

Report of the Blackburn with Darwen Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

2013

1. Introduction

It is a requirement of the Education Reform Act (1988) that every Local Education Authority has a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

Each SACRE should have representation from:

- Christian and other religious denominations which reflect the principal religious traditions of the area
- The Church of England
- Teachers' Associations
- The Local Education Authority

Each SACRE can:

- Require the LEA to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to review the locally agreed syllabus for religious education;
- On application from Headteacher(s), release schools or groups of pupils from the requirement that acts of worship be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

There is a requirement that each SACRE publish an Annual Report on its work. This report is in response to this requirement and covered the period September 2012 to August 2013.

2. Membership

Committee	Representing:	Contact Details
A	Buddhist (1)	Dh. Vidusi, Blackburn Triratna Buddhist Centre
A	Hindu (1)	Mrs Madhubala Pandya
A	Muslim (5)	Lancashire Council of Mosques: Khaliq Choudhury Ismaeel Nakhuda Saleem Seedat
A	British Jews (1)	Rabbi David Braunold
A	Sikh (2)	Baldeep Kaur Hungin
A	Blackburn with Darwen Free Churches (3)	Maggie Beck (Methodist) Paul Wicks (Bap)
A	Roman Catholic (1)	Salford Diocese Robert Beardsworth Joanna Sewell
B	Church of England (2)	Blackburn Diocese Lisa Fenton Helen Sage
	Primary School Co-ordinator (1)	Mumtaj Jolly
	Secondary School Co-ordinator	Kay Patterson
C	NAHT	Peter Fenton
C	ATL	Alice Robinson
C	NUT	Liz Beaumont
C	NASUWT	Vacancy
D	LEA	Cllr Chris Thayne Cllr David Harling Cllr Konrad Tapp Cllr Akhtar Cllr Sylvia Liddle

Secretary to SACRE Mrs Dot Thomson, School Improvement Officer,
Children's Services

3. Matters Dealt with by SACRE in 2012 - 2013

- Religious Education Cluster group meetings – Primary. These continue to be a successful source of support for schools.
- There were no requests for a determination for Collective Worship.
- SACRE has been active in lobbying DfE and MPs with regard to plans for the English Baccalaureate which fail to include Religious Education as an appropriate Humanities subject.
- Consideration of applications for Action learning Bursaries and suggestions for a community arts projects with a religious education theme.
- Vacancies on SACRE were discussed. There is currently a vacancy for an NAS/UWT representative. New Muslim representatives have been encouraged to join Committee A.
- Report from the NASACRE annual conference.
 - SACRE members were concerned about the critical presentation by Mark Chater which attempted to offer challenge but served only to undermine the work of SACREs. The transcript of his speech suggested that only four out of eighty members present would create the SACRE system as it exists. This would not reflect the views of Blackburn with Darwen SACRE but does perhaps reflect that Mr Chater's presentation was breath taking for the wrong reasons.
 - SACREs may have an unwieldy structure but are effective in representing the communities they serve and draw members together to act in the best interests of children and the wider community, united in a



shared vision.

- Within a changing education landscape SACREs need to remain optimistic about the contribution they are able to make and continue to work hard to make a difference to their community in spite of financial constraints and negative national perspectives from so called leaders in religious education.

4. Religious Education

Religious Education cluster meetings are facilitated by Lisa Fenton, Senior Adviser for RE, Blackburn Diocese and a member of Blackburn with Darwen SACRE. The meetings have been held each term in a number of schools to inspire teachers to use a range of resources and approaches in their teaching.

SACRE continues to support schools to fulfil their duties with regard to community cohesion by offering action learning bursaries and providing funding for community cohesion activities with a religious education focus. Newfield School used their funding to plan an RE week with a focus on Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. With the support of community organisations (Blackburn Diocese, Inspiring Grace and **Educasian**) they enjoyed artefacts, dance and experiences of prayer. The whole week provided rich sensory experiences which enabled children with complex needs to access learning about and from religion.

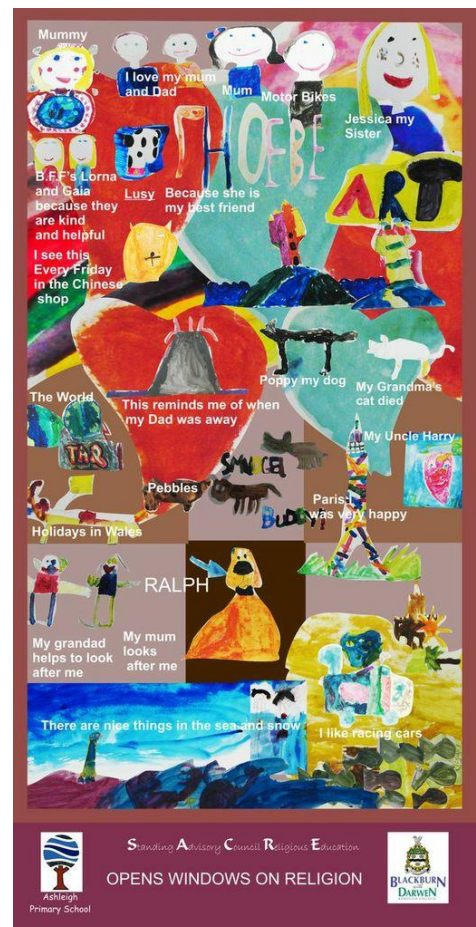
The community arts project, supported by artist Alistair Nicholson, involved twelve schools from Blackburn with Darwen schools. The children worked together to explore their perceptions of important people and experiences in life. Their art work was collated to create banners for display in local parks over the next twelve months.



5. Standards and Quality of provision for Religious Education in Blackburn with Darwen Schools

SACRE remains very concerned about the emerging impact of the English Baccalaureate on the take up of GCSE Religious Education and Religious Studies. They have growing concerns about the withdrawal of additional support for training specialist teachers of RE and with regard to the limited time spent in helping trainee teachers prepare for teaching this important subject. Ed Pawson's response to the outcomes of the recent survey undertaken by NATRE echo the concerns of Blackburn with Darwen SACRE:

"In the light of the shocking murder of Lee Rigby in broad daylight on a Woolwich street and the subsequent backlash from anti-Islamic activists, why are we not taking the need for good religious education more seriously? If our young people are to grow up to be well-informed about religions and other non-religious worldviews, this must begin early in their school life. The fact that the majority of newly trained primary school teachers feel under-prepared to teach about religion and beliefs raises serious questions: how are we to expect children to become active citizens, having an understanding of, and respect for the beliefs and values of others, if their teachers are lacking in confidence themselves?"



The standards achieved at Key Stage 4 are considered at the each year by members of SACRE.

FULL COURSE	2011				2012				2013			
	Community	VA	Community	VA	Community	VA	Community	VA	Community	VA	Academies	TOTAL
NOR	856	459	856	459	856	459	856	459	902	471	389	1762
Number of entries	422	415	422	415	422	415	422	415	373	441	153	967
Number of A*-C	321	270	321	270	321	270	321	270	282	300	127	709
% Entered Gaining A*-C	76.1%	65.1%	76.1%	65.1%	76.1%	65.1%	76.1%	65.1%	75.6%	68.0%	83.0%	73.3%
% of NOR entered	49.3%	90.4%	49.3%	90.4%	49.3%	90.4%	49.3%	90.4%	41.4%	93.6%	39.3%	54.9%

SHORT COURSE	2011				2012				2013			
	Community	VA	Academies	TOTAL	Community	VA	Academies	TOTAL	Community	VA	Academies	TOTAL
NOR	0	0	0	0	419	200	251	870	270	201	418	889
Number of entries	0	0	0	0	50	4	154	208	29	1	212	242
Number of A*-C	0	0	0	0	6	0	120	126	7	0	82	89
% Entered Gaining A*-C	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	0.0%	77.9%	60.6%	24.1%	0.0%	38.7%	36.8%
% of NOR entered	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.9%	2.0%	61.4%	23.9%	10.7%	0.5%	50.7%	27.2%

6. Collective Worship in Schools

The collective worship resources instigated by SACRE and produced on our behalf by Blackburn Diocese are still drawing positive comments from teachers and school leaders. The materials have been well received by other SACREs locally who have considered their purchase. SACRE members resolved to monitor the continued impact of this valuable resource and ensure both collective worship and religious education CDs are included in the induction materials for new Headteachers.

A SACRE is required to consider applications from Headteachers of community or foundation schools (without a religious character) that the requirement for broadly Christian Collective Worship be lifted or modified. There were no applications for a determination during the last academic year. SACRE has requested the LA seeks ways to encourage schools to consider whether this would be appropriate given the nature of the community served.

SACRE requires schools making a request to submit a revised policy for Collective Worship and an overview of worship themes planned for the year ahead. The clerk to SACRE undertakes an observation of Collective Worship in the applicant school to inform SACRE's decision making process. Information about determinations has been included in the Putting Heads Together programme for aspirant leaders and the induction programme for Headteachers new to Blackburn with Darwen schools.

7. Complaints

The SACRE has received no complaints relating to either Religious Education or Collective Worship.

8. RE Advisers

Lisa Fenton facilitates the primary network and leads training on religious education and collective worship which is open to all schools. Helen Sage provides support on request to Secondary schools.

9. Finance

SACRE has a budget of £15,000. Main spending during the last academic year covered the development of resources and Action Learning Bursaries, a Community Arts Project.

SCHOOL	NOR	Number of Entries	Number of A*-C	% Entered Gaining A*-C	% of NOR entered
FULL COURSE	2012				
Beardwood	182	137	116	84.7%	75.3%
Blakewater	91	34	18	52.9%	37.4%
Darwen Academy	109	23	10	43.5%	21.1%
Darwen Vale	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Our Lady & St. John	173	172	78	45.3%	99.4%
Pleckgate	237	199	148	74.4%	84.0%
St. Bede's	200	180	138	76.7%	90.0%
Tauheedul	85	59	56	94.9%	69.4%
St. Wilfrid's	251	94	90	95.7%	37.5%
Witton Park	198	49	32	65.3%	24.7%
Community	708	419	314	74.9	59.2%
VA	458	411	272	66.2	89.7%
Academy	360	117	100	85.5	32.5%
LA TOTAL	1526	947	686	72.4	62.1%

NOR	Number of Entries	Number of A*-C	% Entered Gaining A*-C	% of NOR entered
2013				
0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
191	100	76	76.0%	52.4%
144	17	9	52.9%	11.8%
229	17	16	94.1%	7.4%
176	173	80	46.2%	98.3%
270	202	158	78.2%	74.8%
201	191	145	75.9%	95.0%
94	77	75	97.4%	81.9%
245	136	118	86.8%	55.5%
212	54	32	59.3%	25.5%
902	373	282	75.6	41.4%
471	441	300	68.0	93.6%
389	153	127	83.0	39.3%
1762	967	709	73.3	54.9%

SCHOOL	NOR	Number of Entries	Number of A*-C	% Entered Gaining A*-C	% of NOR entered
SHORT COURSE	2012				
Beardwood	182	26	3	11.5%	14.3%
Blakewater	-	-	-	-	-
Darwen Academy	-	-	-	-	-
Darwen Vale	-	-	-	-	-
Our Lady & St. John	-	-	-	-	-
Pleckgate	237	24	3	12.5%	10.1%
St. Bede's	200	3	0	0.0%	1.5%
St. Wilfrid's	251	154	120	77.9%	61.4%
Witton Park	-	-	-	-	-
Community	419	50	6	12.0	11.9
VA	200	3	0	0.0	1.5
Academy	251	154	120	77.9	61.4
LA TOTAL	870	207	126	60.9	23.8%

NOR	Number of Entries	Number of A*-C	% Entered Gaining A*-C	% of NOR entered
2013				
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
144	107	32	29.9%	74.3%
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
270	29	7	24.1%	10.7%
201	1	0	0.0%	0.5%
245	105	50	47.6%	42.9%
-	-	-	-	-
270	29	7	24.1	10.7
201	1	0	0.0	0.5
389	212	82	38.7	54.5
860	242	89	36.8	28.1%