



Annual SACRE Report 2017-18

The SACRE has several aspects to its role. These include:

- ❖ Advising the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- ❖ Advising on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- ❖ Considering requests for determinations from any schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- ❖ Identifying and revising an Agreed Syllabus for religious education

In principle, every pupil is entitled to RE of the highest quality... A core duty of the SACRE is to gain an overview of the quality of the RE provision in LA Maintained schools and to develop effective strategies to promote the highest standards." - National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

To help with this endeavour the Bracknell Forest Borough SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs), the Diocese of Oxford and the other Berkshire SACREs.

This report sets out a summary of the work of the Bracknell Forest SACRE over the academic year 2017 - 2018.

The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at

<http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=157>

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

The Clerk: lizzie.rich@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

The Local Authority Officer: Steve.Bogg@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Adviser: anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org 07884 655097

Advice Offered

a) Local Authority:

- Advice was given that with the merger of the NUT and the ATL that the constitution of Group C needed to be amended;
- Advice was also given that substitutes should be able to be sent to meetings as currently happens at other bodies such as school's forum;
- The budget for SACRE needs to be shared with SACRE and SACRE needs to be better funded;
- Advice was given that a survey of SACRE members needed to be carried out to address the issues of attendance.
- They were advised that an Agreed Syllabus Conference needed to be established for the duration of this academic year for the purposes of reviewing the syllabus.
- Advice was given to accept the revised syllabus, write a foreword and host the document on the Bracknell SACRE website.
- A request was made to pay the NASACRE subscription for the current academic year and to book a place at the NASACRE AGM for May.
- The LA was advised that there was value in maintaining the financial commitment to the Pan-Berkshire hub, and that the aims of the hub were in accord with the aims of the SACRE.
- The LA was informed that there should be sufficient funds for SACRE, according to a letter from the minister for education shared by NATRE/NASACRE.

b) Schools:

- Advice is offered to schools mainly through the termly newsletters and the termly RE network meetings;
- Topics covered included the purpose of RE, creative and engaging activities, concepts in the new syllabus, sharing good practice, exam season and Ramadan and resources for the subject leader
- The new syllabus was launched at a training event attended by teachers and head teachers.

c) Government:

- SACRE has not offered any advice to the government this year.

d) Response:

- The LA has agreed to both the constitutional changes suggested and a survey has been sent to all SACRE members. The results will be collated over the summer and the timing of SACRE meetings will be decided on as a result.
- The ASC was duly convened and operated for the academic year.
- The illness of the local authority officer has delayed information about the budget being shared with SACRE. This hopefully will be resolved in the new academic year.
- Schools receive the advice but have yet to engage fully with SACRE in terms of feeding back.
- The syllabus has been ratified and accepted. *It has yet to be uploaded to the website*
- The NASACRE subscription was paid and a place booked at the NASACRE AGM

Standards, quality & provision of RE

a) Public exams:

- GCSE headlines
 - i. 219 pupils were entered for GCSE RE in 2018; this is lower than the 2017 figure of 279.
 - ii. Both attainment and progress were in line with national averages.
 - iii. One school entered almost all pupils for GCSE RS (157 of the 219). This represented a higher proportion of the overall number of pupils entered. Last year it was 149 of the 279. Most schools are entering significantly
 - iv. One school had no entries but should have their first results in 2019.
 - v. One school with entries in previous years this year had none.
- A Level headlines
 - i. 38 pupils were entered for A level RS. This is lower than the 2017 figure of 46.
 - ii. Attainment and progress were broadly in line with national expectations, though a slightly higher percentage of pupils gained A* or A than the national average.
 - iii. Only three of the 6 schools entered pupils for A level RS. Last year 4 of the 6 entered pupils for A level.

In conclusion it would appear that the change in GCSE and A level specifications, along with the continued absence of RS from the EBacc, as well as the other pressures that schools are under is having a negative impact on the take up of RS at both KS4 and KS5. In 2016, only two years ago there were over 300 GCSE entries. This is a worrying trend, which SACRE will need to be vigilant of.

b) Attainment in RE:

- SACRE has no real insight into the standard of attainment in RE, although as most of the OFSTED reports suggest that attainment in subjects other than English and Maths is not as high, it can be presumed that this is the case in RE as well.

c) Quality of provision:

- 5 OFSTED reports have included references to broad and balanced curriculum, the way that RE is contributing to preparation for life in Modern Britain and SMSC and that pupils were able to talk about the differences between religions and cultures.
- There were no negative comments about RE in any of the OFSTED reports from this year's inspections.
- The only VC school in the local authority to have had a SIAMS inspection is reported to be offering effective RE, which pupils enjoy and commented on their learning about Hinduism.

d) Withdrawal: No schools have sought support with issues of withdrawal.

e) Complaints: No complaints have been received by SACRE about either the quality or provision of RE.

Agreed Syllabus

a) Review:

- The review of the syllabus has absorbed most of the efforts of SACRE 2017-18.

- The review has been undertaken in conjunction with the other five Berkshire SACREs (the Pan-Berkshire Hub)
 - It has undergone several drafts and was finally approved on the 19th June.
 - All 6 SACREs have endorsed the new slimmed down syllabus.
 - The syllabus launch was hosted by the Local Authority.
 - The revised syllabus has been sent to NASACRE.
 - The revised syllabus contains only the statutory material and is therefore much shorter than the previous syllabus. It also contains outcomes for each phase which should help teachers with maintaining challenge and assessing progress.
 - Separate guidance and support material will be produced
- b) Date of next review
- Under current legislation the next syllabus review will not take place until 2023

Standard, quality & provision of Collective Worship

- a) Compliance:
- Several schools that did not have CW policies on their website when the survey was carried out last year have since sent CW policies in to SACRE.
 - OFSTED has made no mention of schools not complying
- b) Quality:
- The plan for a CW roadshow to raise the standard of CW in schools had to be abandoned with the resignation of the chair, who was driving the initiative and the lack of budget provided by the LA.
 - As OFSTED makes no mention of CW but refers frequently to the quality of SMSC and community cohesion it must be assumed that CW is making an effective contribution to school ethos.
- c) Determinations:
- In the previous annual report, it was mentioned that a school was seeking a determination. A change of headteacher however has removed that request, so no requests for determinations have been either received or granted, although a process now exists for such an eventuality.
- d) Complaints:
- No complaints have been received about CW

Management of SACRE

- a) Attendance:
- Attendance at SACRE meetings this year has been below the usual.
 - There have been several reasons for this: the sudden resignation of the previous chair at the same time as a change of clerk, local authority officer and other members.
 - One meeting had to be rescheduled as so many notifications of apology had been received that it would not have been quorate.

- The rescheduled meeting was sadly also not quorate. Consequently, the chair cancelled the third scheduled meeting of the year and the acceptance of the syllabus was carried out by email.
 - A survey has been sent to all SACRE members to try to establish a better day/time/venue for the SACRE meetings.
- b) Membership and training:
- There continue to be 10 vacancies, as three members have resigned during the year and not been replaced, despite contacts with prospective candidates.
 - Most of the vacancies are within the group A faith representatives. Bracknell Forest has only recently undergone a demographic change to a more multi-cultural society, and so organised faith groups are not yet well established.
 - The constitutional change has not yet encouraged a wider range of teachers to join.
 - An approach from a humanist was discussed, but as he declined to attend the meeting, or put anyone forward for nomination, no humanist has been either co-opted or appointed.
- c) Complaints: SACRE has not had to deal with any complaints

Contribution to Local Authority Wider Agenda

- a) School support:
- a. School support has been offered through the SACRE newsletter, the RE network meetings and by email.
 - b. The LA has not requested any specific RE/CW support for any schools.

Summary

2017-18 has been a tough year for Bracknell Forest SACRE. Changes of membership, particularly of the support partners have unsettled things, and the focus on the syllabus review, with a smaller number of people, has meant that there has been little engagement with anything wider. The educational environment is still challenging; the NATRE State of the Nation report, the interim report from the Commission on RE and the change in education secretary have all contributed to a sense that RE is at a watershed moment.

The development of the revised syllabus has, however, been positive. The teachers involved are very pleased with the new, much more succinct document, where each key stage is presented on a double-page spread with outcomes and key questions together. SACRE members were also satisfied that many of the suggestions that they made during the process were able to be incorporated into the finished document. The inclusion of Islam in Key Stage 2 and a non-religious worldview in Key Stage 3 reflects the changing demographic of Bracknell.

The new chair is keen to see SACRE engage more with RE and CW in the local authority area, particularly picking up the concern over low levels of aspiration seen among many students. The inclusion of outcomes in the revised syllabus will hopefully contribute to this.

As adviser to SACRE my hope is that the Local Authority will be more proactive in sharing OFSTED reports, concerns about RE or CW and other interfaith and school matters.

We will need to ensure that SACRE maintains the subscription to NASACRE, engages with the Commission on RE report when it is released and makes some response to the NATRE workforce survey.

Anne Andrews (Adviser to SACRE)

SACRE Membership and Attendance 2017-18

Group Represented	Name	8 November 2017	20 March 2018	Meeting Cancelled
Free Church (A)	Rev Jackie Case	Apologies	X	
Free Church (A)	Wayne Erasmus	Present	Apologies	
Free Church (A)	VACANCY			
Catholic (A)	Juanita Dunlop	Apologies	X	
Catholic (A)	Robyn Lynch	Present	Apologies	
Muslim (A)	Arfan Rashid	Present	Present	
Sikh (A)	VACANCY			
Hindu (A)	VACANCY			
Buddhist (A)	VACANCY			
Jewish (A)	Zvi Solomons	Apologies	X	
C of E (B)	Richard Harling	X	Resigned	
C of E (B)	VACANCY			
C of E (B)	VACANCY			
C of E (B)	Carol Logan	Present	Apologies	
Teacher/union (C)	VACANCY			
Teacher/union (C)	Madeline Diver (Vice chair)	Present	Present	
Teacher/union (C)	Deborah Owen	Present	X	
Teacher/union (C)	VACANCY			
Teacher/union (C)	Ruth Jackson	Present	X	
Teacher/union (C)	VACANCY			
Councillor (D)	Gareth Barnard (Char)	Present	Present	
Councillor (D)	Dorothy Hayes	Apologies	Apologies	
Councillor (D)	Moira Gaw	Present	Present	
Councillor (D)	Isabel Mattick	Apologies	Present	
Councillor (D)	Ian Leake	X	X	
Co-opted (Bahai)	Kathy Hadfield	Present	Apologies	
OFFICERS				
School Adviser	Steve Bogg	Present	Apologies	
Professional Adviser	Anne Andrews	Present	Present	
Clerk	Elizabeth Rich/ Emma Young	Present	Present	

Key:

Present	X= no apologies	Apologies given	Vacancy
Left/resigned	Observer	New member	