

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education ANNUAL REPORT

2019- 2020



**This report covers the work of the Lancashire SACRE for the period
September 2019 to September 2020.**

Please note:

From March 2020 SACRE meetings were affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. Face to face meetings were suspended until October 2020 when they started again virtually.

On 20th March schools closed to pupils for education on site and this was replaced with the provision of remote learning at home. Simultaneously schools commenced the provision of childcare for vulnerable pupils or those with a parent designated as a key worker for the COVID19 response.

On 22nd June schools in Lancashire partially re opened to pupils as informed by individual risk assessments. They then opened to all pupils from 1st September following Government guidance. This involved establishing risk assessments to follow strict protective measures and providing 'blended learning' for when pupils are required to self-isolate.

SACRE Annual Report 2019-20

Chairman's Foreword



Chairman's foreword

Our best endeavours to visit schools during the school year 2019-20 have been thwarted - as so much else - by their closure for many months during the Covid-19 pandemic. SACRE meetings have also been cancelled, but our professional officer, together with teacher colleagues, has been diligent in progressing revision of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus. Since this is now adopted for use in a number of north-west Local Authorities, we shall not be alone in extending to colleagues our gratitude for dedication to the task.

Peter Martin

Peter Martin
Chair, Lancashire SACRE

Role of SACRE

The role of the SACRE is:

- To provide advice to the Local Authority on all aspects of its provision for Religious Education (RE) in its schools (this does not include academies, free schools or Voluntary Aided Schools);
- To monitor the effectiveness and appropriateness of the LA's Agreed Syllabus for RE, deciding when it needs to be reviewed and requiring the LA to carry out such a review, at least every five years;
- To provide advice to the LA on Collective Worship in its schools (this does not include Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled Schools);
- To consider any requests from Headteachers to hold Collective Worship that is not of a broadly Christian character (determinations).
- To advise on matters relating to continuing professional development for teachers in RE and Collective Worship;
- To provide advice on methods of teaching RE, and the choice of teaching materials.
- To monitor the effectiveness of RE, Collective Worship and SMSC in Community Schools.
- To monitor schools' approaches to assessing pupil progress, the uptake of accredited examinations and the standards achieved
- To consider any complaints about the provision and delivery of RE or Collective Worship referred to it by the LA.

Advice

During 2019/20 the SACRE has provided advice to the Local Authority on a range of matters relating to policy and provision for Religious Education. For example:

- Providing recommendations on the variety of professional development and breadth of support provided to schools.
- Supporting the appointment process for new RE associate consultants.
- Providing advice on remote learning opportunities in RE during C19 restrictions
- Providing advice on the provision of collective worship during the pandemic.
- Requesting ongoing evidence in order to accurately evaluate the quality of provision and standards of attainment in RE.
- Providing advice on new more efficient methods of communication with schools.

SACRE has provided advice to schools through the officer to the SACRE on a number of issues relating to the use of the Agreed Syllabus and their statutory duties in the teaching of RE. Advice currently applies to 221 primary schools, 30 special schools

and 27 secondary schools. Voluntary Aided schools and academies do not currently come under SACRE jurisdiction. There are 30 academies in Lancashire plus 239 primary voluntary aided schools and 47 voluntary aided secondary schools.

SACRE has not referred any issues to the Department for Education during the past academic year. Plans are being made to work more proactively in partnership with local academies many of whom purchase the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus.

Complaints

SACRE has a role in investigating complaints against schools in relation to RE and Collective Worship. No such complaints were received in the past year.

FOI requests

During the reporting period, the Local Authority has received 1 request for information under the FOI act.

Support for SACRE

The Lancashire SACRE is supported by the following officers of the County Council:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mrs A Lloyd, LA Officer | Special Support Adviser |
| Misbah Mahmood | Senior Democratic Services Officer |
| Garth Harbison | Democratic Services Officer |

SACRE continues to be well supported by the Local Authority. Funding has been used to pay for:

- The services of RE consultants e.g. for writing resources, providing consultancy support and leading INSET
- The time of the LA Officer (18 days/ year)
- Administrative support (0.5/ week)
- Supply cover for teachers supporting the work of the SACRE
- Attendance at NASACRE conferences and travel expenses
- Room letting rates for meetings, e.g. hosting the NNWHub.
- Subsidising courses

Meetings of Lancashire SACRE

Lancashire SACRE met three times over the year (7th October 2019, 25th November 2019 and 3rd February 2020). Meetings planned for the 27th April and 6th July were cancelled due to the C19 pandemic and did not start again until the autumn term albeit on a virtual basis. All meetings were held at County Hall, Preston.

In November 2019 the SACRE constitution and terms of reference were updated and approved by cabinet.

The SACRE are keen to widen their own knowledge and have adopted a policy of inviting a speaker to attend their meetings at least once each year. In November 2019 Paul Smalley, the then Chair of NASACRE, led a discussion prompted by the question, 'What makes a good SACRE?' A number of undergraduate QTS students from Edge Hill University also attended the meeting and contributed to a task group exercise entitled: Curriculum Intent: What are the aims and vision of Religious Education?

Minutes of the meetings can be accessed on the SACRE web site:

<http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/mgOutsideBodyDetails.aspx?ID=385>

A list of members and their attendance at these meetings can be found in **Annex A**.

Quality and Standards Sub-Committee

The main purpose of the QSS is to provide advice to the Local Authority, monitor the implementation of the development plan, consider changes to policy, respond to the work of other agencies and national reports, promote and champion religious and community harmony and evaluate attainment and the quality of provision in RE.

The QSS meets between meetings of the full SACRE to drive forward the SACRE's business. Meetings of this smaller committee were held on three occasions during the reporting period (11th September 2019, 6th November 2019, and 13th January 2020). Reports of QSS meetings are considered by the full SACRE and are available on the RE web site [as above].

Quality of provision and standards of attainment

SACRE typically uses a number of methods to monitor standards and the quality of provision.

For example:

- Scrutinising inspection reports.
- Collecting end of key stage attainment data.
- Requesting the completion of an annual questionnaire to check statutory duties and request feedback from schools.
- Analysing the Lancashire pupil attitude questionnaire.
- Undertaking school visits to celebrate and share good practice.

During 2019/20 opportunities to monitor provision were curtailed by the pandemic. As statutory assessments were cancelled and schools were in partial lockdown from March 2020 it was deemed inappropriate to gather assessment data from schools. Ofsted inspections were also postponed and the pupil attitude questionnaire was adapted to provide a tool for schools to measure the impact of C19.

Plans to visit schools over the year to see practice in action and meet RE leaders have also been postponed as was the annual questionnaire. These will be reinstated once C19 restrictions relax and schools are back to normal operation practice.

Prior to lockdown a visit was made to Edenfield C of E Primary to see their act of remembrance service which was celebrated as excellent practice.

Requests for Withdrawal

Schools are signposted to SACRE advice and support on protocols for withdrawal on the RE website.

Agreed Syllabus Conference

A formal review of the Agreed Syllabus was undertaken in 2015-16. This will be undertaken again in 2021 in line with statutory requirements.

In the meantime, Lancashire SACRE has kept a watching brief on the development of the RE website, which provides resources to support the implementation of the syllabus, exemplar medium term plans, assessment advice and links to external guidance. At the time of writing exemplifications have been written to support medium term planning for all syllabus units of work for years R – Y6.

Future work on the syllabus involves:

- Updating KS3 exemplifications to ensure that lines of progression are secure.
- Writing concept maps to show how knowledge is built up cumulatively within the syllabus.
- Writing sample assessment tasks and standards files to support moderation
- Finalising the paper syllabus (e.g. clarifying the disciplinary knowledge that underpins the syllabus)

5/30 Lancashire academies and 22 'out of county' academies buy into the syllabus as well as Halton, Warrington, Blackpool and St Helens Local Authorities.

Support for schools

Despite limited capacity, county continues to offer a highly regarded programme of CPD for teachers of RE. This includes:

- Consultancy and Support
- A marketed course programme
- Free network meetings.

The Local Authority has recruited three associate consultants to support the CPD programme. Lancashire SACRE continue to be indebted to Joanne Harris (NATRE's North West Ambassador and Head of Teaching and Learning at Broughton High School) for her ongoing support for Lancashire schools despite the many demands on her time. She has been ably supported during the 2019/20 academic year by Helen Hall (Lea Community Primary) and Natalie Gould (Duke Street Primary).

Other support to schools has involved providing:

- Training to teachers who contacted the LA to express difficulties in teaching the Agreed Syllabus.
- Free training to authorities on purchase of the syllabus e.g. St Helens.
- A marketed course on improving outcomes at GCSE
- Providing free network meetings across north, south, east and west locations.
- Termly newsletters
- Advice on resources to support remote learning in religious education.

Lancashire SACRE has continued to improve methods of communication with schools, which now include the website, a termly newsletter and a twitter page in addition to use of the county portal and emails.

RE Quality Mark

Schools can apply for three levels of the REQM award. A school's evidence and provision are assessed by an external assessor against nationally recognised criteria. Lancashire SACRE encourages all schools to access the REQM assessment materials to use as an audit tool, even if they feel the time and cost of full accreditation are not immediate priorities. See <http://www.reqm.org/>

Youth Voice

Lancashire SACRE have always pioneered youth voice. Plans for another pupil debate in the Council Chambers at County Hall have been postponed due to C19 restrictions.

Collective worship

Collective Worship has continued to be an area of importance for Lancashire SACRE.

The Lancashire guidance for Collective Worship; 'Mirrors and Doors 2', gives support as well as guidance to Lancashire schools, providing proformas and ideas to create meaningful acts of collective worship. This guidance is available online to eligible schools www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/curriculum/re/ and is password protected.

Materials are due for review during the next 18 months as part of SACRE's development plan.

Determinations

Determinations are made where a school, on behalf of a number of parents, requests Collective Worship other than that set down by statute. No such requests have been received by SACRE during the past year.

Contribution to the Wider Diversity Agendas

Lancashire SACRE reflects the religious and ethnic diversity of the local/regional community. Time has been spent by the full SACRE and its QSS sub-committee to ensure that membership serves the needs of Lancashire Schools and supports the Lancashire Agreed RE Syllabus. Attendance is regularly reviewed and reported upon (see appendix). Faith representatives are fully involved in the work of the SACRE and attend conferences, courses and network groups.

Lancashire SACRE aim to plan for at least one meeting at a place of worship each year however plans to do this in 2020 were affected by the C19 restrictions.

Community Cohesion

'Building Bridges' continues to deliver assemblies, and facilitate visits from Faith Leaders and to places of worship. Schools are also encouraged to be actively involved in Interfaith Week celebrations.

'Building Bridges' main aim is to raise standards and breakdown stereotypes through school and community linking; contributing to community cohesion in the school/college and therefore in the wider community.

The 'Faith Friends' programme continues to be popular with schools. The 'Faith Friends' support schools by bringing the RE curriculum to life through making connections between life and learning.

'Building Bridges' also work with local faith organisations and schools to tackle issues around Relationships and Sex Education, halal food provision and attendance.

Termly reports are provided to the SACRE on the work that has been undertaken and the number of schools involved. The aim is to boost inclusion, community cohesion, mutual respect and tolerance between different religions and non-religious world views

During COVID 19 restrictions schools have been offered on-site visits subject to schools risk assessments. Alternatively, school visits and places of worship visits have been offered as interactive virtual sessions.

Links with Other Agencies

Lancashire SACRE continue to maintain positive links with a number of agencies namely:

The Lancashire Association of School Governing Bodies

The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

The NASACRE Annual Conference was postponed in May 2020 and will be replaced by a virtual AGM in November 2020.

Diocesan Groups

Lancashire SACRE maintains positive links with the following Diocese e.g. Anglican – Blackburn, Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester
Roman Catholic – Liverpool, Lancaster and Salford.

NATRE and RE Today

A number of SACRE members have strong links with NATRE and RE Today. This ensures that all members are continually updated with new national developments in the teaching and assessment of RE.

Universities

During the last academic year Lancashire SACRE has forged positive links with local universities. Two representatives from the University of Cumbria are currently co-opted as members of the SACRE whilst regular contact is made with Edge Hill University through a lecturer who is also the Chair of NASACRE.

North, North West Hub

Lancashire SACRE continues to host the North, North West Hub network where representatives from of a number of SACREs come together to raise issues of common concern and share good practice. Meetings are typically held in November, March and June and attended by representatives from Halton, Blackpool, Bolton, Bury, Cumbria, Lancashire, Rochdale, Warrington, St Helens and Wigan. The network group is growing from strength to strength and benefits from the attendance of the current Chair of NASACRE and also a number of North West AREIAC members.

During this reporting period meetings were held in November and March prior to lockdown.

Areas discussed included:

- Responses to national issues, reports and consultations
- Legal duties on schools
- Self-evaluation tools
- Action plans
- NASACRE matters
- FOI requests
- Protocols for determinations
- RSE and health education guidance

- Directories of visits and visitors.
- Reviews of new syllabi

National Reports/Surveys

The following national reports/surveys were considered by Lancashire SACRE over the year:

- NASACRE advice on the new Education Inspection Framework
- LCC guidance on the management of Key Stage 2 SATS 2020/21 and the Muslim festival of Eid (tests were since cancelled).

Future targets for Improvement

Lancashire SACRE undertakes an annual self-evaluation exercise. Progress in implementing the development plan is evaluated and future priorities for improvement agreed. The Development Plan is rewritten biennially and use is made of the NASACRE RE Tool.

The following areas for improvement are currently prioritised within the 2018 -2020 plan:

Key Priority 1 – To raise standards by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education.

- 1.1 The paper syllabus is re designed so that it is more accessible and user friendly for teachers
- 1.2 A system of school to school support is established so that good practice can be shared.
- 1.3 A new assessment system is implemented which results in reliable judgements about pupil achievement
- 1.4 Schools have the tools available to self-evaluate their own practice and set internal targets for improvement.
- 1.5 Effective systems are introduced to evaluate the quality and response to ongoing training and consultancy.

Key Priority 2 – The SACRE works in effective partnership with the LA to monitor and evaluate standards for the quality of provision in R.E. in Lancashire schools.

- 2.1 Appropriate systems are established to monitor pupil achievement based on reliable assessment.
- 2.2 New methods to monitor the quality of provision in RE are trialled.

Key Priority 3 – To improve the provision of collective worship.

- 3.1 Good quality support and guidance is available to support schools in fulfilling their statutory duties with regards to the provision of Collective Worship.

3.2 The SACRE has a clear procedure established to ensure an efficient response to requests for disapplication.

Key Priority 4 – To ensure that the SACRE is effectively managed and works close cooperation with the LA and other key stakeholders.

4.1 SACRE meetings are purposeful and well represented.

4.2 Consideration is given to how SACRE can build a positive relationship with academies across Lancashire.

4.3 The SACRE works positively in partnership with key local and national stakeholders.

4.4 Children and Young people are provided with opportunities to participate in the development of RE

4.5 The SACRE builds positive relationships with local teacher training organisations.

Key Priority 5 – To develop the contribution of RE to community cohesion

5.1 Further develop links with people of different faiths, beliefs and traditions through training of Faith Leaders / volunteers

5.2 Develop a sustainable Primary/Secondary School linking Programme to promote community cohesion and tackle controversial issues.

SACRE Dates of Meetings and Record of Attendance for 2019/20

During the academic year 2019/2020, the Lancashire SACRE met on three occasions. A further two were planned but these were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The dates and frequency of the meetings are determined by the SACRE itself in relation to what has become a customary pattern. The dates of the meetings during the year and numbers attending according to records are detailed below. Members are encouraged to check that the records present a true record for accuracy purposes:

| Name | 07/10/19 | 25/11/19 | 03/02/20 | 27/04/20 (Cancelled) | 06/07/20 (Cancelled) | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Officers | | | | | | |
| Alison Lloyd | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 3 |
| Misbah Mahmood | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 3 |
| Representing the Roman Catholic Church | | | | | | |
| Mr Ben McMullen | Absent | ✓ | Absent | | | 1 |
| Representing the Methodist Church | | | | | | |
| Alan Gillies (Joined Sept 20) | - | - | - | | | 0 |
| Representing Islam | | | | | | |
| Mufti Javid Pathan | Absent | Absent | Absent | | | 0 |
| Mufti Khalid Ibrahim | Absent | Absent | Absent | | | 0 |
| Mrs Tibret Safraz | Apologies | Apologies | Absent | | | 0 |
| Representing Hinduism | | | | | | |
| Mrs Harsha Shukla | ✓ | Absent | ✓ | | | 2 |
| Mr Ishwer Tailor | ✓ | ✓ | Absent | | | 2 |
| Representing Judaism | | | | | | |
| Mr Robert Ash | Apologies | ✓ | ✓ | | | 2 |
| Representing Buddhism | | | | | | |
| Kelsang Pagpa | Absent | Absent | Apologies | | | 0 |
| Representing the ASCL | | | | | | |
| Mr Peter Martin (Chair) | Apologies | ✓ | ✓ | | | 2 |
| Representing the NAHT | | | | | | |
| Karen Stephens | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 3 |
| Representing the NEU | | | | | | |
| Julie Gordon | Apologies | ✓ | Absent | | | 1 |
| Representing the NASUWT | | | | | | |
| Ms Julie Roper | ✓ | Apologies | Apologies | | | 1 |
| Representing the Church of England | | | | | | |
| Mrs J E O'Rourke | ✓ | Apologies | Absent | | | 1 |
| Mrs Helen Sage | Apologies | ✓ | Apologies | | | 1 |
| Mr John Wilson | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 3 |
| Ms Lisa Horobin | ✓ | Apologies | Apologies | | | 1 |
| Representing Lancashire County Council | | | | | | |
| Mr Francis Williams | ✓ | Apologies | Absent | | | 1 |
| CC A Cheetham | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 3 |
| CC Y Motala (Vice-Chair) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Sub | | | 3 |
| CC A Ali | ✓ | Apologies | ✓ | | | 2 |
| CC P Steen | ✓ | Apologies | ✓ | | | 2 |
| Teachers in the Secondary Sector | | | | | | |
| Ms Joanne Harris | Absent | Absent | Absent | | | 0 |

| Representing the Higher Education University of Cumbria | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|--|----------|
| Sally Elton-Chalcraft | Apologies | ✓ | Apologies | | | 1 |
| Carolyn Reade | ✓ | Apologies | ✓ | | | 2 |
| Representing the LASGB | | | | | | |
| Mrs Kathleen Cooper | ✓ | ✓ | Apologies | | | 2 |
| The Faith Centre | | | | | | |
| Mrs Sajda Majeed | Apologies | ✓ | Absent | | | 1 |
| Representing the Bahá'i Faith | | | | | | |
| Dr Malcolm Craig | Apologies | ✓ | ✓ | | | 2 |

Appendix 2

Mission Statement of the Lancashire SACRE

To offer Lancashire Local Authority high quality, informed advice in relation to the provision of both Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools.

Values

In undertaking its statutory functions, the Lancashire SACRE will

- Value and promote religious and community harmony and the establishment of positive partnerships
- Recognise, respect and value the individual beliefs, perspectives and talents of its members
- Recognise itself as a valuable resource to support the development of both Religious Education and Collective Worship in Lancashire schools

Aims

The Lancashire SACRE has agreed the following statement of aims

1. To promote a positive image of Religious Education and the valuable contribution that it can make to young people's education and personal development.
2. To maintain and develop further the status of Religious Education in Lancashire schools, encouraging schools to see it as an effective, important and relevant part of the education that children receive.
3. To recognise and celebrate high quality provision of both Religious Education and Collective Worship in Lancashire schools and to disseminate good practice.
4. To promote processes of learning, discussion and reflective thinking which enable pupils to 'Learn from Religion' and to apply their learning, experience and thoughts to aid their understanding of the communities and world in which they live.
5. To promote learning which enables pupils to explore what religious belief involves and to develop positive values and beliefs by which to live their lives.
6. To encourage schools to develop an explicit and planned approach which enables both Religious Education and Collective Worship to make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development.

7. To promote high quality advice and training based on 'Best Value' principles to secure high standards of teaching and learning, high teacher expectations and the raising of pupils' achievement.
8. To ensure that SACRE members are well- informed and aware of current thinking in both Religious Education and Collective Worship.
9. To monitor and evaluate:
 - The advice, support and training provided to schools
 - Standards of both Religious Education and Collective Worship provision to schools
 - The implementation of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus, and
 - The effectiveness of the Lancashire SACRE.