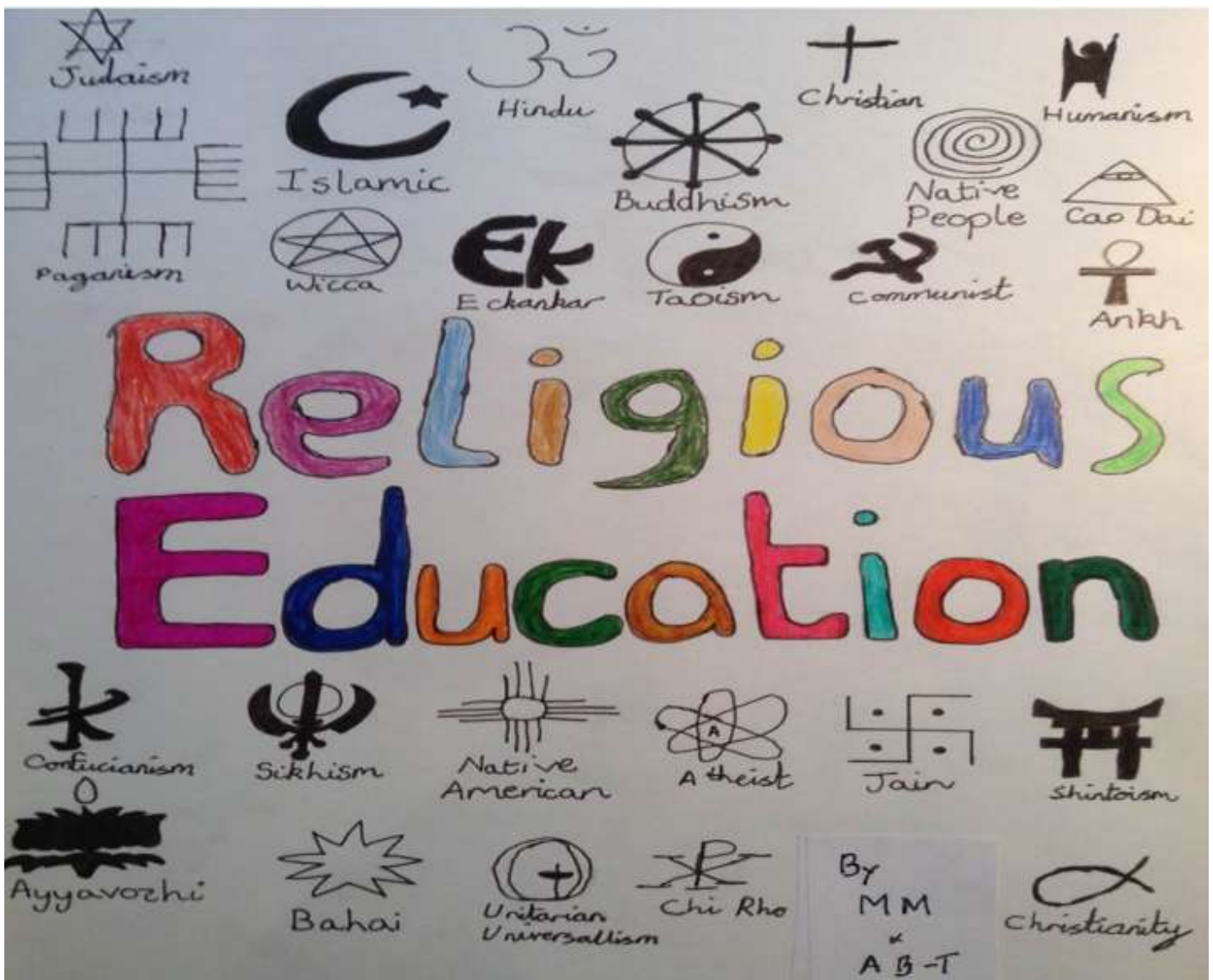


# Annual Report of the Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2013/14

## Celebrating Religious Education in Cheshire East



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*Acknowledgements for Photographs  
Cover courtesy of Goostrey Primary School;  
Pg.5 courtesy of Brereton CE VC Primary School*

# **ANNUAL REPORT** *of the* Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2013-14

December 2014

## **1 Introduction**

I am delighted to introduce the latest SACRE annual report for the authority of Cheshire East. The report covers the period from September 2013 to August 2014.

Once again through careful management of resources, we have continued to provide support for religious education in our schools through our two officers who have advised SACRE, led twilight and network meetings, and supported the subject in schools through supportive emails and telephone calls.

During a time when understanding the diversity of faith has become so important in the light of the Birmingham 'Trojan Horse affair', and ongoing developments in education have brought a rapidly changing landscape, this service is vital in keeping religious education at the forefront of our minds.

The first meeting of the Cheshire East 2013-14 took place on 9<sup>th</sup> October at Sandbach Community Primary School with presentations from members of the school community. This opened the meeting with a discussion on how RE is implemented and marked within School. Books were shared with SACRE members with pupils work in them. The Spring Term SACRE meeting was kindly hosted by Middlewich High School on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 who gave us a summary of how Religious Education is taught. On June 9<sup>th</sup> we were welcomed by the RE department of Wilmslow High School. The evening started with a brief tour of the RE department given by Layla Rajah, the head of department. Layla shared her enthusiastic approach to RE with members and told us about some of the ways she raises the profile of Religious Education.

Lois Wilkinson, clerk to the SACRE, who has provided invaluable administration support for our activities in the past, stepped down in the Autumn Term and we were delighted to welcome our new Cheshire SACRE clerk Colette Hannon to our second meeting of the academic year.

Once again I am grateful for the knowledgeable support provided by my fellow councillors and members of our local faith communities as well as our officers.



**Councillor Steve Wilkinson**  
**Chair of CE SACRE**

## 2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHESHIRE EAST SCHOOLS

### 2.1 Locally Agreed RE Syllabus



### *Engaging Encounter & Reasoned Response*

**The Cheshire East Religious Education Agreed Syllabus was launched in July 2011.** The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory syllabus for RE in Cheshire East schools prepared under schedule 31 to the Education Act of 1996. The syllabus is due for review in the academic year 2015-16.

**It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination and all church controlled schools within the local authority.** Copies of the syllabus CD Rom can be obtained from Colette Hannon clerk to the SACRE or PDFs of the syllabus can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website. <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

Ofsted use the local syllabus as the yardstick by which their inspectors make their judgements on the delivery of the RE curriculum in individual Cheshire East schools.

The existing syllabus is further supported by in-service training (INSET) led by two part-time consultants who are also available to lead INSET for staff in response to requests from schools, provided that schools are able to buy in their support. Telephone and email advice is also often sought and provided by the consultants.

### 2.2 Monitoring the Agreed Syllabus

**The SACRE have a statutory duty to monitor the impact of the locally agreed syllabus.**

**Analysis of Ofsted Reports** – Please refer to minutes of SACRE meetings for full details which can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website. Analysis of Section 5 Ofsted inspection reports, which identifies the performance of schools with respect to spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum, may occasionally give a simple indicator of school performance in RE. The reports for schools in the authority which have been visited by Ofsted are analysed for each SACRE meeting and reported upon. If concerns are raised then advice and support can be offered by the two advisory consultants, Sue Glover (Primary) and Sue Wilson (Secondary).

Under the Ofsted reporting system, detailed information about RE is not available, unless it was through a previous HMI religious education subject survey visit. No RE HMI subject surveys were made during the last academic year and these have now been discontinued. SACRE members remain extremely concerned about how RE is often marginalised in schools and how they can fulfil their responsibility to monitor the impact of the agreed syllabus. This is a topic for concern raised at many SACRE meetings by all members. Without data from Ofsted particularly for primary schools, SACRE will continue to struggle to fulfil their statutory responsibilities fully. Consultants are now looking for creative ways to gather performance data to feedback to SACRE members.

A lack of contact with diverse communities or other cultures within the local area continues to make it difficult for schools to fully demonstrate a well developed understanding of other faiths and cultures. Consultants have regularly highlighted this concern with colleagues at network meetings, and encouraged staff to consider how they could ensure that more visits to places of worship further afield and visiting guest speakers can become regular parts of the RE curriculum.

## 2.3 Standards in Religious Education

### 2.3.1 Examinations in Religious Studies

The report is based upon the provisional statistics for 2014.

A total of 11 Cheshire East secondary schools entered candidates for A and AS level; 16 entered candidates for the full GCSE course in Religious Studies in 2014. This is one less than last year. Entries for the short course are unknown at present. The four main examination boards were used.

#### GCSE Full Course

In GCSE full course there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils taking the examination, though it is a smaller percentage of the cohort. 78.7% of candidates achieved grades A\*-C. This is a fall from last year (82.8 %)

The comparable national figures are unavailable at present.

#### GCSE Short Course

Figures are unavailable at this time

#### GCE 'A' level

88 students were entered for this examination, an increase on last year (74) 61.4% achieved grades A\*-B, 100 % achieved grades A-E. This reflects a lot of hard work by students and staff, who are to be congratulated.

### Comment

- It is not clear if the percentages of the cohort who are not entered for any examination are receiving their entitlement of RE lessons in KS4. We know that some students are not, yet Ofsted rarely tackle this issue. The changes to the short course and the lack of data make this area even more difficult to monitor.
- Some schools are starting GCSE courses in Year 9. Early entry means that KS3 has been impoverished in time and depth. The foundations for good understanding at GCSE are undermined.
- We know anecdotally that some schools are still entering candidates for the short course, but the devaluing of the points, means that the statistics are not being registered.
- The increase in the numbers opting for full course and A level is reassuring confirmation of the popularity of the subject amongst students.

### 2.3.2 Monitoring of Secondary RE Departments

Support was offered by Sue Wilson (employed for 8 days) through telephone calls, emails and network meetings. The **network meetings** covered areas of concern such as the latest Ofsted guidance, the REC review and reviewing KS3, as well as allowing colleagues to share good practice and resources.

#### Subject strengths

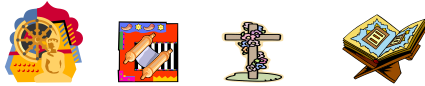
- 100% of students at 'A' Level achieved A-E grades. 61.4% of these were grades A\*-B. an increase on last year (60.4%) More candidates were entered for A level this year.
- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions, two in the north and two in the south of the authority, to ensure some access to professional development for teachers of RE.

#### Areas for development

- The continuing impact of the changes to KS4 needs to be carefully monitored
- Some schools are not fulfilling the legal requirements at KS4, in terms of time allocation.
- Early entry for GCSE means that the KS3 RE curriculum is reduced, and in some cases, Year 11 students are not receiving their legal entitlement to RE.
- Schools needs to be supported through the changes to A level courses next year

## 2.4 Teaching Methods, Advice, Materials, and Training

### 2.4.1 Artefact Bases- Materials



- A substantial collection of religious artefacts purchased previously by SACRE are held at Knutsford Academy who will lend it to local primary schools on request. *Please contact* Chris Perry 01565 633294.
- There is another collection of artefacts in the south of the authority at Sir William Stanier High School. *Please contact* Bryony Fordham 01270 583431

### 2.4.2 Advice and Inset Training for Teachers - Provided by Consultants

#### Primary Schools

- More than 30 primary schools were given email or telephone advice during the academic year. Support was mainly given to RE subject leaders or Headteachers. Advice was primarily based on planning the new primary curriculum; teaching religious concepts; assessment and implementing the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. A small number of queries were about collective worship. One primary school bought in extra RE support for their subject leader.
- Three primary school network meetings sponsored by SACRE were held in different areas of the county. These were attended by approx 50 teachers. This was a unique opportunity for subject leaders to come together to share good practice. The main emphasis of the meetings was to look at practical delivery of the agreed syllabus. SACRE is grateful to Goostrey, Smallwood CE, and Vernon primary schools for hosting the meetings.
- An extra network meeting for both primary and secondary subject leaders was held in July focussing on the RE Quality Mark. This was attended by over 20 primary school teachers and 4 secondary schools.
- Following the success of sample medium term plans circulated to schools in 2012, short term lesson plans were developed to support the implementation of the syllabus. These were sent to all primary schools in the summer term. The plans are a supplement to the locally RE Agreed Syllabus (2011) and a flexible tool for assisting teachers to use with their own school planning.
- Schools are free to use, improve on or disregard the supplementary documents as required. (NB These plans are not an actual RE Scheme of work that can be picked up and used without alteration). Copies can be obtained from Sue Glover, Primary RE Consultant, (sue.glover62@gmail.com). Schools

#### Secondary Schools

- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions. Tytherington, Kingsgrove Sandbach Girls and Wilmslow High schools kindly provided the venues.
- Other support was offered through telephone calls, emails and network meetings included: supporting new heads of department.
- We also welcomed new heads of department to the authority at Holmes Chapel and Kingsgrove. We hope that other new staff will join us at future network meetings

**Notices about courses, network 'twilights' and other initiatives are given via the Cheshire East bulletin.**

## 2.5 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of RE, requiring the LA's Special Appeals Committee to be convened.

### 3 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

#### 3.1 Supporting Collective Worship

All previously published material giving guidance for collective worship still stand in respect of the law.

The School and Standards Frameworks Act 2006 continues to reflect the current law governing collective worship. NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Council for RE) have produced a paper giving further insights into collective worship which is available on request.

Under the Ofsted framework, inspectors do comment on the opportunities for spiritual development in schools.

Further advice and materials are available from both the primary and secondary RE consultants. The revised Cheshire East Collective Worship guidelines accepted by SACRE in September 2014 can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website.

#### 3.2 Determinations

The SACRE has not been called upon during the past year to make any determinations concerning collective worship.

#### 3.3 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of collective worship requiring the LA's special Appeals Committee to be convened.





## 4 LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

### 4.1 National and International

The Cheshire East SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE).

Jane Brooke, previously a chair of NASACRE is a member of Cheshire East SACRE. Jane is an independent consultant and has previously worked as an RE Project Development Officer for the National Society. She is also the Principal Consultant for Chester Diocese and together with her colleague Mary Myatt has pioneered the national REQM (RE Quality Mark). Several awards have been given to Cheshire East schools including the gold standard. The overall aim is to celebrate outstanding RE practice in schools and further details can be found at [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org). Sue Glover and Sue Wilson, Cheshire East RE Consultants are REQM assessors.

October 2013 saw the publication of two new documents which have the potential to govern and shape the future of religious education.

The first report was the last HMI subject inspection report for religious education published by Ofsted. The report is based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012. It also draws on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of standing advisory councils on religious education (SACREs) and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. 'Realising the Potential' the full report can be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential>

The full impact of this report and its influence on reviewing agreed syllabuses and assessment without levels is still unknown at this time.

The second report was a non statutory religious education subject review, led by the RE Council, designed to complement the review of the rest of the curriculum also published last term. Sue Wilson Secondary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East was a member of task group two in this National Review of Religious Education. Copies of this document are available on the REC website [http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE\\_Review.pdf](http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE_Review.pdf)

The report 'RE in English schools Non Statutory Guidance 2010' was the last government document published that gave in depth guidance on RE. The DFE have welcomed the two new reports from the REC and Ofsted. We await further guidance on how they may impact RE in the future.

Sue Glover Primary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East attended the NASACRE AGM in Birmingham in May of this year and reported back the key messages to the Cheshire East SACRE. Members of Ofsted, REC and the DCSF also took part. It is hoped that SACRE members will continue to attend national events in future years, funding permitting. The NASACRE Newsletters 'SACRE News' are much valued by SACRE members, providing useful insight into the activities of SACREs and the teaching of RE across the country.

### 4.2 Local and Regional

Cheshire East SACRE has links with the local Macclesfield Interfaith Group. The Cheshire East faith audit producing local data is of valuable assistance in the SACRE's work.

Cheshire East SACRE continues to have some links, through the in-service programme, with the University of Chester and Chester Diocese.

Jane Brooke continues to support the Rochdale SACRE and also works for Chester Diocese.

As well as supporting Cheshire East primary schools as a consultant, Sue Glover also serves on Cheshire West SACRE and works for the Diocese of Chester, which has continued to fund religious education and collective worship in Cheshire East church primary schools as part of their work in schools.



## Appendix 1 Examination Statistics 2014

	Cheshire East 2011	Cheshire East 2012	Cheshire East 2013	Cheshire East 2014
<b><u>GCSE Short Courses in RE</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	2189	2115	1859	Unknown
Number of grades A* -C	1151	1207	1169	“
Percentage gaining A* -C	52.6%	57.1%	62.9%	“
Percentage gaining A* -G	95.4%	96.3%	97.5%	“
Percentage of cohort entered	54.2%	68.9%	52.8%	“
<b><u>GCSE Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	760	778	972	1064
Number of grades A* -C	647	697	804	837
Percentage gaining A* -C	85.1%	89.7%	82.8%	78.7%
Percentage gaining A* -G	99.5%	99.9%	99.7%	99.2%
Percentage of cohort entered	18.8%	26.6%	34.1%	27.3%
<b><u>GCE 'A' Level Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	92	89	74	88
Number of grades A-E	92	89	74	88
Percentage gaining grades A-E	100.0%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of cohort entered	5.7%	5.5%	4.7%	4.9%
<b><u>GCE 'A/S' Level Religious Studies – Year 12</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	26	22	25	33
Number of grades A-E	22	21	20	29
Percentage gaining grades A-E	84.6%	95.5%	80%	87.9%
Percentage of cohort entered	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%

## **Appendix 2 LA Publications**

All RE publications are available, generally from the clerk to SACRE, Colette Hannon. Colette can be contacted by email at [Colette.Hannon@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Colette.Hannon@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01270 685943.

The locally agreed syllabus and the accompanying handbook and all other documentation for religious education in primary and secondary schools are also available on the Cheshire East SACRE website. <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

### **LA guidance on Collective Worship**

Guidance on Collective Worship for community schools can be obtained from the RE Consultants.

### **SACRE Annual Report**

Further copies of the annual SACRE reports are available from the Clerk to the SACRE, as above.

## **Appendix 3 SACRE Development Plan**

This year 2013-14 the main areas of activity were:

- To support teachers in dissemination of good practice, teaching and resources
- To help teachers and schools to raise standards in the quality of RE teaching
- To help schools improve the quality of collective worship
- To contribute towards understanding and respect between different religious groups within the community
- To discharge its responsibilities effectively

## **Implementation**

In order to complete the work of the Cheshire East SACRE during 2013/14, there was an initial allocated budget of over £8000 primarily to fund the work of two RE consultants who were employed by the authority to facilitate the work of SACRE, (One primary consultant and one secondary consultant each employed for 10 days).

Recent Ofsted school inspection reports were studied on RE and Collective Worship for evidence of standards and reported to SACRE. Support was offered where considered necessary.

## **Appendix 4 SACRE Statutory Functions**

**These continue to remain the same in line with government legislation:**

- To advise the LA on matters relating to RE and collective worship; methods of teaching; choice of teaching material; provision of teacher training
- To determine any applications from head teachers for disapplication in relation to the general requirements for collective worship
- To monitor the effective provision for RE in community and controlled schools
- To consider whether changes need to be made in the Agreed RE Syllabus or the support offered to schools
- To support the effective provision for collective worship in schools
- To monitor the provision of daily collective worship in schools and consider how to improve such provision
- To publish an annual report on its work

## Appendix 5

During the 2013-14 academic year the attendance figures for members at Cheshire East SACRE meetings was as follows:

Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 Sandbach Community Primary School	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2014 Middlewich High School	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2014 Wilmslow High School
<b>A</b> Christian Denominations & Other Religions	2	3	2
<b>B</b> Church Of England	2	2	3
<b>C</b> Teachers Associations	3	1	1
<b>D</b> Local Authority	3	1	1
Co-opted humanist member		1	1
Observers who were co-opted as members to the SACRE representing Committee A.			2

Also in attendance at each meeting were: Sue Glover, Primary Schools Consultant, Sue Wilson, Secondary Schools Consultant and Colette Hannon, Clerk to the SACRE. Anne Gadsden, Monitoring and Intervention Manager attended all meetings on behalf of the local authority.

Regular items on the agenda include: discussion of local and national news about RE; local Ofsted reports; a summary of the consultants' work during the term and the current budgetary position.

Dates for the Cheshire East SACRE meetings during 2014-2015 academic year are as follows:

25 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Brereton Primary School
29 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	The Fallibroome Academy
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	Underwood West Primary School

## Appendix 6 Distribution

The CE SACRE report is sent to the following:

- NASACRE (National Association of SACREs)
- Cheshire East Schools and colleges
- Members of the Cheshire East SACRE
- Lead Member for Children's Services and the members of the Children's Services Strategic Panel
- Diocesan Education Associations
- Representatives of local faith communities

The report will also be made available on the Cheshire East website [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

**Appendix 7 - Membership of the Cheshire East SACRE for 2013-2014 Academic Year.**

<b>Committee A – Christian Denominations and Other Religions</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Denomination/Religion</b>	<b>Address</b>
Les Biddulph	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	Bridge Cottage, Buxton Road, Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffs ST13 8TT.
Mrs R Habibi	Baha'i	Little Beeches, Bollin Way, Prestbury, SK10 4BX
Mr J Vaja	Hinduism	1 Marlborough Close, Macclesfield, SK10 2LA
Rev JL Gould	Unitarian	4a Bulkeley Rd, Bollin Way Prestbury Sk10 4BX
Heather Staniland	Methodist	Church House Worthenbury LL130AW
Frank Vignon	Judaism	Newly co-opted member
Celina Billings	Catholic	Newly co-opted member
Mr J Ahmed	Islam	71 Ruskin Road, Crewe, CW2 7JS

<b>Committee B – Church of England</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Rev Mrs J Brooke	Church of England	3, Bridge Place, Chester, CH1 1SA
Mrs S Glover	Church of England	8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL
Rev Mr T Shepherd	Church of England	The Vicarage, 15 Offley Road, Sandbach, CW11 1GY

<b>Co-opted Member</b>	<b>Humanist representative Address</b>
Mr G Nicholson	Osborne House Trafford Road Alderley Edge SK9 7DN

<b>Committee C – Teachers' Associations</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Address</b>
Mr I V Bonner	ATL	252 Nixon Drive, Winsford, CW7 2JD
Mrs A Boulton	NAHT	Oaklands School, Cheviot Square, Winsford, CW7 1NU
Mrs J Rippin	NUT	96 Moors Lane, Darnhall, Winsford, CW7 2JD

<b>Committee D – Local Authority</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Cllr Mr S R Wilkinson	(Chair)	Dunholme Farm, Pickmere Lane, Knutsford, WA16 0JL
Cllr Mrs S Jones	(Vice Chair)	10 Fairview Avenue, Alsager, Stoke-on-Tent ST7 2NW
Cllr C Andrew		17 Madron Avenue, Macclesfield, SK10 3PW

<b>Officers Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
Mrs S Glover Primary Consultant	8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL
Mrs S Wilson Secondary Consultant	Drumblefield, Chelford, Macclesfield, SK11 9BT
Mrs A Gadsden Monitoring & Intervention Manager	Room 1 Dalton House, Dalton Way, Middlewich, CW10 0HU