam specification and the grading system.
- vii. No progress data is currently available.
- A level
 - i. The number of entries across the borough is significantly down on last year. There were 80 entries in 2018, compared to 102 in 2017.
 - ii. Results across all the schools is broadly in line with those of 2017.
 - iii. No national comparison or progress data has been offered by the LA.
- b) Attainment in RE:
 - SACRE has struggled to find out about attainment in RE across the boroughs 104 schools but the revised syllabus with expected outcomes should make this easier.
- c) Quality of provision:
 - To understand what RE looks like in RBWM schools, SACRE members have been invited by teacher members to visit their schools to observe RE in an information gathering, rather than judgemental point of view. One such visit has taken place and SACRE received a report on the visit. Of the 14 OFSTED inspections carried out in the borough this year, only 6 mentioned anything connected with RE, and only 2 of those made specific mention of Religious Education.
 - In one church school it was mentioned as a strength of the school; in one community school mention was made of rigorous assessment in RE.
 - 3 schools were mentioned as having a broad and balanced curriculum and there were no negative comments about RE.
 - The one VC school in the borough to receive a SIAMS inspection this year received very positive comments about both the quality of RE and the impact of RE on pupil development.
- d) Withdrawal:
 - No schools have sought help with issues surrounding withdrawal from RE.
- e) Complaints:
 - No complaints have been received by SACRE about either the quality or provision of RE.

Agreed Syllabus

- a) Review:
 - The review of the syllabus has absorbed most of the efforts of SACRE 2017-18.
 - The review has been undertaken in conjunction with the other five Berkshire SACREs (the Pan-Berkshire Hub)
 - It has undergone several drafts and was finally approved on the 6th June 2018.
 - RBWM SACRE had specific issues over the inclusion of humanism as the first listed non-religious worldview at KS3, and there was much heated discussion, but in the end the inclusion of humanism was accepted alongside other non-religious

worldviews. The guidance material can be worded to ensure that other views are represented.

- All 6 SACREs have endorsed the new slimmed down syllabus.
- The syllabus launch was hosted by the Local Authority as part of a mini-conference.
- The revised syllabus has been sent to NASACRE.
- The revised syllabus contains only the statutory material and is therefore much shorter than the previous syllabus. It also contains outcomes for each phase which should help teachers with maintaining challenge and assessing progress.
- Separate guidance and support material will be produced

b) Date of next review

- Under current legislation the next syllabus review will not take place until 2023

Standard, quality & provision of Collective Worship

a) Compliance:

- A survey to gather information about compliance in CW by requesting copies of CW policies revealed a lack of understanding about the difference between CW and RE.
- As some of this information was gathered by LA employees trawling websites, it is unclear whether the misunderstanding lies in the schools or those trawling the website.
- A guidance document was revised and issued to schools on the need for a daily act of CW in all schools.
- This work will be picked up again in the new academic year, now that the syllabus review is completed.
- No OFSTED reports have commented on lack of compliance.
- The LA has not requested SACRE to advise any schools directly on CW

b) Quality:

- 4 OFSTED reports mentioned the contribution that CW or assembly is making to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- There were also comments about the contribution of assembly to promoting respect and tolerance and other British values.
- There were comments about how well pupils were prepared for life in modern Britain.

c) Determinations:

- No requests for determinations have been received this year and there are no pre-existing determinations to review.

d) Complaints:

- No complaints have been received about either the standards or quality of CW

Management of SACRE

a) Attendance:

- Attendance at SACRE has remained stable, with about 15 out of 19 members able to attend.
- Only occasionally are apologies not received in advance of a meeting.

- Only the additional meeting called to discuss the syllabus was not quorate.
- b) Membership and training:
- Membership has also remained largely stable, apart for the appointment of a new clerk.
 - There are still vacancies for teacher posts; efforts to recruit from the subject leader meetings have so far not attracted new members.
 - Training is offered in several ways to SACRE members – through the annual hub conference, the Pan-Berkshire hub (two sessions have been offered here) and at the first meeting of the new year, when SACRE members were reminded of their roles and responsibilities.
 - A request was received from a humanist for humanist representation on RBWM SACRE, but several members were concerned that as humanism represents only one non-religious worldview among the 53% who claim to be non-religious, there was insufficient evidence that there was a need to for humanist rep. The humanist was invited to observe a SACRE meeting and give details about what he could bring to the group, but he declined the invitation.
- c) Complaints:
- No complaints have been received this year about either RE, CW or the operation of SACRE.

Contribution to Local Authority Wider Agenda

- a) School support:
- No schools have requested specific support from SACRE, and the LA has not asked SACRE to deal with any issues.
 - The advice offered to schools has been detailed above, as have the visits of SACRE members to observe RE lessons.

Summary

The focus of the work of SACRE this year has been the review of the locally agreed syllabus. Members engaged well with the debates and discussion about the inclusion of non-religious worldviews into KS3 and Islam in KS2. There has been rigorous debate about the role and purpose of RE and the way to judge achievement and progress in RE. Engagement of members with the Pan-Berkshire hub has ensured that the views of the Royal Borough have been heard and taken note of. The result of this focus is that very little other work has been done, although SACRE is now keen to engage with the national debate.

There is hope that the new syllabus will give SACRE further opportunities to engage with schools, particularly those that were unable to attend the syllabus launch.

SACRE is grateful to the LA for its' continuing support of SACRE, with a committed local authority officer, a clerk and a reasonable level of funding.

As adviser to SACRE my hope is that the Local Authority will be more proactive in sharing OFSTED reports, concerns about RE or CW and other interfaith and school matters.

We will need to ensure that SACRE maintains the subscription to NASACRE and the Pan-Berkshire Hub, engages with the Commission on RE report when it is released and makes some response to the NATRE workforce survey.

Anne Andrews (Adviser to SACRE)

SACRE membership and Attendance 2017-18

Group Represented	Name	28 th November	6 th March	10 th May ASC only	6 th June
Baptist (A)	<i>Vacancy</i>				
Free Church (A)	Ceri Neil	Present	Apologies	<i>Vacancy</i>	<i>Vacancy</i>
Methodist (A)	Margaret Dudley	<i>vacancy</i>	Present	Present	Present
Roman Catholic (A)	Barbara Meaney	Apologies	Present	Apologies	Present
Hindu (A)	Ila Gongotra	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
Islam (A)	Saghir Ahmed	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
Judaism (A)	Hilary Harris	Present	Present	Present	Present
Sikh (A)	Ravinder Singh	Present	Apologies	apologies	Present
Buddhist (A)	Chris Sayers	Present for ASC only	Apologies	X	X
Baha'I (A)	Mike Gammage (Chair)	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
Church of England (B)	Rev Sally Lynch	Present	Present (but not for ASC)	Apologies	Apologies
Church of England (B)	Rev Rosie Webb	Present	Present (but not for ASC)	Apologies	Present
Church of England (B)	Karen Butler (vice-chair)	Apologies	Present	Apologies	Present
Primary (C)	Deborah Firth	X	Apologies	Present	Present
Primary (C)	<i>Vacancy</i>				
Secondary (C)	<i>Vacancy</i>				
Secondary (C)	<i>Vacancy</i>				
Headteacher/ HoD (C)	Louise Ceska	Present	Present	X	Present
Headteacher/ HoD (C)	<i>Vacancy</i>				
RBWM (D)	Cllr Mohamad Ilyas	Appointed in March	Present	Apologies	Present
RBWM (D)	Cllr Natasha Airey	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
RBWM (D)	Cllr Richard Kellaway	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
LA Officer	Clive Haines	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
Professional Advisor	Anne Andrews	Present	Present	Present	Present
Clerk	Andy Carswell <i>left Mar 18</i> Nabihah Hassan-Farooq	Present	Present	Present	Present

Key:

Present	X= no apologies	Apologies given	Vacancy
Left/resigned	Observer	New member	