



## Devon SACRE Annual Report 2017/8

### Forward by Chair of Devon SACRE

Once again, this annual report gives a full account of the important work being undertaken by Devon SACRE, in the pursuit of high quality RE in our schools. It has been a great privilege to have been Chair of Devon SACRE during the year and to participate in the ongoing support of RE in Devon schools. With teachers and schools seemingly under more pressure and scrutiny than ever before, and with children's mental health high on the agenda, SACRE continues to make a valuable contribution in the provision of excellent religious education for our schools.

The Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) programme continues to offer an important lifeline for many teachers of RE across the county. It is exciting to note that LTLRE is increasingly being recognised nationally as a beacon of excellence in the way it provides teachers with grass-roots support and empowers new leadership in the subject.

The Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2018 events went beyond our expected bounds, with a concert and testimony from individuals of international renown. 700 people attended the Cathedral to hear Anita Lasker-Wallfisch speak powerfully about how she survived the horrors of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. No less significant was the concert performed by her son, Raphael Wallfisch, with his accompanist John York, playing a repertoire that included Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelsohn and Bloch. We were honoured to hear that on the previous day Anita had addressed the German Bundestag!

In addition to this, our HMD schools' day drew participation from more than a dozen secondary schools, offering educational talks, walks and films!

However, the most significant work of the year saw SACRE getting started on a review of the Devon RE Agreed Syllabus. SACRE has expressed its real determination to ensure that provision is made for schools to access a more complete and professionally written syllabus, accompanied by high quality resources.

Devon SACRE would like to congratulate students and staff in Devon secondary schools for all the hard work put into studying for exams. RE continues to be a subject that the majority of schools in Devon take seriously, recognising the important part it plays in helping to prepare young people for life in modern Britain.

The role of Devon SACRE continues to be vitally important, enabling teachers to be supported in providing high quality Religious Education for Devon's young people. I look forward to the conclusion of our work on introducing an improved Agreed Syllabus for all state-funded schools in Devon in 2018/9.

Claire Hulbert

Chair of Devon SACRE 2017/18

## **1 SACRE organisation**

### **a) Membership**

SACRE would like to say a big thank you to Paula Fletcher, Jonathan Marshall, MarkAndrew Dearden and Nuala Nation who left us during this year. Thanks for your generous commitment and contribution over many years. SACRE welcomes new members: Ruth Ingrouille, Alex Parkes, Sandra Gill, Belinda Twiggs and Fuad Abdo

### **b) Professional support for RE**

SACRE continues to be well supported by clerk Gerry Rufolo (DCC), Sally Watts (Babcock/LDP).

## **2 SACRE activity and updates**

### **a) Devon Agreed Syllabus review**

This year saw us get a review of the Devon Agreed Syllabus for RE under way, with evaluation of the current agreed syllabus carried out through Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) hub groups and via teacher surveys. At the June meeting Katy Staples, who is Adviser to three SACREs, gave SACRE members a very useful introduction to the process of Agreed Syllabus review.

A working group was established with a view to setting up an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to oversee the process. Discussions have been taking place with neighbouring SACREs and it is hoped that we will be able to collaborate with Torbay, Plymouth and possibly Cornwall. SACRE aims to have a new and fully supported syllabus in place for first teaching in September 2019.

### **b) Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE)<sup>1</sup>**

LTLRE hub groups across Devon have become nationally recognised for the high-quality cross-phase support they offer for teachers of RE through termly twilight meetings and our annual conference. These networks have established themselves as important providers of professional development for teachers of RE, working through hub leaders who are provided with 2 annual training days. LTLRE hubs meet in 5 locations: Barnstaple (N Devon), Exeter, Exmouth (East Devon), Newton Abbot (S Devon) and Tavistock (W Devon) with a primary and secondary lead in each.

We are nearing the end of our funding streams (generously donated by St Luke's College Foundation), so the conference in 2018 would be the first not to offer a residential option. In view of this, Devon SACRE has agreed to increase the amount of financial support it offers to the LTLRE programme, in recognition of the important support the network hubs offer to develop high quality RE across the County. £1800 will be made available in 2018/9 (this will support the running of two hubs).

SACRE would like to thank Linda Rudge for the outstanding leadership role she has played as LTLRE Programme Director since 2011. Leadership of LTLRE has been reorganised, with Corrine Guntrip taking a larger role alongside Tatiana Wilson and Ed Pawson.

### **c) Commission on Religious Education**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ltlre.org>

SACRE has taken the opportunity to engage with some of the draft recommendations made in the Commission for RE's interim report (published in September 2017). SACRE submitted a set of responses to feed into the discussion about the future of RE in schools in England.

#### **d) Training and CPD**

During the year, teachers in Devon have been able to access professional development courses run by Babcock/LDP and the Diocese of Exeter. In particular the training offered to introduce the Understanding Christianity materials has been very well received, with twilight follow-up offered through LTLRE hub groups. Other courses included:

- Islam for KS2 and GCSE teachers, held at Exeter Mosque
- Buddhism for GCSE and A level teachers, held at Hartridge Buddhist Monastery
- Teaching and leading RE in the Primary school phase
- Teaching and leading RE in the Secondary school phase
- Raising the Grade at GCSE for schools in N Devon

A new System Leader Qualification in RE and School Ethos, in collaboration with MarJon University, is being offered for 2018/9. This is heavily subsidised by St Luke's College Foundation.

#### **e) Diversity issues**

SACRE is pleased to support the work done by Devon and Cornwall Police to tackle Hate Crime, raising awareness about the Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime Pledge<sup>2</sup> in schools. SACRE also recommends that schools should adopt the use of the new LGBT toolkit<sup>3</sup>

#### **f) South West SACRE conference**

Devon SACRE sent 6 delegates to the SW SACRE conference at Dillington House in March 2018. Evaluations showed a very positive appreciation of the address by Professor Denise Cush, who was outlining the developing work of the Commission on RE. Delegates also gave a strong recommendation for the presentation by Stephen Pett on the Understanding Christianity resources produced by RE Today.

#### **g) Half termly RE newsletter**

The half termly RE newsletter continues to give extensive advice about cpd events, conferences and teaching resources for primary and secondary schools. This is emailed out to all schools and can be found on the RE pages of the Babcock/LDP website.

### **3 Interfaith work**

#### **a) Interfaith conference**

During the year a significant amount of preparatory work took place to plan a conference for Interfaith Week 2018 entitled 'Keeping Body and Soul Together' with the Bishop of Crediton (Sarah Mullally) as principal speaker. However, the conference had to be cancelled with Bishop Sarah's appointment as the next Bishop of London.

In its place a conference was planned Interfaith Week 2018 on 'Dying Matters'. This would be aimed at GCSE RS students, but also open to the public.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/advice/threat-assaultabuse/hate-crime/sign-the-pledge/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://new.devon.gov.uk/equality/lgbttoolkit>

### **b) Faith and belief training course**

SACRE, working alongside Devon Faith and Belief Forum (DFBF), is making plans to run another faith and belief visitor training course during the year 2018/9 to enable schools to access visitors for their RE curriculum. Details of current visitors can be found on the LTLRE website.<sup>4</sup>

## **4 Holocaust Memorial Day**

Holocaust Memorial Day 2018 commemorations, themed *'The Power of Words'*, were hugely successful, with up to 1000 people being directly involved in events, and with students from at least 20 schools either participating or attending at a variety of events. The whole impact was hugely inspiring, with a special focus being the 'Inherit the Truth' concert and talk at Exeter Cathedral. 700 people, including students and teachers from schools across the region, listened with rapt attention to Anita Lasker-Wallfisch speaking about her experiences as a survivor of the Auschwitz concentration camp and to her son Raphael Wallfisch playing exquisite cello music. A number of letters of thanks were received in recognition of the impact of the event, including messages from the Lord Mayor of Exeter and Dr Phil Norrey (Chief Executive of DCC).

Discussions with the Dean of Exeter Cathedral have been positive and arrangements made to hold the Opening Ceremony for HMD 2019 in the Cathedral.

## **5 Standards in Religious Education**

One of the roles of SACRE is to monitor standards and compliance with the law for RE. This is not an easy task, given the lack of available evidence to help us understand where RE is thriving, and where it is lacking. Working alongside the Diocese of Exeter (C of E schools) and the Diocese of Plymouth (Roman Catholic schools) we are confident that RE is taken seriously in the vast majority of church schools across the Authority (given that religious education and collective worship form part of their Section 48 inspection frameworks.) However, we lack significant mechanisms to fully understand the provision and impact of RE in community schools.

Data from exam results represent the only consistent external measure available, so this means that we lack coherent understanding of how schools are performing at EYFS-KS3. Even GCSE results only give us a retrospective view, given that they represent what has taken place in a school, not what is currently happening. In recent years results data for RE short course has been very hard to access, giving us an incomplete picture of KS4.

### **a) Devon schools GCSE RS**

#### **Table A Trends in GCSE entries for Religious Studies<sup>5</sup>**

Religious Studies GCSE entries in England 2010-2018 (thousands)

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ltlre.org/resources/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.commissiononre.org.uk/final-report-religion-and-worldviews-the-way-forward-a-national-plan-for-re/>

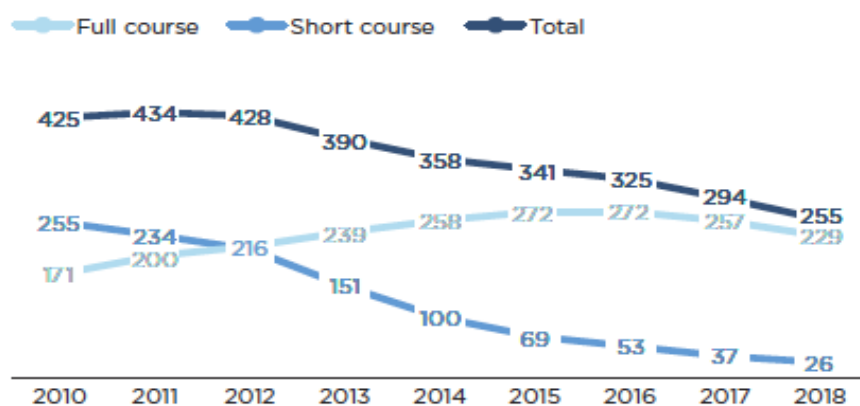


Table A shows the continued downward trend of Religious Studies exam entries nationally. RE is a statutory subject at KS4 and the most common way for schools to meet this requirement is by following accredited (GCSE) courses. The trends on the graph suggests that nationally, an increasing number of schools are failing to meet their statutory duty to make provision for all KS4 students to receive their entitlement to religious education.

**Table B Trends in Full Course RS GCSE entry in Devon schools**

GCSE Full Course entries (% of Y11 cohort)	2016	2017	2018
National	45	43	41
Devon	53	61	58

Table B shows that in Devon, against the national trends, GCSE RS exam entries have increased since 2016. Devon secondary schools continue to enter significantly more students for GCSE RS than the national average.

**Table C: the number of students entered for GCSE RS in Devon schools**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Full Course	2760	2870	3544	2954	3666	4087	3785
Short Course	2857	2878	2178	2053	1179	1321	?
<b>Total</b>	<b>5617</b>	<b>5748</b>	<b>5722</b>	<b>5007</b>	<b>4845</b>	<b>5408</b>	3785

Table C shows the entry trends for Devon schools for Full Course and Short Course RS. Unfortunately data for RS short course has not been made available for 2018, but it is clear that overall entry of students for RS exams at KS4 continues to be taken seriously by schools in the County.

**Table D: Full course GCSE results**

Average results	9-7	9-5	9-4
National	30%	60%	72%
Devon	19%	51%	65%

However, although Devon schools continue to be committed to entering students for RS examination courses, results lag significantly behind the national average. This is a trend that has continued for a number of years. More work needs to be done to understand why students in Devon perform significantly less well than students nationally.

**b) Monitoring RE in secondary schools**

Devon SACRE continues to monitor standards in RE in secondary schools, specifically in schools where there are concerns about compliance, time allocation or low examination entry/pass levels for Religious Education.

Following analysis of data from the DfE's school workforce survey (2017/8), SACRE wrote to ten secondary schools to explore an apparent lack of provision for RE. In some cases it became clear that the schools are, in fact, teaching adequate RE, but are applying incorrect codes when reporting details of their curriculum to DfE. In other cases, where the data accurately identifies a lack of RE in school timetables, the schools have been open to discussion regarding the status and position of RE in their curriculum.

In the schools visited during the year there have been positive discussions with students, the teachers in charge of RE and Head Teachers/Senior Leaders. These schools have shown an appreciation for the support given by SACRE, leading to an expectation of further development of the curriculum opportunities for Religious Education.

Both community schools and academies alike are being approached for these monitoring visits and it is noted that, although academies are not bound to teach the Devon Agreed Syllabus, there is a willingness to engage with SACRE advice, because it is understood to represent good practice for the creation of high quality RE. In many cases our visits have opened up opportunities for new communication channels, allowing RE teachers to access advice from a wider range of support networks and giving impetus for school leaders to take the subject more seriously, leading to curriculum developments for RE.

#### **c) Monitoring standards and compliance in RE in Devon primary schools**

Given the large number of Primary schools in Devon and the lack of evidential data, it is impossible to adequately monitor the provision of RE in all schools. However, SACRE undertakes to sample the RE in a number of schools every year, to check for compliance. SACRE members have been encouraged to participate in the process of exploring school websites to ascertain their provision for RE. A website search of schools in the Exeter area has revealed a variety of provision for RE. Several schools have been contacted to discuss the place of RE in the curriculum and to make an offer of a partnership visit.

In addition, Ofsted reports are regularly scrutinised, and where there are references to inadequate provision of RE, British values or SMSC, SACRE will contact the school to offer support.

## **6 Collective Worship**

There have been no formal complaints about Collective worship in schools and no applications for determinations.

## **APPENDIX 1: MEMBERSHIP OF DEVON SACRE 2017**

### **Group A: Christian and other religious denominations, not including Church of England.**

13 places: Appointment for four years ending on 30 April 2019

Jude Taylorson  
Miss Mary Hext  
Mr Ravi Nathwani  
Mr Fuad Abdo  
Mrs Nuala Nation

Buddhist Community  
Methodist Church  
Hindu Community  
Islamic Community  
Roman Catholic Church

Mr Richard Halsey	Jewish Community
Mr Bernard Lane	United Reformed Church
Ms Helena Hastie	Baha'i Community
Mr Keith Denby	Devon Humanists
Ms Maia Miller	Pagan Federation

**Group B: The Church of England**

6 places: Appointment for four years ending on 30 April 2019

Ms Claire Hulbert	Diocesan Board of Education
Ms Penny Hammett	Diocesan Board of Education
Mrs Tatiana Wilson	Diocesan Board of Education
Mrs Alex Parks	Diocesan Board of Education
Mrs Ruth Ingrouille	Diocesan Board of Education
Mrs Sandra Gill	Diocesan Board of Education

**Group C: Teachers' Associations**

12 places: Appointments for four years ending on 30 April 2019

Mr John Gooddy	Teaching union/ATL
Mrs Lorna Clay	Teaching union/NASUWT
Mrs Wendy Harrison	Teaching union/NUT
Mrs Sue Shute	RE teachers association/NATRE (secondary)
Mrs Gerry Winnall	RE teachers association/NATRE (primary)
Mr Paul Cornish	Secondary school leaders/SHA
Dr Karen Walshe	Higher Education/ITE/UCU
Dr Edgar Mihas	USU (FE)

**Group D: The Local Authority**

6 places:

Cllr Emma Brennan	County Councillor
Cllr C Channon	County Councillor
Cllr P Colthorpe	County Councillor
Cllr Iain Chubb	County Councillor
Cllr M Squires	County Councillor
Cllr Gordon Hook	County Councillor

**Co-opted members**

Up to 6 places: Appointments for two years ending on 30 April 2019

Mrs Saxon Spence  
 Mr Jeremy Roberts  
 Belinda Twiggs  
 Rosemary Khreisheh