



The London Borough
of Richmond upon
Thames
Standing Advisory
Council for Religious
Education
Annual Report

2015-16

Foreword and Summary

By the Chair of SACRE

This year saw the debate on Religious Education move on to consider whether it should continue to be set at the local level, reflecting the mix of faiths in the borough or whether it should shift to a national syllabus, in line with all other subjects. We will continue to monitor this national debate and prepare for the consequences of any policy change, should it come to pass.

Perhaps the most rewarding part of the year, was the culmination of the World War 1 RE project, which was funded by a Civic Pride Grant from Richmond Council. This saw teachers, who had taken part in the training workshop, return to their schools and work with their pupils to create some amazing pieces of art around the issues of peace, remembrance and conflict resolution. Such was the quality of the work produced that they were displayed at our local Orleans House Gallery for everyone to view. The pressure is now on to look for ways to repeat such an innovative and moving project. The committee continues to see one of its remits as providing a resource, and indeed resources, to our teachers to help them educate our children in the most engaging and inventive ways. As a result, we have carried on with our project to compile a directory of local places of worship that can accommodate school visits. I'm glad to see that this is close to fruition, despite a few teething problems along the way.

Once the directory is complete, the committee intends to continue in the same vein, by co-ordinating the collection and assembling of a small 'library' of religious and other artefacts that can be loaned to schools to help them bring the faiths to life. While still in the midst of finishing the directory, I'm delighted to reveal that several members are already deep into planning this next project.

As ever, I'd like to end by thanking everyone who is part of SACRE for the commitment and determination they have shown over the year. The successful delivery of our projects is entirely down to their efforts and dedication.

Councillor Gareth Evans
Chair of SACRE

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

ANNUAL REPORT OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2015 - 2016

1.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 Agreed Syllabus

On 12th February 2013, SACRE took the decision to revise the existing Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (RE).

1.2 Agreed Syllabus Revision

At the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) Meeting on 6th November 2013, it was explained that there were three possible ways to proceed:

- 1) to make minor adjustments to the current syllabus
- 2) to 'buy in' another syllabus and make adjustments so that it is suitable for schools in Richmond.
- 3) to change as much of the current syllabus as might be deemed necessary

Lesley Prior advised that the ASC should make minor revisions to the current syllabus or buy into a similar document. It was agreed to revise the current syllabus.

The revised syllabus was agreed on 17th July 2014. It was approved by the Council and is the statutory document for all LA community schools in the Borough and is also used by some academies.

A link to the syllabus can be found here:

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/sacre_syllabus_2014.pdf

1.3 Standards in RE

SACRE used to monitor standards in RE by carrying out an annual analysis of OFSTED reports. In 2015-2016, SACRE members continued to regret the fact that current OFSTED arrangements make it extremely difficult for them to carry out this statutory duty, as the necessary evidence is no longer available. SACRE members therefore seek other ways in which to monitor standards in RE, such as inviting RE teachers in LA schools to share with them examples of their work.

2.0 IN-SERVICE TRAINING: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1 Short Courses

The Authority offers a basic programme of in-service training.

SACRE members were pleased to note that there continue to be termly meetings for Subject Leaders for RE in primary and special schools. These have been delivered by Lesley Prior, LDBS Adviser for RE in Community Schools. Lesley also supports the Richmond upon Thames SACRE. During 2014– 2015, these meetings took place on:

- **30th September 2015** at St Mary the Virgin Church, Twickenham
www.stmarytwick.org.uk/
- **24th February 2016** at Richmond Synagogue
www.richmondsynagogue.org.uk/
- **18th May 2016** at Hounslow Mosque
www.hounslowmasjid.co.uk/

All venues are within or close to the London Borough of Richmond and welcome visitors from Richmond schools. Members of Richmond SACRE were instrumental in arranging these sessions and also attended them to work closely with the teachers involved.

Participants were given opportunities to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of the three Abrahamic faiths and consider ways in which teaching about them and learning from them can be enhanced in their schools
- evaluate the place of Christianity, Judaism and Islam in the local area and build professional links with members of these local faith communities
- analyse the current legal requirements for RE in Richmond in relation to these three faiths and identify a variety of approaches to enable their schools to meet these requirements
- consider the interface between these three faiths and school life, the challenges these create, the rights of children, schools and parents and possible strategies for resolving relevant issues in a practical and sensitive way
- learn about issues in RE at a national level and to discuss the challenges posed by these for RE in Richmond.

Feedback from these meetings was excellent.

2.2 Newly Qualified Teachers

All Newly Qualified Teachers in RE Departments in Secondary Schools are also offered advice, help and support through a mentoring visit conducted by Lesley Prior and funded by the LA.

2.3 Additional Training Events

In collaboration with a local interfaith group, SACRE secured funding from 'Civic Pride' (www.richmond.gov.uk/civic_pride_fund) to organise training for teachers for RE in 2014-2015, not least because the Local Authority is placing a significant emphasis on commemorative events relating to the centenary of World War I. Richmond is well known as the site of the Poppy Factory and there are other direct links between the town and different aspects of the war, such as the community of Belgian refugees who lived and worked in the area from 1914 onwards.

The main training day took place on 24th April 2015 at Orleans House Gallery.

An exhibition of children's work from some of the schools involved was displayed in early November 2015 at Orleans House Gallery to mark Remembrance Day.

Please see the following link for more details:

<http://www.hounslowfriendsoffaitth.org/2015/10/peace-and-remembrance/>

3.0 COMPLAINTS

No complaints on either Religious Education or Collective Worship were referred to SACRE for investigation in the year 2015 – 2016.

4.0 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

4.1 Determinations

No schools in Richmond upon Thames have been given a determination in relation to Collective Worship.

5.0 MATTERS REFERRED TO SACRE

No matters were referred to SACRE for consideration in the year 2015 – 2016.

6.0 LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

The Richmond upon Thames SACRE is affiliated to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

Login details for the NASACRE website are:

- Username: **member1617**
- Password: **Gr8RE4a7L!**

Lesley Prior, LDBS Adviser for RE in Community Schools and SACRE Consultant is a member of the NASACRE Executive and represented

Richmond SACRE at the NASACRE AGM and Conference AGM at Central Methodist Hall in London on 17th May 2016.

Full details and copies of the relevant presentations can be found at:

<http://www.nasacre.org.uk/conference-and-agm/2016/2016-materials>

The login details (see above) are required to access these presentations.

There were two key note speakers.

The Rt Hon Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss GBE, formerly President of the Family Division of the High Court was the first female Lord Justice of Appeal and until 2004, was the highest-ranking female judge in the United Kingdom. She has chaired many high profile enquiries and inquests. Baroness Butler-Sloss served as Chair for the recently published **Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life**. See this link for details: <http://www.corab.org.uk>

Professor Adam Dinham is Professor of Faith and Public Policy at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is also Chair of the British Sociological Association Sociology of Religion Study Group (Socrel), Professor of Religious Literacy, Diakonhjemmet University College, Oslo, Norway and Honorary Stephenson Professor of Leadership, Religion & Society, Sheffield Institute for Interdisciplinary Biblical Studies, Sheffield University, UK. With Martha Shaw, Professor Dinham is the co-author of **RE for REal: The Future of Teaching and Learning about Belief**. See this link for details: <http://www.gold.ac.uk/faithsunit/reforreal/>

If SACRE members or others would like to hear their speeches from the NASACRE AGM/Conference, then they will need to login to the NASACRE website to gain access to a podcast. The link is available above.

The Rt Hon Charles Clarke, speaker at last year's NASACRE AGM is now Patron of NASACRE and attended this year's event too. He participated in a panel session with other speakers at the end of the day.

Lesley Prior, SACRE Consultant for RE, is also a member of many other RE professional bodies.

In 2015-16, Lesley's role as RE Adviser to Community Schools for the London Diocesan Board for Schools has also enabled her to work with teachers and other staff within Richmond upon Thames, as well as in other areas of the country.

Charanjit Singh (Group A – Sikh) is a key figure within a local Interfaith Group, Hounslow Friends of Faith (<http://www.hounslowfriendsoffaith.org/>) and her links with different religious groups in the area has been invaluable in supporting the work of SACRE and the schools it serves.

7.0 SACRE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

During the academic year, SACRE members worked to:

- create a directory of places of worship in the LA open for school visits
- begin to discuss how to build up a small resource collection of religious and other artefacts to support teaching and learning in RE.

The directory will be available to schools early in the new academic year.

8.0 SACRE CONTACT OFFICERS 2015 - 2016

Cllr Gareth Evans Chair of SACRE

David Gaspard Clerk to SACRE
Kenny Uzodike

Lesley Prior LDBS Adviser for RE Tel: 07808761148
e.mail:
lesley.prior@london.anglican.org

9.0 MEETINGS

Meetings of SACRE and the Agreed Syllabus Conference were held on:

- Thursday, 3rd December 2015
- Wednesday, 2nd March 2016
- Monday, 14th June 2016

The Chair, the Clerk and the SACRE Consultant Executive Committee also met between meetings where and when necessary.

**LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES STANDING ADVISORY
COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2015-2016**

MEMBERSHIP

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions in the area.

David Foll, Elizabeth Rowley, Christine Cannon, Charanjit Singh, Rashid Laher, Sandhya Mohindra, Corinne Rosenberg, Ruth Williams

Group B: Church of England

Lesley Mortimer, Carol Fletcher

Group C: Teachers

Anne Farren, Helen Beavan, Suzanne Tucker, Nasreen Irshad

Group D: Local Authority representatives

Cllr Gareth Evans, Cllr Sarah Tippet, Cllr Penelope Frost, Cllr Gemma Curran