

Bexley Standing Advisory Council  
on Religious Education (SACRE)

# Annual Report for the academic year 2013-2014





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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

I am pleased to be able to introduce the Bexley SACRE Annual Report for the academic year 2013 / 2014.

With the limited resources available to us, and ever aware of the demands we sometimes place on some of our members who give their time and expertise voluntarily, a decision was previously made to reduce the number of meetings each year from four to three. Bexley's SACRE managed to meet three times in the year, in November 2013 and in March and July 2014.

In the year in question, the SACRE were delighted to be able to review some more excellent GCSE, AS and A level results achieved by Bexley students in 2013. It pleases me, on behalf of the SACRE, to be able to congratulate our students on their results. The Borough's RE Heads of Department and their teaching staff also merit a thank you for the excellent results they have achieved in what continues to be an uncertain time for their subject, although some recent reviews and announcements suggest stability may be forthcoming for the subject and those that teach it.

I am pleased to report that the new agreed syllabus for Religious Education in Bexley received its official launch on 11<sup>th</sup> July. The event was well attended and I must extend my particular thanks to Lat Blaycock, the keynote speaker and Kate Christopher, RE Today's National Advisor. The syllabus will be rolled out in schools from September and I look forward to receiving the response from both students and staff.

The SACRE works hard to establish and maintain connections with the wider community and we were pleased to receive a presentation from the Redeemed Christian Church of God Bethel's Court on their outreach efforts regarding spiritual education. On behalf of SACRE, I extend my sincere thanks to the representatives that attended and gave an insightful and informative presentation.

In a personal capacity, I wish to state my gratitude for my position as Chairman of SACRE; I have previously been a member of the SACRE and I know of the important role it plays and the vital contributions that representatives from the different groups make to enrich the religious and moral character of pupils in our schools. I am looking forward to working to support effective Religious Education learning in the Borough's schools. I also wish to extend a warm welcome to Mrs Dorothy Jones who has resumed her elected position as Vice-Chair for SACRE. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to my predecessor Richard Gillespie and wish him all the best in the future. Similarly, I would like to thank the former members of SACRE for their hard work and dedication throughout their terms.

Looking ahead, I am keen to raise the profile of SACRE and the important work it does within the Borough. We will continue to maintain our working relationships with our schools and hopefully forge new ones with faith groups and centres across Bexley. We will also continue to monitor and, where necessary, correspond on and debate any relevant RE matters, be they of local or national relevance, and we will place a particular focus upon the progress of the new syllabus.

In conclusion, I extend my thanks to the SACRE members who have departed, and extend a warm welcome to our new members. I am always conscious that the SACRE could not function without the dedication and input of our members, who give their time voluntarily.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'David Leaf', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the end of the name.

Cllr. David Leaf  
Chairman of Bexley SACRE



## 1.2 OVERVIEW

Bexley SACRE met on three occasions during the past year:

27 November 2013

13 March 2014

16 July 2014

The North West Kent Muslim Association was gracious enough to offer Crayford Mosque as a venue for the November meeting, for which the SACRE were extremely grateful.

We are part way through a self assessment process, from which evolved a development plan to guide our work. We continue to work to that plan.

The new syllabus for Religious Education in Bexley was launched on 11<sup>th</sup> July and will be introduced to schools in September 2014. Progress will continue to be monitored throughout the next few academic years, with the possible establishment of a working group devoted to the purpose.

We were delighted once again to be able to welcome the excellent GCSE, GCE A and AS level results achieved by students in Bexley in 2014.

An increasing concern is once again our ability to retain and maintain a stable membership. Numbers have increased in the last year, with a notable increase to Group C. There are, however, a number of vacancies in Group A, detailed on page 13 of this report, which places even more expectation on those that remain and who, we must not forget, give their time voluntarily. It also leaves certain denominations and religions present in Bexley, unrepresented on the SACRE.

This annual report has been signed off by the SACRE membership. It will be made available to Head Teachers, the RE department heads and RE co-ordinators in all the Borough's schools.

The report has also been added to the SACRE page on the London Borough of Bexley's website: <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4889>

Bexley SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs



## **SECTION 2: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE LOCALLY AGREED SYLLABUS**

### **2.1 The locally Agreed Syllabus**

Historically, the Bexley Agreed Syllabus has been fully embedded into the local curriculum and we have no reason to believe that schools were not finding it to be a useful framework for the teaching of Religious Education in the Borough. Feedback from teachers on the SACRE indicated that the Syllabus was well known in their schools and that teachers had well established plans in schools that enabled the Syllabus to be taught.

As reported previously, mindful of our statutory duty to ensure that the Syllabus is reviewed every five years, and after consulting our members, an Agreed Syllabus Conference was convened in 2012. Comprising representatives of the SACRE, the local authority and teachers who were not SACRE members, the Conference successfully developed a new agreed syllabus.

The intention was for the statutory element of the new Syllabus to be available in hard copy and as an online resource, with the non-statutory elements predominantly web based and available via a number of media, such as Bexley Fronter etc. This approach would enable quick and efficient response to feedback and the addition of new and / or updated non-statutory material.

The syllabus was formally launched on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at a well-attended event. It will be introduced to schools in September 2014. Progress will be monitored by SACRE, with any issues to be addressed by members.

### **2.2 Teacher training and teaching materials**

The local authority provided a selection of workshops during the new syllabus launch event which served to introduce teachers to the new content. They were also introduced to the website containing the non-statutory materials.

There will be a subject leader's network meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October, with two further meetings scheduled for February and June in 2015.

The World Religion sessions, led by Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School and supported by the local authority, will begin in September 2014 and will continue until January 2015.

There are also plans to include SACRE in the SMSC development meetings, due to the importance of SACRE's role in advising schools on the matter.

Governor training is scheduled throughout 2014/15.

## **2.3 Examination results**

The 2014 Religious Studies examination results for Bexley are summarised in paragraph 2.5.2 below. We will discuss these in our meeting at the end of 2014.

There is a report in the next paragraph on the discussions the SACRE membership had about the 2013 results.

### **2.3.1 Bexley Religious Studies GCSE, AS and A Level results 2013**

As we do every year, the SACRE discussed the 2013 Religious Studies GCSE, AS and A Level examination results for Bexley and England.

The SACRE welcomed another good year for Bexley students and noted that the results were roughly consistent with previous years. In particular the SACRE commented on the fact that there had been a decrease in the number of Full Course GCSE entries, matched by an almost identical rise in GCSE Short Course entries. It was suggested that reasons for this change would remain unclear until future data could be analysed. The Chairman agreed and commented that the same was true for any impact of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (E. Bacc.) on GCSE entries, which he believed would not be clear until 2014 at the earliest.

The SACRE was advised, however, that the data provided in November and again in March was un-validated and as some potential errors had recently been brought to light, the data would be reviewed and revised where necessary. Members noted that where any significant changes or impact were evident this would be brought back to the SACRE in March 2014. Members accepted that any consequential changes to data or text in the SACRE annual report should be agreed with Chairman direct. A full discussion of the item was postponed until accurate data could be collected by the Policy and Performance team.

### **2.3.2 National Religious Studies GCSE, AS and A Level results 2014<sup>1</sup>**

The 2014 Religious Studies examination results for Bexley, with comparison data for previous years and national results, is presented in paragraph 2.3.3 below.

256,775 students in England sat a Religious Studies examination in 2014. This is a reduction of 120,025 students, or 32% from the entries in 2013.

240, 400 students sat the GCSE Full Course nationally, an increase of 29,900 on 2013. This is similar to the numbers that took the exam in 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> 2014 data is provisional



At 4,480, national AS Level entries remain low for the second year since 2012, after which we saw an unexplained decrease of 82% in 2013. The number of entries was very similar to that in 2013.

National A Level entries were also similar to 2013 although they saw a slight decrease of 4% to 12,295.

In 2014, 70.1% of GCSE Full Course entrants in England achieved a A\*-C grade, which was a slight drop from 72.2% in 2013. The pass rate between A\* - G increased slightly from 2013, by roughly 1%.

At AS Level, 86.4% of entrants achieved an A-E result, which was a slight increase of 1.2% on 2013. 27% achieved an A-B result, which was a slight decrease on 2013's 28.7% result.

At A Level, 51.5% of entrants in England achieved an A\*-B results, which was a 0.1% increase on the result in 2013. 99.8% achieved an A\*-E result, which was an identical result to the 2013 candidates.

### **2.3.3. Results in Bexley**

2,874 students sat a Religious Studies examination in Bexley in 2014. This was a reduction of 2,179 students from 2013 or a 43.1% decrease in entrants.

2,130 students sat the GCSE Full Course, 518 students sat the GCSE Short Course, 150 students sat the AS Level examination and there were 76 entrants A Level.

The number of students who sat the GCSE Full Course examination increased by 8%, from 1,977 entrants in 2013 to 2,130 in 2014. The number that sat the Short Course dropped from 1332 to 518, which is a reduction of 61%. AS Level entries in Bexley increased by 39%, with 42 more students sitting the exam in 2014. There was a small decrease in A Level entrants, with numbers falling by 6.2% from 81 to 76 entrants.

Regarding results, there was a 2% increase in A\*-C results in GCSE Full Course this year, with 76.7% achieving a pass. This was higher than the national average, which stood at 70.1%. The Short Course results saw a slight decrease in results, with 40% of entrants achieving an A\*-C grade compared to 58.3% in the previous year.

There was an increase in A-B results at AS Level, with 46.7% achieving this in 2014, compared to 42.6% in 2013. This was significantly higher than the national average, where 27.1% students achieved A-B results. There was, however, a slight decrease in results at A Level, with 55.3% achieving A\*-B in 2014 compared to 59.3% in 2013.

It is worth noting that with the Bexley AS and A Level cohort being quite small, any difference in the data from one year to the next can sometimes represent a large percentage change. Summary tables of the results for Bexley are attached at Appendix A, together with some comparison graphs for data for England. More detailed, school level, data is provided in Appendix B to this report.

### Religious Studies examination results: Bexley, 2007 - 2014

(2014 data is provisional)

GCSE Full Course - Bexley					
	Entries	Passes A* - C	% Passes A* - C	All passes A* - G	% All Passes A* - G
2007	730	510	69.9	723	99.0
2008	823	675	82.0	822	99.9
2009	1,010	746	73.4	994	98.4
2010	1,120	829	74.0	1,116	99.6
2011	1,625	1,161	71.4	1,609	99.0
2012	2,133	1,458	68.4	2,091	98.0
2013	1,977	1,481	74.9	1,953	98.8
2014	2,130	1,634	76.7	2,110	99.1

AS Level - Bexley					
	Entries	Passes A - B	% passes A - B	All passes A - E	% all passes A - E
2007	31	4	12.9	29	93.5
2008	35	17	48.6	31	88.6
2009	30	5	16.7	21	70.0
2010	27	5	18.5	22	81.5
2011	22	5	22.7	19	86.4
2012	32	3	9.4	27	84.4
2013	108	46	42.6	103	95.4
2014	150	70	46.7	142	94.7

A Level - Bexley					
	Entries	Passes A* - B	% Passes A* - B	All Passes A* - E	% All Passes A* - E
2007	73	36	49.3	73	100.0
2008	88	43	48.9	87	99.0
2009	69	32	46.4	69	100.0
2010	58	35	60.3	58	100.0
2011	69	29	42.0	68	98.6
2012	57	28	49.1	55	96.5
2013	81	48	59.3	80	98.8
2014	76	42	55.3	73	96.1

## Religious Studies examination results 2014: Comparison with National\* results

(2014 data is provisional)

(\* England)

<b>GCSE Full Course</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>% Passes A* - C</b>	<b>% All Passes A* - G</b>
Bexley	2,130	76.7	99.1
England	240,400	70.1	97.9

<b>GCSE Short Course</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>% Passes A* - C</b>	<b>% All Passes A* - G</b>
Bexley	518	40.9	91.7
England	NA	NA	NA

<b>AS Level</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>% Passes A - B</b>	<b>% All Passes A - E</b>
Bexley	150	46.7	95.4
England	4,480	27.1	86.4

<b>A Level</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>% Passes A* - B</b>	<b>% All Passes A* - E</b>
Bexley	72	56.9	100
England	12,295	51.5	99.8

## 2.4 Complaints

No complaints about RE were received by the SACRE this year.

## **SECTION 3: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND PROVISION FOR PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **3.1 Monitoring**

The SACRE's role is to monitor the quality of Collective Worship in local schools.

As reported previously, and following an extensive review, the SACRE concluded that Collective Worship appeared to be inclusive, varied and of benefit to students, and that no further work was required to promote it. That view did not change in the current reporting period.

### **3.2 Training and advice**

There are plans to include SACRE in the SMSC development meetings, due to the importance of SACRE's role in advising schools on the matter.

Governor training is scheduled throughout 2014/15.

### **3.3 Determinations and complaints**

No determinations were applied for, and the SACRE received no formal complaints about collective worship.

## **SECTION 4: BEXLEY SACRE: WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AND LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

### **4.1 Professional and administrative support**

Meetings of the SACRE are attended by a senior officer from the local authority's Directorate of Education and Social Care and an officer of the Committee Services and Scrutiny team of the local authority clerks the SACRE meetings and acts as the point of contact for individual members. There is no longer a formal designated advisor to the SACRE.

### **4.2 Development of the SACRE**

#### **4.2.1 SACRE training**

Despite financial constraints, SACRE members are encouraged to attend national and regional events and to report back to subsequent SACRE meetings. For instance in March, the Vice Chairman gave members positive and informative feedback from the RE Subject Leader's meeting. SACRE members also discuss any available annual analysis of the previous year's SACRE reports, and compare the national picture with the local context.

### **4.3 Finance**

The SACRE receives no independent funding, although we are grateful to have access to a small allocation from the local authority's curriculum development budget should the need arise for a limited number of conference delegate fees, for example, and our NASACRE membership fee.

### **4.4 Membership and Constitution**

Although maintaining a strong membership is an ongoing concern for SACRE, in current view it is quite strong. Groups B and C are full to requirement which is positive, although there remain vacancies in Group A.

Despite actively pursuing to fill the vacancies in Group A, it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so, with a number of local and national organisations either unable to offer a nominee, or appearing unwilling to do so. Fewer members means there is even more expectation on those that remain and who, we must not forget, give their time voluntarily.

The terms of office for all Bexley SACRE members in Groups A to C inclusive will end in May 2018, although some may be subject to renewal thereafter. The membership was most recently reviewed in May 2014.

The SACRE Constitution was reviewed three years ago, and there was no reason to review it again in the period of this report.



#### **4.5 National**

Bexley SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

#### **4.6 Local**

Bexley SACRE works in collaboration with the local Diocesan Boards.

The CRIBS group (Christian Resources in Bexley Schools) is represented on the SACRE.

The North West Kent Muslim Association, who are represented on SACRE, graciously offered to host a SACRE meeting at Crayford Mosque in November 2013, which was well received by members.

The Redeemed Christian Church of Bethel's Court presented their work to SACRE, which was informative for all members.

Several meetings of the Agreed Syllabus Conference were held at Brampton Primary School, who kindly offered their facilities as a venue.

## APPENDIX A

### THE COMPOSITION OF THE BEXLEY SACRE

The composition of the SACRE for the 2012/2013 academic year was as follows:

#### GROUP A (CHRISTIAN AND OTHER FAITHS)

Methodist	Mrs Di Sprowles	
Baptist	Miss Carole Farley	Until June 2014
	Mr Gordon Raggett	Since June 2014
Judaism	Mr James Martin	Since January 2014
Buddhism	Miss Tina Crowley	Until June 2014
	Mr R A Wimalasekera	
Islam	Mrs Faozia Rashid	
Free Church (Evangelical Christians)	Mr Paul Weston	
Roman Catholic	Vacancy	
Hinduism	Vacancy	
Sikh	Vacancy	

#### GROUP B (CHURCH OF ENGLAND)

Church of England	Mrs Jeannie Watts	
Church of England	Mrs Dorothy Jones (Vice Chair)	
Church of England	Fr Philip Wells	Since October 2014
Church of England	Rev Scott Lamb	Since October 2014
Church of England	Mr Alex Tear	Until June 2014

### GROUP C (TEACHERS IN THE AUTHORITY)

Chislehurst and Sidcup	Ms June Ben Rabah	Since November 2013
Trinity Secondary School	Ms Cerys Siney	Since January 2014
Haberdashers' Aske's	Ms Frances Thapen	
Crayford Academy		
Barrington Primary	Mrs Judith Fudger	Since July 2014
Mayplace Primary	Mrs Emily Champion	Since July 2014
Lessness Heath	Ms Victoria O'Reilly	Since July 2014
Belvedere Infants	Ms Amy Ashford	Until June 2014

### GROUP D (THE AUTHORITY)

Councillor Ross Downing	Until June 2014
Councillor Richard Gillespie (Chairman)	Until June 2014
Councillor David Hurt	Until June 2014
Councillor Harry Persaud	Until June 2014
Councillor Michael Taarrant	Until June 2014
Councillor Simon Windle	Until June 2014

Councillor Esther Amaning	Since June 2014
Councillor Christine Catterall	Since June 2014
Councillor Graham D'Amiral	Since June 2014
Councillor Andy Dourmouh	Since June 2014
Councillor Ross Downing	Since June 2014
Councillor John Husband	Since June 2014
Councillor David Leaf (Chair)	Since June 2014
Mr Timothy Rice	
Bexley School Governors (Primary)	

### CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Humanist	Mr Jay Allnut	Until June 2014
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### SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (other than Councillor substitutes)

Dr Fazlur Rashid	Group A (Islam)
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Attendance by members during the 2013/2014 academic year was as follows:

	<b>Possible</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Mrs Di Sprowles	3	3
Miss Carole Farley	2	1
Mr Gordon Raggett	0	0
Mr James Martin	1	1
Miss Tina Crowley	2	0
Mr R A Wimalasekera	3	2
Mrs Faozia Rashid	3	3
Mr Paul Weston	3	0
Mrs Jeannie Watts	3	3
Mr Alex Tear	2	0
Mrs Dorothy Jones (Vice Chair)	3	3
Fr Philip Wells	0	0
Rev Scott Lamb	0	0
Ms Amy Ashford	2	0
Ms June Ben Rabah	3	3
Ms Cerys Siney	2	1
Ms Frances Thapen	3	1
Mrs Judith Fudger	1	1
Mrs Emily Champion	0	0
Ms Victoria O'Reilly	1	1
Councillor Esther Amaning	1	1
Councillor Christine Catterall	1	1
Councillor Graham D'Amiral	1	0
Councillor Andy Dourmouh	1	1
Councillor Ross Downing	1	1
Councillor John Husband	1	1
Councillor David Leaf (Chair)	1	1
Mr Timothy Rice	3	0
Dr Fazlur Rashid	3	3
Councillor Ross Downing	2	0
Councillor Richard Gillespie (Chairman)	2	2
Councillor David Hurt	2	1
Councillor Harry Persaud	2	2
Councillor Michael Taarrant	2	1
Councillor Simon Windle	2	2





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