

People Directorate
Setting and School Effectiveness

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Annual SACRE Report

2019-2020



The SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

The Milton Keynes SACRE works closely with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs) and the Diocese of Oxford. All meetings of the SACRE are open to the public.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the Milton Keynes' SACRE over the academic year 2019 -2020. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found

http://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Committees/tabid/170/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/589/id/1120/Default.aspx

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

Chair: Rev Dr Paul Smith at paul.a.smith.mk@btinternet.com

Clerk: Janet Gleghorn at janet.gleghorn@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Local Authority Officer: Michael Manley: michael.manley@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Adviser to SACRE: Anne Andrews anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org

Introduction from the Chair

I am pleased to commend this year's SACRE report and grateful to Anne Andrews and Janet Gleghorn for compiling it so effectively!

The budget is carefully managed to maximise benefit and target effective delivery of the curriculum through teacher skill support and enhancement of SACRE members' contribution to overall work of SACRE.

Advice and Teacher Support benefits from our Professional Adviser's work offering termly meetings with teachers responsible for delivering or managing RE. Her work and skills are invaluable, and her contribution forms a major element in our current priority of providing practical and relevant teaching support. Investment in an enhanced web presence is also vital and some of the budget has been allocated to this and is money well-spent. There is evidence that some RE knowledge amongst those given responsibility for its delivery continues to be a concern and reflects the national picture, too. Government really does need to invest in RE

specialist training and teacher incentives especially if it wishes to promote a peaceful, tolerant, and diverse society.

Coping with Covid-19 has marked the second half of the past year. The disruption that the pandemic has created clearly effects all aspects of life, not least the statutory provision of education and means of assessing attainment, let alone delivery of effective teaching. Lack of accurate assessment levels hampers SACRE being able to form priorities for the future. A general plan of action has been considered and will be reported on next year. As collective worship is also part of SACREs remit, we have given this some consideration over the year and wish to maintain this as a priority area going forward.

Management of SACRE has been an ongoing challenge especially in the effort to remain both widely representative and quorate. During lockdown we were able to hold an online meeting for the summer term. MK SACRE is rarely quorate owing mainly to the non-attendance of local councillors and intermittent attendance of teachers. Recruiting a diverse membership with relevant skills or knowledge, motivation and adequate representation of the local community is always a challenge but remains a focus and is regularly reviewed.

I have great pleasure in being able to commend this report!

Meetings of the SACRE during this year were held on the following dates:

28 November 2019

11 March 2020

17 June 2020 (virtual meeting)

Budget 2019-2020

SACRE was given a budget of £4535 for the year 2019-20, much of which has been spent on the contract for the professional adviser (to include attendance at SACRE meetings, running RE Network meetings and writing the annual report), additional training programme and the development of the website and the faith booklets as determined by SACRE at the first meeting of the year. Money is also allocated to the consultant teacher who oversees the flagship Youth SACRE. Although the NASACRE AGM did not take place, the money will be held for next year and most of the expenditure has taken place.

Advice offered to LA and Schools

Co-operation between the LA and the SACRE continues to be good despite the lack of councillor attendance at meetings, and so Ofsted reports and a budget breakdown have been made available as requested.

The NATRE guidance for the re-opening of schools and the restoration of a full curriculum has also been shared. The LA has also agreed to a redesign of the SACRE webpages to make them more user-friendly for teachers and that work is continuing through lockdown.

Advice to schools is offered largely through the training programme and RE network meetings. This year, the topics covered have included core concepts in Christianity, concepts in Judaism, including a visit to the synagogue and an online network meeting that looked at resources for home learning and CPD. An afternoon was also run for teachers new to RE or new to Milton Keynes which looked at the basics of RE teaching and the particulars of the Locally Agreed syllabus. Most of these events were attended by at least 15 teachers from a wide range of schools, and additional email support has been offered to some of the schools concerned.

The advice this year has focused largely on RE, but the guidance for collective worship and the policy for determinations have been updated and distributed where appropriate.

Standards, Quality and Provision of RE

The relevant portions of seven Ofsted reports were shared with SACRE, but there were not many comments directly relating to RE, collective worship or SMSC. Overall the messages were positive though there are some concerns over teacher subject knowledge in some schools, particularly on issues of faith, culture and community. This will form part of SACREs forward plan for the year 20-21.

The two schools that had received SIAMS inspection had both been praised for the quality of their collective worship and RE. As part of a federation including some community schools, and using the locally agreed syllabus this suggests that the syllabus is enabling schools to deliver good quality RE.

Clearly the second half of the year has presented a challenge to schools, and it is therefore not possible for SACRE to have a clear understanding of current attainment or provision in RE. Collecting data and supporting teachers with getting RE back on the curriculum will be high on SACRE agenda for the new academic year.

No complaints have been received about RE and the LA has not asked SACRE to support any schools with RE. SACRE has not been made aware of any Ofsted reports making mention of religious education.

GCSE & A Level Results:

As examinations were cancelled results are not being made public this year.

Agreed Syllabus

Under current legislation the next syllabus review is due in 2022.

Standards, Quality and Provision of Collective Worship

With schools not fully open since March, there is no information about provision or quality in collective worship, but guidance and a new determination policy were produced by SACRE during the year. This is another area that SACRE intends to focus on in the new academic year as schools re-establish good working routines.

The LA has not asked SACRE to support any schools with collective worship.

Any school wishing to explore the relevance of a determination (daily collective worship which is other than 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character) in their context should contact the local authority officer, Michael Manley. Church schools are not eligible for a determination. For an academy wishing to apply for a determination the correct process is for the Trust to apply through the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to the Secretary of State.

Management of SACRE

SACRE has met three times as usual, though the last meeting of the year was a virtual meeting. The LA continues to provide support with a local authority officer and a clerk available at each meeting.

Group D, Councillors and Group C, teachers are still underrepresented, with only one member per group. This reliance on one person increases the likelihood of a meeting not being quorate and in fact none of the SACRE meetings this year has been quorate. However, Group B now has three members, which should improve things a little and there are new members for Group A and C, though these are largely replacements for members who have moved on. New members are sent the NASACRE handbook for SACRE members and there are plans to offer training at a development day in September, though whether this will be able to go ahead a planned is as yet unclear.

SACRE is supported by a professional adviser, paid for 3 days a year, but employed on an occasional basis for additional training, such as the session for new RE subject leaders and the re-writing of the determination policy and collective worship guidance.

Contribution to the wider agenda of the local authority and partnership working

The rewriting of the faith booklets and redesign of the website are contributing to the agenda of being more inclusive. SACRE faith members share information about their community events. THE resource centre at the EMA and SACRE offer one another mutual support. SACRE works with NASACRE and had two members booked to attend the AGM. The professional adviser is provided by the Diocese of Oxford and so there is a good working partnership there. Youth SACRE is based in one of the secondary academies, and that strengthens ties between SACRE and the academy schools in Milton Keynes.

Attainment in Religious Studies at GCSE in 2020

Attainment in Religious Studies at AS-Level in 2020

Examination results are not being reported this year as all were based on Centre Assessed Grades

Membership and attendance 2020

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Group A:	Christian denominations and other religions	
Free Churches	Rachel Foster/Carol Wheatle	2/3
Roman Catholic Church	Vacancy	
Baha'i	Latifeh Rowlands	2/3
Buddhism	Ajit Da Silva	0/3
Hinduism	Manjula Korja	0/3
Islam	Zainab Manji	2/3
Judaism	Lou Tribus	3/3
Sikhism	Talvinder Kaur Virdee-Basra (Vice Chair)	3/3
Humanism	Elaine Lever	3/3
Group B:	The Church of England	
	Rev Paul Smith (Chair)	3/3
	Rev Michael Morris	0/3
	Gill Wood	2/3
	Vacancy	0/3
Group C:	Associations representing teachers	
Primary	Vacancy	0/3
Secondary	Katie Wilkins	1/3
Academies	Shammi Rahman/Sara Smith	0/3

Group D:	The Local Authority	
	Clr Edith Bald	0/3
	Clr Alan Webb	0/3
Additional attendees		
Observers	Tarika Yajik	
Professional Adviser	Anne Andrews	3/3
Local Authority Officer	Michael Manley	3/3
Clerk/Note taker	Janet Gleghorn	3/3