



Derby City Council

Derby City Children and Young People's Department

Annual SACRE Report

2011/12



**Annual Report of the
Derby Unitary Authority
Standing Advisory
Council for Religious
Education 2011/12**

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Foreword

The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) has continued in its role to support schools within the City of Derby. Nationally, there are many challenges facing SACREs as a result of changes in Government policy and the rise of academies but we continue to have strong support in Derby for the work of our SACRE in providing advice to the City Council.

The rise of academies and free schools is of concern as there is no requirement on such schools to teach the locally agreed RE syllabus and our SACRE has very little jurisdiction over them. It is our intention, however, to continue to work in partnership with schools in Derby including academy schools. There are further concerns with free schools both nationally and locally around potential segregation of communities along faith and cultural lines and the potential impact on community cohesion. Derby SACRE has raised our concerns with the council relating to the proposed opening of a Free School in Derby this September but we have also offered to work with the school in supporting a well balanced Religious Education syllabus for all of its pupils.

The numbers of children studying RE at Key Stage 4 has declined nationally over the last year. This has happened at the same time that RE has been omitted from the English Baccalaureate. Derby SACRE will continue to monitor carefully the situation in Derby schools. On a positive note an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE was formed recently in the light of the changes to the English Baccalaureate and our SACRE has written to that group to offer our support for its important work in the coming year.

It is more important than ever that Derby SACRE focuses on its statutory functions and responsibilities. To this end SACRE has been running an induction and training programme to support members' visits to schools across the city to help identify both existing good practice and also where support is needed in the future from SACRE and the Local authority.

I would like to thank all SACRE members for their continuing commitment and also the Local Authority Officers who work so hard to support this work throughout the year.

Councillor Robin Turner

Chair of Derby Unitary Authority Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Annual Derby City SACRE Report 2011/12

National Context

As a result of the many changes in education over the last year the various stakeholders in RE are working together in a more coordinated fashion under the umbrella of the Religious Education Council (REC). The REC has created committees to undertake this task more effectively. Many organisations representing RE teachers, lecturers and SACREs are working closely on the REC curriculum, assessment and qualifications committee. That committee is to review the RE curriculum, its most appropriate forms of assessment, and advise on suitable public qualifications for RE in England. It will also seek funding for that enterprise and advise on the management of the project, drawing on and working with REC member organisations and other partners in conducting. Derby SACRE will continue to support the work of the REC through its members and Officer.

The REC has been instrumental in setting up an All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG) for Religious Education. Its chair is **Stephen Lloyd**, MP for Eastbourne and Willingdon, who put up the Early Day Motion on RE in the English Baccalaureate debated in parliament last year . The proposed aim of the group is to provide a medium through which MPs, Peers and organisations with an interest in religious education can discuss the current provision for religious education in schools, academies, colleges and universities; to act as a forum for all who share common concerns in promoting the highest possible standards of religious education; to press for continuous improvement in religious education; to promote a clear, positive image and public understanding of religious education; and to advocate that every young person experiences a personally inspiring and academically rigorous education in religious and non-religious worldviews. Anybody can contact their constituency MP and suggest that they might consider joining the group. The secretariat for the APPG will be run by the RE Council, so any suggestions should be sent to the group at appg@religiouseducationcouncil.org.

Derby City SACRE has written to the All Party Parliamentary Group offering its support and highlighting the areas that we believe the group should focus on. A copy of our letter is included in the Appendix 2 of this annual report.



The REC is also preparing to put into place a **national review of RE** to run alongside the review of the national curriculum in England. This will as far as possible be in tandem with the NC review as regards timescale, design and scope.

Ofsted

There is now a new RE webpage on the **Best Practice** section of the Ofsted website. It includes links to all their most recent school reports as well as other links. It includes hyperlinks across to the main RE websites.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/our-expertknowledge/religious-education>

Local Context

Derby SACRE has met three times throughout the academic year and a task group has met on separate occasions to prepare and develop the SACRE action plan.

Training for SACRE members

In the absence of Ofsted Reports providing evidence of RE provision and standards in our schools and with the continuing concern about cuts and restructuring in local authority staffing Derby SACRE has organised a training event for SACRE members to equip them with the confidence and understanding necessary to visit schools in Derby in the new academic year and identify both good practice and also areas where schools require further support from the local authority.

We are very grateful for the time and expertise offered to SACRE by Christine Smith, Head of RE at Chellaston Academy and her staff, who allowed SACRE members into the school in the summer term to pilot the questionnaire produced by the SACRE task group and to observe RE being taught across the key stages (see Appendix 3 and 4)

Academies and Free Schools

Along with all SACREs in the country Derby SACRE finds itself in a challenging situation as more of our schools become academies. Although the law requires all maintained schools in England and Wales to teach RE consistent with the requirements of the local RE Agreed Syllabus this is not the case with Academies and Free Schools who can follow any agreed syllabus or none at all. It remains Derby SACRE's advice to the local authority that we should continue to seek to work in partnership with all schools in the city to ensure consistency of provision, entitlement and standards in RE and that the local RE Agreed Syllabus provides the best basis for doing so. Derby SACRE expressed some concerns about the proposal to open a Free School in Derby in September in 2012. SACRE will continue to monitor the situation in the new academic year in terms of Religious Education provision in the school.

Derby SACRE represented at the Annual National Association of SACREs Conference in London in May.

Mair Bradley (Chair of Committee A) and Graham Falgate (Officer) represented Derby at the annual NASCRE AGM at the Friends Meeting House, London on Wednesday 23rd May 2012. Over 90 delegates representing 73 SACREs met to experience what many felt was one of the best of such meetings for some time.

Professor Robert Jackson gave the key note address entitled '**RU 4 EC RE? Research and European Policy Making on Religious Education: Taking account of young people's views in developing the subject**'. He presented a thorough and well received account of some European and UK research giving young people's voices about RE and gave an outline of some of the Council of Europe's work on religion. He concluded by offering some thoughts on the development of a 'road map' for utilising the Council of Europe recommendation.

Of particular interest were research findings that students between the ages of 14 and 16 see the classroom as a 'safe space' for dialogue and they want more of a voice and aspire to peaceful coexistence based on knowledge about each other's religions and worldviews. English case studies from the Warwick 2010 research found that RE develops positive attitudes towards other people as well as self-reflection and personal growth including students' development as members of religious traditions. They appreciated direct contact with difference (visitors/visits) in their learning.

Professor Jackson also referred to the Religion and Society project of 2007-2012 which found that students developed appreciation of the faith positions of others. However, students also identified that RE lessons often fail to take account of diversity within religious traditions and often felt that their own traditions are stereotyped. They expressed discomfort at being used as representatives of their traditions in lessons.

Lat Blaylock gave the second key note address entitled '**SACRE + Teachers of RE = Good Learning**' which was extremely well received. He began by talking about sacred spaces and acknowledging that the biggest gatherings in the world are religious e.g. the Kumbh Mela and Hajj. He highlighted that religious worship of this sort often takes place in the open/outside. He went on to speak about a project about learning events which has been a good way to reach hard to reach teachers i.e. those who never come or never manage to get out of school on CPD and described some of the effective activities used with students at these events.

Lat stressed the need for SACREs to work in partnership with schools on initiatives like this which enabled young people to engage in depth with interfaith dialogue. All the conferences have been the result of SACRE engagement. He showed examples of outcomes of the pupils' ideas and work at the conferences. Lat recognised that SACREs can get overwhelmed with maintenance issues but stressed the importance of them being more

proactive and dynamic; getting involved with pupils in ways that make a difference. He suggested that the SMSC agenda and its resurgence in importance in Ofsted inspections is a possible driver to take RE forward.

His presentation continued with some examples of 'good RE'. He maintained that support from SACREs for teachers will help to improve RE. He concluded that such SACRE projects matter. Great SACREs are critical friends to teachers.

State of the RE nation address:

Sarah Smalley presented the RE Council's assessment of the current position. New government policies have started to take effect and there are some difficulties as well as positives. She went on to explain:

- Over half of secondary schools are either or are in the process of becoming academies.
- A recent workforce survey into the number of teachers in secondary schools employed to teach RE and the hours they taught RE revealed an increase in both the number of teachers and hours taught but this did not however refute concerns about the subject's exclusion from the EBacc.
- The Government had suggested the number of places for teachers of RE had to be reduced. There had been a recent announcement of 50 more places but the threat of losing expertise within university departments remains a reality.
- NATRE (National Association of Teachers of RE) has taken a strong lead in gathering information from teachers on RE's exclusion from the EBacc. The evidence collected looked gloomy with a third of responding schools saying that they expected fewer pupils to be taking GCSE RS.
- Information from the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants reveals a diminishing number of local authority RE advisers.
- NASACRE reports fewer SACREs have full support for their work so it may be difficult for SACREs to rise to the challenges given to the meeting by Lat.

On the positive side Sarah pointed to:

- The introduction of the RE quality mark – a wonderful scheme being trialled in parts of England. This will work like the arts mark award.
- The all party parliamentary group (APPG) on RE bringing together MPs from across the party spectrum. Everyone should write to encourage their MPs to seek membership of the APPG.
- The REC review of RE which although it will be non-statutory and not have national authority it is hoped will be helpful for the RE community.
- The fact that at the moment the RE community is better placed to face the challenges than has ever been the case before.

Annual Report to SACRE from the Chief Executive of The Open Centre, based in the St James' Centre, Normanton, Derby.

Established in 1981, the Open Centre is a well-respected organisation. We exist to promote understanding between different communities by celebrating and raising awareness of their faith and cultural heritage. We promote good community relations between British citizens, no matter what their background or belief. As part of our activities we work closely with schools, different communities, faith organisations and places of worship as well as representatives of secular organisations; however the Open Centre is not a religiously based organisation and has no affiliation to any specific faith based groups.

The need for The Open Centre's work

Over 10, 000 school children from Derby City and Derbyshire visit the centre each year and these numbers are increasing all the time, with visitors and bookings now being received from other parts of the East Midlands, Staffordshire and further afield. There is nowhere else like the Open Centre - no other organisation offers the services it does to schools and the local community.

The Open Centre currently offers:

- ▶ Workshops at the Open Centre and in individual schools
- ▶ Tours and visits to places of worship
- ▶ Speaker Panel - talks, debates, lessons, assemblies etc
- ▶ Cultural Awareness Days
- ▶ Bespoke cultural heritage events for community, public and private sector organisations

Example of feedback from visitors:

- ▶ "Awareness and understanding of other cultures extremely important today."
- ▶ "Nobody else offers the same width of experiences of people from different backgrounds."
- ▶ "The unique resource meets need that no other organisation can."

Exciting news for September 2012

In response to the withdrawal of local authority funding, the Open Centre is in the process of developing a new strategy to secure its economic sustainability to make it independent and less reliant on grants, starting with an increased range of workshops delivered by a team of local artists. There are workshops to suit all ages (including teachers!). We are still keeping your favourites but we wanted to give you more choice. The workshops are listed on our new website along with an easy booking process. The website will also include downloadable resources and teaching materials for schools and should be available in the coming months. Our Faith Trails have had a bit of an overhaul as well in response to feedback from teachers. Each school will have their

own personal host for the day who will guide them round each place of worship. The tours will include lots of interaction and visual materials to support the children's learning. The hosts are of a very high calibre and will go the extra mile to ensure the children have a memorable visit. You will be able to keep track with current news and information on the centre through our media outlets including Facebook, Twitter, E-bulletin's and newsletters. The Facebook account is now open and can be found at Derby Open Centre.

Appendices

1. SACRE attendance 2011/1
2. Letter to APPG
3. Code of Conduct for SACRE members visiting schools
4. Visiting schools questionnaire
5. Distribution list for Annual SACRE Report

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCES OF DERBY SACRE 2011/12 Appendix 1

	22/06	28/11	26/03
Group A (Christianity and Other World Faiths)			
Vacant (Afro-Caribbean Council of Churches)	-	-	-
Maryam Djavid (Bahai Faith)	A	-	A
Vacant (Baptist Church)	-	-	-
Vacant (Bhuddist Faith)	-	-	-
Raj Bali (Hindu Faith)	✓	✓	✓
Phil Royle (Methodist Church)	✓	✓	✓
Joan Price (Pentecostal Church)	✓	✓	✓
Lucy Care (Religious Society of Friends)	A	✓	A
Kate Tippen (Roman Catholic Church)	-	-	-
Wendy Jordan (Salvation Army)	✓	✓	✓
Rev Roy Ninkovic (Serbian Orthodox Church)	✓	✓	✓
Rev Mrs Mair Bradley (United Reformed Church)	✓	✓	✓
Ruth Dolby (Jewish Faith)	✓	✓	✓
Forid Miah (Islamic Faith)	✓	-	-
Aslam Siddiqi (Islamic Faith)	✓	✓	✓
Dr Hardial Singh Dhillon (Sikh Faith)	✓	-	-
Vacant (Sikh Faith)	-	-	-
Group B (Church of England)			
Rosemary Wibberley	✓	✓	✓
Viv Lawrence	✓	✓	✓
Alison Brown	✓	✓	✓
Maxine Bull	✓	✓	-
Group C (Teachers' Associations)			
Jane Oldershaw (ATL)	-	-	-
Kate McRae (NAHT)	✓	✓	✓
Vacant (NASUWT)	-	-	-
Kelly Bradley (NUT)	A	✓	✓
Ash Venkatech (SHA)	✓	-	-
Group D (Local Education Authority)			
Higginbottom (Chair)	✓	✓	-
J Khan (substitute for Turner from 28/11 meeting)	-	A	-
Radford	✓	✓	✓
Tuplin	A	✓	✓
Turner	A	-	-
Wood	✓	✓	✓
Co-opted Members			
Laura Connolly (The Open Centre)	A	✓	✓
Dr Phil Henry (Multi Faith Centre)	✓	✓	✓
Mike Lake (British Humanist Association)	✓	✓	-
Ian Shaw (Derbyshire Pagans)	-	-	-

Key:

✓	=	Attended	-	=	Not in attendance
A	=	Apologies submitted the meeting	N/A	=	Not SACRE members for
✓S	=	Substitute attended			

Stephen Lloyd
Chair of the All Party Parliamentary
Group for Religious Education
100 Seaside Road
Eastbourne
BN21 3PF

Contact: Councillor Lisa Higginbottom
E-mail: Lisa.higginbottom@derby.gov.uk
Telephone: 01332 297564
Date: 21 May 2012

Dear Stephen,

I am writing to you on behalf of Derby City SACRE following discussions which took place at our Spring Term SACRE meeting.

Firstly, we wish to thank you for chairing this important group and for recognising the importance of the challenge that faces Religious Education in schools in England and Wales. We wish you and your colleagues every success.

Secondly, we wish to add our voice to the concern which we know has been expressed by so many people in the Religious Education community for some months now about the challenges faced by those who teach and those who wish to learn about this most important curriculum subject. Our concerns are fourfold:

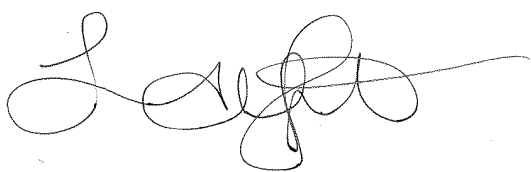
1. The local and national partnership working for RE, started under a Conservative government in 1993, improved RE greatly. The decision by this Government to exclude RE from the English Baccalaureate has severely undermined this relationship and there is clear evidence already that fewer students are opting to take RE as a public examination at Key Stage 4 and that in turn this is having a significant impact on the recruitment and retention of specialist RE teachers in the profession.
2. All schools are being encouraged to become academies. Academies no longer have to teach the locally agreed syllabus of RE but can teach almost whatever RE they want, making the syllabuses and SACREs, the bedrock of RE provision and quality since 1944, redundant and irrelevant. GCSE RE is not allowed to count towards the English Baccalaureate, putting RE in secondary schools and at A Level at serious risk. The government has excluded RE from the new round of curriculum development, and in December 2011, all the QCDA guidance and support material for RE was removed from the DfE/NC websites. The number of trainee RE teachers has been drastically cut and the majority of university courses for training RE teachers is likely to disappear in the next two years.
3. As more schools become Academies the role of SACREs will be progressively undermined and what limited authority SACREs had to provide for and monitor the quality of RE teaching will diminish rapidly. At a time when OFSTED are no longer required to observe or make judgments about the contribution of RE to the school curriculum and its contribution to attainment and achievement this is particularly worrying.
4. RE, whilst remaining part of the basic curriculum, is in great danger of becoming insular and fragmented at a time when religion and belief have a very high profile, and which the majority of young people learn about only in schools mostly through their RE. Without some action, RE will decline in provision and quality, going the way of daily

Collective Worship, the most widely flouted educational requirement of all.

Derby City SACRE encourages the APPG to work with the Religious Education Council to:

- to actively support the resourcing and provision of high quality Religious Education for pupils of all ages in schools in England and Wales
- carry out a review of RE alongside the NC review which will, among other things, develop a new framework for RE provision consistent with the thinking on the new National Curriculum
- give further thought on how best to position the Council and the RE Community itself to ensure that RE can thrive in the new educational context
- to provide clear guidance to local authorities about the function and role of SACRE in the context of the changing world in which SACREs now find themselves

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Higginbottom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cllr Lisa Higginbottom (Chair of SACRE)

To ensure that there is mutual clarity about the purpose, function and remit of visits by SACRE members to schools SACRE has issued the following code of practice to its members:

Code of Practice

- SACRE members are **not** visiting the schools in an inspectorial role
- Members of SACRE visit schools as **representatives of SACRE** and not as representatives of a particular faith tradition or group
- SACRE members will request school visits in writing with the Head teacher at least **one month in advance**. The date and time of any visit will be arranged at the mutual convenience of the school and the SACRE member
- SACRE members will seek to act in a **supportive** capacity to the RE teacher and the school at all times
- SACRE members should at all times be **sensitive** to the situation and context in which they find themselves
- Observations arising from school visits should be treated **in confidence**. Where discussion is felt appropriate at a SACRE meeting such discussion should be of a general nature with no individual teacher or pupil named
- Members of SACRE should **not seek to visit** RE lessons focussing on their **own faith tradition, group, or belief system** unless specifically invited to do so
- Members of SACRE should be mindful at all times of the professional context in which teachers operate and use the opportunity to **extend their own learning** rather than seek to make judgements

I agree to follow this agreed Code of Conduct when visiting a school as a representative of SACRE

Signed.....

Committee.....

Date.....

DERBY CITY SACRE – VISITS TO SCHOOLS

The purpose of the meeting/contact with schools will be:

1. To raise awareness of the role of SACRE
2. To increase SACRE's knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in Derby City's schools
3. To enable SACRE to identify areas of confidence in schools (to facilitate the sharing of success) and similarly areas where schools lack confidence (in order to offer productive links for individual schools and, where concerns are widespread, to inform the LA so that this can be addressed in terms of training and development.
[In doing so SACRE believes that it can be more accountable for the quality of learning in schools.]

NAME OF THE SCHOOL:

KEY STAGES TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOL:

DATE OF THE VISIT: **TIME:**

SACRE MEMBER/S ATTENDING:

SCHOOL STAFF/GOVERNOR/S ATTENDING (name and position)

.....

.....

.....

.....

At the close of the meeting, please sign to confirm that a copy of the notes made was kept by the school

.....

AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION

	Confident	Fairly confident	Not very confident
STANDARDS & PROGRESS - KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING (AT1)			
How confident are you that pupil progress is measured effectively, year on year?			
How? <i>[some notes would be included here to help SACRE members know what to expect]</i>			
Are you confident that over 75% of children are achieving age-related national expectations in RE (using the National Standards as reproduced in All Our Worlds p179 – copy attached)?			
How does the school make sure there is progression (against those standards)? <i>[some notes would be included here to help SACRE members know what to expect]</i>			

SOCIAL, MORAL, SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT - IDENTIFY & EXPERIENCE (AT2)

	Confident	Fairly confident	Not very confident
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How confident is the school that learners have a positive attitude towards RE?

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For example..... *[some notes would be included here to help SACRE members know what to expect]*

SOCIAL, MORAL, SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT - VALUES & COMMITMENT (AT2)

How confident is the school that RE contributes to community cohesion? eg Visits to Places of Worship, cultural exchanges, visiting speakers etc

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For example..... *[some notes would be included here to help SACRE members know what to expect]*

How confident is the school that RE makes a difference in the school community?

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For example..... *[some notes would be included here to help SACRE members know what to expect]*

What further support would you like from Derby SACRE/the Local Authority for RE/Collective Worship in your school?

Distribution list

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Adam Wilkinson – Chief Executive of Derby City Council

Andrew Bunyan - Strategic Director, Children and Young People

Lynda Poole – Director of Learning and Inclusion

Angela Cole – Head of Service, Inclusion and Intervention, CYP

The Head teachers of all Derby City Schools

SACRE members

The CEO of the Open Centre

The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)