

People Directorate
Setting and School Effectiveness

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Version 1

Annual SACRE Report

2016-2017



The SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

The Milton Keynes SACRE works closely with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs) and the Diocese of Oxford. All meetings of the SACRE are open to the public.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the Milton Keynes' SACRE over the academic year 2016-2017. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found

http://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Committees/tabid/170/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/589/id/1120/Default.aspx

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

Chair: Revd. Paul Smith at paul.a.smith.mk@btinternet.com

Clerk: Janet Gleghorn at janet.gleghorn@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Local Authority Officer: Linda Bartlett at linda.bartlett@milton-keynes.gov.uk

SACRE Developments in 2016-2017

Meetings of the SACRE during this year were held on the following dates:

24 November 2016

21 February 2017

8 June 2017

Reverend Paul Smith continued to serve as Chair of the SACRE, along with Mrs Talvinder Kaur Virdee-Basra as Vice Chair. The change in the time of meetings to after school has continued to ensure that there was a high level of engagement from schools. Milton Keynes Council had delegated responsibility for the appointment of members to the SACRE to the SACRE itself and members were pleased to use this power to select and appoint Lou Tribus. The school representatives were: Doris Evans, Zoe Terry and Shammi Rahman.

Anne Andrews remains as the Oxfordshire Diocese professional adviser to the SACRE. Support for the primary and secondary school RE co-ordinators' networks continued to

be organised under the leadership of the LA officer and the development of a Youth SACRE under the leadership of Shammi Rahman (Denbigh Teaching School).

The budget allocated for the SACRE during this year was £562. An additional £4000 was made available by the Council to pay for RE initiatives. This was led by a variety of practitioners in support of religious education in schools in all phases across Milton Keynes, including the re-writing of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE.

Partnership working

Paul Smith, the Chair (Group B) attended the NASACRE AGM in May 2017 and Anne Andrews, Diocesan advisor. It was beneficial to meet members of other SACREs throughout the country. Group discussions enabled the sharing of ideas and concerns with representatives from SACREs in nearby areas. Keynote Speakers were Dr Joyce Miller, Associate Fellow in the Religions and Education Research Unit at the University of Warwick (WRERU). Joyce spoke about the development of RE over the past 40 years or so, providing a very helpful oversight of how the subject has developed over the decades and placing current debates and issues into a historical context. Prof Aaqil Ahmed at the School of Media and Performing Arts, University of Bolton and a Board member of various organisations including Princes Trust mentoring charity, Mosaic. As the only person to have been both BBC and Channel 4 Head of Religion and Ethics spoke on the subject of religious literacy, explaining why religion and ethics are so important in today's world, and how to present the issues fearlessly but fairly without creating phoney controversy.

Review of the year's plans

The Youth SACRE has now grown in numbers and more schools are showing an interest in the need to bring about quality RE across the borough. Shammi Rahman has been leading the meetings which have been based at Denbigh Teaching School. There were four sessions, which were attended by 17 schools and on average 40 pupils per session over the year. The Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet leader Roz Mascarenhas brought a representative from the MK Youth Parliament to take part in the last Youth SACRE meeting.

This was made up of ten primaries

1. Jubilee Wood
2. Cold Harbour
3. Summerfield
4. Orchard
5. Two Mile Ash
6. Loughton Primary
7. St Monica's Catholic
8. Great Linford
9. Christ the Sower
10. Whitehouse Primary

Secondary Schools:

1. Stantonbury Campus
2. St.Paul's Catholic
3. Lord Grey
4. Denbigh
5. Ousedale
6. Radcliffe

These meetings have now taken a different dimension by having all workshops being organised by the Youth SACRE members themselves. The pupils have decided to discuss matters that are relevant to their experiences and more teachers have left inspired to teach religious education with new ideas and teaching techniques that are experienced in the meetings. The Youth SACRE has made great progress but is aware that there is still more work to be done to engage other schools and improve the provision for quality RE across Milton Keynes. Youth SACRE members attended a SACRE meeting and the primary head teacher's strategy meeting to present their arguments for more efforts to be made by schools to ensure RE is taught and taught well. We now have interest from Cedar's Upper School in Leighton Buzzard who want to explore setting up their own Youth SACRE group in Bedfordshire. The sixth form Youth SACRE members are looking to set up a sixth form conference for all Milton Keynes A Level Religious Studies students, in the hope that this will encourage the development of the Ambassadors Group. Whitehouse Primary and Two Mile Ash School have requested for young Youth SACRE members to talk to younger pupils about faith.

Regular updates have been provided to schools about RE using Educate, an online email communication with all schools and direct to a mailing list of RE Coordinators. Communication is challenging as RE coordinators change post regularly.

There have never been any applications for determinations, either for change to collective worship or for removal from RE lessons; thus, there has been no urgency to develop a new process.

New members were made aware of the SACRE members' handbook published later in the year by NASACRE on its website. All members of SACRE have access to the NASACRE website log in.

Religious education in 2016 - 2017

3 termly twilight meetings for primary teachers were held during the year led by the Oxford Diocese RE adviser. Secondary teachers were also invited to attend. They were jointly available to teachers from Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire. The first two sessions, 23 November 2016 and 9 March 2017 focused on assessment in RE and the review of the Locally agreed syllabus. They were held at St Mary and St Giles School in Stony Stratford. The third session on 29 June was held at the Milton Keynes Hindu association and was led by one of the volunteers at the Mandir. Teachers were introduced to the main concepts of Hindu teaching and had time to explore a range of artefacts and the shrine. 28 primary schools and 3 secondary schools were involved. The Youth SACRE has developed strong links with secondary schools.

The EMA Network trialled Stepping Stones, a programme for primary schools which addresses similarities and cultural impact as an aspect of possible radicalisation and sensitisation. This links to faith and belief. It is now being offered direct to schools by Candlespark, the organisation which developed it.

SACRE members are very welcome to attend the Youth SACRE meetings; details of which are circulated before meeting.

Religious Education Resources

During the year progress was made in the development of the SACRE website. A wide range of resources to support the teaching of RE are maintained in the EMA Network resource collection held at the Rivers Centre, Bletchley. All Milton Keynes' schools have been made aware of this collection. All schools receive information about the EMA library and there continues to be an increase in the number of schools using the materials. The development of planning materials and teaching support were collated ready for launch in 2018.

The Milton Keynes Agreed RE Syllabus Conference

The SACRE Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) completed its work to revise the Locally Agreed Re syllabus under the leadership of its Chair, Tina Virdee Basra. Members of the SACRE were co-opted onto the ASC. There were three meetings, which followed the SACRE meetings. Huw Humphreys, Headteacher of Christ the Sower, led the working party to consult with schools, supported by the Youth SACRE leader, Shammi Rahman, the Oxford Diocese RE adviser and the LA officer, Linda Bartlett. They collated and edited the draft syllabus for presentation to the SACRE. The syllabus included new assessment criteria linked to current national assessment without levels and age related expectations. The new syllabus was agreed in July 2017 and was immediately circulated to school for introduction from September 2017.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship training took place on 10 January 2017 with 5 schools in attendance. This was co delivered with Rachel Foster from Bridge Builder.

No applications for a determination have been received by the SACRE either this year or in previous years. Any school wishing to explore the relevance of a determination (daily collective worship which is other than 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character) in their context should contact the local authority officer, Linda Bartlett. Church schools are not eligible for a determination. For an academy wishing to apply for a determination the correct process is for the Trust to apply through the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to the Secretary of State.

Schools and the SACRE

The SACRE had upheld its responsibility to monitor the provision and quality of RE and collective worship in Milton Keynes' schools by surveying all schools through an online survey via Educate in 2015-16 where 51 schools responded. This informed the SACRE of the needs of schools and helps members to identify ways in which they might best support schools in the provision of RE and collective worship and fed into the review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. During 2016-17 views were secured through the Youth SACRE and consultations about the new syllabus. Surveys were prepared in 2016-17 for circulation in 2017-18, when they will be led by Lou Tribus, with support from the Oxford Diocese RE adviser (Group A).

Attainment in Religious Studies at GCSE in 2017

Total Students: 1238, increase of 8 students from the previous year.

Percentage Achieving:

A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
3.2%	17.1%	27%	20.8%	13.8%	8.4%	4.9%	2.9%	1.8%

Percentage achieving at least C: 68%

Attainment in Religious Studies at A-Level in 2017

Total Students: 64

Percentage Achieving:

A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
0%	14%	27%	36%	16%	6%	2%

Percentage achieving at least C: 77%

Attainment in Religious Studies at AS-Level in 2015

Total Students: 41

Percentage Achieving:

A	B	C	D	E	U
17%	29%	27%	10%	12%	5%

Percentage achieving at least C: 73%

Membership of Milton Keynes Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Group A:	Christian denominations and other religions	
Free Churches	Rachel Foster (MK Bridgebuilder Trust)	3/3
Free Churches	Richard Wightman	2/3
Roman Catholic Church	Vacancy	
Baha'i	Latifeh Rowlands	3/3
Buddhism	Vacancy	0/3
Hinduism	Manjula Koria	0/3
Islam	Arif Master	1/3
Judaism	Lou Tribus	2/3
Sikhism	Talvinder Kaur Virdee-Basra (Vice Chair)	2/3
Group B:	The Church of England	
	Rev Paul Smith (Chair)	3/3
	Rev Michael Morris	0/3
	Vacancy	0/3
	Vacancy	0/3
Group C:	Associations representing teachers	
NUT	Doris Evans	0/3
Primary	Vacancy	0/3
Secondary	Zoe Terry	0/3
Academies	Matt Bonnett	0/3
	Shammi Rahman	3/3
Group D:	The Local Authority	
	Cllr Edith Bald	1/3
	Cllr Alan Webb	1/3
Additional attendees		
Co-opted Humanist	Elaine Lever	2/3
Observers	Huw Humphries (ASC)	2/3
	Dr Jatindra Saha	1/3
	Harkirat Singh	1/3
Professional Adviser	Anne Andrews	3/3
Local Authority Officer	Linda Bartlett	2/3
	Pauline Lyseight-jones	1/3
Clerk/Note taker	Janet Gleghorn	2/3
	Judith Cumino (temp)	1/3

Next report due in February 2018