

Hackney SACRE

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Promoting, supporting and encouraging good practice in the teaching of Religious Education in Hackney schools



Annual Report 2017-2018

The annual report is produced in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

Minutes of SACRE meetings during 2017-2018 were used to prepare this report and also the analysis of exam data at Key Stages (KS) 4-5.

Members approved this report on 13/03/19



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Chairman's Introduction

Each year SACRE is required to produce a summary of its activities. The Education Act 2002 requires that religious education must be provided as part of the basic curriculum in addition to the National Curriculum. Amended guidance on the content and format of this report is based on the NASACRE (National Association for Standing Advisory Councils) guidance February 2015. The report outlines our work to promote RE and Collective Worship in the Borough, to develop the good teaching of Religious Education in our schools and to support community cohesion. This report covers the Academic year 2017-2018, and includes GCSE and Religious Studies results from this period and a brief overview of SACRE discussions.

Hackney SACRE with Hackney Learning Trust continues to promote RE, Collective Worship, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Community Cohesion. The current Hackney Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was published in 2013 and includes knowledge and reference to religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews, practices and ways of life, a central goal being to create knowledge and understanding of all members that make up our rich and diverse community. As part of the syllabus at each Key Stage, visits to local places of worship are encouraged as are visits by members of SACRE and faith communities to local schools. It is a legal requirement that SACREs review their Syllabus every 5 years. We have begun our review, which includes surveys by our teachers and pupils, as well as taking into account the recent publication of Final Report of the Commission on RE (CoRE) September 2018, the "A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools" July 2018 and 'State of The Nation' reports of 2017.

We will continue to support our schools' development of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Community Cohesion with the production of the School RE Calendar, which, with the help of the Hackney Learning Trust, we send to all Children's Centres, Secondary schools and Primary schools in the borough, and will include pupils' artwork.

Our support for RE in schools continues through well attended and evaluated training sessions, the dissemination of updated schemes of work for key stages 1 and 2, and network meetings for Heads of Departments in Secondary schools.

Finally, I want to thank the Hackney Learning Trust in continuing to provide good specialist advisory support so that SACRE can continue to function effectively, by funding the services of our RE and SACRE Advisor, during 2017-2018.

SACRE Chair
Sandra Hall

1. Standards and quality of provision in RE

Key area 1a: Provision, compliance and time allocation for RE

The Hackney Agreed Syllabus 2013 recommends that 5% of curriculum time is dedicated to RE, and that this should equate to approximately: 36 hours per year for KS1; 45 hours for KS2; 45 hours for KS3 and 40-48 hours for KS4. This excludes time allocated for collective worship. Religious Education remains statutory for all students and Hackney expects schools to provide all students with their entitlement to study the subject, including at KS4 when they should preferably be entered for GCSE RS. While requirements for Academies differ, their funding arrangements ensure that they make provision for all pupils in RE.

In 2015 guidance was created by Hackney SACRE for school governors regarding the inclusion of RE in schools. This was based upon the REC (Religious Education Council) guidance, and was sent to all schools via the Hackney Learning Trust's 'School Bulletin'. In November 2017 Hackney schools were invited to take part in a survey. The summary results were included in our 2016-2017 Report.

Primary Schools

In November 2017, over a quarter of all Hackney primary schools (including state and free schools, as well as those of a religious nature) completed a survey. The summary results are below.

In general, the provision of RE is similar in 2017 to the year before, although 10% have increased the provision and now follow the schemes of work provided by the RE Advisor.:

- The delivering teachers are Non-specialist i.e. no RE qualifications beyond GCSE in all schools
- None of these schools have received external training other than the borough (Hackney Learning Trust) termly training, which is provided by an RE specialist. From 2017 this borough training was reduced from termly whole day training (6 hours) to only twilight sessions each term (2hrs), with an annual conference in the Summer Term.
- Most schools deliver RE through schemes of work developed by the borough RE specialist. 23% of primary schools currently teach RE derived from an alternative curriculum, but we understand several more wish to adopt the Hackney schemes of work.
- 69% of schools share information with parents' via newsletter/website.

Secondary Schools

The below summarises the information collated from those secondary schools (including maintained and free schools, as well as those of a religious nature) that completed a survey in November 2017, as well as further information collated in a survey conducted in November 2018. Where available, there is also a correlation made with relevant findings from the Final Report of the Commission on RE (CoRE) September 2018.

Hackney 2017	Hackney 2018	(CoRE) September 2018
All pupils in KS3 and KS4 were taught by an RE specialist teacher	Similar	
All schools delivered KS3 RE through schemes of work derived from the Hackney Local Syllabus	Similar	Nearly 20% of all schools offer no RE @KS3
All KS4 pupils followed an examination board syllabus for Full Course RE	Several schools GCSE from 2018 optional only	1/3 of all schools provide no RE @KS4.
All pupils received at least the minimum time allocation requirement in KS3 and KS4, and in schools of a religious nature they received more time	No longer the case – see above	Drop of 43000 in Full Course GCSE in 3 years Drop of 229000 in Short Course over 8 years
All schools regularly share information about RE provision with parents via newsletter/website	Similar	
All schools also have space for displays of pupils' RE learning on walls	Similar	

The drop in number of schools providing any curriculum time for all KS4 pupils has dropped – three schools now only provide an option for pupils to study RE. This will our affect future examination results.

Key area 1b: Public Examinations 2017-8

The following text and tables detail the received data, showing the number of entries and the results achieved by Hackney students for full course RE in relation to national figures. From 2018 GCSEs are graded from 9 (top) to 1 (lowest) instead of the grades A*-E, with 9-4 considered a standard pass or 9-5 a strong pass. No data for 2016-17 was made available for the completion of this report.

GCSE Full Course summary

Hackney	2015	2017	2018
Total pupils	1984	1976	2002
Entered for full RS GCSE	934	865	993
% A*-C/9-5 passes	77.6	93.9	63.3
National			
% A*-C/9-5 passes	72.0	71.3	71.8
Difference	+5.6	+22.6	-8.5

For 2018-19 the number of pupils being entered for the Full Course GCSE across our schools will drop dramatically, as in several schools RE has now become a GCSE optional subject at KS4, rather than compulsory for all students.

However, for 2018 examinations, the number of entrants for the GCSE remained steady, with even a slight increase to 993, which is an equivalent of 49.1% (up from 44% last year) of the total cohort, and is a positive comparison to a 10% drop in the number of national entrants.

The new GCSE specifications came on line for the 2018 examinations with a new marking structure to replace the grading system, and with a subsequent change in the examination marking schemes. In Hackney there was a dramatic decrease in the percentage of pupils achieving the highest levels of 9-5, which doesn't seem to match the national picture.

There have been subsequent discussions between the Hackney RE Advisor and several of the Hackney secondary schools. These schools have surmised that the disappointing attainment of their pupils is largely due to: the lack of resources from the examination boards for the new GCSE specifications; and also due to the delayed and often inconsistent detail about the marking scheme that would be used for the examinations (particularly for one of the examination boards). Exam boards advised that there would be significant volatility in schools with the introduction of the new more challenging syllabus and that comparisons should not be made with previous years.

Full Course GCSE detail by Hackney school

School	Entries				% A* - C/ 9-5 points			
	2014	2015	2017	2018	2014	2015	2017	2018
Bridge Academy			25/173	31 (19%)			88	83.8
Cardinal Pole	155	127	143/162	144 (92.9%)	85.8	77	69	59.7
City Academy	24	30	58/176	42 (24%)	100	86.6	95	73.8
Clapton Girls Academy	158	139	174/175	168 (97.7%)	82.3	81	87	74.4
Hackney New School				74 (83.1%)				59.5
Urswick Academy	125	60	135/136	0	64.8	65	70	
Haggerston	65	93	166/179	96 (69.6%)	73.8	73	61	58.4
Our Lady's	104	88	121/121	122 (100%)	71.2	81	77	50.9
Skinners		63	136/170	148 (88.6%)		98	79	70.9
Petchey Academy	81	85	153/169	168 (96%)	66.7	74	58	62.5

All schools experienced a drop in attainment of the higher levels in the summer 2017 examinations. Only four out of the nine* achieved on or over the National Average for 9-5 points, and in Skinners Academy and Clapton Girls' Academy this is particularly commendable as a large proportion of the cohort were entered for the examination. In the Bridge and City Academies the numbers being entered into the examinations remains low at around 20%.

Hackney New School had their first cohort reach the end of KS4 who performed below the national average, but a large proportion of pupils were entered. This meant that a total of five Hackney schools attained less than the National average, all of which entered most of their pupils (70% and above). Of those, other than Hackney New School, Haggerston and Petchey Academy results remained consistent whilst Cardinal Pole and Our Lady's experienced a drop in their results (10% and a more concerning 27%, respectively).

*N.B. Lubavitch Senior School for Girls now enter their pupils for the i-GCSE, which is not included in the GCSE data provided. The Urswick School did not enter pupils for the examinations for the new GCSE specification, and therefore their results could not be included either. No results were provided for Mossbourne City Academy. Yesodey HaTorah pupils do not sit the GCSE RE Examinations.

Religious Studies – A Level

Hackney	2015	2017	2018
Total pupils			
Entered for RS AS level	76	67	41
% A-B passes	47.3	57	46%
National % A-B passes	54.5	54.6	52.7%
Difference	-7.2	+2.4	-6.7%

There has been a decrease in the number of Hackney pupils entered for the RE A Level examinations – approximately a third less. This is a much bigger decrease than nationally, where there was only a 5% decrease in the number of entrants. Of these Hackney pupils, a lesser percentage achieved A*-B grades, resulting in attainment that was less than the national average.

A Level detail by Hackney school

School	Entries			%A - B*		
	2015	2017	2018	2015	2017	2018
Cardinal Pole	6	6	4	83.3	67	50
Clapton Girls Academy	16	9	4	43.8	33	75
Haggerston	11	6	4	54.5	17	75
Our Lady's	5	9		20	67	
Mossbourne	13	22	18	69.2	64	77
Petchey Academy	2	12		50	67	
The City Academy		3	2		67	0

No data was provided for The Petchey Academy or Our Lady's Covent High School at the time of writing this report.

The number of entrants at Mossbourne City Academy remains stable, whilst it is decreasing on the other schools. This makes the percentage of pupils achieving A*-B grades in Mossbourne impressive. Nearly all the pupils at Clapton Girls' and Haggerston also achieved the highest grades, but the attainment at Cardinal Pole dropped below the national average, even with a third less pupils being entered. Sadly, neither of the pupils at The City Academy achieved higher than a D grade.

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA (Local Authority) and other key stakeholders

Hackney SACRE met three times during the academic year 2017-8.

All agendas and approved minutes of these meetings are saved regularly and will be made accessible via the Hackney Learning Trust website.

Agenda items for these meetings included (in no particular order):

- Training of primary teachers
- Updating primary Schemes of Work
- Borough RE Calendar
- Accommodation for SACRE meetings
- Budget and website access to SACRE information
- National reports and Commissions for RE
- Matters related to RE and Collective Worship
- Attendance and membership to SACRE
- Agreed Syllabus Review
- RE GCSE reform

The Hackney Learning Trust continues to support the work of Hackney SACRE, which has Chairs appointed for each of the Committees. Membership is reviewed in all SACRE meetings, and all members are reminded that they should provide a representative in their absence, and introduce a replacement when they resign the SACRE committee. Concerted efforts have been made to acquire representatives from Hindu and Sikh faiths, and following changes at the Local Authority buildings, meetings have been held at the Town Hall.

Hackney Learning Trust support provided during 2017- 2018 to SACRE includes:

- One day a week of a Religious Education Advisor, their attendance and preparation for SACRE meetings and working parties, to train and support our schools and to respond to queries and Freedom of Information requests (FOIR), and, where possible, to represent Hackney regionally and nationally
- CPD for staff for Hackney Schools on RE teaching and learning, and for units of work and launches related to it (primary RE training held, and primary schemes of work updated)
- production, publishing and distribution costs for the annual report
- administrative support for the SACRE from Governor Services
- photocopying and distribution costs for SACRE and for papers or information for schools developed by SACRE to promote good RE and Collective Worship
- SACRE and Religious Education web site development and maintenance by Advisor
- Training and networking opportunities for Advisor and SACRE members
- Designing, publishing and dissemination costs for the Hackney Agreed RE Syllabus
- Design, production, publishing and distribution costs for the Hackney RE Calendar

Hackney Learning Trust receives the total SACRE funding provided by Hackney Council, and disseminates funding for the above upon individual requests.

3. Collective Worship

Hackney SACRE support an inclusive approach to collective worship that promotes spiritual development and contributes to community cohesion. SACRE have previously published guidance on procedures to apply for a determination, as well as providing resources for use in school assemblies, which were shared with schools at a primary training day along with the 2008 version of the Recommended Approach for Collective Worship. This issue continues to be discussed in primary training, led by the RE Advisor, and is included in advisory work/support materials that have been delivered as part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development training in schools.

Determinations: There have been no applications for determination during 2016-2017.

4. The effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus

Hackney SACRE published the revised Syllabus in June 2013, and all schools and children's centres were each sent two copies. All primary schools that completed the survey in November 2017 follow the schemes of work provided by the RE Advisor, which follows this syllabus. A further four schools have adopted these schemes of work in 2018. All secondary schools that completed the survey in November 2017 confirmed that they follow the syllabus to create schemes of work for KS3 pupils.

This Syllabus was created to include guidance that provides greater support for the development of the skills in enquiry, critical analysis, reflection and comparison. These all promote AT2 (attainment Target) in lessons, and was in line with the Ofsted subject reports of 2013 'Realising the Potential' which promoted the use of enquiry and critical thinking in RE lessons. Our current Syllabus includes knowledge and reference to religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews, practices and ways of life, a central goal being to create knowledge and understanding of all members that make up our rich and diverse community. As part of the syllabus at each Key Stage, visits to local places of worship are encouraged, as are visits by members of SACRE and faith communities to local schools.

It is a legal requirement that SACREs review their Syllabus every 5 years. Our review continues to incorporate views and information gleaned from surveys by our teachers and pupils. It also takes into account national developments and initiatives, and recent publications such as Final Report of the Commission on RE (CoRE) September 2018, the "A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools" July 2018 and 'State of The Nation' reports of 2017.

As such, decisions have been made to incorporate specific reference to how our RE Syllabus contributes to pupils' understanding of British Values, as well as further exemplification of strong pedagogical practice in RE, and reference to the wider Hackney society, including, for example, the Alevi community.

However, due to the constraints on the borough RE Advisor by the Hackney Learning Trust, it may not be possible for the syllabus to be completed within the time allocation.

Hackney SACRE continues to support both the creation of new and the revision previous aforementioned primary schemes of work by the RE Advisor that complement this syllabus, using contributions and feedback from the schools. These schemes have been structured in a way that pupils' critical thinking and analytical skills are developed further and they are increasingly engaged in philosophical and ethical discussion and are exposed to a wider range of content. The schemes continue to be developed to allow all pupils from all backgrounds to engage with the subject, and will be updated in line with the new Agreed Syllabus.

5. Contribution of the SACRE to Community Cohesion and wider diversity agendas

Much work through Hackney SACRE supports community cohesion. Our membership reflects the rich mix of faiths and communities found within the borough, including attendance to SACRE meetings representatives from the Alevi and Humanist communities, and much work is directed at supporting wider diversity agendas.

Hackney SACRE supports RE that meets the needs of all students with or without beliefs, and promotes inclusion and religious, non-religious and racial harmony. We believe that RE promotes understanding and respect for all communities and it is even more vital now that we continue to do this, with the rise of fundamentalism and extremism in the UK and worldwide. Through the teaching of RE, negative stereotypes and prejudices can be tackled and we can generate understanding, overcome barriers, and promote community cohesion.

The Hackney Agreed Syllabus 2013 contains information about how RE should support the development of SMSC, and PREVENT training was also previously provided to primary and secondary teachers. Efforts have been made to increase references to a wider range of religious and non-religious beliefs that are represented in our community in the primary schemes of work being created, and will be incorporated into the revised Syllabus in due course.

In addition, we are working to better support the development of the understanding of both religious and non-religious responses to ultimate questions and ethical issues within these schemes and within the guidance included in the Syllabus as well as through the training that has been provided at borough level. These elements will remain central to the work of the SACRE.

In addition, Hackney SACRE will, if funding allows, again produce a full-colour wall calendar showing religious and non-religious festivals and other significant dates. This will be illustrated with artwork selected in a competition open to all Hackney primary school pupils. The calendar will be sent to all Hackney schools and Children's Centres, thus supporting and promoting the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.

Further opportunities and projects are being explored by the RE Advisor, which will hopefully support community cohesion, interfaith dialogue and the promotion of networking between Hackney schools. For example, some considerations include: a unit/scheme of work for KS3 investigating beliefs through art and/or music, which may culminate in a Borough competition for secondary schools. Another may be to work with primary schools to create workshops about places of worship in the Borough.

6. Summary

Hackney SACRE continues to work with teachers in improving the quality of teaching and learning of RE in both primary and secondary schools by providing training, and publishing updated schemes of work and materials and guidance to develop and support SMSC, Assessment for Learning and effective teaching and learning strategies.

It has become increasingly challenging to ensure curriculum provision and quality of RE in our schools since the changes in accountability measures of schools for example RE excluded from the EBacc, and Ofsted no longer systematically monitors statutory compliance in schools. Further, the GCSE reform has had a negative effect on school the numbers of students being entered for GCSE, school provision and attainment.

Despite this, Hackney SACRE strives to continue to support the teaching and learning of RE in Hackney schools, and are exploring other opportunities – beyond the continued training -to engage our schools in pedagogically sound activities/workshops/initiatives. In addition, recent national reports and publications will be reflected in the Syllabus revision, as well as in training and in the production of all school resources and materials created in conjunction with Hackney SACRE, in order to support the continued development and improvement in the teaching and learning of RE in the borough.

Members of SACRE 2017-18
As of December 2018

Group	Name	
1. Religious Faith Groups	Prempal Birdi	Sikhism
	diisekera	Buddhism
	Naftali Loewanthal	Judaism
	Priya Shah	Hindu/Jain
	yasarzaman	Islam
		<i>Other Churches</i>
2. Church of England	Lynn Hargreaves	
	Rev J Westcott	
3. Teachers	Sandra Hall	
	Sheena Merchant	
	Claire Gray	
	Brenda Humphreys	
4. Local Authority	Harvey Odze (Cllr)	Councillor
	Katie Hanson (Cllr)	Councillor
	Kam Adams (Cllr)	Councillor
	Jessica Webb (Cllr)	Councillor
	Sade Etti (Cllr)	Councillor
	David Pollock	Humanist
	Ruhi Altun	Alevi (guest)
	Stacey Burman	RE Advisor