

Annual SACRE Report 2019-20

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
- ❖ Advising on 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 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs), the Diocese of Oxford and the five other SACREs in Berkshire.

This report sets out a summary of the work of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead SACRE over the academic year 2019-20. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_index.htm

The constitution and terms of reference can be found at:

http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/members_constitution.htm

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

The Clerk: Mark Beeley: mark.beeley@rbwm.gov.uk

The Local Authority Officer: Clive Haines: clive.haines@achievingforchildren.org.uk

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Introduction from the Chair

How does a SACRE measure its success, beyond meeting its core statutory commitments? The recommendations of the Commission on Religious Education¹ provide one possible yardstick. The Commission proposed in its reforms that SACREs should in future focus on:

- providing information about local sources of support available to RE teachers and provide CPD support for schools
- connecting schools with local faith and belief communities and other groups that support the study of Religion and Worldviews in schools
- developing programmes of study and supplementary materials to support the RE curriculum, for use within and across their local authority boundaries
- providing extra resources for schools on local faith and belief communities to support local studies
- providing further support for learning outside the classroom
- providing advice to schools and school providers on matters of religion and belief in schools
- facilitating school-to-school collaboration
- celebrating success including through offering prizes and competitions
- promoting good community relations within and outside schools.

This is of course an ideal. We are not close to being able to contribute in this ambitious way. It is important to note that the Commission also recommended that SACREs should be resourced at a sufficient level to enable them to carry out their activities effectively. Our own SACRE does not currently have that level of resources. This seems likely to form part of a future dialogue with the Council about the evolution of SACRE's role.

Nevertheless, in the very limited pattern of our own SACRE's activities, it is possible to see the nucleus of a more comprehensive programme for the future:

- Network meetings for RE teachers
- SACRE newsletters circulated to schools and teachers
- Pan-Berkshire collaboration with other SACREs on the development of resources to support the Agreed Syllabus.

SACRE continued to expand and enrich its membership with new appointments. And, after a debate lasting several years, in July 2019 SACRE finally took a significant step in recognising the importance of non-religious worldviews by co-opting a representative from the Windsor Humanists.

Finally, a more prosaic, but important, achievement this year was the approval of a new SACRE constitution, by SACRE itself at its July 2019 meeting, and by the Royal Borough in October 2019. The new constitution removes the long-standing confusion that had existed before by consolidating and updating the several earlier drafts. A copy of the approved new constitution is attached as Annex 1.

¹ **Commission on Religious Education – Final Report – Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward – A National Plan for RE** – September 2018. The entirely separate investigation led by Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead 'Westminster Faith Debates - A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools' published in July 2018 reached broadly similar conclusions, including about the future role of SACREs.

Advice Offered

a) Local Authority:

- The news from NATRE that some schools nationally had had poor Ofsted inspection grades because RE was not being taught or not taught with sufficient breadth was shared and it was agreed to ensure that the SACRE newsletter alerted schools again to their requirements to teach RE to all and provide a daily act of collective worship.
- Post Covid-19 the LA has been informed of the expectation that RE should quickly be restored to full curriculum delivery when schools restart fully.

b) Schools

- Support and advice are offered to schools through the RE Network meetings and the newsletters.
- All three planned network meetings took place, though the content of the summer term meeting had to be altered. The first of the year gave teachers an opportunity to share resources and teaching materials that they found useful, while the second focused on the question of Intent in the RE curriculum and schools were advised that the curriculum for RE needed to be coherent and show the way that units of work linked to each other. The third was going to focus on implementation and impact but instead focused on resources for teaching online and CPD for teachers.
- The SACRE newsletters have offered information on training courses available locally, Ofsted, festivals, Inter-faith week, resources for online teaching and CPD, collective worship and the work of SACRE.

c) Government:

- No correspondence with the government has taken place.

Standards, quality & provision of RE

a) Public exams:

- As results were based on Centre Assessed Grades this year, they are not being made public or used to hold schools to account.

b) Attainment in RE:

- With the closure of schools to all but the most vulnerable and key worker children, there is no way of ascertaining the standards reached in RE outside of examination groups.

c) Quality of provision:

- SACRE sent a questionnaire to schools in the latter half of the academic year to find out about provision in RE during the period of reduced schooling. 10 schools responded, though 8 of those were Church of England schools outside the direct responsibility of SACRE. The conclusion reached by SACRE is that it is likely that schools only responded where they were complying with the legal requirements. All of those that responded were offering RE either online or in class and in some cases both. There are concerns that learning may have been lost, but a recognition that the true scale of the challenge will not become clear until pupils return to school.

d) Withdrawal:

- No schools have sought help with issues surrounding withdrawal from RE.

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

Agreed Syllabus

- a) 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:
- As for RE, the survey responses showed that the schools responding were offering some collective worship. As only 10 schools responded SACRE surmises that many other schools are not providing much in the way of collective worship for their pupils.
- b) Quality:
- No information has been obtained on the quality of collective worship. Ofsted reports have not mentioned it where these took place, and as visiting schools has not been possible no information is available.
- c) Determinations:
- No requests for determinations have been received this year and there are no pre-existing determinations to review.
- d) Complaints:
- No complaints have been received about either the standards or quality of CW

Management of SACRE

- a) Attendance:
- Attendance at SACRE has been good this year, with very few absences, either with or without apologies.
 - Chair and Vice chair have remained the same, as has the LA officer and a new clerk has been appointed.
 - The intention was to hold two of the meetings this year in places of worship. The synagogue in Maidenhead hosted the first meeting of the year, but the one in the Gurdwara was cancelled due to Covid-19.
 - It had been decided in the previous year to begin the meetings with a reflection and this continued in the autumn, but not at the summer term online meeting.
- b) Membership and training:
- More members have been recruited, and therefore apart from in Group D there are fewer vacancies. However, the final meeting of the year had several councillors in attendance as observers, so it is hoped that at least two of them will be appointed by the LA.
 - The second meeting of the year was cancelled as the Covid-19 pandemic was beginning to take hold, and as yet no one was ready with an online platform. By the

summer meeting this was rectified, and the meeting took place online and was broadcast. This drew some observers, and a teacher has expressed an interest in joining SACRE as a result.

- After a presentation from a member of the local humanist group, Anthony Lewis was co-opted onto SACRE.

c) Pan-Berkshire SACRE hub

- Windsor and Maidenhead has continued to work with the other Berkshire SACRES (Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham, Slough, and Bracknell) as part of the hub. The major project has been the Westhill funded Real People, Real Faith film project. Four of the six planned filming sessions took place in places of worship before lockdown. Teachers interviewed members of the communities using questions from the syllabus. The film maker has made the first cuts available so that three teachers are able to start work producing the first round of notes. TrueTube has been approached as a host and hopefully the films will be available early in the new academic year.

d) Complaints:

- No complaints have been received this year about either RE, CW or the operation of SACRE.

Contribution to Local Authority Wider Agenda

a) Community Cohesion:

- All the interfaith group conversations organised by the Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum have been advertised to teachers through the SACRE newsletter, but clearly there have been fewer initiatives for people to participate in.
- SACRE ensured that the voices of SACRE members were heard in the final meeting of the year to learn about how schools and faith communities had coped with the pandemic.

Summary

It has been hard to achieve much this year outside of the Pan-Berkshire SACRE hub project, which has involved many teachers and venues in the local authority area. This project will enable teachers and pupils to engage with the diversity and lived reality of local religious communities.

It is encouraging that many of the vacancies have been filled and moving the meeting online may mean that more people are able to attend, as travel and parking problems are eased.

It will be interesting to see how quickly SACRE can find out more about what is happening in schools when they are fully open, and how well teachers engage with online training as a more regular occurrence. I am optimistic that a plan can be put together to ensure that schools help pupils to catch up and that the progress made in RE recently is not lost.

Anne Andrews (Adviser to SACRE)

SACRE membership and Attendance 2019 - 20

| Name | Group | 19-11-19 | 17-03-20 Meeting Canceled | 11-07-20 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|---------------------------------|----------|
| Vacancy | Baptist (A) | | | |
| Clare Theobalds | Free Church (A) | X | | P |
| Margaret Dudley | Methodist (A) | P | | P |
| Barbara Meaney | Roman Catholic (A) | P | | P |
| Ila Gangotra | Hindu (A) | P | | P |
| Saghir Ahmed | Islam (A) | P | | X |
| Hilary Harris | Judaism (A) | P | | P |
| Ravinder Singh | Sikh (A) | P | | P |
| Chris Sayers | Buddhist (A) | P | | P |
| Michael Gammage (Chair) | Baha'i (A) | P | | P |
| Anthony Lewis | Humanist (Co-opted) | P | | P |
| Rev Darcey Chesterfield-Terry | Church of England (B) | P | | P |
| Rev Sally Lunch | Church of England (B) | A | | P |
| Karen Butler (Vice-Chair) | Church of England (B) | P | | P |
| Deborah Firth | Primary (C) | P | | P |
| Vacancy | Primary (C) | | | |
| Vacancy | Secondary (C) | | | |
| Vacancy | Secondary (C) | | | |
| Louise Ceska | HT Secondary Academy (C) | P | | P |
| Richard Rhodes | HT primary (C) | P | | P |
| Cllr Donna Stimson | RBWM (D) | P | | P |
| ? | RBWM (D) | | | |
| ? | RBWM (D) | | | |
| Clive Haines | Local Authority Officer | A | | P |
| Mark Beeley | Clerk | P | | P |
| Anne Andrews | Professional Advisor | P | | P |

Key:

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

Appendix 1 Constitution

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Constitution

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is established in accordance with Section 390-397 of the 1996 Education Act (as amended) by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (“the authority”) acting as the local education authority.

1. Duties and Powers

- a) The SACRE shall advise the authority on matters connected with collective worship in schools within the Royal Borough and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus in all maintained² schools as the authority may refer to it or as it may see fit.
- b) SACRE shall in particular be free to advise on methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers. SACRE may itself offer training and support for religious education teachers, and for those responsible for arranging collective worship, in the Royal Borough’s schools.
- c) The SACRE shall on an application made by a headteacher of any school within the Royal Borough, after consultation with the governing body, consider whether it is appropriate for the requirement for collective worship to be of a wholly or broadly Christian character to be disappplied in the case of that school, or in the case of any class or description of pupils at that school. The SACRE shall arrive at its decision and communicate it to the headteacher in accordance with the provisions of Section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1998.
- d) The representative groups on the SACRE, other than that representing the authority, may at any time require a review of any Agreed Syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority.
- e) The SACRE shall, each year, publish a report on its proceedings. The report shall specify any matters on which the SACRE has given advice to the authority and the reasons for offering the advice.
- f) The SACRE shall take any action assigned to it by the authority in relation to the consideration and disposal of any complaint concerning collective worship or religious education in compliance with Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988.

2. Membership

The members of SACRE (other than co-opted members) shall be appointed by the authority so that they shall represent the following groups:

Group A - Christian denominations and other religions

The Free Churches - 3

The Roman Catholic Church - 1

Hinduism - 1

² Academies and Voluntary Aided schools, and private schools, fall outside of SACRE’s remit, though Voluntary Controlled schools must use the Agreed RE Syllabus.

Islam - 1
Judaism - 1
Sikhism - 1
Buddhist – 1
Bahá'í - 1

Group B

The Church of England – 3

Group C – Teacher Representatives

Key Stage 1 – 1
Key Stage 2 – 1
Key Stage 3 – 1
Key Stage 4 – 1
Headteacher – 1
Academy Representative - 1

Group D – Local Authority Representatives

Councillors – 3

3. Terms of Office and Procedures

- a) Members of the SACRE shall serve a period of four years from the date of their appointment. They shall be eligible for reappointment by the authority at the end of a term of office. They may resign at any time.
- b) Any member who fails to attend 3 consecutive ordinary meetings of the SACRE other than for a reason approved by the SACRE shall cease to be a member. Substitutions for absent members shall not be permitted unless with the approval of the SACRE.
- c) The quorum shall be 5 members, with each Group represented by at least one member.
- d) The validity of the proceedings of the SACRE, or of any of its representative groups, shall not be affected by a vacancy in the membership or on the grounds that a member does not at the time represent the denomination, religion or association she or he was appointed to represent.
- e) The SACRE shall elect annually at its first meeting of the academic year, a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among its members.
- f) The SACRE shall meet three times per year, or more frequently as determined by the SACRE.
- g) SACRE will always seek to find a consensus satisfactory to all members, and strive for unanimity. In the event that this is not possible, and that a decision must be made, then a vote shall be held. Each Group shall have one vote. In the event of a tied vote, the decision of the Chairman shall be final.
- h) SACRE may invite up to three individuals to serve as co-opted members to assist its work. These co-opted members shall be appointed for a term not exceeding four years. They may be invited to serve additional terms. They shall have no voting rights.

- i) SACRE will be serviced by a Clerk provided by the authority and supported with appropriate resources including authority officers and an Adviser for Religious Education.

4. Complaints

Any complaint about SACRE as a whole, or about individual members in their capacity as SACRE members, shall normally be dealt with by SACRE initially and only referred to the authority where necessary.

Alternatively, complaints about SACRE as a whole, or about individual members acting in their capacity as SACRE members, can be made to the Local Authority by writing to The Complaints Team, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road Maidenhead SL6 1RF or by calling 01628 683857.