



Harrow SACRE Annual Report 2013 - 2014



Harrow
SACRE



Foreword

The London Borough of Harrow is among the most religiously diverse boroughs in the country and Harrow SACRE has a special and well established relationship with Harrow Council and the communities it serves. Statistics from the 2011 Census are helpful in illustrating this diversity.

Harrow has the highest religious affiliation in England and Wales and is ranked as having the:

highest percentage of Hindus (25.3%)
highest percentage of Jains (2.2%)
second highest percentage of Zoroastrians (0.1%)
second lowest percentage of residents declaring No Religion (9.6%).

The Census data also reveals that 37.3%% of residents have identified themselves as Christian, 12.5% as Muslim, 4.4% as Jewish, 1.1% as Buddhist and 1.2% as Sikh.

Harrow is also defined by its ethnic profile, having the:

- second highest percentage of residents of Indian origin (26.4%) and the highest percentage of residents who have described themselves using the category of 'Other Asian' (11.3%)
- highest ranking of residents identifying their country of birth as South and Eastern Africa (9.9%), Kenya (4.9%), Sri Lanka (4.3%) and Romania (2.2%)
- highest percentage of residents who identified themselves as British only (41.6%), indicating a high degree of integration

There are 61 schools in Harrow, 44 primary schools with nursery classes in 26 of these schools, 10 high schools, 1 all-through free school, 2 primary special schools, 2 high school special schools, one alternative provision secondary academy and one pupil referral unit. 8 of the high schools are Academies, as is one primary special school. The number of schools judged to be good and outstanding in inspection far exceeds the national average.

Harrow Council's Education Strategy and School Organisation service commissions the Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP) to provide R.E. specialist expertise and advice for the SACRE. We are grateful that Harrow Council has maintained its financial commitment to SACRE. This is recognition of the importance of religious education, and of its contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and to community cohesion, in a borough where religious identity and practice is of such importance.

In 2013-14 the highlights of SACRE's work have been the visit of many children to the Jewish Living Experience and hearing from schools that have completed their own R.E. SEF. These have given Harrow SACRE an insight into the outstanding quality of R.E. in its schools. Looking forward, we welcome the work of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales and A Review of Religious Education in England and how we can use it to develop our own Agreed Syllabus.

Alison Stowe
Chairman, Harrow SACRE

a) School Self Evaluation

- In 2013 – 2014 two primary schools submitted their self-evaluation reports to SACRE. The reports were different in structure and style – with one school adopting the format of the Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP) school self-evaluation form and the other using the school's own template. This variation was useful in enabling SACRE members, many of whom are not teachers, to identify how information might most usefully be shared with them. They have also recommended how the LA officer who advises the SACRE might best help them to interpret the findings in order to increase their knowledge of the quality of Religious Education (R.E.) teaching and learning and subject leadership and management in Harrow.
- Whilst school leaders are increasingly familiar with making evaluative statements referenced to Ofsted criteria, SACRE finds it helpful to receive a more descriptive report, which provides them with a picture of how R.E. is planned and delivered across the school. When judgements are exemplified this adds authenticity to the report, demonstrating that it is specific to the school and that school leaders understand the Ofsted criteria in the context of R.E. For example, where pupils have been interviewed about their experiences of R.E., quotations could be included.
- In future, school leaders will be asked to include some outline information about how R.E. is timetabled and who teaches it. SACRE is interested to hear whether there has been an increase in the number of TAs and HLTAs delivering R.E. in Harrow primary schools or whether a single teacher (a cover teacher or the R.E. leader) teaches R.E. across a key stage.
- An analysis of strengths, priorities for improvement, barriers to further development and the impact of actions already taken by school leaders to raise achievement in R.E., would provide a useful summary at the end of each section or overall.
- Where schools have made a judgement about pupils' standards and achievement, members would welcome the opportunity to see a small sample of work which exemplifies the expected levels at the end of a year or key stage. This will help SACRE members gain understanding of what represents high expectations for achievement in R.E.. Members are interested to find out whether teachers are pitching their expectations in RE as high as they would, for example, in literacy and whether children and young people find their R.E. as demanding as other subjects.
- Members have requested that school reports are contextualised with some background information about the school, its demographic profile, its published data and the most recent Ofsted judgements. This might be provided by the LA adviser in an introduction to the school report.
- SACRE hopes that, if provided with sufficient notice, a school leader will attend a SACRE meeting to present their report. This does not require glossy presentations but is an opportunity for SACRE to ask questions about R.E. in a local school context and to build constructive partnerships with those who teach it.

Glebe Primary School

The headteacher of Glebe Primary School recognises the importance of religion in the lives of the majority of families at her school. When it was proposed to primary headteachers that they submit a self-evaluation report to SACRE, she was quick to support this request and one of the first schools to submit a report. Senior leaders had sensibly drawn upon the Ofsted criteria as a basis for their school report in order to ensure that it was evaluative.

The RE subject leader judges that strengths of R.E. at Glebe Primary School include:

- The use of artefacts
- Visits to places of worship and visitors to the school from faith communities
- Curriculum links between R.E., PSHE and the humanities
- Teachers' subject knowledge
- The high profile of RE is secured by the oversight of a senior leader and the fact that the Humanities Faculty includes staff who represent each key stage

SACRE would welcome the opportunity for a small group to visit Glebe and to observe a sample of RE lessons across the school. Since the school judges RE to be outstanding overall, SACRE encourages the subject leader to apply for the R.E. Quality Mark – Gold.

Shaftesbury High School

Shaftesbury is a special school and its students have a range of complex needs, including behavioural and social needs. The R.E. leader is in her second year at Shaftesbury and has experience in the primary phase.

The Self Evaluation Form (SEF) outlined the strengths and areas for development identified by the newly appointed RE leader. The SEF recorded that R.E. was timetabled as a discrete subject; students, including those on the autistic spectrum, were not engaged by the didactic teaching style, class teachers felt that they lacked specialist subject knowledge and were not confident in teaching RE and that there was a lack of positive pupil attitudes to religious and cultural diversity. Steps that the subject leader had taken to address these areas for development over the last two years included:

- publishing an annual calendar of festivals and religious events for weekly assemblies;
- RE delivered through whole school, weekly themed assemblies;
- follow-up opportunities identified in planning for class teachers;
- an emphasis upon first hand, active learning, through visits to places of worship, visitors from faith communities and the involvement of pupils in drama, dance, role play; and
- pupils and parents invited to offer their own perspective during the celebration of a religious festival.

A PowerPoint presentation gave a flavour of these R.E. themed assemblies, with photographs of students dancing, sharing food and handling artefacts.

The headteacher described to SACRE the impact of these changes, particularly the improvement in the provision for R.E. which now takes account of pupils' needs and preferred learning styles. Pupils were beginning to understand that religious beliefs are 'lived' by individuals and families. For example, after an assembly led by a visiting Muslim speaker, a Muslim student had affirmed that she now understood why she wore a hijab.

Good links had been established with local faith communities; assemblies had been instrumental in

fostering pupils' mutual respect for the faith of others and a deepening understanding of their own. As a result, RE now has a higher profile with pupils, parents and staff.

The SEF also outlined the R.E. leader's planned next steps. The headteacher agreed that, building on the improvements that had been made, it might now be timely to return to some class based teaching and learning.

b) School presentations to SACRE

In the autumn term discussion of RS GCSE results, SACRE members had asked for training on the GCSE syllabus and examinations. Andrea Kahn, head of R.E. at Avanti House (5-18 free school), gave a presentation where she discussed key issues for secondary departments, including:

- the importance of the KS 3 curriculum in building a sound knowledge and understanding of religious traditions so that pupils are then well prepared to analyse religious responses to moral and ethical issues at GCSE;
- communicating a passion for R.E. in KS 3 as preparation for GCSE can sometimes be formulaic and dry; and
- developing higher level thinking skills so that pupils are able to analyse and synthesise information – anticipating what is required at A level so that students see GCSE as a path to higher level qualifications.

SACRE members questioned the rationale for so many High schools entitling the subject as Philosophy and Ethics, when the statutory entitlement is to R.E.. Ms Kahn explained that the title philosophy and ethics can help to distance the subject from some of the prevailing negative preconceptions. She also argued that philosophy and ethics allows for a contemporary issues based approach and encourages young people to think for themselves. These views were discussed at length. SACRE members noted that religious education, as defined by the Agreed Syllabus, is fundamentally concerned with exploring big questions about meaning and purpose, faith and its impact on individuals and communities. Most SACRE members preferred the term Religious Education but were grateful to Ms Kahn for her explanation as to why schools were adopting a different term.

Andrea Kahn's presentation also provoked an interesting discussion about the coverage of those faith traditions identified in the Harrow Agreed Syllabus and decisions about balance and breadth of coverage. Again Ms Kahn confirmed the importance of Agreed Syllabus R.E. in Key Stages 1 – 3 so that students did not reach GCSE never having encountered their own faith tradition or beliefs covered in the programmes of study.

SACRE members found this presentation an illuminating preparation for their scrutiny of published RS GCSE results and have invited Ms Kahn to return to SACRE to provide a very valuable perspective upon R.E. from Harrow's first all-through Free School.

SACRE Monitoring and Evaluation of Attainment in R.E.

Public examination entries and results in RS GCSE and GCE AS and A level in 2014

GCSE Short Courses are not counted in the Performance Table Attainment and Value Added Measures

GCSE RS Full Course

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	% cohort	A*	A	B	C	A* - C	A* - G
2014	509	27%	14%	23.6%	25.9%	15.3%	78.8%	97.8%
2013	312	18%	13.8%	26.6%	25%	15.1%	80.4%	97.4%
2012	179	10.7%	25.7%	30.2%	21.2%	14%	91.1%	98.9%
2011	113	7%	25.7%	28.3%	17.7%	15.9%	87.6%	99.1%
2010	211	11%	13.7%	25.1%	27.2%	17.3%	83.5%	99.5%
2009	196	10%	30.1%	29.1%	16.8%	10.7%	86.7%	100%
2008	215	13%	15.3%	26.5%	23.3%	20.5%	85.6%	97.7%

National data (provisional)(Please note this data includes all schools)

Year	No. entries	% cohort	A*	A	B	C	A* - C	A* - G
2014	282099	5.4%	10.9%	19.3%	23%	18.3%	71.5%	98.3%
2013	263988	4.8%	11.2%	19.7%	22.8%	18.7%	72.4%	98.3%
2012	239123	4.6%	11.8%	20.3%	22.9%	18.7%	73.7	98.8%
2011	221974	4.3%	11.7%	20.2%	22.7%	18.7%	73.3%	97.8%
2010	188704	3.5%	12.0%	20.1%	22.6%	18.4%	73.1%	98.6%

Source: <http://www.bstubbs.co.uk/gcse.htm>

AS Level

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	A	C	E	A - B	A - E
2014	16	6.3%	-	6.3%	43.8%	93.8%
2013	5	40%	-	-	80%	100%
2012	13	0%	15.4%	15.4%	46.2%	76.9%
2011	16	6.3%%	25%	12.5%	25%	93.8%
2010	9	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%	55.6%	77.8%
2009	5	20%	60%	20%	20%	100%

A Level

Local Authority level data (non-denominational schools only)

Year	No. entries	A*	A	B	C	A* - B	A* - E
2014	22	4.5%	31.8%	50%	13.6%	86.4%	100%
2013	25	0%	8%	28%	44%	36%	100%
2012	31	3.2	9.7	54.8	25.8	67.7	100%
2011	20	15.0%	15.0%	71.4%	14.3%	70%	100%

MANAGING THE SACRE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY, SCHOOLS AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Membership and meetings
- Partnership with Harrow Council
- Partnership with schools
- Partnership with NASACRE and the R.E. Council

a) Membership and meetings

The SACRE continues to meet each term and twice in the autumn in order to devote time to the Annual Report.

At the June 2014 meeting, Alison Stowe was re-elected as Chair and Cllr Camilla Bath as Vice Chair.

In 2012 – 2013 membership of Group A had been strengthened and attendance has continued to be good. There was one meeting in the Autumn Term when an Extraordinary Council meeting was called at very short notice and so the meeting was in-quate. The Teachers' Associations group is very small and the lead LA officer who advises the SACRE has managed to recruit two new teachers who could commence their representative role in 2014 – 2015 when their position has been affirmed by their relevant teaching union.

Harrow SACRE Membership 2013 -2014

Chair	Alison Stowe (Group C)
Vice Chair	Cllr Camilla Bath (Group D)

Group A: Religious traditions and Christian churches

Ms Mercedes Afnan	Baha'i
Ven Sumaner Sramaner	Buddhist
Mike Bishop	Christian (Free Church Federal Council)
Neville Ransley	Christian (Catholic)
Angela Clapham until 2/12/13	Christian (Catholic)
Ciara O'Flaherty from 6/3/14	Christian (Catholic)
Vijay Hirani	Hindu (Swaminarayan)
Ananda Caitanya Das	Hindu (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)
Dr Julie Crow	Humanist (Harrow Humanists)
Varsha Dodhia	Jain
Zafar Khalid	Muslim (representing Harrow Muslim Council)
Zia Baig	Muslim
Cllr Asad Omar	Muslim
Gill Ross	Jewish
Doreen Samuels	Jewish
Beverley Wilson	Rastafarian
Paramjit Singh-Kohli	Sikh
Phiroza Gan-Kotwal	Zoroastrian

Group B: Church of England

Mary Abbott
Revd. Philip Barnes
Revd. Matthew Stone

Group C: Teachers' Associations

Manju Radia
Alison Stowe
Vacancy

Group D: Local Authority

Cllr Camilla Bath Conservative
Cllr Sasi Suresh Labour
Cllr James Bond Independent/Ungrouped (until June 2014)
Cllr Manji Kara Conservative from 6/3/14 (reserve from 25/6/14)
Cllr Ghazanfar Ali (from 25/6/14)
Cllr Kareema Marikar (reserve from 25/6/14)
Cllr Margaret Davine (reserve from 25/6/14)

Members have served throughout 2013 – 2014 unless otherwise indicated

In Attendance

Rachel Bowerman, Adviser on behalf of the Corporate Director, Children and Families, Harrow LA

Vivian Wright, Clerk to the SACRE

b) Partnership with Harrow Council (and the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) 2014-15)

In February 2014 the SACRE Chairs' Group met with Patrick O'Dwyer, Educational Professional Lead, Educational Strategy and School Organisation. The meeting was devoted to consideration of how to take forward a review of the Harrow Agreed Syllabus. Funding of **£12,260** was agreed at this meeting and confirmed in a letter from Patrick O'Dwyer. This would fund up to 12 days advice and writing time and, importantly, would fund consultation with teachers. The Chairs' Group had recommended that the new syllabus should be published in electronic format only.

Whilst the business of drafting and agreeing a new syllabus is properly that of the Agreed Syllabus Conference, the SACRE Chairs' Group proposed some key principles for consideration:

- a. regular and systematic consultation with R.E. subject leaders throughout the development of a new syllabus develops knowledge and understanding of the subject and builds leadership capacity;
- b. an induction programme to introduce the new syllabus, following its launch, provides further training at which attendance could be an entitlement;
- c. young people consulted in Harrow High schools could be put forward for the 'Young ambassadors' scheme proposed by the R.E. Council; and
- d. the basis for the new Agreed Syllabus should be the R.E. Council's Curriculum Framework but there should be exploration of how it might be expanded and developed to support non-specialists' subject knowledge – this latter did not represent a commitment.

c) Partnership with Schools and the Professional Development of R.E. Teachers

SACRE has commissioned HSIP to deliver a termly seminar for R.E. leaders. Two SACRE members attended the Autumn term seminar and reported back on their findings:

- 25 primary schools were represented
- subject leaders were introduced to the HMI report "R.E: realising the potential" and the R.E. Council's " Review of R.E. in England and its National Curriculum Framework for R.E."

- this seminar constituted the first round of consultation for the review of the Harrow Agreed Syllabus
- participants were asked to discuss the purpose of study and aims of the Framework in detail and then were helped to navigate through the structure and presentation of the subject content at KS 1 and KS 2
- R.E. subject leaders were very enthusiastic about this opportunity to be involved in the consultation.

The spring term seminar for R.E. leaders was held at the Pinner Synagogue in order to prepare teachers for the opportunities offered by the Jewish Living Experience exhibition. Examples of units of work for teaching and learning about Judaism at KS 1 and KS 2 were modelled for teachers. There was a demonstration of the Shabbat blessings by Sara Younger, from the Education team of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and a guided tour of the synagogue led by Stan Conway.

Each academic year one of the seminars is hosted by a local place of worship and used as an opportunity to build R.E. leaders' subject knowledge and help them to make contacts with the faith community. There are plans to host CPD at the Shree Kutch Swaminarayan Temple in Harrow in 2014 – 2015 when the community has completed its building project.

In July 2014, RE leaders were again involved in consultation on the revision of the Harrow Agreed Syllabus. They discussed the suggestion that the R.E. Council's Framework for R.E. might be expanded to include 'locally agreed requirements' at each Key Stage, specific to each faith tradition, alongside those generic requirements presented in the national Framework. A worked example, Judaism at KS 1 and KS 2, was shared with participants and they discussed whether this additional detail would support teachers' understanding of the content. Leaders agreed with SACRE that further exemplification of this approach should be drafted for consideration by the ASC and other consultative groups.

d) Partnership with Local Faith Communities

The LA adviser to the SACRE worked in close partnership with members of the Pinner Synagogue to facilitate good communication with schools about the Jewish Living Experience, which was located at the synagogue from 9th – 26th June 2014.

Sara Younger, Education Policy and Projects Manager for the Board of Deputies of British Jews, was invited to give a presentation to SACRE at the spring term meeting. Ms Younger outlined the seven themes of the exhibition, which are designed to reflect the core values of Judaism, and described some of the activities through which visitors could encounter the 'Jewish Living Experience.' 36 sessions were booked by 18 Harrow schools and nearly 1200 children visited during the three weeks of the exhibition.

At the summer term 2014 meeting there was a discussion about the inspection of behaviour and safety in schools, including the extent to which pupils are aware of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Representatives of each SACRE group agreed that piety can sometimes be confused with extremism and they gave examples of how they had been consulted by school leaders to help provide a channel of communication with parents to help overcome obstacles and reaffirm inclusive principles. It was agreed that the SACRE should be kept informed about guidance and initiatives from central government, Ofsted, NASACRE and individual SACREs.

e) Partnership with NASACRE and the R.E. Council

At their autumn term meetings 2013 – 2014, SACRE discussed the following high profile and seminal reports:

- **Religious Education: realising the potential (Ofsted, October 2013)**
Rachel Bowerman provided a summary of the key findings and eight key challenges facing R.E.. The report was based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September

2009 and July 2012.

There was a discussion of the implications of this report for the revision of the Harrow Agreed Syllabus and for the faith communities represented on SACRE and on the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

- **A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England (R.E. Council, October 2013)**
The Chair and the LA adviser had represented Harrow SACRE at one of the R.E. Council's dissemination events in November 2013.

The R.E. council has reviewed RE in England 2012 – 2013 as part of its wider strategic plan for developing the subject. The review ran in parallel to the DfE review of the National Curriculum. The final report includes a non-statutory curriculum framework for RE, an analysis of the wider context for RE and six recommendations for the RE community and the DfE.

Members noted recommendation 2: *to pursue with policy makers the challenges around the existing settlement for RE*. They noted that the arguments chimed with the first recommendation of the Ofsted report and with the 'Challenging SACRE' presentation that Dr Mark Chater gave to the NASACRE AGM in May 2013.

- Alison Stowe, Chair of SACRE attended a national regional debate at Brunel University entitled '*Old localism, new localism: what does the future hold for RE in schools?*' The event included a presentation by Janet Orchard, project manager for the R.E. Council review of R.E., and by Lesley Prior, Chair of NASACRE.

Finally, SACRE received the June 2014 report from John Keast who was retiring from his role as Chair of the R.E. Council. They paid tribute to his dedication to 'the good ship RE,' seeking always to secure its long term future in schools, in teacher training and, strategically, at a national and local level in parity with other subjects.

Complaints about RE and Collective Worship

During the year SACRE received one complaint from a parent about the provision of R.E. in a Harrow primary school. SACRE provided advice to the Local Authority and to the school about managing this complaint and communicated with the parent about the LA complaints process and about next steps. The complaint was resolved by the school's senior leaders.