

TORBAY SACRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012



Chairman's Introduction

To become the Chair of any organisation or group is a great honour and privilege, for it suggests that one's views and understanding in at least one field are valued and appreciated by one's peers. However, such a position also brings with it the responsibility to ensure that the aims and objectives of that organisation are upheld and promoted. So, when the organisation in question is Torbay SACRE it is "not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly; but reverently, discreetly, soberly and in the fear of God, duly considering the cause for which (that organisation) was ordained" to misquote the marriage service (1928 revision of the Book of Common Prayer). SACRE was "ordained" to monitor and advise schools about RE and Collective Worship.

This is no small task, for religious education is involved with the study of a sphere of human endeavour which has occupied some of the greatest human thinkers from the earliest of times – before there was a written language, to the present day. Religion has challenged humans to think about such great issues as "Why there is something, not nothing?" "What is the purpose of life?" "What happens when we die?" The answers to these questions then lead to patterns of behaviour that affect how we think about and react with each other (in society), our world, and that which is beyond it. Thus it is involved with the physical, the intellectual and the spiritual aspects of life. Religion has given rise to our ethics and morals; it explains and underlies much of our artistic and musical endeavour. It has therefore shaped and continues to shape the formation and development of civilisation, not just in this country but also across the world and throughout history. In fact, there is hardly an aspect of human enterprise that is not touched in some way by religion (or the lack of it).

The task of educating others in any subject too, is no small task. For the means that we employ must be the best we can offer so that they strengthen and build, and equip others to take their place within our society. Through education we seek to help others to learn to think and make a contribution to the society and world we inhabit. Education is a vital factor in the wellbeing of any community or society as it has the capacity to break down ignorance, prejudice, and violence. No wonder a former Prime Minister declared his priorities to be "Education, Education, Education".

Thus the task of monitoring and advising the local authority and schools about this important aspect of twenty first century life is no easy task to be played with or dashed off lightly. Torbay SACRE takes its responsibility and duty very seriously. This means that in a time of radical change in the education and examination system within our country we have to be especially vigilant and prepared to comment. It is therefore unfortunate that our esteemed and well loved Advisor Mr Graham Langtree has been seriously ill and therefore unable to guide us through some of the developments in the education world and we take this opportunity to thank him for all he has done under the circumstances and

wish him a full and speedy recovery. We have been thankful too for the help and advice offered by Mr David Hampshire whose work is primarily in Cornwall and on the Isles of Scilly supporting their SACREs.

It is my belief that all the members of Torbay SACRE have contributed significantly to our work and that recognition of their contribution in terms of time and talents should be noted and I personally thank them for these. I would also like to take the opportunity to particularly thank Theresa Cornelius for her continued services as Clerk to SACRE and Mr Philip Mantell Diocesan Director of Education (Exeter Diocese) for his continued membership and input to the work of SACRE.

The following report, I feel sure, will illustrate our work over the past year and show our determination to contribute to the cause of religious education and collective worship into the future. We hope that our service to society as a whole and schools in Torbay in particular will continue. As a result it is our hope that pupils will be presented with the best in this very special area of the curriculum, by promoting good practice, encouraging development, and offering help and advice wherever we can.

Rev. I. H. Blyde BSc, BD, MA

Torbay SACRE Annual Report 2012

Advice to Local Authority (LA)

Support for SACRE has been a priority for Torbay Council but significant changes were made to that support as a result of the need to make budget cuts in 2011 – 2012. SACRE advised Torbay Council that it could reduce its costs by the merging of two roles, that of the professional officer to SACRE and the professional adviser to SACRE whilst keeping a distinct clerk to the council. SACRE was deeply aware that there was pressure for the Council to save money and it did not wish to be a disproportionate burden on the Council's finances at these difficult times.

SACRE was concerned as a result of its analysis of attainment of GCSE results that not all pupils were receiving their entitlement to RE. The Agreed Syllabus, in line with the National Framework for RE, clearly states that at Key Stage 4 (14 – 16 years old) that pupils should follow an accredited course in Religious Studies. Whilst it does not state that pupils have to be entered for an examination it is surprising that only 52% of pupils were. Entry rates differed greatly in some schools, with one school entering only 8% of its cohort in Year 11 and another over 98%. SACRE is advising that the LA sends out a clear message to its schools that RE is an entitlement for all pupils, not withdrawn by their parents, and that they should be ensuring that the Agreed Syllabus is followed in full. In terms of Academies, where boards of directors have adopted the Agreed Syllabus without emendation, the same entitlement applies. In its communication with all schools in the Authority's area the LA it should reiterate the importance of RE as a part of all schools' basic curriculum, whether by statute or by contract.

SACRE also advised that where a school's performance in RS examinations was below what could be reasonably expected from contextual data that the Authority should offer support to those schools to improve RE at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

Advice to the Secretary of State

At its Spring meeting SACRE discussed the current situation with regard to RE in the schools' curriculum. SACRE was concerned at the apparent downgrading of religious education as a result of the educational reforms that were being pursued by the current coalition government. As a result SACRE wrote to the Secretary of State setting out its concerns, especially in relation to the RE section of the government's website. The Department of Education (DfE) responded to SACRE's concern in a letter from its communications department. The letter stated the government's commitment to RE and saw it as having an important role in shaping the values and traditions of pupils at school.

SACRE, in light of further developments, were unsure what the DfE's commitment to RE meant in practice.

SACRE discussions

SACRE has had a series of full agendas during the reporting year 2011 – 2012. Agendas and minutes of the meetings are a matter of public record and are available from the Local Authority.

Throughout the year SACRE continued to discuss the national situation in relation to RE. It was clear that the government was not going to change its decision not to include Religious Studies in the English Baccalaureate and that the proposed English Baccalaureate Certificate will not include RS. Similarly, the pursuing of the Academies project meant that the role of SACRE as a statutory body was increasingly compromised and there was a danger that SACREs would become an anachronism. The feeling that RE was being further devalued was the removal of bursaries for prospective RE teachers. Given that RE is a statutory subject this would seem strange, especially as there were bursaries created for the prospective teachers of Latin and Greek that, though laudable, are not statutory. On a positive note SACRE discussed the work being developed by the RE Council of England and Wales and the development of an RE Quality Mark to promote publically recognised excellence in RE.

During the Autumn Term of 2011 SACRE discussed its Development Plan, as that was coming to an end. It was proposed that SACRE have a new Development Plan for 2012 – 2013. Unfortunately, due to a break in the professional support for SACRE the Action Plan has not been revisited. This will be a priority when SACRE meets in 2013. Naturally, any action plan will need to be agreed to by the Local Authority and this support will be crucial if it is to be effective.

SACRE also discussed its website development. Given the changes in Devon there clearly needs to be work done on developing a website for SACRE which can be used by schools in Torbay. This will be a priority for 2013.

SACRE also discussed Ofsted's guidance on RE and the role that SACRE might have in relation to the government's Prevent Strategy.

Some of the issues reported here will be further developed by SACRE in 2013.

Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

SACRE has continued to monitor standards and provision in RE. At its Autumn meeting in 2012 it looked in detail at GCSE and A Level results for schools and Academies in the area covered by the LA.

GCSE

In 2012 462 candidates from six schools sat GCSE Full Course RS. Table 1 presents their attainment by percentage at each grade.

GCSE Full Course

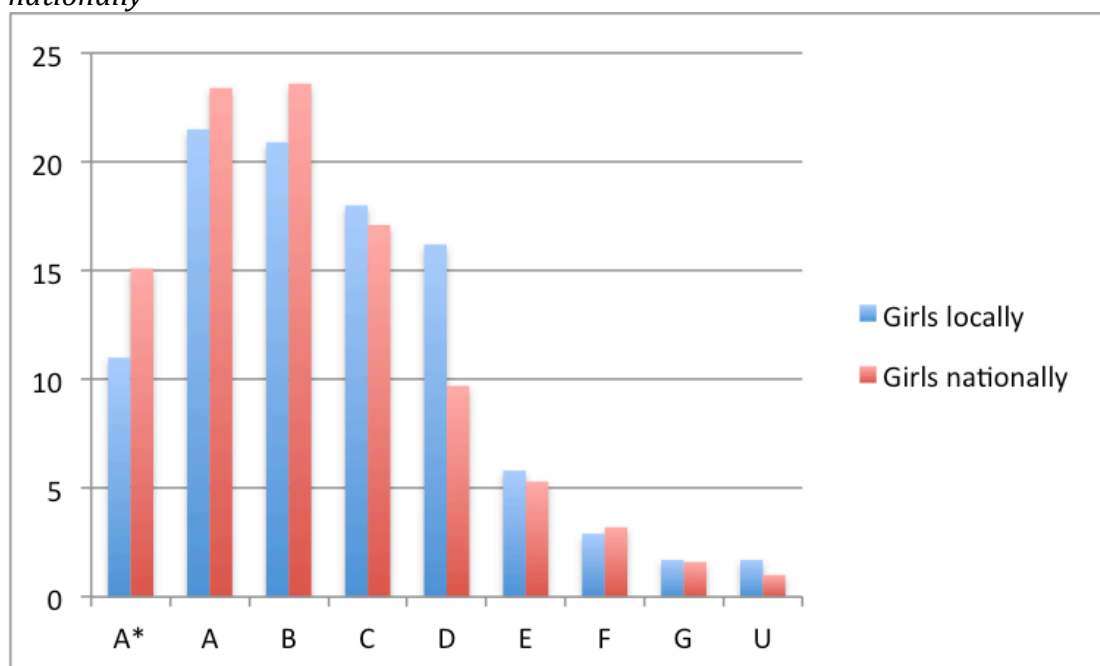
Table 1: *GCSE Full Course RS attainment 2012 in Torbay schools*

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
All	18.1	29.6	18.8	11.2	10.6	4.54	3.0	2.8	1.0
Boys	22.4	34.4	17.5	7.2	7.2	3.7	3.1	3.4	0.6
Girls	11.0	21.5	20.9	18.0	16.2	5.8	2.9	1.7	1.7

As can be seen boys' attainment at A* and A was particularly good in this year, as was the A* - C rate (81.5%). In fact boys not only out performed girls in 2012 locally they also out performed boys nationally (where the A* - C rate for Full Course GCSE was 67%).

When girls' attainment is looked at it can be seen, Graph 1, that they did not perform as well as girls nationally (A* - C rate of 71.4% of girls locally compared to 79.2% of girls nationally).

Graph 2: *Torbay girls' performance in GCSE FC RS 2012 compared to girls nationally*



SACRE recognises that this may be a feature of this year's results but will monitor the situation in the future.

Nevertheless, Torbay's A* - C rate for all candidates was above the national figure in 2012, 77.7% locally compared to 73.6% nationally. This is a cause for celebration and testament to the hard work of RE teachers in the Authority's area.

GCSE Short Course

This year two schools in Torbay entered 195 candidates for GCSE Short Course Religious Studies. Attainment by percentage is presented in Table 2, below.

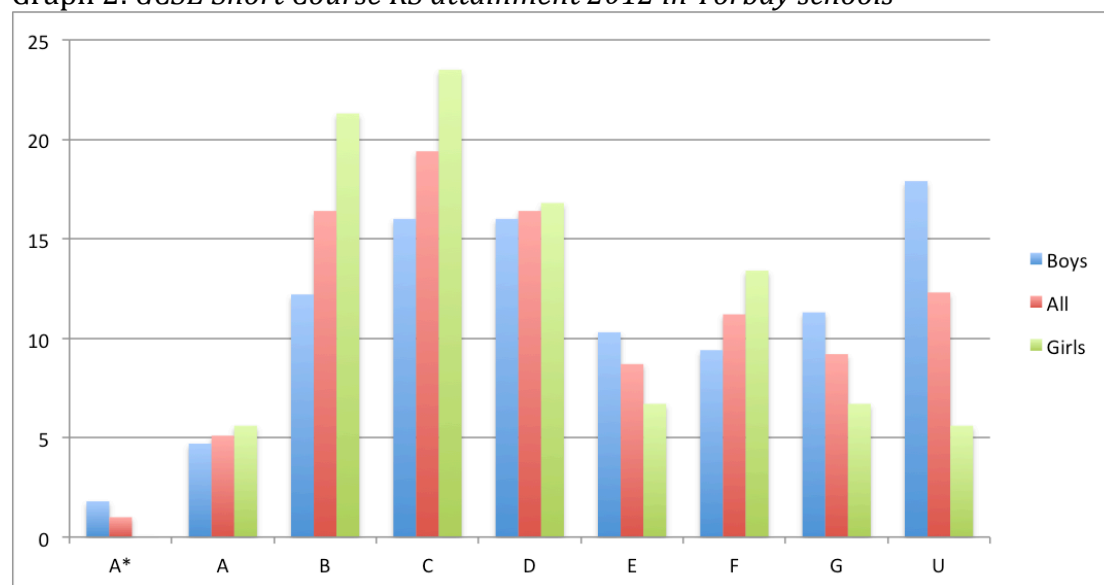
Table 2: *GCSE Short Course RS attainment 2012 in Torbay schools*

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
All	1.0	5.1	16.4	19.4	16.4	8.7	11.2	9.2	12.3
Boys	1.8	4.7	12.2	16.0	16.0	10.3	9.4	11.3	17.9
Girls	0.0	5.6	21.3	23.5	16.8	6.7	13.4	6.7	5.6

As can be seen 41.9% of candidates attained an A* - C grade in 2012 compared to 53.1% nationally. When boys' and girls' attainment are looked at separately it is clear that girls performed better than boys. Only 34.7% of boys attained an A* - C grade compared to 50.4% of girls. When boys locally are compared with their peers nationally they also do less well (34.7% compared to 53.1% nationally). Similarly girls did less well locally than nationally (50.4% compared to 60.8%).

SACRE recognises that the Short Course option carries with it particular issues, especially as it is often thought to be of little value by pupils and their parents. Nevertheless, those schools who provide this accreditation for RS should think carefully about the curriculum time for Short Course, often delivered in less than one hour per week, and the priority given to it by pupils. SACRE was concerned by the high percentage of U grades (see Table 2) in 2012 and saw this as indicative of pupils' attitudes to the subject and the accreditation. SACRE has asked the LA to work with one school in particular on this issue.

Graph 2: GCSE Short Course RS attainment 2012 in Torbay schools



GCSE RS's contribution to attainment at KS4 in Torbay

Table 3 sets out the comparisons in terms of A* - C grades in Torbay this year.

Table 3: Comparison of GCSE attainment in Torbay with GCSE RS 2012

	Candidates who attained A* - C in five GCSE subjects	Candidates who attained A* - C in five subjects including Eng. & Maths	Candidates who attained A* - C in RS FC GCSE	Candidates who attained A* - C in RS SC GCSE
All	82.0	59.4	77.7	41.9
Boys	78.8	54.5	81.5	34.7
Girls	85.5	64.7	71.4	50.4

In 2012 RS Full Course GCSE made a positive contribution to boys' attainment in Torbay. Given the concern about boys' attainment nationally this is to be

celebrated. Girls' attainment in RS Full Course had a negative impact on both girls' attainment and overall attainment in Torbay this year when the figures for five A* - C when all subjects are considered and may be something that the Authority may wish to pursue further. What is of note, though, was that girls did better than boys at both five A* - C grades, whether English or Mathematics were included, than boys in Torbay in 2012 but less well than boys in RS Full Course GCSE. It is not clear why this was the case but it is something that SACRE may wish to monitor in the future.

GCSE Short Courses do not contribute to the LA's five A* - C GCSE profile, whether English and Mathematics are included or not. Nevertheless, as can be seen from Graph 3 Short Course GCSE has a long way to go if it is to reflect the Authority's profile.

A Level (including AS Level)

In 2012 ninety-nine candidates sat GCE A Level RS, 49 boys and 51 girls from five schools. Table 4 sets out their attainment by percentage at each grade.

Table 4: *A Level RS attainment in Torbay 2012*

	A*	A	B	C	D	E
All	5.0	21.0	37.0	21.0	11.0	5.0
Boys	6.1	22.4	36.7	16.3	14.2	4.0
Girls	3.9	19.6	37.2	25.4	5.8	5.8

In 2012 boys (65.2%) in Torbay at A* - B grades did exceptionally well when compared with girls locally (60.7%) and other boys nationally (52.%). Girls in Torbay also performed better than their peers nationally (60.7% compared to 56% in England). SACRE sees this as a cause for celebration, especially boys' attainment in light of GCSE performance, and recognises that these results are a testament to the excellent work of RE teachers in Torbay's schools as well as the dedication of their students.

Advanced Supplementary (AS) Levels present a problem for analysis. Candidates stop at AS Level for two distinct reasons. Some choose to do an AS Level in the first year of 6th Form, more rarely second year, with the intention of having that qualification as part of a broader basket of qualifications that contribute to UCAS points for university entrance. Others stop at AS Level because they do not attain a high enough grade, or any grade, to reasonably progress to the full A Level. The following analysis is offered in light of these considerations. Table 5 sets out attainment in AS Level Religious Studies for 2012 for twenty-three candidates from five schools in Torbay.

Table 5: *AS Level RS in Torbay Schools 2012*

	A	B	C	D	E	U
All	0.0	17.3	17.3	30.4	21.7	13.0
Boys	0.0	15.3	30.7	15.3	23.0	15.3
Girls	0.0	20.0	0.0	50.0	20.0	10.0

What is of note is the relatively high percentage of candidates who were ungraded in 2012. This would compare with 7.8% for all candidates nationally

(England), 9.7% for boys and 6.9% for girls. Whilst the relatively small number of candidates in Torbay (23), compared to the national data set (28,682), means that small numbers make high percentages SACRE can rightly ask the question: should these candidates have been put in for the examination at all? Schools need to think carefully about the criteria that they use to accept students on A Level courses.

Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

Partnership with schools

SACRE has continued to promote the work of the South Devon RE Teachers' Network and was obliged to Andrew Strachan for his report to SACRE on their work. There was also a Heads of RE Conference in February 2012 to support those delivering RE in Torbay.

SACRE also supported the work of two groups looking at attainment in RE, a Primary Group and a Secondary Group. SACRE was especially grateful to Angela Sumner for her pivotal role in developing eighteen exemplifications of standards for primary RE teachers.

Torbay SACRE is also committed to supporting the Learn/Teach/Lead project, coordinated and supported by St Luke's College Trust. SACRE has received reports about the development of the project and will monitor its impact in Torbay over the two years of the project.

SACRE attendance

SACRE was quorate at all its meetings in the year under report.

Attendance by committee

Committee A	40%
Committee B	91%
Committee C	66%
Committee D	83%

Co-opted members 100%

SACRE thanks all of those members who have attended SACRE, contributed to its agendas and discussions during the year under report.

Membership and training

Torbay SACRE has nineteen members in its four committees, including co-opted members and five vacancies. SACRE has three Christian (non-Anglican) representatives in Committee A, the Roman Catholic Church, the Free Churches and Pentecostalist Churches, the latter currently being a vacancy. Given the nature of Torbay as an area, demographically and geographically the number of non-Christian faiths represented on SACRE is restricted to four. In Committee A there are representatives of the Sikh, Jewish and Muslim faiths and a member of the Baha'i faith is co-opted. SACRE also has a Humanist representative.

Torbay SACRE encourages participation of Teachers' Associations. Currently there are vacancies for the Association of School and College Leaders (formally SHA) and the National Association of the Teachers of RE (formally PCfRE).

Members of SACRE have had opportunities during the year to participate in training. After its AGM in 2011 members had a training opportunity led by Graham Langtree and in March 2012 members were able to participate in training at the South West SACRE's Conference in Somerset.

SACRE will look at its training needs during 2013 and look at ways of sharing that with schools in Torbay.

Professional and financial support

SACRE has had the support of a committee clerk for all of its meetings and professional support at two of its meetings.

SACRE would like to thank Mrs Theresa Cornelius for her excellent service to SACRE in the year under report. Mrs Cornelius has prepared the agenda and minutes for all of the meetings this year and has worked tirelessly on SACRE's behalf.

In November SACRE discovered that Mr Philip Mantell was moving from his post within Torbay Council to take up a position with the Diocese of Exeter. Whilst no longer working for the Authority, he has continued to provide high quality support during a very difficult period.

SACRE has benefitted from the professional support, for many years, of Mr Graham Langtree. Mr Langtree became the Adviser to Torbay SACRE in the Autumn of 2005, and was present at the Autumn 2011 meeting, for which he wrote the reports, and the Spring 2012 meeting but unfortunately he has been unable to play a full part in SACRE's work due to illness. SACRE wishes him well and a speedy recovery.

As a result of Mr Langtree's unavailability SACRE approached Mr David Hampshire, currently the RE Adviser for Cornwall, to support the Chairman of SACRE and SACRE. SACRE would like to thank Mr Hampshire for the work he has done for it during the year under report.

SACRE had a budget of £5,000 in the year under report that contributed to its costs and the costs incurred by members in the discharge of their duties.

Information and advice

SACRE has given no formal advice to its schools during the year under report. SACRE, though, has supported a number of events and projects during the year. The work done by its primary and secondary teachers to support the assessment of and attainment in RE is one example, as was Holocaust Memorial Day 2013. When SACRE's website is functional it will be easier for it to focus on its advice and to provide valuable information for its schools.

Complaints about RE in community and controlled schools

No complaints about religious education were received by SACRE in the year under report.

Review of the Agreed Syllabus

Torbay has been in partnership with Devon County Council and Plymouth City Council in terms of its Agreed Syllabus since the creation of the three authorities from the former Devon County Council. The review of that syllabus has been delayed by a year to see what shape the current government's curriculum reform will take and the response by the RE Council of England and Wales. SACRE realises that there is a need to review the current syllabus and will consider its options during 2013.

Collective worship

SACRE's remit in regard to Collective Worship is limited to community schools, Trust and Foundation schools which have no religious character.

SACRE has discussed the issue of Collective Worship and the paper produced this year by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the national association representing advisers of RE (AREIAC). SACRE recognised that there was an issue in relation to Collective Worship in some schools and a lack of expertise in many to enable Collective Worship to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

SACRE will discuss Collective Worship further in 2013, especially the help it can give to schools in ensuring they comply with the statutory requirement and the provision of training it might make available for visitors to collective worship in Torbay.

Monitoring of collective worship and tackling issues of non-compliance

SACRE has not been involved in the monitoring of collective worship during the year under report but will address this issue in 2013.

Complaints about collective worship in community schools

SACRE has not received any complaints about collective worship in community schools, or Trust and Foundation schools of a non-denominational character, in the year under report.

Determinations

A determination is a request from a school that it can, for a period of no more than five years without review, provide collective worship that is other than wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character for a group of its pupils. Community, Foundation and Trust schools without a religious foundation may make such a request. In the year under report there was no request for a determination from a Torbay school.

Contribution of SACRE to wider diversity agendas

Knowledge and understanding of local religious, cultural and ethnic minorities

Torbay SACRE is aware of the religious and cultural diversity within Torbay; given that Torbay's population is only in the region of 131,000. In 2001 98.8% of

people in Torbay identified themselves as White and 96.1% stated they were born in Britain, only 2.2% were born outside of the European Union and 1.6% within it (including the Republic of Ireland). 76.2% positively identified themselves as Christian with 14.9% stating that they had no religion and 7.9% not stating any religion. Of other religious traditions 0.2% identified themselves as Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish, 0.3% Muslim and 0.4% other.

When the Census 2011 data is published SACRE will then be able to see if there has been a significant change in this situation and will then look at what it might do in terms of advice for the Authority, its schools and other schools within its area.

Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social, racial and religious harmony and to community cohesion

SACRE is aware that RE, and Collective Worship can make a significant contribution of religious harmony and community cohesion. It is also aware that this is not the main purpose of RE or Collective Worship. SACRE recognises that the promotion of community cohesion within schools – which is still a statutory requirement – is the work of the whole school and its curriculum. Given the pressures on RE the review of the Agreed Syllabus should help the Authority and its schools, and those who adopt the syllabus, to see the positive contribution that RE should be making to this important agenda.

Links to local authority initiatives promoting diversity

SACRE has received reports about the work of TIFFY (Torbay Inter-Faith Forum 4 Youth). SACRE supports this work which in the year under report saw young people from Torbay going to Faithfest in Birmingham, to the Dramatic Encounters Day at Lupton House and a visit to meet with students preparing to teach RE and the University College Plymouth of St Mark and St John (Marjons). SACRE welcomes the hard work of the Torbay Inter-Faith Forum and hopes that it will continue to be able to support the work that it does in the Authority.

Summary

The year under report has been difficult for SACRE in many ways. The loss of its usual adviser for RE due to illness has made SACRE realise how much it has depended on his hard work, wisdom and dedication since SACRE started with the birth of the new unitary authority. Members, though, have responded to the challenge and it was good to see how many have contributed not only to its discussions but also on preparing and delivering reports in their own right. SACRE is rightly pleased with the GCSE Full Course RS results this year and the A Level RS results, especially for boys.

SACRE would like to thank all those who have supported its work during the year under report. SACRE is especially grateful, though, to the teachers of RE in Torbay in whatever type of school they find themselves. SACRE knows how fragile RE can be as a subject and that it is often the moral purpose of those who care about RE, both in primary and secondary schools, which means that it is not only delivered but delivered with enthusiasm and purpose.

Membership of SACRE

Committee A (Christian denominations other than the Church of England and non-Christian religious traditions)

Mrs Sylvia Kennedy	Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
Rev Peter Killick	Free Churches
Mr Chaz Singh	Sikh community
Mr Daniel Lewis	Jewish community
Mr Yousif Al-Nassar	Muslim community

Committee B (the Church of England)

Mr Philip Mantell
Mrs Angela Sumner
Rev. Ian Blyde
Mrs Charlotte Caluori

Committee C (Teacher Associations)

Mr Andrew Strachan	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Mrs Penny Millington	National Association of Head Teachers
Mrs Heather Savini	National Association of Teachers of Further and Higher Education
Mrs Lisa Hatchard	National Association of the Teachers of RE
Ms Gina Bourne	National Union of Teachers

Committee D (the Local Authority)

Cllr Mr Michael Hytche	Conservative
Cllr Bobbie Davies	Liberal Democrat
Cllr Nicole Amil	Conservative
Cllr Chris Lewis	Conservative

Co-opted members

Mrs Jan Mughrabi	Baha'i community
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