

Bury
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report Sept 2021-August 2022



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1. Introduction

a. Foreword

Bury SACRE is a group of professionals and members of faith communities which is actively involved in ensuring that all children in our borough receive a high standard of Religious Education, including non-religious world views. We have been keen since the launch of our new agreed syllabus in 2021, to have an overview of delivery of the subject in primary, secondary and tertiary phases of education. We want to ensure that teachers and other staff providing RE in our schools have the knowledge and training to ensure that we are helping children to develop enquiring minds and an investigative, questioning approach. As more schools academise, we are also recommending to trusts to adopt our agreed syllabus, to ensure consistency in the quality of RE across the borough. The SACRE is well attended, supported strongly by the local authority, and active in regional and national networks. I commend this annual report to all interested readers.

Alan Beedie SACRE Chair

b. Overview of the work of SACRE

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is a statutory body set up to advise the Local Authority on matters related to religious education and collective worship. Its members are drawn from teachers, Local Authority representatives including Councillors, faith representatives from the Church of England and a range of Christian denominations, and representatives from other religious groups represented in the area.

SACRE's key functions include monitoring the provision and quality of RE, and providing advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus. This includes advice on methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and provision of teacher training. This is primarily done through the review and implementation of the locally agreed syllabus, a process which is required every five years. This is followed by on-going monitoring of its effectiveness in the light of changing national education policy.

It is a legislative requirement that each SACRE produces an annual report of its work and that this is published, sent to the local authority, to NASACRE and to other interested parties such as the Department for Education.

During the academic year 2021-2022 we have continued to be supported by Paul Cooke, as the responsible officer from the local authority. Previously Paul was chairing meetings, and we thank him for this service. We also have the professional subject specialist input of Stephen Pett from NATRE/ RE Today, a very effective partnership which allows the SACRE to offer an excellent standard of training and professional development in RE.

SACRE met on three occasions during the academic year 2021/22. The management and access to these meetings has been in line with all regulations.

Detailed information on attendance at meetings can be found in Appendix A.

A brief overview of each meeting can be found below

4 October 2021

- *Report back on the agreed syllabus launch conference for primary schools*
- *Report on training provided on Understanding Christianity*
- *SACRE membership*
- *SACRE development plan approval*
- *Plans for summer conferences 2022*
- *RE hubs supporting primary practitioners*
- *National RE Updates, including Ofsted RE Research Review*

26 January 2022

- *Updates on training provided and planned*
- *Filling vacancies on SACRE*
- *Discussion on time allocation for RE up to KS4*
- *National RE updates*

20 June 2022

- *Report back on network meetings/ hubs*
- *Feedback data from primary conference*
- *Secondary webinars*
- *Update on Understanding Christianity training*
- *Plans for next year*
- *Welcome to elected representatives joining SACRE*
- *Faith Ambassadors scheme*
- *National RE updates*

The **Agreed Syllabus Conference** resulted in the decision to adopt the NATRE Model B syllabus in 2021. This will continue to be reviewed on the statutory 5-yearly cycle.

2. Religious Education

a. The locally agreed syllabus and RE in schools

The Bury agreed syllabus was launched in June 2021, with over 46 teachers from 30 schools attending launch training. SACRE believes that most, if not all, primary academies are using the Bury agreed syllabus. Not all secondary academies are using it in full, although many use it to inform their practice. The SACRE has plans to survey practice in academies in the borough.

b. Standards and monitoring of RE

It has not been possible, as a consequence of the pandemic, to re-establish SACRE's supervision of standards of achievement in RE at GCSE and above, as is our normal practice. Once data becomes available and can be interrogated, we will resume this practice.

SACRE reviews school workforce survey data when it is available, reviewing school websites and surveying schools to explore provision further.

OFSTED reports can also provide a way of monitoring RE. SACRE will be looking at examples of local OFSTED reports that comment on RE. The new OFSTED inspection framework and RE research review is bringing a renewed focus on RE in schools where RE was struggling to get sufficient curriculum time.

c. Teacher training and materials and advice for schools

Network meetings

There is an active RE hub meeting which is led by a member of SACRE, and which meets termly to provide support to primary colleagues across the borough. This group was formed under the auspices of Manchester Diocese, but all teachers are welcome to attend, and there is an agreed focus for each meeting. Secondary colleagues are encouraged also to take part in networking and in the webinars we offer, but there is scope for considerable development here.

SACRE primary RE conference, 13 June 2022

The annual primary RE conference took place virtually. The conference was a follow-up on the launch of the agreed syllabus from last year. The conference was not recorded. However, all recordings of the launch are still available.

Feedback from the seminars was very positive, as outlined below.

	Excellent	Good
RE, learning and the brain	67%	33%
Teaching about Hindus	100%	-
Teaching about Jewish life and practice	58%	42%
Green issues in Primary RE	83%	17%
Plenary	75%	25%
Overall value of the conference	92%	8%

Comments in feedback included:

- Good mixture of activities and information. Activities that can be used in staff meetings and some to be used in class. Information about religions to extend my own knowledge which will be useful as subject lead.
- The conference was full of great information and it was lovely to listen to Jeremy talking from his own life experience. The information was clear and concise.
- It was good to refresh knowledge of faiths and find activities to use with the children.
- Informative and lots of ideas to use in class
- I found this course very useful with lots of new information and ideas to use in school.
- Thank you for the session and the resources sent.
- Very informative and lots of ideas that i can include in next years planning.
- Great conference and I have learnt a lot of valuable information.
- Very informative and lots of practical advice and activities to take forwards.
- Thank you! It has been fantastic. Lots of valuable ideas, knowledge and resources have been shared. I am looking forward to using some of these ideas in my setting. The mixture of speakers has been great especially as the training has been a whole day, it has kept ideas and training fresh. Thank you

Secondary webinars

These were held in March, June and July 2022, on the following topics

- Exploring religious texts

- Deeper thinking in Islam
- Learning and the Brain

Attendance at the webinars has not been high, and SACRE are looking at ways of reaching out to secondary RE departments.

d. Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about RE during the year.

e. Advice given to the local authority

SACRE continues to support the implementation of the agreed syllabus, and ASC will take the lead on a review of the syllabus in the five year cycle.

3. Collective worship

a. Standards and monitoring of Collective Worship

SACRE has met in a hybrid form over the last year, and has established a regular programme of meetings, and is now fulfilling its statutory duties, after a period when the SACRE was not meeting. However, as RE has been the priority over this period, SACRE has found it hard to monitor collective worship over the past few years. It is also noted that schools were not able to meet statutory requirements in collective worship during the pandemic. In the past, SACRE members have monitored the quality of collective worship in non-faith schools (and faith schools) through personal visits. These have not yet resumed.

b. Determinations

No determinations have been requested in the year 2021-22.

c. Teacher training provided

No SACRE training on collective worship has been provided in 2021-22, although the Diocese of Manchester continues to support its schools in this area.

d. Other information

There were no formal complaints to SACRE about collective worship during the year.

e. Advice to the Local Authority

No advice was given to the local authority around the provision of collective worship.

4. Links with other bodies

a. National Bodies

- Bury SACRE is a member of NASACRE. Its newsletters are circulated to all members.
- Stephen Pett, RE Today, connects SACRE with NATRE, and provides national updates at each meeting. Reports from NATRE, including the School Workforce Data and regular primary and secondary surveys have proved useful to SACRE when monitoring schools. Further resources, such as those for home learning, from NATRE have been shared with schools.
- Information from the RE Council has been used in meetings and shared with schools where appropriate.

b. Local bodies

Bury Council provides excellent support to SACRE, including clerking of meetings and administration relating to the activity of SACRE.

5. SACRE involvement in the Local Area

SACRE updates governors and headteachers on resources and training via briefings and bulletins

SACRE encourages a Faith Ambassadors project which has involved students from Holy Cross Sixth Form College who are adherents of different faiths. The project provides opportunities for learning for upper primary age children in schools which take advantage of the scheme, to learn at first hand what it means to be a young person following a faith. It has been of benefit to both the ambassadors and the receiving schools. There is an interest in recruiting faith ambassadors from secondary schools in the borough, to expand the scheme.

6. Managing the SACRE and partnership with the Local Authority

a. Professional and administrative support

Clerk to SACRE:

Rebecca Hoyle
Governor Support
Knowsley Place
Bury
BL9 0EJ

0161 253 5688

Local authority officer:

Paul Cooke
Strategic Lead (Education Services)
Knowsley Place
Bury
BL9 0EJ

0161 253 5674

Adviser to SACRE:

The LA has a contract with RE Today Services. Stephen Pett is the RE Today national adviser who delivers the contract to Bury LA and SACRE.

RE Today Services
Imperial Court, Sovereign Road, Birmingham B30 3FH

b. Membership, representation and attendance

SACRE has been active in recruiting members to represent all groups. It also considers co-opting those with skills, knowledge and experience who can help to develop SACRE's work. Current vacancies, and repeated absences are discussed by the Chair and LA Officer.

All groups have been represented according SACRE's terms of reference at each meeting.

c. Training for SACRE (and ASC) members

The SACRE Clerk, Chair, LA Officer and RE adviser are on hand to advise SACRE members.

All members are invited to attend the training provided for schools. Several SACRE members attend the primary conference each year, providing support to the RE adviser and spending time meeting and supporting teachers.

d. Finance given to SACRE for its work

The local authority has put in place appropriate funding arrangements to support the work of SACRE including, clerking and administration, the commissioning of support from RE Today, and attendance at conferences and participation in training by SACRE members. The local authority has also ensured funding is available to support the roll-out of the new RE syllabus to schools, including the provision of materials.

7. Appendices

a. SACRE membership

As of October 2022, SACRE membership stood as follows

GROUP A

Roman Catholic Church

1. ...Bec Hyndman
2. ...Anne Walsh
3. ...VACANCY

Free Church Federal Council

1. ...Alan Beedie
2. ...Alison Knott
3. ... VACANCY

Jewish Faith

1. ...VACANCY
...Russell Conn

Muslim Faith

1. ...Fatima Zubair
2. ... VACANCY

GROUP B

Church of England

1. ...Sheryl Farnworth
2. Bethany Rothwell
3. ...Claire Clark

GROUP C

Teachers' Associations

1. NEU ...Marie Saatchi
2. NAS/UWT ...VACANCY
3. NAHT ...Sarah Jones
4. NAHT Edge ... Jude Fair-Lawton
5. SHA-ASCL ... VACANCY

GROUP D

Local Education Authority

- ... Cllr K Hussain
- ... Cllr S Thorpe
- ... (Vacancy)

... Paul Cooke (Assistant Director)

Unassigned:

Jane Walsh

b. Circulation details for this Annual Report

Copies will be sent electronically to the relevant bodies.

- Director of Children's Services, Bury LA

- Cabinet Member for Education, Bury LA
- The Department for Education (Central Government)
- NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education)
- Headteachers and Governing Bodies of Bury schools and academies
- All members of Bury SACRE, for distribution to the bodies/communities they represent

c. Exam results for Bury schools

This is the first time since 2019 that externally marked GCSE examinations have been sat by students. In 2020 and 2021, grades were determined by teachers as externally marked examinations could not take place due to the disruption caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Bury GCSE results

No of pupils	Number of GCSE entries	% Full Course GCSE Entries	% 9-4 grades	% Short Course GCSE Entries	% 9-4 grades
2188	1070	48.9%	69.8%	0.1%	--

National GCSE results

No of pupils	Number of GCSE entries	% Full Course GCSE Entries	% 9-4 grades	% Short Course GCSE Entries	% 9-4 grades
650366	221124	34%	76.8%	2.6%	65.5%

A level results:

27 students completed A level Religious Studies in Bury. 100% gained grades A*-D

A*	3	11%
A	7	26%
B	7	26%
C	7	26%
D	3	11%
E		
U		