

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Bath and
North East Somerset

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE Annual Report September 2023- August 2024

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1. Introduction

1.1 From the Chair: Welcome to our Annual Report 23-24

This report covers the period September 2023 to August 2024. We have had another successful year of SACRE work with the Council continuing to meet online with an in person meeting in the summer. This seems to work well for the convenience of those who would have to travel. Visiting schools in person has resumed as before the restrictions. We continued in addition to monitor school's RE activities via surveying their websites, together with on-line teacher training and other activities to maintain the profile of RE.

Another big change happened this year, with the departure of our RE Advisor Adam Robertson to another job. We welcomed Rebekah Guy as his replacement in November 2023.

The SACRE continued to meet during the year, with good attendance at meetings. We are fortunate to have a diverse membership, particularly in respect of representatives of different local faith communities, and actively seek to recruit when vacancies arise. There is a good link with the local Bath Interfaith Group which has been active in the area for over 30 years, and is represented on the SACRE by myself. There is thus a valuable link for local RE teachers who are kept informed of local interfaith events, and can access visitors for their schools. During this period we had to take the decision to discontinue maintenance of the RE Resources available for loan at Saltford Primary School (see 2.7); these have been made available since 2005, and stored / administered from several different sites over the years – most recently at Saltford Primary School.

During this period we reviewed and revised the SACRE Constitution, which should be reviewed every 4 years, mainly making changes of clarification to the election process for the officer roles on SACRE, and adding a section on code of conduct and standards, including DBS checks for all members.

The long-overdue review of B&NES SACRE Guidance on Collective Worship was undertaken, and revisions suggested by a working group of several SACRE members (see 3.2).

We are looking forward to further work with the local schools, developing our SACRE membership and continuing support for schools next year. In addition, the next revision of our Agreed Syllabus is due to begin next year, so we began the process of planning for this.



Jane O'Hara

1.2 Overview – SACRE

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is legally constituted by a Local Authority with the responsibility for overseeing Religious Education and Collective Worship in community, Voluntary Controlled foundation schools without a religious character and trust schools.

SACRE has met three times in the last academic year. Two meetings were held online and one was held 'in person' at Bath Spa University. All meetings were quorate and well attended.

In meetings the following aspects were discussed:

- SACRE membership
- National Content Standard
- Standards in RE and Collective Worship
- WIRE award
- Local, Regional and National updates
- Revision of Collective Worship Guidance

1.3 Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE has developed and shares a locally agreed syllabus with partner SACREs in Bristol, North Somerset, and the London Borough of Haringey. The current syllabus (Awareness Mystery and Value) was launched in March 2022 and it will run for a period of 5 years to 2027. The process for reviewing and updating the agreed syllabus (ASC) will begin in January 2025.

2. Religious Education

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

The locally agreed syllabus in schools is Awareness Mystery and Value (<https://www.awarenessmysteryvalue.org/>). This is shared by Bristol, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. It is utilised by many schools across the authority, including Academies. Two RE CPD sessions happened in B&NES last year, which focused on using and adapting the Agreed Syllabus using a Religion and Worldviews approach.

2.2 Standards and Monitoring of Religious Education: Ofsted and SIAMS Reports

SACRE accesses Ofsted reports on local schools throughout the year. During the period of this report (2023-24), 19 schools received inspections. Three schools were graded as ‘Outstanding’, one school was graded ‘Inadequate’ and all others were graded as ‘Good’. The following table highlights where RE or Collective Worship was noted. Where relevant, schools were contacted to celebrate success, encourage them to apply for the WIRE award or to offer support with their RE curriculum.

| School | Date of inspection | Grade | Mention of RE or Collective Worship |
|---|--------------------------|-------|---|
| Peasedown St John Primary School | 26 and 27 September 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW Respectful and positive culture |
| Beechen Cliff School | 21 September 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW “Respect is central to the school’s ethos. Pupils sign up to the ‘Beechen Cliff Charter’ which sets out the importance of equality and diversity.” |
| Writhlington School | 27 and 28 September 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW Well-sequenced PSHE curriculum. Respectful school culture |
| Weston All Saints C of E Primary School | 26 and 27 September 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW Welcoming and inclusive school positive comments about school values in some subjects the curriculum is in early stages of development |
| Castle primary School | 3 October 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW Inclusive and welcoming school Pupils know that judging others by background, gender or race is wrong. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. |
| Clutton Primary School | 18 and 19 October 2023 | Good | “In some wider curriculum subjects, pupils’ knowledge is less secure. For example, in religious education (RE), some pupils can recall what they have learned about sacred texts and talk about the links between them. However, others struggle. This is because the checks on what pupils know, before moving on to new learning, are not |

| School | Date of inspection | Grade | Mention of RE or Collective Worship |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| | | | always effective. This slows the progress that some pupils make.” |
| Fosse Way School | 31 October 2023 | Outstanding | No mention of RE or CW |
| Beechen Cliff School | 12 December 2023 | Good | No mention of RE or CW |
| Somerset Studio School | 24 and 25 January 2024 | Good | Pupils celebrate what makes people different No mention of RE or CW |
| Ralph Allen School | 5 March 2024 | Good | Alongside this (PSHE), they learn about philosophy and ethics and experience a wide and empathetic view of life. |
| Trinity Church School | 26 and 27 March 2024 | Good | “They (pupils) can talk about their understanding of difference and diversity. Pupils know why prejudice and discrimination are wrong.” |
| Chew Stoke Church School | 23 and 24 April 2024 | Good | “Pupils broaden their cultural knowledge through an exciting global link with a school in Uganda. Pupils share letters, engage in collective worship and have raised money to fund a new classroom block for the Ugandan school.” “The school’s Worship, Ethos and Equality team actively promote the school’s values.” |
| Aspire Academy | 23 April 2024 | Good | No specific mention of RE or CW “The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain well. Pupils learn that it is okay to have different opinions.” Wider curriculum not fully developed. |
| St Nicholas Church School | 8 May 2024 | Outstanding | No specific mention of RE or CW “Pupils learn about other cultures from their peers. They value inclusion and know that everyone is equal.” |
| Roundhill Primary School | 4 and 5 June 2024 | Inadequate (previous) | No specific mention of RE or CW. Some curriculum comments could relate to RE. |
| Swainswick Church School | 18 and 19 June 2024 | Outstanding | “Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect for different cultures, faiths, types of families and relationships.” |
| Marksbury CofE Primary School | 2 and 3 July 2024 | Good | No specific mention of RE or CW |

| School | Date of inspection | Grade | Mention of RE or Collective Worship |
|--|--------------------|-------|---|
| | | | "They understand how the school's values help them to develop resilience, make the right choices, and be understanding of others." |
| Bishop Sutton Primary School | 3 and 4 July 2024 | Good | No specific mention of RE or CW |
| St John's Church of England Primary School | 2 and 3 July 2024 | Good | "Spiritual leaders run whole school assemblies" " Pupils learn about different religions and cultures. They know that any form of discrimination is unacceptable." |

In addition to Ofsted inspections, all Church of England schools are inspected as a designated church school through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The schools inspected during the timescale of the annual report are detailed below:

| Date of inspection | School | Previous outcome | Outcome |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------|
| 20.3.24 | St Michael's Juniors | Outstanding | J1 |
| 28.2.24 | Farrington Gurney | Good | J1 |
| 27.2.24 | St Mary's, Writhlington | Good | J1 |
| 11.10.23 | St Saviour's Juniors | Outstanding | J1 |
| 10.10.23 | St Saviour's Infants | Outstanding | J1 |
| 19.9.23 | St Philip's | Outstanding | J1 |

All schools inspected received Judgement 1 (J1): *'Through its vision and practice, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish'*.

2.3 Standards and Monitoring of Religious Education: Analysis of School Websites

Each year SACRE monitors school websites to examine the RE curriculum and to ensure schools are meeting their legal obligations. Due to the number of schools, this is done over a 3-year cycle. In 2023-24 SACRE members reviewed a total of 19 websites. A simple 'traffic-light' system is being used to indicate whether each

website contains information about the legal requirements for RE and collective worship, and to credit them where further information had been uploaded regarding aspects of programmes of study and contributions to pupils' understanding of British Values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Results of the surveys showed that 14 of the schools were rated 'green' for evidence that RE is being taught and offered and 4 were rated 'amber'. 1 school was rated 'red' and they were contacted to offer support and guidance. This resulted in a positive conversation and relationship formed. 4 of the 19 schools did not set out their Religious Education policy or information on the right to withdraw. SACRE would like to congratulate those schools who have improved their websites this year, and monitoring will continue annually. In addition, guidance on 'good practice' is being shared with the schools as needed, and also via the CEOs of local Multi Academy Trusts (MATs).

2.4 Standards and Monitoring of Religious Education: Public Examination Results in Religious Studies

Our thanks to NATRE who have provided the KS4 data for 2024 below:

| School Name | KS4 Entries Full Course (Percentage) | Percentage 9-4 |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Beechen Cliff School | 26.1 | 76.7 |
| Chew Valley School | 5.8 | 83.3 |
| Hayesfield Girls' School & Mixed Sixth Form | 12.9 | 86.2 |
| Norton Hill School | 18.1 | 87.0 |
| Oldfield School | 27.6 | 74.1 |
| Ralph Allen School | 23.1 | 91.7 |
| Somervale School | 15.7 | 50.0 |
| Saint Gregory's Catholic College | | |
| St Mark's Church of England School | 59.5 | 95.5 |
| Wellsway School | 8.9 | 89.5 |
| Writhlington | 13.9 | 47.8 |
| Broadlands Academy | 0 | |
| Somerset Studio School | 0 | |
| Isambard Kingdom Brunel Studio School | 0 | |
| Aspire Academy | 0 | |
| Fosse Way School | 0 | |

| School Name | KS4 Entries Full Course (Percentage) | Percentage 9-4 |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Three Ways School | 0 | |

SACRE notes the following from the results:

- St Mark's entered the largest cohort for GCSE RS (59.5%) and attained pass rates of 95.5%.
- Hayesfield, Norton Hill, Ralph Allen, Chew Valley, Wellsway, Oldfield and Beechen Cliff also obtained high pass rates.
- 6 schools did not enter any students for GCSE RS.

As part of its monitoring role, SACRE will be congratulating those schools who have achieved excellent results, whilst working with other schools to ensure that – even if they are not offering all students the chance to study for GCSE – they are meeting the legal requirements to teach RE in Key Stage 4.

2.5 Support for Teachers and Schools: Syllabus Teaching Materials

The Agreed Syllabus website <http://awarenessmysteryvalue.org/> contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study.

2.6 Support for Teachers and Schools: Resource Centre

SACRE has for many years made available a collection of religious artefacts and resources covering all the major religions, available for loan throughout our area. However after auditing them it was found that several items were looking tired or in need of replacement, or had been mislaid. In view of the fact that the numbers of schools requesting loans had become few (only 6 loans over the past 3 years), it was decided that it was no longer worthwhile to spend further money out of our budget to maintain the resources, and it has been discontinued in 2024. Thanks were expressed to Rob Jenkins and Saltford Primary School for administering and storing the resources, and at their request, the remaining resources were donated to that school.

2.7 Support for Teachers and Schools: SACRE Website

The SACRE website <http://banes-sacre.com/> was maintained and updated during the year. A co-opted member of SACRE receives a small stipend for managing the site and ensuring it is kept up to date. As well as information about SACRE, the site contains ideas for RE specifically for Bath and North-East Somerset schools,

including lists of resources available to borrow, and reports on the use of local visits and visitors to support the agreed syllabus for RE.

In addition, we have a presence on the Bath and North-East Somerset local authority website – which enables members of the public to have access to SACRE information via the link to our website. [Standing Advisory Council on RE \(SACRE\) | The HUB \(bathnes.gov.uk\)](#)

2.8 Support for Teachers and Schools: Communication and Complaints

Termly newsletters have continued, with all schools receiving a SACRE newsletter three times per year. The newsletter contains contact details for various communities and resources, as well as ideas for the classroom and information on upcoming events and CPD.

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints concerning RE nor was it notified of any disputes relating to withdrawal for RE. However, it should be noted from our earlier report on school websites (see 2.3 and also below), that information about the Right for Withdrawal is rarely obvious.

3. Collective Worship

3.1 Analysis of School Websites

As for religious education (see 2.4), SACRE analysed the websites of 19 schools using a simple ‘traffic-light’ system. It was found that 7 schools included a substantial reference to Collective Worship on their websites, which is considerably less than RE. 4 of the sites included a partial mention. Despite the legal requirement to let parents know of the right to withdraw children from the daily act, however, 4 of the sites failed to mention it. As for RE, SACRE has provided feedback for schools about its findings on Collective Worship on school websites.

3.2 Training and Support

No training on Collective Worship was organised by SACRE during the year but information from other local providers, such as the Diocese of Bath & Wells was circulated to all schools through the newsletter.

The B&NES SACRE Guidance on Collective Worship was reviewed and revisions suggested by a working group of 5 SACRE members (including the RE Advisor). Our SACRE last published guidance on Collective Worship on our website in 2007, so review was overdue. The updated guidance contains suggestions and resources, as well as a clear outline of the legal requirement, and the options for schools should they consider they meet the conditions for a Determination (which needs to be granted by SACRE) i.e. for permission to build worship around a faith other than Christianity. SACRE has never been approached for a Determination, but it is possible that several schools in the area may meet the criteria. The guidance will be reviewed in 5 years.

The Wire Award - the Widening Diversity in Religious Education (WIRE) award is an opportunity available to all schools in the B&NES SACRE area. To achieve the Wire award a school must:

- Send a teacher to at least one continuing professional development (CPD) opportunity for RE. This could be the conference, or a local RE hub.
- Put on a 'faith day' or a celebration of RE to which a local SACRE member can be invited. Or a school might enter a national RE competition.
- Take pupils on a visit to a place of worship that is not the majority religion of their school. For most schools in B&NES, this will be from a faith other than Christianity.

The Award has been created to further SACRE's priority to encourage mutual understanding of different faiths, and to break down stereotypes and barriers. In the year 23-24, four schools (Farrington Gurney, Camely, St Mark's and Fosse Way) have met the criteria for the award.

3.3 Determinations

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints about the provision of RE, and there were no requests from schools to vary the legal requirement for Collective Worship. Information for schools on how to do this can be found at: <http://www.banes-sacre.com/collective-worship>

4. Links with Other Organisations

4.1 National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE (NASACRE)

The SACRE retains an annual membership of this organisation which provides access to important updates on national issues, training opportunities for SACRE members, and the use of recommended templates for policies and guidance documents.

The annual NASACRE Conference in May 2024 was attended by one member of SACRE who then gave feedback to members at the next SACRE meeting.

4.2 Regional

Two SACRE members attended the online South-West Conference for SACREs in February, which featured a keynote address by Jen Jenkins on developing a Religion and Worldviews Syllabus. A full report on the conference was shared with SACRE members and implications for future SACRE work noted.

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE continued to take part in the regional Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) project, with funding from Diocesan and other charities, aiming to provide training in religious education, especially through the building of communities of RE teachers across the region. The LTLRE conference ran in June 2024 in conjunction with University of Bristol and the Shared Space Project.

A member of SACRE represents the C of E Diocese of Bath and Wells ensures we are updated on current training available from this source, as well as any updates and news of the SIAMS inspections of local Church of England schools.

The SACRE Adviser has worked closely with both the Diocese of Bath and Wells and other local MATs to ensure high-quality RE is being taught and that up to date CPD is available.

4.3 Local: Learn, Teach, Lead RE

The Bath and North East Somerset Hub is led jointly by Mary Patterson (Hayesfield School) and Paul Marvin (Farrington Gurney Primary school). Hub leaders get access to high quality training and facilitate three Hubs per year aimed at both primary and secondary teachers, and teaching assistants.

Two out of three meetings have happened online and have been mostly well attended. Feedback has been incredibly positive and there is a real sense of a shared RE community in this group with some innovative exciting ideas shared.

In January 2024, a meeting was held at the Islamic Centre in Bath and it had about 40 attendees with very positive feedback. It is really encouraging to see high levels of engagement.

4.4 Local: Faith Communities

We are fortunate to have representatives from a diversity of local Faith communities sitting on SACRE: Baha'i, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and now Humanist. We are in the process of seeking vacancies for Sikh and Buddhist representatives.

The current Secretary of Bath Inter Faith Group sits on SACRE and gives regular updates on local activities, which are circulated. The representation from local faith communities is a useful resource for RE teachers, and will be invaluable as a resource for review of materials in the review of the Agreed Syllabus beginning soon.

5. SACRE Arrangements

5.1 Organisation and Support

Bath and North East Somerset Council contracts with an RE Adviser who offers professional advice to SACRE, arranges and clerks the meetings, maintains the website, organises monitoring of RE and Collective Worship, and writes the Annual Report. Rebekah Guy began as RE Adviser in November 2023, taking over from Adam Robertson. The contract is with RE Today Services.

SACRE has instigated an Action Log to track communications with the LA. It was agreed that the information from the Action Log throughout the year will feed into the SACRE Annual Report which can then report on advice from SACRE submitted to the LA and how it was responded to. However, as this is a new initiative from early 2024, we intend to include this in our next Annual Report.

5.2 Membership and Recruitment

Chair – Jane O'Hara

Vice-Chairs – Kevin Burnett and Cllr Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar

Local Authority link officer – Olwyn Donnelly, Head of Education Commissioning

Jane O'Hara and Kevin Burnett were both re-elected in October 2023.

Further recruitment for representation is needed on Group A, as there are a couple of faith communities locally that would benefit from representation on SACRE.

5.3 Financial Report: 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Expenditure is shown below (Development Plan for 2023-2024 is in Appendix A).

There was a budget of £14,325 for SACRE to meet its responsibilities.

Note that we were able to cover the expenditure expected from our Development Plan below, (see also Appendix A) £14,375.00, as we had £50 brought forward from the previous year.

Expenditure

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Agreed Syllabus Review & Development | 800 |
| Resource Centre | 250 |
| Members' training, expenses, fees & NASACRE subscription | 280 |
| Support for Primary and Secondary Schools | 3000 |
| Monitoring of RE and collective worship and production of newsletters and annual report | 1750 |
| SACRE and Agreed Syllabus websites hosting and management | 440 |
| WIRE Award - transport grants | 1000 |
| Training for Holocaust Memorial Day | 750 |
| Professional fees | 6105 |
| TOTAL | 14.375.00 |

Rebekah Guy

SACRE Adviser

January 2025

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Appendix A: Bath & North East Somerset SACRE Development Plan 2023-24

| Priorities | Targets | Payment | Cost £ |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------|
| A. To maintain and develop the Agreed Syllabus and began the review process | i. Clerking tasks: attend and minute agenda-setting and full SACRE meetings; prepare agendas, financial statements and book venues; distribute minutes, agendas and papers to members; liaise with Chair, Senior advisers and Support assistant; correspond with schools, partner and representative organisations; respond to inquiries on SACRE matters. Arrange members' attendance at training events and make payments to schools and members | RG | 6,105 |
| | ii. To work with the AMV family of SACREs in the development of materials and online resources for the Agreed Syllabus | RG | 800 |
| B. To improve teaching and learning of RE within the authority | i. To provide support for Primary and Secondary schools, through a choice of activities (requested through the newsletter) | Venue, presenters, admin, schools | 3000 |
| | ii. Pro-actively build relationships with schools to act as 'friendly inquisitor' (e.g. meeting with Trust leads through School Standards Board, offering of Governor training) | | |
| | iii. Reactive support for schools (in terms of Ofsted reports, website monitoring, or those raised by local authority). Schools to be offered 2.5 hour diagnostic to look at curriculum and suggest improvements in ordering and sequencing of knowledge. | RG | |
| | iv. Online training offered to school offering subject knowledge webinars to build teacher confidence in teaching key knowledge and progression. | RG | |
| | v. To maintain, review and develop the RE Resource Centre | Robert Jenkins, Saltford Sch | 150 |
| | vi. To update and improve items in the RE Resource Centre | Resources | 100 |
| | vii. To enable B&NES schools to visit places of worship through the creation of a Travel Grant Fund to which schools could bid for 50% match funding for Travel costs | Schools | 1,000 |
| | viii. Increase teachers' self-confidence in combatting antisemitism through training event linked to Holocaust Memorial Day. Hold event with speakers and ideas for teachers | RG, Speakers | 750 |

| Priorities | Targets | Payment | Cost £ |
|---|---|----------------------------------|------------------|
| C To develop the capacity of SACRE to monitor RE, CW, the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus and standards of teaching and learning | i. To fill the vacancies on the council | Members | 0 |
| | ii. To develop the capacity of SACRE members to participate in the work of the council [Training, NASACRE subscription, travel expenses, room hire] | Members, venues | 280 |
| | iii. To continue the cycle of regular monitoring of RE teaching and collective worship across the authority using self-evaluation and website surveys and to follow-up with schools as required | RG | 750 |
| | iv. To Inform and update schools about local and national RE developments through the Annual Report and the SACRE website | RG | 1000 |
| | v. To develop and maintain the SACRE & Agreed Syllabus websites [Sam Cavender £120; SACRE Domain £193; Management £127] | MP / RG / Sam Cavender / Domains | 440 |
| TOTAL Development Plan | | | 14,375.00 |
| SACRE budget before deductions | | | 15,000.00 |
| Bath & North East Somerset 'Matrix' fees & charges @ 5% | | | - 675.00 |
| Total: | | | 14,325.00 |
| Brought forward from 2021-22 | | | 50.00 |
| TOTAL available for SACRE: | | | 14,375.00 |

Based on a budget of £15,000, less Agency fee