



## **Torbay SACRE Annual Report 2017/8**

SACRE's role is to provide advice and support, and to monitor the provision and quality of Religious Education and Collective Worship in Torbay schools

### **Forward by Chair of Torbay SACRE**

Once again, this annual report gives a full account of the important work being undertaken by Torbay SACRE, in the pursuit of high quality RE in our schools. It has been a great privilege to have been SACRE Chair during the year and to participate in the important, ongoing support for RE in our schools. With teachers and schools seemingly under more pressure and scrutiny than ever before, and with children's mental health high on the agenda, SACRE continues to make a valuable contribution in the provision of excellent religious education for our schools. The Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) programme continues to offer an important lifeline for many teachers of RE in Torbay and it has been a privilege to have held the role of LTLRE lead for the local hub over the last 7 years. It is exciting to note that LTLRE is increasingly being recognised nationally as a beacon of excellence in the way it provides teachers with grass-roots support and empowers new leadership in the subject.

SACRE continues to monitor the provision and quality of RE in Torbay schools, but the most significant work of the year saw work being started on a review of the Torbay RE Agreed Syllabus (to be carried out every 5 years). SACRE has expressed its real determination to ensure that provision is made for schools to access a more complete and professionally written syllabus, accompanied by high quality resources.

Torbay SACRE would like to congratulate students and staff in Torbay secondary schools for all the hard work put into studying for exams. RE continues to be a subject that the majority of our schools take seriously, recognising the important part it plays in helping to prepare young people for life in modern Britain.

The role of Torbay SACRE continues to be vitally important, enabling teachers to be supported in providing high quality Religious Education for all our young people. I look forward to the conclusion of our work on introducing an improved Agreed Syllabus for all state-funded schools in Torbay in 2018/9.

Corrine Guntrip

Chair of Torbay SACRE 2017/18

### **1 SACRE organisation**

#### **a) Membership**

SACRE would like to say a big thank you to Rev Peter Killick, Chaz Singh, Jan Mughrabi, Andrew Strachan, Gina Bourne, Heather Savini who stood down during this year. Thanks was expressed for their generous commitment and contribution over many years. A special thank-you goes to Heather who has served on Torbay SACRE for over 30 years.

SACRE is pleased to welcome new members: Carly Watson (Primary Teacher, Pentecostal Christian), Jacqui Stephens (Primary Head), Bill Becher (Quaker), Claire Bird (NATRE), Teresa Langler (NASUWT) and Maia Miller (Pagan community) as a co-opted member.

### **b) Professional support for RE**

During this year SACRE was well supported by Magenta Kolwicz and Debbie Horn. Ed Pawson has taken over the role of Adviser to SACRE from David Hampshire. The Local Authority has assured SACRE members that a clerk will always be made available to the group.

### **c) Humanist representation on SACRES**

SACRE discussed the implications of the change in proposed legislation made recently by the Welsh Government allowing SACREs to take on a representative from a non-religious belief system. This opens the way to invite Humanist to be represented in Group A on a SACRE in Wales and this also has implications for the way Humanism is represented on Torbay SACRE.

### **d) Local Authority funding for SACRES**

SACRE discussed recent comments made by Nick Gibb, Schools Minister about the importance of their remit. In response to a Parliamentary question Nick Gibb re-iterated the Government's commitment to SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences, stating that they will continue to be funded by Central Government.

SACRE thanks Torbay Local Authority for its commitment of £8000 to the SACRE budget. This is available for the commissioning of the SACRE adviser through Babcock, a subscription to Learn Teach Lead RE Hub, resources and attendance at conferences. SACRE will determine exactly how the budget is spent.

## **2 SACRE activity and updates**

### **a) Torbay Agreed Syllabus review**

This year saw us get a review of the Torbay Agreed Syllabus for RE under way, with evaluation of the current agreed syllabus carried out through Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) hub groups and via teacher surveys. At the June meeting SACRE members agreed how the process of Agreed Syllabus review should take place and the November 2018 meeting was designated as an opportunity to explore all options.

Discussions have been taking place with neighbouring SACREs and it is hoped that we will be able to collaborate with Devon, Plymouth and possibly Cornwall. Plans are being put in place for a new and fully supported syllabus will be in place for first teaching in September 2019.

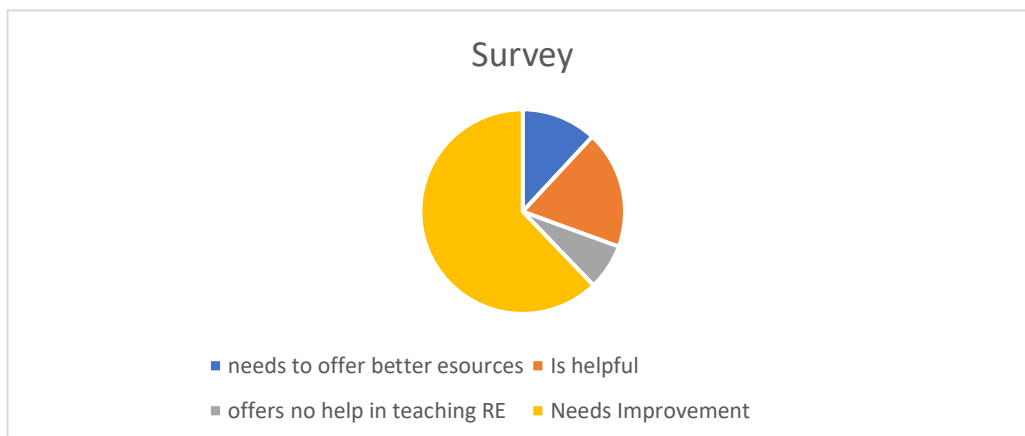


Chart 1: Survey of teacher attitudes to the existing Agreed Syllabus

### **b) Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE)<sup>1</sup>**

The project is a learning partnership project for Religious Education with a focus on creating a community of enquiry and professional development across the southwest peninsula.

The project aims to support all teachers of RE irrespective of their experience or qualifications through practical support at hub meetings and the opportunity to participate in projects that develop their teaching skills and the learning experiences of those they teach.

They look to partner with others and believe that encouragement and collaboration in research projects enables innovative practice.

LTLRE hub groups across the SW (including the Torbay hub) have become nationally recognised for the high-quality cross-phase support they offer for teachers of RE through termly twilight meetings and our annual conference. These networks have established themselves as important providers of professional development for teachers of RE, working through hub leaders, who are provided with 2 annual training days.

All hub leaders are teachers themselves who are developing their own practice. Some are Specialist Leaders in Education who work with Teaching Schools or support Initial Teacher Education Programmes, others work nationally supporting the teaching of RE. A key strength of the project is that hub leaders are equipped through specialised training giving them skills and expertise. In addition the annual conference is a springboard for much work in schools, offering all those who attend the opportunity to hear national figures in Religious Education. We are nearing the end of our funding streams (generously donated by St Luke's College Foundation), so the conference in 2018 would be the first not to offer a residential option.

LTLRE has expressed its thanks to Torbay SACRE for the financial support of £900 it has given to the programme this year, in recognition of the important support the network hub offers to develop high quality RE in schools across the Bay.

SACRE would like to thank Linda Rudge for the outstanding leadership role she has played as LTLRE Programme Director since 2011. Leadership of LTLRE has been reorganised, with Corrine Guntrip taking a larger role alongside Tatiana Wilson and Ed Pawson.

### **c) Commission on Religious Education**

SACRE has taken the opportunity to engage with some of the draft recommendations made in the Commission for RE's interim report (published in September 2017). The report recommends that learning in RE should be more focused on a worldviews approach, emphasizing the diversity of beliefs held by pupils in our schools, and showing increased awareness of non-religious perspectives in society as a whole. SACRE debated this idea and the RE hub has explored this with teachers. Teachers responded positively to the development of a worldviews approach to RE. SACRE also discussed recommendations to develop the role of SACREs to become more connected with local faith and belief communities. A set of responses was submitted to the national consultation to feed into the discussion about the future of RE in schools in England.

### **d) Training and CPD**

During the year, teachers in Torbay schools have been able to access professional development courses run by Babcock/LDP and the Diocese of Exeter. In particular the training offered to introduce the Understanding Christianity materials has been very well received, with twilight follow-up offered through the LTLRE hub group. Other courses included:

- Islam for KS2 and GCSE teachers, held at Exeter Mosque

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ltlre.org>

- Buddhism for GCSE and A level teachers, held at Hartridge Buddhist Monastery
- Teaching and leading RE in the Primary school phase
- Teaching and leading RE in the Secondary school phase

A new System Leader Qualification in RE and School Ethos, in collaboration with MarJon University, is being offered for 2018/9. This is heavily subsidised by St Luke's College Foundation.

#### **e) Diversity issues**

SACRE is pleased to support the work done by Devon and Cornwall Police to tackle Hate Crime, raising awareness about the Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime Pledge<sup>2</sup> in schools. SACRE also recommends that schools should adopt the use of the new LGBT toolkit<sup>3</sup>

#### **f) South West SACRE conference**

Torbay SACRE sent Bill Becher as a delegate to the SW SACRE conference at Dillington House in March 2018. Evaluations showed a very positive appreciation of the address by Professor Denise Cush, who was outlining the developing work of the Commission on RE. Delegates also gave a strong recommendation for the presentation by Stephen Pett on the Understanding Christianity resources produced by RE Today.

#### **g) Half termly RE newsletter**

The half termly RE newsletter continues to give extensive advice about cpd events, conferences and teaching resources for primary and secondary schools. This is emailed out to all schools and can be found on the RE pages of the Babcock/LDP website.

### **3 Interfaith work**

#### **a) Interfaith conference**

During the year a significant amount of preparatory work took place to plan a conference for Interfaith Week 2018 entitled 'Keeping Body and Soul Together' with the Bishop of Crediton (Sarah Mullally) as principal speaker. However, the conference had to be cancelled with Bishop Sarah's appointment as the next Bishop of London.

In its place a conference was planned for Interfaith Week 2018 on 'Dying Matters'. **This conference :**

- **offered opportunities to engage with speakers from across the spectrum of faith and beliefs**
- **be suitable for schools (in particular GCSE students) and is also open to the general public**

This conference brought together teachers, health professionals and members of diverse faith and belief communities to discuss: death and dying, the value of human life, end of life care, assisted death and palliative care. The talks and workshops were linked to topics featured in GCSE Religious Studies specifications.

#### **b) Faith and belief training course**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/advice/threat-assaultabuse/hate-crime/sign-the-pledge/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://new.devon.gov.uk/equality/lgbttoolkit>

SACRE, working alongside Devon Faith and Belief Forum (DFBF), is making plans to run another faith and belief visitor training course during the year 2018/9 to enable schools to access visitors for their RE curriculum. Details of current visitors can be found on the LTLRE website.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4 Holocaust Memorial Day**

Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 commemorations, themed *'The Power of Words'*, were hugely successful, with up to 1000 people being directly involved in events, and with students from at least 20 schools either participating or attending at a variety of events. The whole impact was hugely inspiring, with a special focus being the 'Inherit the Truth' concert and talk at Exeter Cathedral. 700 people, including students and teachers from schools in Torbay, listened with rapt attention to Anita Lasker-Wallfisch speaking about her experiences as a survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp and to her son Raphael Wallfisch playing exquisite cello music. A number of letters of thanks were received in recognition of the impact of the event, including messages from the Lord Mayor of Exeter and Dr Phil Norrey (Chief Executive of DCC).

Discussions with the Dean of Exeter Cathedral have been positive and arrangements made to hold the Opening Ceremony for HMD 2019 in the Cathedral.

#### **5 Standards in Religious Education**

One of the roles of SACRE is to monitor standards and compliance with the law for RE. This is not an easy task, given the lack of available evidence to help us understand where RE is thriving, and where it is lacking. Working alongside the Diocese of Exeter (C of E schools) and the Diocese of Plymouth (Roman Catholic schools) we are confident that RE is taken seriously in the vast majority of church schools across the Authority (given that religious education and collective worship form part of their Section 48 inspection frameworks). However, we lack significant mechanisms to fully understand the provision and impact of RE in community schools.

Data from exam results represents the only consistent external measure available, so this means that we lack coherent understanding of how schools are performing at EYFS-KS3. Even GCSE results only give us a retrospective view, given that they represent what has taken place in a school, not what is currently happening. In recent years results data for RE short course has been very hard to access, giving us an incomplete picture of KS4.

##### **a) GCSE Religious Studies and KS4 RE**

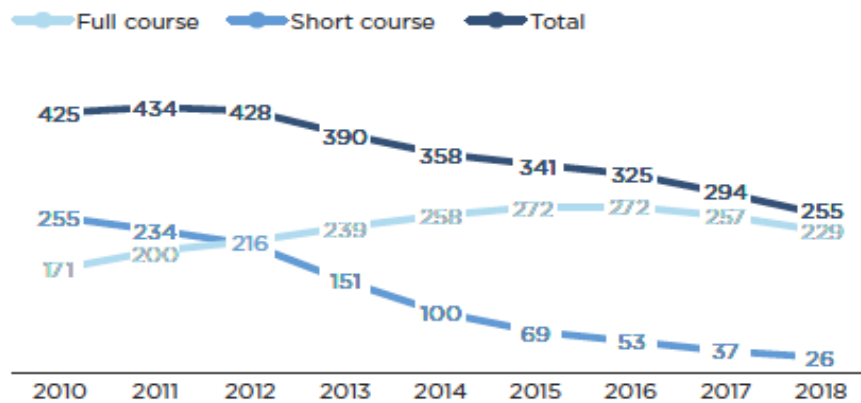
##### **Graph A Trends in GCSE entries for Religious Studies<sup>5</sup>**

Religious Studies GCSE entries in England 2010-2018 (thousands)

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ltlre.org/resources/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/final-report-religion-and-worldviews-the-way-forward-a-national-plan-for-re/>



Graph A shows the continued downward trend of Religious Studies exam entries nationally. RE is a statutory subject at KS4 and the most common way for schools to meet this requirement is by following accredited (GCSE) courses. The trends on the graph suggest that nationally, an increasing number of schools are failing to meet their statutory duty to make provision for all KS4 students to receive their entitlement to religious education.

**Table A Trends in Full Course RS GCSE entry in Torbay schools**

| GCSE Full Course entries (% of Y11 cohort) | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--|------|------|------|
| National                                   | 45   | 43   | 41   |
| Torbay                                     | 59   | 66   | 47   |

Table A shows that in Torbay GCSE RS exam entries have exceeded national entry levels for the last 3 years. However, there is still a significant downward trend in entry numbers over the period. This drop in GCSE entries suggests that an increasing number of schools are not providing all students with their entitlement to study RE in Years 10 and 11. SACRE is continuing to engage with secondary schools to remind them that RE is a statutory subject at KS4.

**Table C: Full course GCSE results**

| Average results | 9-7 | 9-5 | 9-4 |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| National        | 30% | 60% | 72% |
| Torbay          | 32% | 57% | 68% |

Table C shows that on average, students in Torbay schools are achieving grades equivalent to national results. However, in fact, there is a gulf in difference between the attainment of students in the Grammar schools, in comparison with students in other secondary schools. This is a significant concern and SACRE is keen to work with schools to explore how levels of attainment at GCSE can be raised.

**b) Monitoring RE in secondary schools**

Torbay SACRE continues to monitor standards in RE in secondary schools, specifically in schools where there are concerns about compliance, time allocation or low examination entry/pass levels for Religious Education.

Following analysis of data from the DfE’s school workforce survey (2017/8), SACRE wrote to several secondary schools to explore an apparent lack of provision for RE. In some cases it became clear that the schools are, in fact, teaching adequate RE, but are applying incorrect

codes when reporting details of their curriculum to DfE. In other cases, where the data accurately identifies a lack of RE in school timetables, SACRE has made it clear that it has concerns about compliance with statutory expectations.

In most schools contacted during the year there has been a positive response and the schools have shown an appreciation for the support offered by SACRE, leading to an expectation of further development of the curriculum opportunities for Religious Education. However, some schools remain resistant to these conversations.

#### **c) Monitoring standards and compliance in RE in Torbay primary schools**

Given the large number of Primary schools in Torbay and the lack of evidential data, it is impossible to fully monitor the provision of RE in all schools. However, SACRE undertakes to sample the RE in a number of schools every year, to check for compliance. SACRE members have been encouraged to participate in the process of exploring school websites to ascertain their provision for RE. A website search of schools across the Bay has revealed a variety of provision for RE. Several schools have been contacted to discuss the place of RE in the curriculum and to make an offer of a partnership visit.

In addition, Ofsted reports are regularly scrutinised, and where there are references to inadequate provision of RE, British values or SMSC, SACRE will contact the school to offer support.

#### **d) Monitoring faith group input into RE**

Torbay SACRE has a duty to monitor standards and quality of RE teaching in schools. As part of this remit SACRE evaluates external faith groups who deliver religious education in some of our schools. Two groups that take a significant number of RE lessons in schools in Torbay are Lynx and ICE, so SACRE invited members of their teams to give presentations about their work.

Tim Funnell from Lynx explained that they work in a number of secondary schools. He says they comply fully with safeguarding expectations and they endeavour to give a balanced view of Christianity, using a personal approach.

Nick Pitt from ICE (Initiative in Christian Education) explained how the group works in a number of Torbay primary schools, running Open the Book groups, lunchtime clubs, prayer spaces and discussion sessions. All schools workers are trained primary school teachers and they are fully compliant with safeguarding expectations.

### **6 Collective Worship**

There have been no formal complaints about Collective worship in schools and no applications for determinations.

## **APPENDIX 1: MEMBERSHIP OF Torbay SACRE 2018**

### **Group A: Christian and other religious denominations, not including Church of England.**

6 places:

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Mrs Sylvia Kennedy  | Roman Catholic |
| Ms Carly Watson     | Pentecostal    |
| Mr Yousif Al-Nassar | Muslim         |
| Mr Ras Virdee       | Sikh           |
| Bill Becher         | Quaker         |

**Group B: The Church of England**

4 places:

|                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mr Phillip Mantell    | Diocesan Board of Education |
| Rev Angela Sumner     | Diocesan Board of Education |
| Rev Ian Blyde         | Diocesan Board of Education |
| Mrs Charlotte Caluori | Diocesan Board of Education |

**Group C: Teachers' Associations**

12 places:

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Ms Claire Entwistle | NATRE       |
| Teresa Langler      | NASUWT      |
| Mrs Corrine Guntrip | NATRE/LTLRE |
| Jacqui Stephens     | NAHT        |

**Group D: The Local Authority**

4 places:

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Cllr Ms. Jane Barnby     | Councillor |
| Cllr Ms. Jackie Stockman | Councillor |
| Cllr Ms. Di Stublely     | Councillor |
| Cllr Mr Julian Parrott   | Councillor |

**Co-opted members**

Up to 4 places:

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| Maia Miller  | Pagan Federation |
| Penny Rouvas | Sikh             |