Coventry Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Annual Report 2017-18

Coventry City Council

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Introduction

This is the annual report of the Coventry Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for 2017/18 and is published in accordance with the requirements of section 391 (6) of the Education Act 1996. It provides an account of SACRE activities during this period.

Circulation of this report

This report will be circulated electronically to:

Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of Coventry schools
Coventry City Councillors
Department for Education
Diocesan Board of Education (Coventry Church of England Diocese)
Diocesan Education Service (Roman Catholic Archdiocese Birmingham)
The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
SACREs in neighbouring authorities

Information on administrative and organisational matters is available from Lucy Lambert: Education Improvement and Standards, PO Box 15, Council House, Coventry, CV1 5RR – telephone 024 7683 2444 or email lucy.lambert@coventry.gov.uk.

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Message from the Co-Chairs of SACRE

The academic year 2017 /2018 has been one of continued engagement and building bridges, working with Warwickshire SACRE, developing joint working patterns whilst retaining the opportunity to maintain local autonomy.

We have developed a joint Chairs' group, comprising of the leader of each representative group (faith members, LA representatives and teachers' groups) to provide an overview whilst maintaining the local perspective. This allows greater understanding, appreciation and co-operation across both local authorities.

The new Agreed Syllabus was successfully launched, with the Bishop of Coventry and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills at the inaugural events. SACRE provided further support for schools who were unable to attend or had new personnel in place. We are delighted with the responses to the material and overall structure of the syllabus. It appears to have been universally approved. Some additional units have been developed to supplement the programme and there is scope for more, which we hope teachers and faith groups will want to join us in creating.

Now the task is to continue supporting schools and monitor the implementation of the syllabus and arrange training with a view to start monitoring visits in 2019.

One of the exciting developments this year was the appointment of an specialist RE Facilitator to provide support in schools, advise SACRE and the local authority and lead the regular RE coordinators meetings. We are enormously grateful to both Coventry and Warwickshire local authorities for their encouragement of this vision and collaboration, in particular we are indebted to Ruth Waterman and Sarah Bradwell /Lucy Lambert and Sarah Mills for their unstinting support and professionalism.

SACRE continues to explore issues around continuity of membership and ensuring that faith groups and teachers are adequately represented when people move on, training for members on various issues such as 'Prevent' and faith group perspectives.

The SACRE toolkit, developed by NASACRE, was used to help identify priorities for 2018/2019. Which are:

- Continue to provide support to schools using the Coventry and Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus (2017-2022) and supplement the syllabus with additional units to provide more local context (such as Peace and Reconciliation) and through support from the RE Facilitator
- Continued use of the SACRE Toolkit to identify current strengths and next steps
- Confirm how well schools are using the Agreed Syllabus and begin the monitoring process
- Membership review- fill current vacancies and ensure representation across all relevant groups and faith communities

- Continue conversations with Warwickshire around joint working
- Enhance communication with schools to assist good quality delivery of RE
- Update induction booklet for new SACRE members







Mr Chris Mellers

1. SACREs role and function

SACRE has a statutory duty:

To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and Religious Education in community schools and foundation schools which do not have a religious character. Religious Education in these schools must be delivered in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus.

To advise the Local Authority on collective worship and methods of teaching, choice of materials and teacher training in Religious Education and collective worship.

To provide an annual report.

To require Coventry City Council to periodically review the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (at least every 5 years).

In addition the SACRE can:

Consider applications made by a Headteacher to release some or all of the pupils in a particular school from the requirement for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (a Determination).

Membership of SACRE:

Coventry SACRE comprises four statutory groups:

Group A – such Christian Denominations and other religions and denominations of such religions as will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area. Currently Coventry SACRE has provision for representatives from the following faiths – Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity (Free churches, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholicism, Society of Friends), Islam, Judaism.

Group B – Church of England (Christianity)

Group C - Teacher Associations

Group D – Local Authority

Additional members including people with particular expertise in areas of religious education or who represent perspectives not included in the statutory groups are coopted by SACRE.

In 2017/18 Coventry SACRE had co-opted members representing:

• The ITE department at the University of Warwick

Membership details are shown in Appendix A.

2. Advice provided by SACRE

a) Advice to Local Authority

SACRE supported the Local Authority to second a RE specialist in the form of an RE Facilitator to provide support to Coventry schools and Coventry SACRE.

Coventry SACRE also continued joint-working with Warwickshire through the merging of the two Chairs Groups.

SACRE also provided support to a school on assessment in RE.

b) Schools

SACRE identified that the constitution needed updating. This process has begun and is being progressed.

SACRE Co-Chair and SACRE Clerk attended the MIRAP (Midlands Religions and Philosophy Network) conference and wrote a report for SACRE members and LA representatives about key issues for RE that were discussed.

c) Government or other bodies

A request was made to SACRE for contact information by a Dr Peter Hemming, Lecturer in Social Sciences at Cardiff University; so that he could distribute a document entitled 'Diversity of Religion and Belief in the Primary School: Impact and Engagement Project'. This was a large document and schools were working on embedding the new agreed syllabus so the decision was made to share the link to the document with schools but to not promote it further at this time.

3. Standards and Quality of Provision of RE

a) Public examinations - 2017 validated results

In 2017, 1749 Coventry year 11 students were entered for Religious Studies qualifications, this is approximately 52% of the year 11 cohort. There were 1598 entries for the full GCSE, and 151 for the short course GCSE.

17 of the 22 Coventry schools offered the full GCSE course. However of the remaining 5 schools, 3 did not have a year 11 cohort in 2017.

Some schools (Barr's Hill, Bishop Ullathorne, Blue Coat, Cardinal Newman, Cardinal Wiseman, Grace Academy and Lyng Hall) enter the vast majority of their students for Religious Studies.

The numbers taking short course Religious Studies GCSE are low, which reflects the national situation. However, there has been an increase in entries from 6 in 2016, up to 151 in 2017.

The proportion of students attaining a C grade or above in their GCSE is 69.1% which is below the national figure of 70.3%.

Students at Blue Coat performed particularly well in 2017 compared to other schools with a high number of entries. Attainment was also high at Finham Park, compared to other schools where relatively fewer students were entered.

	Full GCSE Coventry	Full GCSE National
Number of entries	1598	248,063
A* - G passes	96.4%	97.9%
A* - C passes	69.1%	70.3%

At post-16 there were 115 year 12 students entered for AS Religious Studies and 145 for A Level. 14 Coventry schools entered students for these qualifications.

At AS Level 90.4% attained A - E grades including 43.5% at grades A - B. The national figures were 93.3% and 46.9% respectively.

At A Level 97.2% attained A^* - E grades, including 41.4% at A^* - B and 16.6% at A^* - A. The national figures are 98.4%, 55.3% and 24.5%.

2018 GCSE Results

Provisional 2018 results from FFT Aspire show that 1371 pupils were entered for Religious Studies GCSE, with 71% achieving a grade 4 or higher, and 60% achieving a grade 5 or higher.

Please note: Examination results data is provisional and could be subject to minor changes when the final Key Stage 4 datasets are published at the end of January 2019.

2018 GCE AS Results

Key Stage 5 data for 2018 had not been released by the Department for Education in time for inclusion in this report.

b) Quality of RE provision in schools

A total of 39 schools in Coventry were subject to an Ofsted inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This also included schools subject to short inspections.

The following are examples of quotes taken from Ofsted reports of schools inspected during 2017/18, where Religious Education, Collective Worship or Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) development have been highlighted.

Primary schools (28 inspections)

Teaching and Learning/RE Curriculum

They learn about the different faiths and cultures in their community, which includes visits to local places of worship. The school has a set of shared values, which are used to plan purposeful opportunities for self-reflection and to consider the needs of others. Leaders ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of British values through the curriculum. These values are very well promoted around the school.

Pupils understand and respect different cultures and faiths. Displays around the school celebrate the diverse range of home languages spoken by families in the school community and their religious faiths. Pupils readily said, 'It is OK to be different in this school.'

However, pupils' books showed that some teaching does not focus enough on the knowledge, skills and understanding specified in the national curriculum for some foundation subjects and in the syllabus for religious education (RE). Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that: pupils make at least good progress in RE and all foundation subjects, and develop thorough subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding.*

Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of major world religions and are respectful of the beliefs of others.

SMSC

Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are good. Teachers' and leaders' work to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on 'big questions'. For example, in Year 3, pupils consider 'What makes a good friend?'

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. Pupils receive emotional support that helps them to build resilience. Pupils respect others from all faiths and backgrounds. They have a strong understanding of the importance of British values.

Throughout the curriculum there are opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.

The school fulfils its duty to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness admirably, through its emphasis on teaching religious, human and fundamental British values. Pupils are tolerant and show regard and respect for each other and adults.

Secondary schools (5 inspections)

SMSC

Leaders promote British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, fostering tolerance and respect amongst pupils. Leaders promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values very well through the curriculum. This includes through daily mentor time and 'personal, health and social education' lessons.

The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong. Pupils benefit from a range of activities both inside and outside of the classroom, which they value.

The curriculum underpins pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.

Collective Worship

Pupils learn about these topics in a variety of settings, both in and outside of the classroom. For example, pupils spoke about recent assemblies and work completed on radicalisation and extremism.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is strong. The programme to promote this aspect of the school's work is embedded well across the curriculum and further through additional activities. These include outside speakers, bespoke assemblies and focus days. Pupils value these sessions and speak highly of them.

Special schools (6 inspections)

Teaching and Learning/RE Curriculum

Pupils are not taught as much as they might be about different faiths and cultures in order to extend their understanding of the wider world. Work on different faiths and other cultures is not covered in the curriculum well enough to extend pupils' understanding and knowledge of the world beyond their immediate experience.*

SMSC

There is a strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning, and these are firmly embedded in your school.

The school's provision for pupils' social and moral development makes a highly effective contribution to pupils' behaviour and welfare. They discuss current topics in the news and explore their ideas about the wider world. Pupils are taught to look after their environment and this respect is reflected in their behaviour and around the school site. British values are promoted through debates and work on what it means to be British, and on democracy, racism and prejudice. This has helped to instil a shared understanding of tolerance for others.

*Where school reports included comments indicating improvement was required in provisions for RE or SMSC, these schools have been included in 2018-19 priorities for monitoring.

c) Withdrawal

SACRE is not aware of any withdrawals from RE made during 2017-18.

d) Complaints

No formal complaints were received by SACRE regarding RE in 2017-18.

4. Agreed Syllabus

The main priorities for Coventry SACRE in 2017/18 was implementing the Agreed Syllabus and agreeing monitoring processes for 2018/19.

The new Agreed Syllabus was launched at 3 events in July 2017 and schools began using it in September 2017. The Agreed Syllabus is a joint document endorsed by Coventry and Warwickshire SACREs working in partnership. It is an RE Today syllabus with additions and alterations to reflect the needs of Coventry and Warwickshire. Both SACREs have worked together to fund the cost of syllabus for schools and produced their own additional units of work. Schools were also given the option of purchasing a supplementary scheme of work that supports the new Agreed Syllabus via RE Today at a reduced price. Both SACREs received the support of RE Today, in the form of advisers Fiona Moss and Stephen Pett, who ran launch events. The launch events introduced teachers to the new Agreed Syllabus and additional materials and focused on sharing practical classroom strategies to enable teachers to understand the nature of the syllabus and make use of good practice in their own delivery. Each school received a hard copy and sample of exemplar work. One of the launch sessions was held at a place of worship; the Sikh Gurdwara Sahib in Leamington Spa. This included a tour of the Gurdwara, led by a SACRE member who represents the Sikh Community in Warwickshire.

An event in November 2017 was held to ensure any schools who had missed the initial launch events were informed of the new Agreed Syllabus and key messages shared at the two launch events.

5. Collective Worship

Two schools (Holbrook Primary School and Frederick Bird Primary School) that were granted a determination in 2016-17, continued with their current determination in 2017-18.

There were no further applications for determinations to alter the character of collective worship for all pupils in a particular school during 2017/18.

6. Management of SACRE

a) Attendance at SACRE Meetings

Coventry SACRE met on three occasions during the 2017/18 academic year. Details of venues and attendance are provided in the table below.

Date	Venue	Numbers in attendance from each group					
		Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Co-opted Members	
18/09/2017	Council House, Coventry	2	2	2	2	0	
22/01/2018	Moseley Primary	3	2	1	3	0	
13/06/2018	Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Transfiguration	2	3	1	2	3 observers	

Membership Groups:

Group A - Christian and other religious denominations other than the Church of England (9 members)

Group B - Church of England (4 members)

Group C – Teacher Associations (3 members)

Group D – Coventry City Council (4 members)

SACRE has continued to select meeting venues which reflect its three key partnerships; schools, faith groups and the Local Authority. Where a meeting is held in a school, there is usually an opportunity for SACRE members to have a look at the RE work on display and to learn about the delivery of the RE curriculum across the school. This is also the case with meetings held at places of worship, where members of the faith community will provide an insight into their particular faith or belief through a short presentation to members and/or tour of the building.

b) Membership and training

Members of SACRE attended WRAP (Workshop for Raising Awareness of Prevent) training for all SACRE members.

c) Professional and Financial Support

A budget is provided to SACRE by the City Council to cover the priorities identified. The SACRE Chairs' Group has advised the local authority on priorities and how this funding should be spent. In 2017-18, this was used to fund the following:

- Implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus including:
 - Embedding the use of the new Agreed Syllabus in schools
 - Training from RE Today on assessment and resources
- Servicing of SACRE meetings venues, refreshments
- NASACRE annual subscription / attendance at AGM

The local authority has continued to provide annual support to SACRE with LA Officer time, a clerk and other administrative staff in order to enable SACRE to fulfil its duties.

d) Complaints about RE and Collective Worship

No formal complaints were made about Religious Education or collective worship during 2017/18.

7. Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority agenda

a) SACRE contributions to LA agenda and other agendas

1) Implementation of Agreed Syllabus

The main priority for SACRE in 2017/18 was to support schools to implement the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, supplementing with additional units. Coventry SACRE also contributed to the updating of Warwickshire SACRE web pages so that both Coventry and Warwickshire schools can access the syllabus resources online.

2) Recruitment of RE Facilitator

SACRE supported the local authority to second a RE Specialist Facilitator to provide support to Coventry schools and SACRE. This is a joint appointment with Warwickshire SACRE.

3) Joint working – Coventry and Warwickshire SACREs

We have continued conversations with Warwickshire SACRE around joint working and partnership working between Coventry and Warwickshire SACRE has continued. In 2017/18 it was agreed to merge the two Chairs' Consultative Groups as there are

currently overlaps in the membership with the two SACREs sharing a co-chair and a number of representatives in Group A and Group B, agreed syllabuses for both Coventry and Warwickshire. The appointment of the RE Specialist Facilitator is also a joint appointment.

4) NASACRE AGM – "Stronger Together - Celebrating the Power of Community" Hester Meacock, member of Group A, attended the NASACRE AGM on 24 May 2018 in London. A written and verbal report was shared with SACRE members at the June meeting, with contributions also included from Lizzie McWhirter, also from Group A.

5) NASACRE SACRE RETool

In June 2018 SACRE made use of the NASACRE SACRE RE Tool to set priorities for 2018/19. Each group rated Coventry SACRE's current position and the consensus was used to identify areas and aspirations for future improvement.

6) Faith Encounters

SACRE signposted 'Faith Encounters' course to SACRE members and faith groups as a way of encountering other faiths and ensuring school visits are an enriching experience for both places of worship and schools.

b) SACRE support to schools (events and training)

Two twilight sessions for schools were held in April and June 2018 and were co-hosted by Coventry and Warwickshire SACREs alongside representatives from RE Today. The session goals were to creatively implement the new Agreed Syllabus, consider progress within the syllabus, use additional teaching and learning strategies when teaching RE and to give teachers the opportunity to ask questions and work together to implement the new syllabus in their schools. The sessions also aimed to give teachers confidence in improving RE in their schools, specifically at Primary level, through the use of the Agreed Syllabus. Assessment in RE was also discussed.

In November 2017 Coventry SACRE Chair visited a primary school in Coventry where she visited a class and met with Year 2 children to discuss their learning in RE. During the visit, she talked with the children about what they had learnt about light in Religions drawing in Hanukkah, Diwali, the Goddess Lakshmi and Eid and they compared and contrasted between Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.

During the same month both SACRE Co-Chairs visited a Sikh school (primary and secondary combined) in Coventry and were taken on a tour, met with children and staff and learned about their RE provision and use of the agreed syllabus.

In January 2018 a joint Coventry and Warwickshire SACRE meeting was held at a local primary school and SACRE members were able to see a selection of children's work in RE, as well as tour the school and hear about the school's RE provision.

In May 2018 the Buddhist SACRE representative hosted a group of sixth formers from a Coventry private school when they visited the Forest Hermitage Buddhist Monastery in Lower Fulbrook, Warwickshire, as part of their A-Level studies on Buddhism.

During 2017-18 SACRE updated their advice to schools on visits to places of worship and these were made available on the Warwickshire SACRE website, with teachers being made aware of where to find this and resources linked to the Agreed Syllabus.

c) Links to broader community initiatives

During Eid, SACRE sent a letter of greetings and peace to local Muslim communities in Coventry and Warwickshire. A reply was received by Coventry SACRE Clerk from the Islamic Chaplain at Coventry University Spirituality and Faith Centre, extending gratitude and appreciation to SACRE for this gesture. Similarly, a letter was also sent out at Diwali to local Hindu faith communities.

A member of Coventry SACRE represented SACRE at the Coventry Peace Walk in 2017.

In August 2018 SACRE Chair attended the Hiroshima Peace Day event held at Coventry Cathedral on behalf of Coventry SACRE.

Glossary of Acronyms

AGM Annual General Meeting

AREIAC Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants

ASC Agreed Syllabus Conference

C of E Church of England

CPD Continuing Professional Development

DfE Department for Education

EBacc English Baccalaureate

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

ICT Information and Communication Technology

INSET In-Service Training Day

KS Key Stage

LA Local Authority

LOtC Learning Outside the Classroom

NASACRE National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education

NATRE National Association of Teachers of Religious Education

NQT Newly Qualified Teacher

Ofsted Office for Standards in Education

PEBBLE Public Body Liaison Committee for British Paganism

RE Religious Education

REC Religious Education Council

RS Religious Studies

SACRE Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

SIAMS Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

SMSCD Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

Appendix A SACRE Membership

Group 1 Church of England – 5 members

Emma Griffiths Chris Mellers (Co-Chair) Lizzie McWhirter Hester Meacock Vacancy

Group 2 Other Denominations – 12-14 members

Ajahn Manapo (Buddhist)
Jonathan Passman (Jewish)
Helen Maoudis (Greek Orthodox)
Bill Rattigan (Baha'i)
Claire Rutter (Roman Catholic)
Pauline Luckett (Free Church)
Eleanor Nesbitt (The Society of Friends)
David Bone (Muslim)
Amra Bone (Muslim)
Vacancy
Vacancy
Vacancy

Group 3 Associations representing teachers – 5 members

Georgia Allen (NASUWT) Pam McKiernan (NUT) Michelle Carrier Vacancy Vacancy

Group 4 Local Authority – 5 members Reverend Terry Colling Cllr Joe Clifford Manjit Kaur (Co-Chair) Gyll Brown (Vice-Chair) Vacancy

Co-opted members

Rachel Cooper