



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SACRE Annual Report**  
September 2018 - July 2019



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# SACRE

## Wokingham Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

### The Chair's Foreword

On behalf of all the members of the Wokingham SACRE, I would like to thank all the teachers, schools, subject leaders and various members of faith communities for their continued and dedicated efforts in making the standard of Religious Education in Wokingham a beacon of excellence.

The Wokingham SACRE continues to have marvellous membership and year on year I'm amazed by the effort and devotion of the the members, who always do a high quality job and often on limited resources. During the year we met three times (once each term) and the Vice-Chair and I attended 3 Berkshire SACRE Hub meetings.

This year we began an exciting new chapter working with a new advisor, Angela Hill, who brings a wealth of experience with her and some exciting ideas to help the Wokingham SACRE in its endeavours to provide the very best Religious Education for our young people in Wokingham.

In 2018-19 we introduced the new locally agreed syllabus; under the guidance of Jan Lever the 6 Berkshire SACREs produced a Pan-Berkshire syllabus that is fit for the 21st Century.

We look forward with optimism and enthusiasm; the Pan-Berkshire Hub has been awarded £4,000 to undertake a project called, 'Real People, Real Faith.' More on that in the report, but it's exciting.

Finally I'd like to thank Wokingham Borough Council for their continued support of the SACRE.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and get a sense of work we have completed this year.

Stephen Vegh, Chair: Wokingham SACRE

### 2018-19: The Context

#### RE teaching in Wokingham schools

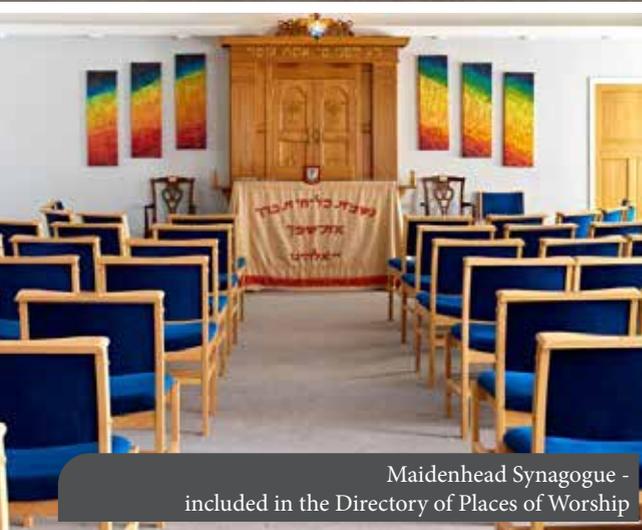
This year saw the implementation of the new Pan-Berkshire RE syllabus. The syllabus has been well-received and has enabled teachers to streamline the statutory content for RE. Many schools are using Discovery RE to support the delivery of the new syllabus. Teachers are also able to access a range of free support materials developed by the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub. These materials offer guidance from Early Years Foundation Stage up to Key Stage 3. These support materials can be found here:

<https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/religious-education/re-syllabus/>

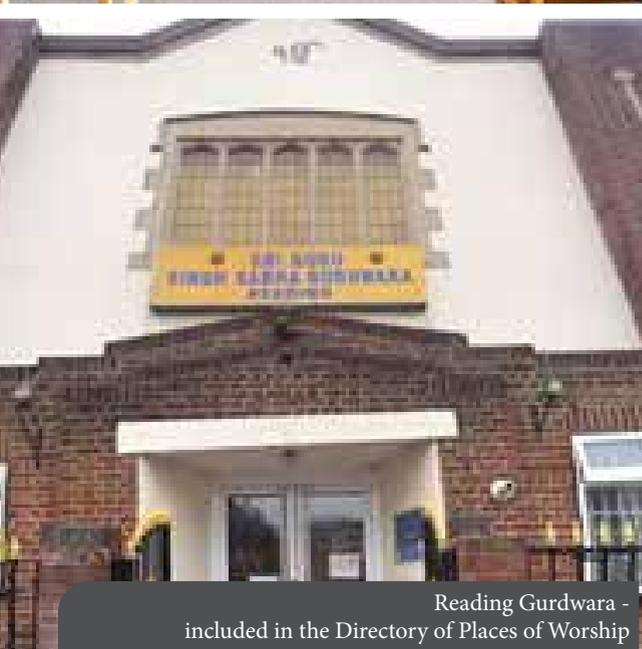
The Pan Berkshire Hub continues to review and add to the guidance materials to further support teachers and finalise assessment processes. Teacher networks and CPD also offer further support to teachers in the implementation and development of their approach to the new syllabus.



Maidenhead Mosque -  
included in the Directory of Places of Worship



Maidenhead Synagogue -  
included in the Directory of Places of Worship



Reading Gurdwara -  
included in the Directory of Places of Worship

## The Wokingham SACRE

The Wokingham SACRE continues to take very seriously its role in supporting schools and teachers, and works closely with the Borough Council to offer this support.

The SACRE has met once each term to progress its work, structuring its work each year through an agreed action plan. The SACRE has continued to appreciate the support of Wokingham Borough Council. The funding offered enables support for teachers and schools to continue.

The SACRE is indebted to Emily Waddilove, WBC link officer (Teaching and Learning Advisor) for her continued support and overseer role. The SACRE is also grateful to have an exceptionally dedicated and very able clerk, Anne Coffey, who always goes beyond the call of duty to serve the SACRE and advance its work.

The SACRE has welcomed three new members this year: Faith Kirby and Michaela Wright (secondary RS teachers at St Crispin's and The Piggott schools respectively) and Julie Easton (teacher at St Nicholas CE Primary School). The SACRE is actively seeking to recruit members to fill vacancies for Buddhist and Roman Catholic representatives in Group A, and for two more teachers to join Group C. The dedicated Chair, Stephen Vegh, an experienced teacher and leader of Religious Education (currently teaching at The Brakenhale School), and equally committed Vice Chair, Beth Rowland, experienced local councillor, led the SACRE admirably through the very busy and productive year of meetings.

This year the SACRE has appointed a new RE Advisor, Angela Hill, to provide professional support. Angela joined us in March, and is an experienced teacher and leader of RE, having worked in a number of secondary schools in Wales. She is currently a full-time national RE Adviser at RE Today Services. Angela is one of the Wokingham SACRE representatives on the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub.

The SACRE continues to keep in touch with schools and to support them to fulfil their students' entitlement to high quality RE, mindful of the pressures upon teachers and school timetables. The SACRE listens to teachers through termly network meetings, training events and the teacher representatives on the SACRE, and the support it offers is informed by these conversations. Elected members consider the SACRE's work in the light of the bigger Council purpose, and support it whole-heartedly. Wokingham has continued to be a core member of the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub, offering its meeting rooms regularly as a venue for both meetings and training events.

SACRE meetings continue to be synchronised across all 6 Berkshire SACREs, with Hub meetings in-between, allowing six meeting points each year with a flow of information and dialogue between the Hub and the SACREs. This was especially important in the syllabus review, and continues to be important in allowing discussion and feedback around the implementation of the new syllabus across the unitary authorities.

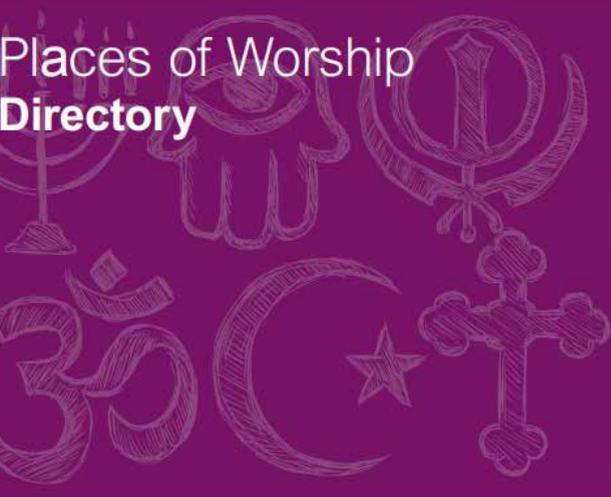
The support of Wokingham Borough Council enables the SACRE to communicate directly with schools through the regular schools' e-newsletter and channels of correspondence. This enables good attendance at training events and network meetings.

## The work of the SACRE in 2018-19

### Raising awareness

The SACRE continues its campaign to raise awareness of its work, in order to encourage more teachers and other stakeholders to engage with the SACRE so that they can benefit from the support available and contribute to shaping the work of the SACRE. As well as updating the 'What is a SACRE?' leaflet and disseminating it to councillors, governors, teachers and newly qualified teachers, there is also new information

# Places of Worship Directory



Christianity

Buddhism

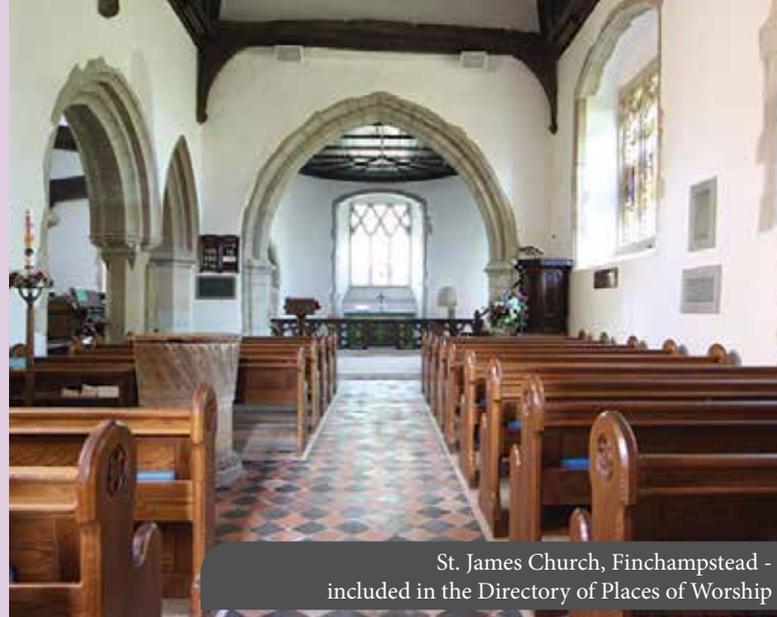
Hinduism

Islam

Judaism

Sikhism

Other



St. James Church, Finchampstead - included in the Directory of Places of Worship

on the SACRE and RE web pages on the Wokingham schools hub - <https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/religious-education/> - including the new locally agreed syllabus and the updated SACRE leaflet.

## Represented nationally

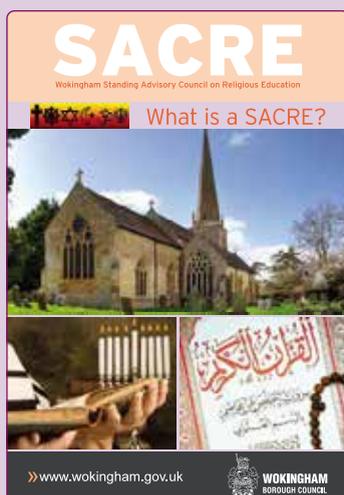
The Wokingham SACRE always has representatives at the annual NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) AGM (annual general meeting) and conference. This year Michaela Wright (formerly Watters), Head of RE at the Piggott School and our new advisor, Angela Hill attended on the SACRE's behalf.

The conference this year took place in Manchester and the title was 'Cohesive Communities and Effective Partnerships: RE near and far.' The conference included key-note addresses by Peter Bull and Dr. Julian Stern, as well as coverage of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework, and reflections on the Commission on Religious Education. NATRE (National Association of Teachers of Religious Education) work with the DfE was also featured during the conference. Further details can be found at <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/conference-and-agm/2019>

## Keeping informed

The SACRE invites people to offer presentations at its meetings in order to keep up to date with developments in education nationally and locally. This year, SACRE welcomed Julian Bushell, Chair of the Secondary Federation, and Sherrie Newell, Manager of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, who gave an interesting presentation about the the board's work, and the agencies with whom they work.

'Opportunities for pupils' personal, social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education are well developed.'  
- Ofsted report on a Wokingham secondary school.



## Teacher network meetings

Primary teachers have again been given the opportunity to attend termly network meetings, offering updates on both national and local developments in RE. These meetings are very much appreciated by teachers and continue to be well attended. Teachers have worked to develop the appendices for the syllabus during this year's meetings, and all the syllabus support materials have been developed by practising teachers. These meetings provide valuable time and space to share good practice, as well as to feed back to the SACRE and the Hub on the implementation of the new syllabus. At network meetings, teachers have reported that they like the new syllabus and are all in the process of implementing it.

SACRE members are encouraged to attend network meetings and some attended during this year. Teachers at one meeting were able to enjoy SACRE member Julie Easton's presentation on her Farmington Fellowship project.

This year the primary network meetings, hosted at Nine Mile Ride Primary School, have continued to be well-attended, with an average of 13 teachers at each one, and 22 schools represented over the course of the year. (There were 15 delegates from 15 schools at the October meeting; 11 delegates from 11 schools at the February meeting; and 13 delegates from 13 schools in June. 12 schools were represented at just one network meeting, 5 were represented on 2 occasions and 5 were represented at all 3 meetings.)

The teachers who attend, who have varying levels of experience, are always enthusiastic, and open to sharing their ideas and concerns. There is a friendly and very supportive ethos at the meetings.

'Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported. For example, a visitor was invited to the school to speak about her beliefs as a Muslim. Pupils also celebrate a variety of festivals, such as Diwali, through their religious education.'  
- Ofsted report on a Wokingham primary school

## Primary RE Subject leader training

Training for Primary RE subject leaders was attended by 14 teachers, who gave very positive feedback. Teachers reported that the training gave them greater confidence to embark on

the role of RE subject leader and afforded them with practical guidance and ideas for resources.

'Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and is embedded throughout the curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain through the successful promotion of British values across the curriculum and the development of a strong sense of equality and personal responsibility.'  
- *Ofsted report on a Wokingham secondary school.*

## Secondary teachers

Network meetings are not considered the best means of support for secondary RE teachers. Instead, SACRE provides support to fund their biennial training event. Every two years a Wokingham secondary school hosts an RE-specific training day, with national speakers and workshops, as part of the Secondary Federation common INSET day.

This event took place in February 2019 and gave secondary teachers opportunities to meet with key R.E. contributors including: other teachers and leaders of RE across the federation; primary colleagues; 'Love for Life'; members of Wokingham SACRE; 'RE Inspired' and others. Teachers participated in a workshop on how to teach RE successfully to students with ASD, based on Julie Easton's Farmington Fellowship research.

Another workshop on 'Creativity in the RE classroom' was delivered by Debbie Marris, teacher of RE and Coordinator of SIAMS, who offered some practical ideas to promote creativity in RE to encourage better student engagement. Teachers also benefitted from an update on 'the political landscape and RE'.

Mary Shaw, RE leader at Bearwood Primary School attended the event to provide information to secondary teachers about RE teaching in primary schools. She fed back to the primary network that the day was very positive, with learning taking place between secondary and primary teachers, which was particularly useful in terms of planning good RE around transition.

'Leaders ensure that the curriculum includes opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils' moral and social development is strong.'  
- *Ofsted report on a Wokingham primary school.*

## The Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub

The Hub continues to thrive, with meetings held each school term.

The Hub has been working hard with teachers on the design and development of support materials for the new syllabus, which has been the main focus of their work this year. As mentioned above, the syllabus support materials can be found here:

<https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/religious-education/re-syllabus/>

The Hub successfully bid for a £4,000 Westhill/NASACRE award. These awards are for local projects involving schools. The awards are funded by grants from the Westhill Foundation and managed and coordinated by NASACRE. The exciting project that the Hub is undertaking is called 'Real People, Real Faith' and aims to create some short filmed interviews

with faith members in places of worship. These interviews can then be used in classrooms across Berkshire, and maybe even further afield, to enhance pupils' understanding of the rich diversity of lived faith in the area. The questions for the interviews will be inspired by the Pan-Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus 2018-2023. Secondary and primary pupils and teachers are working with the Hub to develop these valuable teaching materials.

The Hub members have set prospective dates for a conference in summer 2020, when all Hub projects can be reviewed and celebrated

'Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.'  
- *Ofsted report on a Wokingham primary school.*

## SACRE Projects

### 'Crossing the Bridges' update

Although the main work on the Crossing the Bridges project has been completed, and a wealth of materials to support school visits to places of worship are now available on the Wokingham schools hub (<https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/religious-education/teaching-materials/crossing-bridges/>), work on updating and expanding the Directory of Places of Worship has been undertaken this year.

The Directory is now reported by Wokingham teachers to be in regular use, and comments from visits or contacts is fed back through teacher networks.

The SACRE is particularly grateful to member Catherine Jinkerson for her continuing hard work, not only on updating and expanding the directory, but also in reaching out to her contacts from the project to encourage visitors from faith communities to contribute to assemblies in schools.

In order to evaluate the impact of the directory, and as a general part of its monitoring, the SACRE reviews data on educational visits undertaken by Wokingham schools. From September 2018 to July 2019, there were 83 school visits which had RE as the main purpose. This is slightly fewer visits than during 2017-18, but an improvement on the previous two years.

### Previous years' figures are as follows:

2017-2018: 94 trips with RE as the main purpose

2016-2017: 64 trips with RE as the main purpose

2015-2016: 42 trips with RE as the main purpose

This data is for both primary and secondary school visits and includes visits to over 40 different places.

'Pupils benefit from rich opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding in an age-appropriate way. They demonstrate these values in their mature and thoughtful interactions with each other and the adults around them. For example, in religious education, pupils reflected on how they could be a friend to the paralysed man in the story they were learning about.'  
- *Ofsted report on a Wokingham primary school*

## GCSE Examination Results

The pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE states that during Key Stage 4 "All pupils must receive Religious Education and should follow an externally accredited course for Religious Studies e.g. GCSE, or an alternative, well-structured and challenging programme of Religious Education. Schools are encouraged to facilitate examination entry for as many students as possible."

67% of the Year 11 cohort in Wokingham was entered for the Religious Studies GCSE examination in 2019, an increase on last year's 61.9%, and a significantly higher percentage than the 42% entered nationally. Of those Wokingham students entered, 28% achieved a 7+ (A or A\* equivalent) grade, in line with the national figure of 29%, and an improvement on the 24% who achieved 7+ grades in the borough last year.

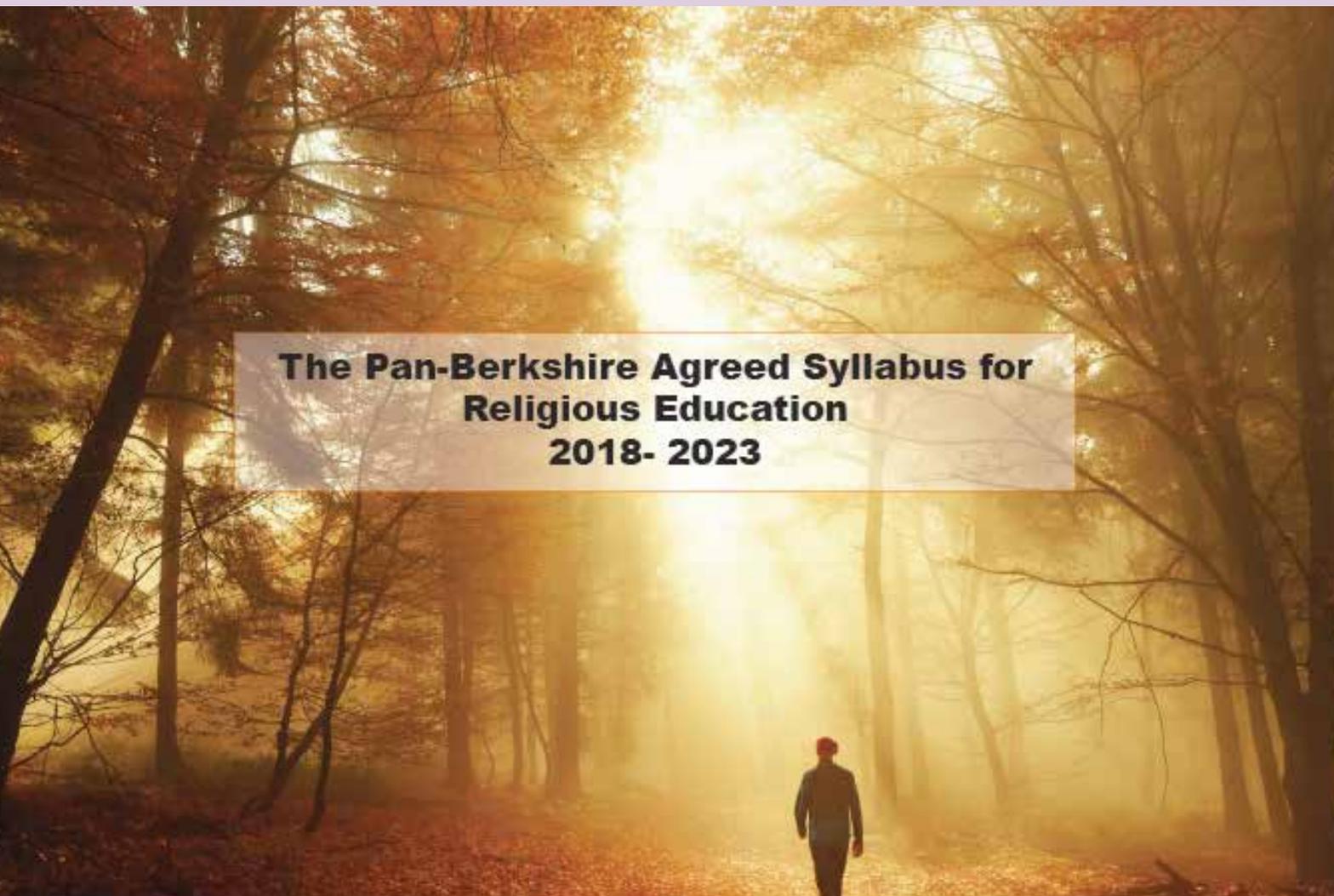
### Religious Studies GCSE outcomes 2019

	% of cohort entered <i>(2018 data in brackets)</i>	% achieving Grade 7+ <i>(2018 data in brackets)</i>	% achieving Grade 4+ <i>(2018 data in brackets)</i>
Wokingham	67 (61.9)	28 (24)	74 (73)
National	42 (43.7)	29 (28)	71 (71)

The percentage of students in Wokingham gaining grade 4 (C equivalent) or above was 74%, above the national equivalent of 71%.

In summary, as in previous years, Wokingham schools achieved results in line with national results, and accomplished this despite entering a significantly larger percentage of the cohort than was entered nationally.

(Data from FFT Aspire and NCER)



# The Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018- 2023