

STILL STANDING

A report on future directions for SACREs



A report on the joint REC/NASACRE LAN Pilot project 2020-21

Claire Clinton

November 2021



Appendix 3 B&D write up of LAN research project

This project has developed from The CoRE report section 8 and the need for a new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) framework:

Aim of Project:

- To provide 2/3 CPD occasions where local teachers can meet local faith leaders and learn about different religions in the spring term 2021. These days will build teachers subject knowledge around religions and world views and allow them to be clearer on similarities and differences.

Why do we need this project?

- It will improve religious literacy, helping teachers to talk knowledgeably about religion/world views and diversity with pupils;
- It will help to build community – between teachers as well as between community members when meeting with local religious/worldview leaders.

This initiative is the first stage of an action research within the nation LAN project. We will be using the data from the CPD sessions to investigate what is going well, what causes issues, how things could be changed.

• Process	• Tasks	• Data collection activities
• Specifying the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&D has suffered from a lack of any specific RE CPD for a number of years. • SACRE discussed Sept 19 this need and decided to apply for a NASACRE and Westhill Trust grant to allow this work to be carried out. • This project seeks to look at the impact of a 'LAN' providing CPD for teachers around subject knowledge around religions and world views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey data from teacher in 2020 • Before teachers attend CPD collect data on interest, knowledge and confidence around religions and worldviews. Then compare to evaluations after CPD to measure impact after 3 training occasions.
• Planning an intervention or change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to do this we decided as a SACRE to create a SACRE working group: established June 2020 (Chair, vice-chair, LA rep and RE Advisor). Meet regularly to progress the project. This group reports back to SACRE at each meeting over the course of the year. • At the sub group: We decided to go and do some reading on creating this event to see what we could learn from research about holding/organising this type of CPD. Thinking about our reading – what we have learnt from 3 articles we read: • Kathryn Wright PHD thesis 'Theology of embrace': In order to learn from religion and worldviews you need to create a safe place where adults feel able to listen with an open heart, and for those who share to do so with an open heart. If you can create this then your time potentially will be very powerful in terms of teacher learning and understanding 	<p>a) Adult SACRE members will be invited to attend the teacher CPD days – <i>64% of SACRE members attended</i></p> <p>b) Break down barriers constructed through ignorance and fear of the unknown, and challenge the resulting stereotypes which emerge in popular culture around religion.</p> <p>Desired outcomes:</p>

about someone else's life – their motivations and outlook/worldview. Real life encounters offer the teacher a great source of knowledge and understanding of other ways of living – as well as epistemological wisdom – gaining insight.

- Emma Salter: religious representation in secular RE (article in BJRE): Just telling children about faith isn't enough. Having children being able to meet someone from that faith allows them to build/make their own perspective. Personal connections are important in pupils building their own views/opinions. Personal testimonies that people have are important to show how teaching are put into practice. But doing that it allows pupils to link their own ideas and questions to a factual base. Don't be concerned if someone gives a biased personal; the research piece talk about the fact that the teacher should be there to highlight the factual learning so pupils can see what is different. Recommended practice to include a faith practitioner when teaching RE
- Charles Taylor: The politics of recognition (book): So complex and complicated not sure there is anything in it for us – was our first reaction to reading parts of it! But we think it is about seeing that everyone has worth, universal dignity. Our true self/identity is formed through continual dialogue with others and our experiences. We can't find a sense that one culture is superior to another culture, unless we have the same fusion of horizons about things before we can make value judgements. The fusion of horizons comes from Gadamer's work and further reading on this might help with the theoretical aspect of the research - it's about finding common understandings when people have very different background traditions and understandings.

We can see as we think about setting up these CPD events we need to ensure:

- Telling us teachers need to meet people who are living with the faith to see how it is used in every-day life to then help children to develop their knowledge and thinking around religion
- Teachers to develop their authentic self they need to dialogue with others from different cultures and religions – different voices.
- Dialogue, places where you can safely ask questions and not upset people are essential if you want deep learning and insights to be gained by teachers at CPD. Also that wisdom only develops where there is openness to hear – need to flag this up gently with teachers in how we set up events
- All of this informs who we set up our CPD opportunities as well as how we introduce people, and set parameters for respect, asking questions

1. Teachers understanding their responsibility to know the correct information to give to pupils – teaching standards (substantive subject knowledge)
2. Teachers aware of what they don't know
3. Teachers know where to go to find correct information
4. Teacher confidence to ask questions to religious/worldview leaders
5. Knowing the point of contact for a religion in a local area (link to SACRE)
6. Sharing what they know with others in their school or local school community, information embedded with school systems

-
- CPD assessment at the end of our intervention shows the above bullet points 1-6 have been more than met
-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should still go ahead – Action point for Claire to re-advertise to RE leaders and BDSIP out to schools • Hold 2/3 training events for teachers in B&D. • 23rd Feb – Event 1 (1:30-4:30pm) Islam & Christianity • 2nd March 2021 – Event 2 (1:30-4:30pm) Hinduism & Sikhism & Jainism • 30th March – Event 3 (1:30-4:30pm) Judaism & Buddhism • Create baseline assessment for teacher’s expertise. Denominations, how different people interpret scriptures; have they visited places of worship; confidence on teaching this religion/world view; answers questions from pupils on this religion. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XA0GpG_RDzCMfRuljaPg5ga2HhHJK_R2LHFM6bibpbs/edit 	
Implementing the intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a baseline assessment for teachers to complete before coming to the 3 CPD events - done • Advertise CPD to schools and teachers – done via Prof RE advisors school database; BDSIP advertised to schools and HTs; SACRE HT rep also advertised it out to head teachers; faith forum newsletter to pass onto any teachers they know – all achieved • RE advisor then recruited religion/worldview leaders and representatives to lead sessions at the CPD events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from our google form showed: Results are very positive: • <p>Before the 3 CPD session 28% of teachers said they felt confident/extremely confident around teaching RE. After the training this figure was 82%. A rise of 54%.</p> <p>We can see dramatic change in teacher confidence around understanding different religions and worldviews from the training input – with every input after training there is a much larger percentage of ‘yes’. The biggest change is in teachers confidence around Buddhism with 7% of teacher feeling confidence about teaching Buddhism before the training and 63% feeling confident after it.</p> <p>29.7% of teachers felt confident or extremely confident to ask questions to religious leaders. After the training we found teachers, confidence rose to 69%. A rise of almost 40%.</p> <p>Overall, we have found that teachers have gained a great deal from attending these sessions. We used</p>

		£2000 to put on this provision and therefore believe this shows excellent value for money as targeted CPD for teachers, as well as building up community cohesion.
Evaluating	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give adult SACRE members will be invited to attend the teacher CPD days <p>14 members were present at different session, 4 there for all 3 session (out of a possible 22 members) 64% involved.</p> <p>9 members of SACRE presented – they weren’t just present, but more active</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Teachers understanding their responsibility to know the correct information to give to pupils – teaching standards (subject knowledge) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the initial questionnaire it was evident that teachers had gaps in their learning and had come on this CPD to full those – so they were understanding their responsibilities in this area. Evident from evaluations that every teacher had gained in terms of subject knowledge. • 10 recording of faith leaders now up on YouTube for all schools to access: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oM8F76W5sVc&list=PLBm9kOV6w4-UI3QbXMRa-2rQ_3pViRb-b 3. Teachers aware of what they don’t know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial questionnaire and the final the evaluations showed for some teachers: • Where they felt confident about their subject knowledge the CPD sessions opened up an awareness of what else there was for them to add to their subject knowledge • Teachers who were aware from the start of subject gaps in their knowledge, and evaluations show their progress in closing gaps. Know where to go next or what they needed to do further reading on. • The sessions catered for everyone – that was a strength of it. Because of the small numbers in breakout rooms and the opportunity to question the presenter was a strength. • The sessions were devised so that there was time for questions and dialogue • People were able to ask whatever questions they had – an opportunity to take teacher’s subject knowledge a lot deeper. 	

4. Teachers know where to go to find correct information

- Contact details for all 25 presenters were shared with teachers – so teachers had met all of those contacts – they would have felt much more able to carry on a dialogue with or to approach to ask a question.
- It gave teachers a sense of what different faith leaders and representatives would work better at primary (KS1 or KS2) or in a secondary setting.
- For the first time B&D has launched a database of POW and faith contacts – this event gave teachers face to face (although virtually) contact with people on the database.
- Highlighted for teachers what they need to develop in terms of their own expertise in leading RE in their schools and having good subject knowledge.
- Having the 3 sessions spaced out really helped to absorb the information learnt.

5. Teacher confidence to ask questions to religious leaders

- Evidence in evaluation (54% and 40%)
- ‘Theology of embrace’
- On order to learn from religion and worldviews you need to create a safe place where adults feel able to listen with an open heart, and for those who share to do so with an open heart
- The politics of recognition (book)
- We think it is about seeing that everyone has worth, universal dignity. Our true self/identity is formed through continual dialogue with others and our experiences. We can’t find a sense that one culture is superior to another culture, unless we have the same fusion of horizons about things before we can make value judgements

6. Knowing the point of contact for a religion in a local area (link to SACRE)

- Generosity of all the different religious leaders who wanted to enable teachers to be in a better place to help teachers to be able to lead better RE in schools. Joint responsibility to improve the education opportunity for our children around religion and worldviews was impressive.
- Bullet points 1-5 have been met
- Have to acknowledge that to be able to do events like these you need a lot of knowledge and a lot of contacts. It has been successful because it comes on the back of work that our professional RE advisor has done for many years in East London.
- Succession planning – how do we ensure the links are secured.

	<p>7. Sharing what they know with others in their school or local school community, information embedded with school systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area to follow up. What have they done back in school as a result of the training? How could the training be better next time? What do you need next? • CPD assessment shows the above bullet points 1-6 have been more than met • SACRE have now written a funding application for further funding from the LA to be able to build upon the work we started with teachers this year. This is also a successful outcome from the project. 	
--	--	--

Final words

- CoRE report suggest that LANs should in recommendation e) provide CPD for schools. We have researched what a small amount of funding (in this case £2000) can provide a LAN with the opportunity of leading for local teachers successfully.
- We believe if SACREs were to change to a LAN then having a relationship with schools is an important element of what they offer, and providing CPD an essential part of that relationship. This provides SACRE members with opportunities to share their expertise and substantive knowledge with teachers in their community. As well as LAN members to learn from teachers the questions they need answering in order to represent different religions and worldviews successfully in their classrooms. Most importantly it provides a place for on-going dialogue and questioning.
- But we were able to do what we did as a SACRE fine. The NASACRE/Westhill awards gave us the chance to make an intervention. For the LA to see what as positive and to be proud of gaining the award. This has now led to the LA releasing more funding to SACREs work going forward and means we will have a budget annually to decide how best to use for the benefit of teachers in B&D schools. So whatever SACREs are called this is an essential part of their work, and having NASACRE/Westhill awards allows 5 SACREs annually to have this journey potentially within their locality.

SACRE working group members

- Avril Carnally – B&D LA rep on SACRE; Randip Sahota – B&D teacher and SACRE chair; Councillor Dorothy Akwaboah – SACRE vice-chair; Claire Clinton – B&D RE advisor
- May 2021.