

# SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education  
 Annual Report 2020/21

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## **CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION**

I would like to begin my introduction by offering sincere thanks to all members of Portsmouth SACRE, and many others including teachers and community members, who have work so hard to support RE in Portsmouth in the year covered by this report. This has been especially significant in the year when SACRE has completed the review of its agreed syllabus and adopted Living Difference IV for use across the authority.

We must acknowledge also that the year 2020/21 has been another extraordinary year in light of COVID-19. During this time SACRE continued to meet regularly, both virtually and in November face to face. The Agreed Syllabus Conference was held face to face in November. Training has continued to be offered to primary and secondary teachers through our links with Hampshire inspectors/advisers. SACRE receives professional advice from Patricia Hannam and Justine Ball, who as primary inspector/adviser in Hampshire has also maintained contact with primary schools where possible during this period.

SACRE has continued with its monitoring responsibilities and has much planned to support the implementation of the new agreed syllabus Living Difference IV. SACRE continues to receive excellent clerking support from within the Authority and valued working with Lisa Gallagher during this period. SACRE continues ensure members are able to participate in regional and national RE meetings and events. In the period of this report this has included attending the virtual South West AREIAC SACRE conference, NASACRE AGM as well as the regional South Central SACRE Hub meetings. SACRE continues to follow with interest developments following the publishing of the report from the Commission on RE (CoRE) in 2018.

SACRE places the concern to ensure all children in Portsmouth have access to high quality and challenging Religious Education at the heart of all its work. SACRE is grateful also for the opportunities our partnership with Hampshire, Southampton, and the Isle of Wight continues to offer teachers and our children and young people alike.

Rev. Sam Duddles  
Chair, Portsmouth SACRE

## **SECTION 1: INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE**

### **1.1 Duty to establish a SACRE**

Since the Education Reform Act of 1988, all Local Education Authorities (LAs) have been required by law to constitute a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area.<sup>1</sup>

### **1.2 What does a SACRE do?**

SACRE is a unique body; it is set up by the LA but is independent of it, with the role to give advice to that LA. The law states that Religious Education must be taught in all maintained schools<sup>2</sup> and a SACRE's role is to advise what needs to be done to improve religious education (RE) and collective worship for schools in its area.

The main purpose of the annual report is to hold the LA to account, by informing the Secretary of State and key partners what advice SACRE gave the LA during the year and how the LA responded to that advice. This includes advice on Religious Education and Collective Worship in those schools for which the LA has responsibility.

### **1.3 Composition of SACRE**

There are four groups or committees, as below:

- A: The Christian denominations and other religious denominations, reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area.
- B: The Church of England
- C: Teacher and head teacher associations
- D: The Local Authority

The Local Authority has determined that the SACRE should comprise of:

- Representatives of Christian denominations and other religious groups reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area
- Four representatives of the Church of England.
- Six representatives of teachers' associations.
- Four representatives of the local authority, at least two of whom should be elected members.

Other members may be co-opted from time to time as appropriate for all or part meetings

### **1.4 Membership of SACRE**

The names of the SACRE members and the religious denominations for Group A can be found at Appendix A.

### **1.5 SACRE Functions**

- To advise the LA on collective worship and the Religious Education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training for teachers
- To consider whether to recommend to the LA that its current agreed syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference.
- To consider whether the requirement that religious worship in a county school should be 'broadly Christian in nature' should be varied (determinations).

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<sup>1</sup> Education Act 1996 Section 390:1

<sup>2</sup> School and Standards Framework Act 1998 Section 69



## 1.8 Circulation of Annual Report

A list of the organisations receiving this report can be found in Appendix D.

## SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF SACRE'S WORK in 2020/21

- ***Living Difference III: Implementation and Locally Agreed Syllabus review and revision***
- *Living Difference III* was adopted by the Agreed Syllabus Conference in October 2016. This syllabus is shared by Portsmouth, Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight local authorities.
- SACRE together with the Local Authority has continued to support the implementation as indicated through the activities discussed below from 2.2 – 2.5.
- In June 2020 Portsmouth Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened and agreed to move to review *Living Difference III*.
- In this reporting year the review and revision has taken place. Following a joint SACRE meeting in July 2020, teachers and other have regularly had the opportunity to engage with other across the four authorities to discuss the revision and adjustments being made.
- In light of COVID-19 all meetings have taken place virtually.

### 2.2 Meeting Training Needs

- The duties on schools regarding religious education is raised regularly at head teachers' meetings and in other ways through SACRE's strong links with the authority's school improvement service and Director of Education. Academies are not obliged to follow the Agreed Syllabus, however, SACRE is keen for all schools in the Authority to use the syllabus to ensure consistency of educational experience for children across the Authority regardless of where they go to school. SACRE is keen to impress on Academies however, that it is vital schools use *Living Difference III* with integrity. Primary network meetings have been held virtually in this reporting year. Secondary RE Subject leaders been encouraged to attend the virtual Secondary RE Networks that are enabled through the Hampshire Learning Zone platform. It can be extremely useful for Portsmouth teachers to meet with colleagues in Hampshire, since *Living Difference III* is shared across the authorities.

### 2.3 Resourcing *Living Difference III*

- Primary RE News on-line publication, produced by Hampshire Inspectors continues to be available for Portsmouth schools to subscribe to. Teachers are also aware of the other published resources available to support the teaching of *Living Difference III* through the Hampshire RE Centre in Winchester.
- SACRE's artefact loan collection continues to be available to schools and is maintained by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) and the Authority's

despatch team deliver/collect boxes without charge. However, during the period of this report, in light of Covid-19 there have been some changes to this service.

## **2.4 Monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus**

A representative monitoring group has met virtually during the period of this report, at a suitable time before each full SACRE meeting in order to monitor the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus. The group seeks to be comprised of at least one representative of each of the 4 SACRE groups, including the Chair. The group usually reviews Ofsted reports from Portsmouth schools, together with other data such as KS4 GCSE results. However, during this period neither have been reliably available in light of COVID-19. SACRE intends to take a systematic approach in order to ensure it has an overview of religious education across the authority.

## **2.5 Maintaining SACRE Effectiveness**

- SACRE has met three times during this period. All meetings have been held virtually.
- SACRE seeks to ensure that all four groups are well represented at all meetings. Recruitment from some faith groups in Portsmouth continue to be challenging, in particular SACRE is keen to secure representation from the Roman Catholic Diocese. The Jewish community locally is aging; while meetings have been held virtually SACRE has been pleased to welcome a representative on behalf of this community from further afield.
- Teacher representatives from primary schools and secondary schools have attended SACRE during this period.
- Training was offered to SACRE members in September 2020 and undertaken virtually, bringing together SACRE members from the 4 local authorities who use Living Difference III locally.
- Reports have been regularly presented to SACRE to ensure that SACRE is well informed about local and national matters in relation to religious education.
- Where members have been able to attend local, regional or national events held virtually during this period, this has been facilitated, for example the NASACRE AGM in May 2021 and termly South Central SACRE Hub meetings.
- A pre SACRE meeting with the Chair or Vice Chair, SACRE Clerk and SACRE Professional Adviser has taken place prior SACRE meetings during this period.

## **SECTION 3: STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **3.1 Commentary on GCSE examination results in Religious Studies**

#### **Background information**

- 2020 and 2021 should have been the third and fourth years respectively of the RS GCSE specification that first became available for examination in the summer of 2018.
- Grades are awarded in the form of 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest); grade 4 regarded as a 'standard pass' and grade 5 as a 'good pass'.
- The GCSE RS full course is intended to be taught over 2 years, sat at the end of year 11 and to be taught in 120 hours of teaching time.

- RS GCSE tests not only knowledge but the capacity to *analyse* and *to use evidence and logical chains of reasoned argument to evaluate*. Teaching must enable students to do this as well as remember subject knowledge. RS GCSE success has a high demand in terms thinking as well as writing. Where young people are given the opportunity to analyse, evaluate and in other ways reason well at KS3 standards are higher at GCSE.

### **GCSE Religious Studies examination results 2020 and 2021: overall findings**

- In the summers of both 2020 and 2021 GCSE examinations were suspended and grades awarded to students on the basis of teacher assessments. There has been no verified school level data available to local authorities for either year.
- SACRE remains concerned about the low numbers of young people in Portsmouth who are entered for the full course RS GCSE and therefore concerned to ensure through all means possible that in other ways young people are able to access their entitlement for religious education at Key Stage 4.

### **3.3 Quality of Teaching and Leadership in Religious Education**

During Covid-19 and the period of this report, SACRE has continued to fulfil its duty to monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus in a number of ways, including examining school websites

During the period of this report, in light of Covid-19 the manner of Ofsted inspections has been curtailed. It has therefore been impossible to gather any information about the situation of RE through these reports.

## **SECTION 4: COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

SACRE has received no formal complaints about religious education in the past year.

## **SECTION 5: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **5.1 Monitoring Collective Worship**

Ofsted reports sometime mention collective worship in relation to evidencing that a school is promoting children's SMSC development and personal wellbeing.

### **5.2 Complaints**

There have been no complaints about Collective Worship in schools.

### **5.3 Determinations**

No requests for determination have been submitted to SACRE and there are no current determinations for review.

## **SECTION 6: LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES**

### **6.1 Links with other Authorities and SACREs**

Portsmouth retains links with the Hampshire SACRE through members who are on both bodies. Portsmouth SACRE is also represented at the South Central SACRE Hub meetings in Winchester.

### **6.2 NASACRE**

Portsmouth SACRE is a member of NASACRE and NASACRE bulletins are regularly circulated to all SACRE members by the Clerk.

### **6.3 South Central RE/SACRE Hub**

Portsmouth SACRE members are invited to the South-Central Hub meetings during the period of this report. During the period of this report the SACRE hub meeting was held virtually and this has enabled SACRE members to attend more frequently.

## **APPENDIX A - SACRE MEMBERS 2020/21**

**Group A Representatives** - One representative of each of the religions and other bodies listed in the constitution

**Baha'i - Elizabeth Jenkerson**

**Baptist - Geoff Wheeler**

**Buddhism - vacant position**

**Evangelical Church - Pastor Chris Thomas**

**Hinduism – vacant position**

**Humanist UK - Barbara Spiegelhalter**

**Humanist UK Geoff Wade (nominated reserve Humanist representative)**

**Muslim - Mr Syed Aminul Haque**

**Muslim - Sheikh Fazle Abbas Dattoo (from June 2018)**

**Judaism – Sandra Teacher (temporary representative for March and June 2021 meetings)**

**Quakers - Sarah Coote**

**Roman Catholic – vacant position**

**Sikh - Jaswant Singh-Digpal**

**United Reformed Church - Christine McMillan**

**Methodist Church – vacant position**

**Group B Representatives** - Church of England

**Sue Bowen**

**Revd Sam Duddles**

**Jane Kelly**

**Group C Representatives** - Six teachers representing the various key stages and an association recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation.

**Kari Laing** Post-16 Representative (from April 2018 with Sarah Hanley Post 16 Rep until March 2018)

**Aasha Small** Primary School Rep

**Gemma Self** Early Years Rep

**Helen Reeder** Teacher Liaison Panel

**Debbie Lucas** Secondary School Rep

**Ali Beechurst** Primary School rep

**Group D Representatives - Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority.**

**Maria Cole** (appointed as of 19 June 2018 by Portsmouth City Council)

**Taki Jaffer** (appointed as of 19 June 2018 by Portsmouth City Council)

**Councillor Suzy Horton** (appointed by Portsmouth City Council to May 2021. Stepped down May 2021) Chair June 2019-May 2021

**Councillor Tom Coles** - (appointed by Portsmouth City Council June 2019)

**Councillor Ryan Brent** (appointed by Portsmouth City Council October 2021)

**Officers in Attendance:**

**Patricia Hannam** (HIAS), Professional Adviser (from Jan 2017)

**Debbie Anderson**, Head of School Improvement

**Lisa Gallacher**, PCC - Democratic Services (clerk from September 2020 – current date)



## APPENDIX B:

### **Professional development opportunities offered in 2020/21 for Schools leaders and subject leaders to ensure effective implementation of Living Difference III across the authority**

Following the distribution to all schools regarding the new agreed syllabus Living Difference III, the following support took place during the school year 2020/21

1. **Support for Headteachers** opportunities were sought through this period to keep in contact with head teachers of schools, in a time when more have become academies. Separate briefing sessions have not taken place during this time.
2. **Secondary RE HoDs are encouraged attend CPD opportunities for secondary RE teachers that run in Hampshire.**
3. **Primary network meetings** were held virtually once each term during the period of this report in September 2020, January 2021 and June 2021. Attendance remains good.

## APPENDIX C: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS RECEIVING THIS REPORT

Copies will be sent electronically to the relevant bodies. This report will be available on the Local Authority and NASACRE websites for interested parties to download.

Director of Children, Families and Education Portsmouth City Council

Deputy Director of Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education - Education, Portsmouth City Council

Cllr Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, Portsmouth City Council

The Department for Education (Central Government)

NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education)

Headteachers and Governing Bodies of all Portsmouth Schools

All members of SACRE

The Anglican Diocese of Portsmouth

The Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth