

Luton SACRE Annual report for 2013-14

SACRE support and training for Luton teachers.

Agreed Syllabus

This year has been the second year of the implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus, 'Identities, Meanings and Values'. The SACRE has continued to support schools to embed the syllabus through the activities described below.

More Schemes of Work

Lat Blaylock, one of the authors of the syllabus has written more schemes of work for the primary syllabus and one for the secondary syllabus; these have been distributed to schools.

'Teaching Christianity and Making the Most of Your Church Visit' Training Session.

In June 2013, Rev. Janet Mackenzie and Sajida Khan hosted an event at Janet's church, St Augustine's, called 'Teaching Christianity and making the most of your church visit' which was appreciated by the teachers that attended.

'Teaching RE in Primary School' Conference

In November 2013 Lat Blaylock, from RE Today, led a conference called 'Teaching RE in Primary school'; this was attended by 20 teachers and the feedback was very positive.

"Excellent sessions led by Lat. Lots of fantastic ideas to take back to school which are simple and easy to implement. The whole day was very helpful, informative and comprehensive. Thank you".

RE Networks for Primary Schools

Lat also led the first of a series of RE network meetings for primary school teachers in March. Twenty five delegates attended from fourteen schools. The feedback was very enthusiastic with 100% positive feedback on the helpfulness of the session.

"Fantastic and engaging",

"The session led by Lat was excellent. Very good ideas and resources provided! I will be feeding back what I have learnt to teachers at my school! Thanks".

Lat secured many ideas from the delegates which will inform future meetings.

'Better RE: Thinking, Spirituality, Progress and Achievement' Conference

The RE Society of Bedfordshire and Luton invited Luton teachers to their training 'Better RE: thinking, spirituality, progress and achievement' at Marston Mortaine in March 2014. This training was also led by Lat Blaylock.

Resources for schools and student RE teachers

This year the SACRE purchased some practical and attractive RE resources for schools. A Key Stage 1 photo pack, 'Talking Pictures', was sent to Infant and Primary Schools and 'More than 101 Ideas' was sent to Primary, Junior and High Schools. Special schools received both resources.

Six schools represented at the Primary Network took up the '50% off' offer for membership of RE Today's regular magazine and resources. The SACRE also purchased an annual magazine membership for the Chiltern Teaching Group's RE students and the Shire's RE students.

RE Quality Mark (REQM)

SACRE wrote to all Luton schools to highlight the new RE Quality Mark. The REQM has been developed to celebrate high quality RE, provide schools with a framework to capture good practice and to develop whole school commitment to excellent teaching and learning in RE.

The REQM has 5 strands:

- Learners and Learning
- Teachers and teaching
- Subject Leadership
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Curriculum

SACRE agreed to subsidize the cost for the first four schools that applied. This year Lealands High School and Foxdell Infant School applied for the subsidy. Further information is available on the website www.reqm.org or by email admin@reqm.org.

Luton Council of Faiths (LCoF)

In Luton we are very fortunate to have a highly respected and proactive Council of Faiths which works tirelessly in the town to promote inter-faith dialogue and community cohesion. Ryad Khodabocus of LCoF, a co-opted SACRE member, has worked with schools on many projects this year, delivering lessons and assemblies which complement the Agreed Syllabus. He has worked with schools on units such as:

- What makes some places Special? - by facilitating visits to places of worship and engaging with other Faith Based schools
- Why should we care for the Earth? - by developing a new initiative that involved the development of Dallow Downs as a resource for guided walks for schools (access was improved and anti-social behaviour deterred). Teaching resources to complement RE and other subjects were developed and school staff were trained on how to use them
- Who is an inspiring person? - by facilitating religious representative speakers for schools

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- Fairness and Justice - by delivering assemblies and supporting schools to become fully Fair Trade
- How to make our town more respectful- leading school assemblies
- Training RE teachers to use the Diversity Game; this game facilitates links between RE and community cohesion

The SACRE contributed to some of the financial costs of these activities and intends to support LCoF to develop more activities in 2014-15, with support from RE Today.

Luton Churches Education Trust (LCET)

Luton Churches Education Trust has a national reputation for the quality of its work with high schools. SACRE has been able to contribute financially to the innovative work of its ThinkTank project which has created Spiritual Ambassadors in Lealands and Icknield High schools:

“The students are benefiting from ThinkTank tremendously. They have spoken about how they enjoy meeting with pupils from different years and schools and discussing spiritual and religious themes. They are looking forward to spending time with other students from other schools on the residential.” Assistant Head, Luton high school.

The SACRE agreed to support the project with its expansion into 1 more high school in 2014-15 and with the development of its accredited course.

Traded Services support for schools

Luton Traded Services have a number of RE consultants that they are able to commission for specific work in individual schools on request. Schools should contact Katherine Shieber at the Legrave Centre 548020 if they wish to access bespoke training or advice.

Luton SACRE

SACRE Meetings

Three full SACRE meetings were held during the period covered by this report. The minutes of meetings can be requested from Louise Browne at louise.browne@luton.gov.uk. The SACRE has continued to meet in education or religious establishments. This year we have met in St Augustine’s Church, Ashcroft High School and the Friends’ Meeting House. Thank you to all our hosts with particular thanks to the Rev. Janet Mackenzie for showing us around her stunning church, St. Augustine’s, and to Vicky Cook for talking to us about the teaching of RE at Ashcroft High.

Determinations

Six primary schools and three high schools have Determinations agreed by the SACRE. A Determination means that the school is exempt from the legal expectation that the school's assemblies should be "wholly or broadly of a Christian nature". Most of the present Determinations will need to be reapplied for by schools from October 2014 –November 2015. All schools will be written to in September 2014.

SACRE Website

National documents e.g. the recent Osfted report on RE and The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Religious Education's report, 'The Truth Unmasked', can be found on the Luton SACRE web page, as can information on the SACRE and links to useful resources.

http://www.luton.gov.uk/Education_and_learning/schools_and_colleges/sacre.

2012-3 Religious Studies GSCE results

In 2013, 38% of students gained an A* to C grade for the short course RE, this is 10 % lower than 2012 and 12% lower than the national average of 50%. There were 500 entries from 10 high schools which is 147 fewer entrants than in 2012. For the GSCE Full course 66% of 1352 entrants from 12 High schools gained A* to C grades. The percentage gaining between A* to C grades fell by 4 % compared to last year's results and was 8% lower than the national average (74%). However the number of entries for GCSE full course increased by 223. All of the high schools have retained their GCSE RE courses.

SACRE Membership

I would like to thank the SACRE members for their commitment; both attendance and membership continue to be strong. There have been some changes in representation. We are pleased to welcome new representatives: Sujel Miah, Alex Drew, Debbie Williams, Hayley Cohen, Farzad Forghani and Sinead Killian. We would like to thank Sajida Khan (RE consultant), Geoff Collins, Brian Green, Maureen Murphy, Trevor Kippax, Kishore Kaler and Sue Moss who have recently resigned, for their contribution to SACRE over the past few years.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Clerk to SACRE, Rosalind Paul, and the Secretary to SACRE, Louise Browne, for their conscientious preparation of each meeting and for commissioning high quality RE work for schools as outlined in the new development plan 2014-15.

Current members include:

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations

Stephen O'Brien and Sinead Killian (Roman Catholic)
Michael Singleton (Vice Chair) and Lawrence Patterson (Free Church)
Marvalyn Chambers and Sylvia Keddo (Majority Black Churches)
A Malik, Sujel Miah, and Massood Akhtar (Islam)
Ramnikbhai T Gohil (Hinduism)
Vacancy (Sikhism)
Hayley Cohen (Judaism)
Vacancy (Buddhism)

Group B: Church of England

Jane Chipperton
Jane Lipman
Janet Mackenzie

Group C: Teachers

John Williams (Headteacher) - Chair
Noshin Hussain (Secondary)
Mrs D. Williams (Primary)
Sue Moss (Early Years)
Elif Ucar (Further Education)
Angela Wallington (Special)

Group D: Local Authority

Cllr Mahmood Hussain
Cllr Gilbert Campbell
Cllr Andrew Malcolm
Cllr Tahir Khan

Group E (no voting powers): Co-opted members:

Ryad Khodabocus (Luton Council of Faiths)
Farzad Forghani (Baha'i Faith)
Alex Drew (Luton Churches Education Trust)

LA Officers

Rosalind Paul (Clerk to SACRE)
Louise Browne (Secretary)

John Williams
Chair, Luton SACRE