



Harrow SACRE Annual Report 2014 - 2015



**Harrow
SACRE**



www.harrow.gov.uk/SACRE

Foreword

The London Borough of Harrow is among the most religiously diverse boroughs in the country and the Harrow Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) has a special and well established relationship with Harrow Council and the communities it serves. Although statistics from the 2011 Census are now somewhat out of date they are helpful in illustrating the diversity of the Local Authority.

Harrow has the highest religious affiliation in England and Wales and is ranked as having the:

- highest percentage of Hindus (25.3%)
- highest percentage of Jains (2.2%)
- second highest percentage of Zoroastrians (0.1%)
- second lowest percentage of residents declaring No Religion (9.6%).

The Census data also reveals that 37.3% of residents have identified themselves as Christian, 12.5% as Muslim, 4.4% as Jewish, 1.1% as Buddhist and 1.2% as Sikh.

Harrow is also defined by its ethnic profile, having the:

- second highest percentage of residents of Indian origin (26.4%) and the highest percentage of residents who have described themselves using the category of 'Other Asian' (11.3%)
- highest ranking of residents identifying their country of birth as South and Eastern Africa (9.9%), Kenya (4.9%), Sri Lanka (4.3%) and Romania (2.2%)
- highest percentage of residents who identified themselves as British only (41.6%), indicating a high degree of integration
- a significant relocation of Eastern European families into Harrow since 2011

The 2011 National Census revealed that Harrow's population is estimated to have increased to 239,100; this figure is 15.6% higher than the 2001 Census showed, and the recently published Office for National Statistics 2014 Mid-Year Estimates show a further increase to 246,011. Harrow's population is now at the highest recorded level, based on records going back to 1901. The 0-4 age group has increased by 5,418 between mid-2001 (12,058) and mid 2014 (17,476), which represents a 45% increase. There have also been increases across all the statutory school age groups. The 2011 Census showed that Harrow's residents were born in approximately 200 different countries and the percentage of Harrow's residents born in the UK is the 6th lowest ranking nationally. Harrow is ranked 7th nationally (and in London) for ethnic diversity and 2nd for religious diversity in London.

At the time of this report there are 59 schools in Harrow, 40 primary schools with nursery classes in 26 of these schools, 10 high schools, 2 all-through (4-18) schools, 2 primary special schools, 2 high school special schools, one alternative provision secondary school, one nursery school and one pupil referral unit. There are 13 academy schools; 8 high schools, one primary special school, one all-through (4-18) school and 3 primary schools. There are two free schools; an all-through (4-18) school and an alternative provision secondary school. The number of schools judged to be good and outstanding on inspection far exceeds the national average.

Harrow Council's Education Strategy and School Organisation (ESSO) service commissioned the Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP) to provide R.E. specialist expertise and advice for the SACRE. In the last two terms of the 2014-2015 school year ESSO took on this work directly. We are grateful that Harrow Council has maintained a very high level of commitment to the SACRE. This is in recognition of the importance of religious education and its contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and to community cohesion, in a borough where religious identity and practice is of such importance.

In 2014-2015 the highlights of the SACRE's work have been the work completed on guidance for school leaders on PE and the on-going work on providing a space for children to pray in school. We have looked at the Prevent strategy and how this impacts on teaching staff and children in our community. With the changing national landscape we have kept abreast of a shift in thinking about Collective Worship and the aims of RE.

Key among developments has been working with Harrow Council to establish the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC), its associated working party and the commissioning of a specialist adviser to develop and publish an Agreed Syllabus in April 2016.

In response to requests from schools, Harrow SACRE has committed to publishing in the autumn of 2015 guidance on:

1. The PE curriculum and religious jewellery,
2. The authorising of school absence for religious observance 2015-2016
3. Fasting during Ramadan
4. An updated self-evaluation form for religious education

Work on these guidance documents began during the 2014-2015 school year and have now been published to all schools. They will also be available on the new SACRE website at www.harrow.gov.uk/SACRE . I trust that you will enjoy reading the highlights of this report as we look forward to a very productive year in 2015-2016.

Alison Stowe
Chairman, Harrow SACRE

a) School Self Evaluation

- In 2014-2015 no school self-evaluation reports were received by the SACRE. Members agreed that the SEF form was a useful tool that could continue to go out to school in a similar format but would need to be updated to reflect the Common Inspection Framework from September 2015. The new SEF will help SACRE better understand the provision for R.E. in schools and to better support that work.
- Whilst school leaders are increasingly familiar with making evaluative statements referenced to Ofsted criteria, SACRE finds it helpful to receive a more descriptive report, which provides them with a picture of how R.E. is planned and delivered across the school.
- SACRE continued to adapt the self-evaluation form in light of the Common Inspection Framework and to encourage schools to make presentations. A new form will be circulated to schools in the autumn term of 2015.

b) School presentations to SACRE

School presentations that were planned for 2014-2015 had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. One of these, on British Values in the primary curriculum, will be re-scheduled in 2015-2016.

SACRE Monitoring and Evaluation of Attainment in R.E.

Public examination entries and results in RS GCSE and GCE AS and A level in 2015

GCSE Short Courses are not counted in the Performance Table Attainment and Value Added Measures

GCSE RS Full Course

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	% cohort	A*	A	B	C	A* - C	A* - G
2015	1126	53%	11.3%	19.9%	26.1%	18.7%	76%	98.8%
2014	509	27%	14%	23.6%	25.9%	15.3%	78.8%	97.8%
2013	312	18%	13.8%	26.6%	25%	15.1%	80.4%	97.4%
2012	179	10.7%	25.7%	30.2%	21.2%	14%	91.1%	98.9%
2011	113	7%	25.7%	28.3%	17.7%	15.9%	87.6%	99.1%
2010	211	11%	13.7%	25.1%	27.2%	17.3%	83.5%	99.5%
2009	196	10%	30.1%	29.1%	16.8%	10.7%	86.7%	100%
2008	215	13%	15.3%	26.5%	23.3%	20.5%	85.6%	97.7%

National Data (provisional)(Please note this data includes all schools)

Year	No. entries	% cohort	A*	A	B	C	A* - C	A* - G
2015	295730	5.3%	10.8%	19.0%	23.6%	18.8%	72.2%	98.3%
2014	282099	5.4%	10.9%	19.3%	23%	18.3%	71.5%	98.3%
2013	263988	4.8%	11.2%	19.7%	22.8%	18.7%	72.4%	98.3%
2012	239123	4.6%	11.8%	20.3%	22.9%	18.7%	73.7%	98.8%
2011	221974	4.3%	11.7%	20.2%	22.7%	18.7%	73.3%	97.8%
2010	188704	3.5%	12.0%	20.1%	22.6%	18.4%	73.1%	98.6%

Source: <http://www.bstubbs.co.uk/gcse.htm>

AS Level

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	A	C	E	A - B	A - E
2015	1	-	-	-	100%	-
2014	16	6.3%	-	6.3%	43.8%	93.8%
2013	5	40%	-	-	80%	100%
2012	13	0%	15.4%	15.4%	46.2%	76.9%
2011	16	6.3%	25%	12.5%	25%	93.8%
2010	9	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	55.6%	77.8%
2009	5	20%	60%	20%	20%	100%

A Level

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	A*	A	B	C	A* - B	A* - E
2015	39	5.1%	10.3%	38.5%	30.8%	53.8%	97.4%
2014	22	4.5%	31.8%	50%	13.6%	86.4%	100%
2013	25	0%	8%	28%	44%	36%	100%
2012	31	3.2%	9.7%	54.8%	25.8%	67.7%	100%
2011	20	15.0%	15.0%	71.4%	14.3%	70%	100%

MANAGING THE SACRE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Membership and meetings
- Partnership with Harrow Council
- Partnership with schools
- Partnership with NASACRE and the R.E. Council

a) Membership and meetings

The SACRE continues to plan to meet each term and twice in the autumn in order to devote time to the Annual Report and to respond to the additional requests from schools for advice in that period. However, due to unavoidable circumstances SACRE only met on 25th March 2015 and the 25 June 2015 in the 2014-2015 year. The time was not however lost as SACRE members met separately as part of the Agreed Syllabus Conference on 11 September 2014.

At the June 2015 meeting, Alison Stowe was elected as Chair and Cllr Kareema Marikar as Vice-Chair.

SACRE has continued its efforts to recruit teachers to the SACRE via their professional associations, including one to represent the academy schools. The constitution allows for up to 6 teachers.

Harrow SACRE Membership 2014 -2015

Chair
Vice Chair

Alison Stowe (Group C)
Cllr Camilla Bath (Group D)

Group A

Ms Mercedes Afnan
Ven Sumaner Sramaner
Mike Bishop
Neville Ransley
Ciara O'Flaherty
Vijay Hirani
Ananda Caitanya Das (until 11/09/14)

Dr Julie Crow
Varsha Dodhia
Zafar Khalid
Zia Baig
Cllr Asad Omar
Gill Ross
Doreen Samuels
Beverley Wilson
Paramjit Singh-Kohli
Phiroza Gan-Kotwal

Religious traditions and Christian churches

Baha'i
Buddhist
Christian (Free Church Federal Council)
Christian (Catholic)
Christian (Catholic)
Hindu (Swaminarayan)
Hindu (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)
Humanist (Harrow Humanists)
Jain
Muslim (representing Harrow Muslim Council)
Muslim
Muslim
Jewish
Jewish
Rastafarian
Sikh
Zoroastrian

Group B

Mary Abbott
Revd. Philip Barnes
Revd. Matthew Stone

Church of England**Group C**

Manju Radia
Alison Stowe
Vacancy

Teachers' Associations**Group D**

CLlr Camilla Bath, Conservative
CLlr Sasi Suresh, Labour (until 25/6/15)
CLlr Kareema Marikar, Labour (reserve until 25/06/15)
CLlr Ghazanfar Ali, Labour

Local Authority**Reserves**

CLlr Manji Kara, Conservative
CLlr Margaret Davine, Labour
CLlr Chika Amadi, Labour (from 26/06/15)

Members have served throughout 2014-2015 except where otherwise indicated

In Attendance

Rachel Bowerman, Adviser on behalf of the Corporate Director, Children and Families
Patrick O'Dwyer, Adviser on behalf of the Corporate Director, Children and Families
[Rachel Bowerman stepped down as advisor to SACRE and Patrick O'Dwyer took over with effect from 25th March 2015
Vivian Wright, Clerk to the SACRE

b) Partnership with Harrow Council (and the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) 2014-15

Agreed Syllabus Conference

The Agreed Syllabus should be reviewed every five years by the ASC. The last locally agreed syllabus was published in 2008. The pending review of Harrow's Agreed Syllabus was delayed until the publication of the new National Curriculum and guidance from the RE Council. The ASC is separately constituted although it can be comprised of SACRE members. It meets as long as it is reviewing the syllabus and once the syllabus is agreed, the ASC is dissolved. Harrow SACRE worked closely with Harrow Council to establish the Agreed Syllabus Conference and all members of the SACRE agreed to be appointed to the Conference and support its work. Members considered the guidance set out in the DfE circular based on the Education Reform Act of 1988 (*Religious Education in English Schools: non-statutory guidance 2010*).

Once the Agreed Syllabus is adopted by Harrow council it becomes a statutory requirement for maintained schools. Voluntary aided schools with a religious character are not required to deliver the Agreed Syllabus, nor are Free Schools and Academies. However, Free Schools and Academies have to provide RE and fulfil the statutory requirements but not necessarily through the locally agreed syllabus. Academies in Harrow have continued to follow the local agreed syllabus. Non-denominational academies and free schools must meet statutory requirements although not necessarily through the locally agreed syllabus.

The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

The Agreed Syllabus Conference was established in September 2014. Julie Crow was appointed as Chair of the Agreed Syllabus Conference and Mary Abbott as Vice-Chair. A small working party consisting of all groups was established to agree the principles for the Agreed Syllabus, to confirm the special adviser and oversee the development of the syllabus on behalf of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. This working party was chaired by the Chair of the Agreed Syllabus Conference. In the summer of 2015 it completed the initial tasks and confirmed the agreement of the ASC to these steps. The work of the ASC is separately minuted although an update is regularly provided to the SACRE.

National Context for the RE Curriculum

'Religious Education: a National Curriculum Framework (Review of Religious Education in England – RE Council 2013' contains the recommendations of the RE Council for a National Curriculum Framework for RE. It provides guidance for an AS Conference. The ASC can decide to adopt it as it is or adapt it.

The 2008 syllabus has two attainment targets:

- Learning about religion
- Learning from religion

The RE Council recommendations contain three attainment targets: (pages 14-15)

- Know about and understand a range of religions and world views
- Express ideas and insights about nature, significance and impact of religions and world views
- Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews

c) Partnership with Schools and the Professional Development of R.E. Teachers

‘Faith Matters’: Guidance for Physical Education

The government offers ring-fenced funding for PE and sport and had undertaken to continue this funding until 2020. To ensure that every pupil receives their full entitlement to Sports and PE, schools need updated and refreshed guidance on dress and religious customs in different faith groups. The guidance document, commissioned by the Harrow SACRE, relates only to sport and PE. This was an update on previously published local guidance. The guidance stresses that this document is for guidance only and the school’s curriculum and policy remain the responsibility of the governing body. The guidance will not produce a uniform approach: there is always diversity.

The first three bullet points of the guidance cover what people do and wear because of their beliefs. This is followed by the fundamental principles underlying this guidance. This stresses the importance of children receiving their entitlement to PE and sport and the removal of problems towards achieving this.

The guidance reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Common Inspection Framework that will be introduced from September 2015. It also reflects Race Equality and Equalities legislation.

Consultation with Teachers and Professional Development

Meetings with teachers in 2014-2015 naturally focused on the forthcoming review and development of the agreed syllabus and the support that teachers could give to this and receive as a result of it. In an early consultation with local teachers, they felt that the second and third targets in the new guidance (the 2013 national framework) were overlapping. In their responses to the opening sentence of this section, teachers felt in need of more specific advice on the purpose of RE. The document did not make clear what was meant by *‘challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life’*, *‘ultimate reality’* and *‘what it means to be human’*. The ASC could use the RE Council’s generic requirements and then decide how these could be illustrated from each faith tradition. Non-specialists are often teaching RE and receive very little CPD in this area. They would need specific examples to support them.

Teachers liked the level of challenge and the idea of progression from KS1 with its requirements beginning with terms such as ‘recall’, ‘retell’ and ‘recognize’ to KS2 where requirements opened with words such as ‘describe’, ‘explore’ and ‘describe and understand’. The taxonomy shows the gradation in children’s understanding and teachers’ questioning.

The Chair of the Harrow SACRE ran a professional development session with RE Subject Leaders. They worked in groups on different sections of the RE national framework published in 2013. Each group had then fed back to the full session. The Chair sent the outcomes to Lesley Prior, who is a national leader in RE and the newly appointed specialist adviser to the Harrow ASC. The Chair reported that the session had been a good use of time and the teachers had been very creative in their ideas. In the EYFS, for instance, teachers had discussed a variety of activities involving role play, understanding the world and religious artefacts. At KS1 the approach became more teacher-led involving looking at different communities. At KS2 the characteristics of key religious figures such as the Pope or the Dalai Llama were considered. There is a real hunger amongst teachers to work together and share ideas which SACRE and the ASC seeks to build upon in 2015-2016.

The Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)

On 7 July 15, the Chair of the Harrow SACRE, Alison Stowe, spoke at The Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) conference about how a multi faith school can deliver Collective Worship to fulfil both the law and the support the multi faith community in a school. After receiving funding from the Farmington Institute, Alison Stowe was able to research Qu'ranic stories and how to convey these writings to children of school age. Parents and children of all faiths were consulted about how Collective Worship could be full of awe and wonder as well as appropriate to all faiths. Picture books with people in them were discussed and other aspects of the school curriculum were considered (art, music and drama).

In the discussion after the talk, the future of Collective Worship was debated with a general feeling that assembly times are important to develop community cohesion. This research shows that it was possible to provide the school with Collective Worship that fulfilled the law, allowed all children to participate and covered British Values.

The PowerPoint can be found at: <http://www.arei.ac.org.uk/members/index.html>

Harrow SACRE renewed membership of the AREIAC for 2015-2016.

d) Partnership with Local Faith Communities

- **Guidance on days of Religious Observance and pupil absence:** This annual guidance and list of days of religious observance is one of the most valued services that Harrow SACRE provides to schools. It helps headteachers to decide how much leave may be allowed to pupils for religious observance. SACRE members worked on this guidance over the summer ready to send out in the autumn. With so much relying on school attendance, SACRE recognised how vital it is for schools to have this guidance that comes with the authority of the faith communities.
- **RE Conference in Birmingham:** Manju Radia has attended a conference in Birmingham. Her school was invited to present a workshop on how they worked towards the Gold Mark Award. She felt very privileged to represent Harrow in this context.

- **Harrow Mosque:** A successful session was held at the Harrow Mosque entitled '*I'm not ISIS*'. It was attended by several local councillors, including members of the SACRE, and many other members of the community. It was covered by the BBC and other media.
- **Fasting During Ramadan**
Schools asked about guidance on taking public examinations during the period of Ramadan in 2016. Muslim representatives on SACRE who were present reaffirmed that fasting was not a requirement for all children and that, for those who were of an age to fast, further guidance could be offered. Some branches of Islam have stricter and more inflexible observances. It was suggested that this was an issue in which NASACRE should be involved. The Chair agreed to email NASACRE to see if there was national guidance on this subject but there was not. SACRE agreed that some guidance should be provided to schools in response to their request after consultation with faith leaders. This will be published in the autumn term of 2015.

e) Partnership with NASACRE

At their autumn term meetings 2014-2015, SACRE discussed the following high profile and seminal reports:

Part 1: The NASACRE conference (Birmingham 2015)

The Right Hon Charles Clarke was the key-note speaker. He demonstrated support for RE in the curriculum and delegates had spent the rest of the day discussing his commentary.

The RE curriculum and the place of SACRE

Charles Clarke believes that the 1944 Education Act is out dated and that RE's current place in the curriculum should be reviewed. SACRE occupies a unique position in relation to the place of RE in the curriculum and deserves more support from government, as one of the few remaining institutions supporting community cohesion. A recurrent theme of the conference was that there are not enough sources of advice with in depth knowledge about RE for teachers to call on. This is why SACRE has such an important role.

The right to withdraw children from RE

A faith group representative commented that the nature of RE has changed since the 1944 Act: there is no longer the same emphasis on religious instruction. The emphasis is now on finding out about religions; there are no elements of indoctrination. The concept of withdrawing children from RE was founded on this doctrinaire approach. It is now questionable whether parents should retain the right to withdraw their children from RE when, in the modern world, it is so important that children should learn about other faiths.

National guidelines for RE

Charles Clarke's speech had given rise to a thought-provoking conversation. Delegates felt that it would be helpful to have national guidelines on what should be taught in RE.

A faith representative from Judaism added that the Jewish community have grappled with what children should be able to access about other faiths. A representative from the Teachers' Associations commented that it is a child's right to have a broad view of his or her community.

Training of Teachers

This subject will be debated for a long time to come. The decline in numbers of suitably qualified people to deliver training is a national problem.

In the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- there is considerable expertise around this table
- teachers need pedagogy as well as expertise
- it would be helpful to have national expectations of what should be taught but that actual delivery should happen locally
- not all schools follow the National Framework.
- Charles Clarke favoured a minimum entitlement in RE for all children.

Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhouse are publishing a small book on these matters which SACRE members agreed to discuss in detail in the autumn.

Part 2

Letter from Lord Nash (7 January 2015)

This letter highlighted the importance of high quality RE teaching and the role of SACREs in promoting this. The letter reflects the broader expectations about the quality of teaching of RE. It stresses the importance of academic rigour: this is a pertinent consideration when formulating the Agreed Syllabus.

The letter is very positive about the role of SACRE and this is encouraging at a time when members might feel that SACRE's role has diminished. SACRE members discussed the concern nationally about the decline in the quality of teaching RE; its marginalisation in the curriculum and lack of support to RE teachers. Member also noted that greater attention would be paid to its annual reports.

The letter went on to remind SACREs about the importance of British Values. The Board of Deputies of British Jews has already issued some excellent guidance on the subject. Many of the precepts of British Values already form part of the curriculum for Citizenship or SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) Education. Schools are carrying out audits to show where British Values occur in different areas of the curriculum. It is important that School Councils and Pupil Voice reflect these values. Assemblies are another important way of covering some aspects, for instance, democracy, voting, respect and tolerance. British Values are also included in the standards used for assessing NQTs (Newly Qualified Teachers). SACRE agreed to consider this area again in the new school year and what contribution members could make to it locally.

The Harrow ASC had already agreed to ensure that British Values inform the new Agreed Syllabus for 2016.

Complaints about RE and Collective Worship

During the year SACRE received no complaints about the provision of R.E.