



North

Yorkshire County Council

Annual report of the North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the school year 2012/13



Introduction

This has been an exciting year for SACRE as it launched a new RE Agreed Syllabus in February and rolled out training across the county. Schools started to teach the new syllabus in September 2013.

SACRE is confident that the new syllabus will support the delivery of high quality, engaging, relevant and challenging Religious Education in North Yorkshire's schools. Feedback from schools so far has been very positive.

This year we have said goodbye to Mr Roger Marks and Mrs Heather Goodall. We extend to them our warmest thanks for their support.

Over the last academic year the SACRE has met three times, once each term. The members have received presentations about aspects of RE teaching in schools and settings. They have also debated a range of issues raised by different stakeholders arising from religious education in North Yorkshire schools. Thanks go to staff and pupils from Mowbray School for hosting the Spring Term meeting and giving us a valuable insight into religious education learning at a Special School.

The report that follows provides more detailed information about examination results and the experiences that our pupils and young people are gaining from their learning. We are continuing with the inclusion of cameos of good practice in schools written by the teachers themselves, giving an opportunity for teachers to share their practice and allowing us to celebrate the achievements of teachers of RE in schools across North Yorkshire.

None of what has been achieved would have been possible without the dedication, hard work, knowledge, skills and understanding of all those who have contributed to the SACRE's endeavours over the last year. Particular thanks go to the three ASTs who have contributed enormously to the development of RE in North Yorkshire over recent years. Unfortunately, their AST role ended in August 2013.

I am very pleased to be able to commend this annual report to school governors, head teachers and their staff, and to members and officers of the county council.

Margaret Gibson

SACRE. Chair 2012/13

The SACRE welcomes any comments on, or enquiries relating to, this report, which should be addressed to Ms. Rebecca Mason, Humanities Education Development Adviser, North Yorkshire County Council, Children & Young People's Service, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AE.

Email: Rebecca.mason@northyorks.gov.uk

The photographs used ???

Executive summary

There were no complaints registered with the local authority and SACRE in 2012/13 in respect of religious education or collective worship.

No determinations¹ were requested by schools.

The number of pupils entered for GCSE full course Religious Studies increased this year, but the results fell slightly, and are just below the national performance at grades A* to C.

GCSE short course numbers continued to decline, following the national trend, but A*-C grades are above the national level.

At GCE A2 level there was an increase in the number of entries and 100% of candidates entered for A2 level achieved a grade A*-E, 25.3% at grades A*/A, which was higher than national average performance. At GCE AS level there was a fall in the number of entries. 87.7% of candidates achieved a grade A-E, 21.1% at grade A-B.

The new Agreed Syllabus was launched at an event in February 2013, which was well attended by over 100 teachers, pupils and SACRE members. A full days training on the new syllabus was provided to primary RE subject leaders at five locations across the county and a central training day was provided for secondary subject leaders. Approximately 200 teachers attended the training events, which were well received by teachers.

Subject leader network meetings continued termly for secondary subject leaders and have been well attended.

Statutory compliance in respect of religious education and collective worship

The SACRE is pleased to report that it has no evidence from Ofsted reports to suggest that RE provision in schools is not compliant with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, as in previous years, there is some evidence to suggest that too little time may be judged to be allocated to RE teaching and that timetabling arrangements in a number of secondary schools may make compliance difficult. Evidence is based on visits to schools by the Humanities Education Development Adviser (EDA) and Advanced Skills Teachers for RE (ASTs) and feedback from network meetings. SACRE has contacted secondary schools to remind them of their statutory duties.

National Curriculum and public examination requirements continue to change. There is an increasing range of ways to judge school performance, including the English Baccalaureate. The climate in which schools are operating is becoming more challenging and provision for subjects like RE is increasingly under pressure.

¹ In respect of requests for exemptions from the legal requirement for broadly Christian collective worship.

SACRE has an important role in ensuring that schools comply with their statutory duties regarding provision of RE.

There were no complaints registered with the local authority and SACRE in 2012/13 in respect of religious education or collective worship and no North Yorkshire school has been found to be failing in its statutory duties in respect of collective worship.

As in previous years, no determinations were requested by schools¹.

Standards and achievement in religious education²

Foundation stage

Whilst the statutory requirements in respect of RE do not apply to pupils who are under compulsory school age, the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage highlights a number of requirements in relation to their personal, emotional and social development, and their knowledge and understanding of the world, which prepare them for the RE they will follow in key stage 1. On the basis of the general monitoring visits made by the local authority to early years and foundation stage settings, there is no evidence to suggest that standards and achievement are in any way significantly different to those nationally expected.

Key stages 1 and 2

On the basis of evidence acquired through a number of school visits by advisers and discussions with head teachers and subject leaders, standards in RE in primary schools are on the whole satisfactory, whilst in many schools they are good. Overall pupil progress in RE is at least satisfactory in the majority of North Yorkshire primary schools, with some good and outstanding features.

Key stage 3

Visits made to a number of secondary schools on the basis of advice and support requests and targeted interventions indicate that standards in RE at key stage 3 are broadly in line with national expectations. Overall pupil progress in RE at key stage 3 is rarely less than satisfactory and is often good, with some outstanding features.

Key stage 4

In 2013, 2517 students were entered for the GCSE full course in Religious Studies, (an increase of 219 from last year), which was 37% of the cohort, and 1813 for the short course, (26.7% of the cohort, a decline of 371 entries which was 14% of the cohort, on the previous year). The performance in the full course fell by 3.6% from the previous year, and the short course results fell by 0.7%. Overall, 64% of the North Yorkshire year group were entered for a GCSE in Religious Studies, a decline from previous years, but reflecting the national trend.

² Public examinations leading to approved qualifications are entitled Religious Studies.

Analysis produced by the RE Council and National Association of Teachers of Religious Education showed that while the number of students nationally taking the full Religious Studies GCSE has increased by 10.6% (representing more than 239,000 16-year olds), that growth has been wiped out by an almost 30% drop in the number of pupils taking the short course, which is worth half a GCSE. This is equivalent to an overall drop of 9%.

The RE Council ascribes this drop to the Government's refusal to include Religious Studies in the new E-Bacc, a performance measure linked to five GCSE subjects.

The Government policy of no longer recognising GCSE short courses as a benchmark of a schools performance was also causing some schools to stop promoting them.

In the absence of nationally validated data at the time of writing, it is estimated on the basis of interim data that North Yorkshire's GCSE results for the full course at grades A*-C are below national performance, whilst for the short course results are above national performance.

Post-16

In 2013 166 students were entered for GCE 'A2' level Religious Studies, compared to 163 in the previous year. 100% of candidates entered achieved a grade A-E (98.8 national figure), 25.3% a grade A*/A (22.2% national figure) and a 53% a grade A*-B (51.4% national figure). A2 Religious Studies was studied in sixteen North Yorkshire schools. Results and number of entries were very similar to 2012 results.

At GCE 'AS' level, there were 57 candidates, compared to 74 in the previous year. 87.7% achieved an A-E grade (85.2% national figure), with 21.1% achieving a grade A-B (28.7% national figure).

In the absence of nationally validated data at the time of writing, it is estimated on the basis of interim data that North Yorkshire's GCE A level results are slightly above national performance and GCE AS level results are broadly in line with national performance.

	GCSE Grades A*-C			
	2013 National	2013 North Yorkshire	2012	2011
Full GCSE	72.2%	69.5%	73.1%	72.0%
Short GCSE	50.1%	58.4%	59.1%	57.5%

Quality of teaching and learning in religious education

Foundation stage and key stages 1 and 2

Teaching and learning in RE in North Yorkshire's primary schools and early years and foundation stage settings is at least satisfactory with some good and outstanding features.

Supported by the 14 new units of learning, primary schools are continually developing their strategies for enjoyable and challenging RE experiences. The new units of learning provide detailed planning and direct teachers to a wide range of resources. They encourage schools to adopt an enquiry approach to RE, getting pupils to ask and explore big

questions. As well as focusing on the explicit RE curriculum, many schools successfully forge links with other subjects, such as in history and geography, thus creating a more meaningful context for RE. Exciting and lively opportunities for pupils to extend and display their RE learning are also provided through, for example, music, art and information technology. Many primary schools are also enriching their study of world faiths through school visits and visitors, UK and international links and global school partnerships.

Kirby Hill CE Primary School

Number on roll: 137

Messy Church. A report by Ric Welsby, Chair of Governors

Rev Alison shared the story of a young Jesus attending the Temple with his parents and being left behind. She explained how far his parents travelled the next day before they realised they had left him behind and the children were asked to reflect on how the parents and Jesus must have felt.

They then split up into their groups. Each group included children from each class in the school. I was in Sapphire Class, where children were using tissue to make flowers and decorate a heart. I was impressed how the older children immediately look after the younger members of the group and soon all members of each group were thoroughly engaged in the activity in question. Miss Stead, leading the activity, regularly asked questions of the group

that linked to the bible study, and the answers were intelligent and sincere.

The school then came together again to share their creations, and worship together before the children enjoyed the reward of a hot dog.

As I have experienced before, this was another fabulous Messy Church, mixing together members of the community and Church with members of the school and studying a bible story in a creative and enjoyable way for all concerned. **Fantastic!**



The Esk Valley Alliance, including Egton Church of England Primary, Goathland Primary and Castleton Community Primary School

Creative RE. A report by Anne King, RE teacher for the cluster

One teacher is working across three small schools teaching R.E. Here are some of the creative things they've done:

One school created a labyrinth reflecting on peace, directions and feasts and also trees with thoughts and ideas by children.

At Castleton C.P. they made a tent to think about how the people in the wilderness felt and complained of thirst and hunger and forgot God had been with them

through the Red Sea. The children were asked what the story told them about God and also about the people.

At Egton C.E. Primary they made plasticine trees of the knowledge of good and evil.

They also made a large scroll, cutting up an old copy of the Old Testament and sticking in the stories to represent the Torah. It was then used in a classroom synagogue for an act of worship.

In many primary schools, higher level teaching assistants continue to make a valuable contribution to the teaching of RE. In these schools consideration should be made to their individual professional development needs in order to ensure the maintenance of

standards, achievement and quality within RE provision and teaching and learning. It was encouraging to see a significant number of higher level teaching assistants attending the Agreed Syllabus training.

Cononley Community Primary School

Number on roll: 118

Inspirational RE. A report by Clare Ellens- yr1/2 and yr4/5 teacher, RE coordinator

Our school got involved in the SACRED Art competition last year and we chose to do 'windows on the soul'. The year 3/4 class went off timetable for the day. They listened to inspirational music then talked about what a soul was and how everybody's soul was different. They linked the soul to being the individual part of you and talked about what made them happy. They then spent the afternoon doing artwork linked to the morning's discussions. The teacher said "it was one of the best, most inspiring lessons; the insightfulness and depth of the children's discussions was truly amazing." Children said they enjoyed the creative side of RE and one girl said "it really made me think about what was inside me, what the soul is." The school displayed artwork from across the school in the entrance.

During the children's work on what makes Jesus an inspiration a vet was invited in as an inspirational person. The children loved having someone in to talk to and made the link between this person being inspirational and helpful, and Jesus.

In Year 3/4 the teacher did a very interesting lesson about the parable of the two builders. She had them build a tower and then blow

it down, they then stuck it to the table to represent the foundations and saw how much harder it was to blow down. She then shared the story of the two builders. The children talked about the foundations in their lives and wrote on paper building bricks, which they stuck into a wall and drew themselves on top. They then discussed how Jesus is the foundation for the lives of Christians and in what ways do Christians build their lives on Jesus?

In a different lesson they wrote a recipe for what makes a good teacher and then talked about whether Jesus was a good teacher.



In the context of the largest county in England, mostly rural in character, it is recognised that it is often difficult for pupils in some schools to experience a range of religious places of worship first hand or to host visits from members of faith communities other than Christian. However, SACRE and

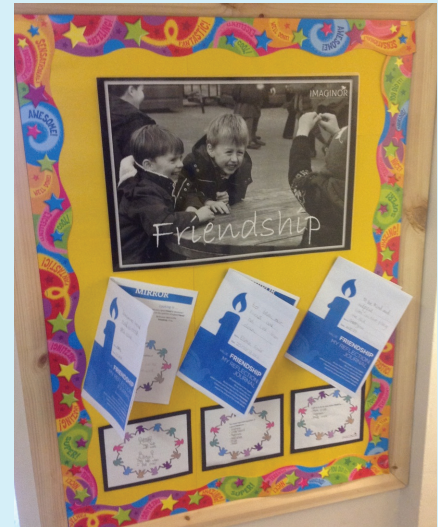
the Local Authority have been supporting schools to undertake visits to places of worship and to host visitors, through developing a visits and visitors database, which is available on 'Fronter', the Local Authority's virtual learning platform.

Wykeham Primary School

Number on roll: 40

Christian Values. Report by James Pynn, Headteacher

As a church school we take a different value each half term. This is explored in worship led by a variety of staff and visitors. We have introduced a class worship session to reflect on our learning and this is displayed in school to remind pupils and visitors of the value we explored the previous half term.



Croft CE Primary School

Number of children on roll: 114

Judaism workshop. A report by Lucy Gamble, class teacher.

The aims of the activities were to widen children's understanding of the Jewish faith, to ensure that the children are respectful of different religions and have an understanding that they have shared values. Judaism is the original of the three Abrahamic faiths, which also includes Christianity and Islam, it is important the children have an understanding of how their own faith began. Each class had the opportunity to read three important Jewish stories, which were, Joseph and the king of Egypt, Journey to the Promised Land and The Jews leave Egypt. They then performed the story to the rest of the school as part of our Collective Worship. A visitor from the Darlington Hebrew Congregation came to lead a Collective Worship and give the children first-hand knowledge and answer any questions. Mrs McAllister really engaged the children and they thoroughly enjoyed her Collective Worship, particularly looking at the Jewish artefacts she brought in. Mrs McAllister commented on how respectful the children were and how they asked

meaningful questions to learn more about Judaism and widen their understanding. During our whole school Judaism Workshop, the children had the opportunity to work in mixed age groups to explore all aspects of Judaism, including aspects of the religion and culture. The workshop included art, design and technology and music activities. The outcomes of the activity are that the children showed a great awareness of themselves and others from a different religion. They could talk confidently about the similarities and differences between their Christian Faith and the Jewish Faith. They also understand how religion can help people feel part of a community and have a sense of belonging.



Key stages 3, 4 and post-16

At key stage 3, there is no evidence to suggest from RE Advanced Skills Teacher school visits and observations by the Humanities Educational Development Adviser, that teaching and learning in RE is anywhere less than satisfactory, whilst there is evidence of much good and some outstanding practice. For some schools however, curriculum time for RE has been reduced or RE has been incorporated into an integrated, skills based course, combining with other humanities subjects, or with Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education.

At key stage 4 and post-16 there is more variation in the quality of teaching and learning in RE. In the public examination courses offered within student options,

it is largely good with some outstanding features. The quality is sometimes less secure in non-examination situations where statutory RE is provided through integrated courses or during tutor group or form time. In these situations there are often high levels of non-RE specialist teaching, often compounded by shortage of time to deliver a meaningful learning experience.

Most schools do deliver either a short or full course GCSE in Religious Studies to all pupils, either over one or two years. Some schools deliver RE to all pupils through a GCSE General Studies course or GCSE Humanities, with some offering GCSE Religious Studies as an option subject. A few schools no longer offer a GCSE option in Religious Studies.

Aireville School, 11-16 school

Number on role: 611

Design-a-Religion day. Report by Lucy Nuttgens, RE teacher

We decided to run Design-a-Religion as a drop-down day for the whole of year 7.

Pupils were allocated to their teams of 4. They selected and negotiated a role as an individual within their group: Team Manager, Designer, IT technician and Spokesperson. There followed a discussion of 'What makes a religion?' and then allocation of the titles of the Religion they were to create. Each group was given a booklet containing key points to consider, the levels on which they would be marked and tips for good presentations.

Pupils then designed their religion, working out the basic principles, and then prepared a presentation which they gave to the other pupils. They were asked to consider beliefs,

spiritual leaders, symbols, rituals, what impact following the religion would have on a believer and the relevance of the religion today.

Positives from the day:

- Feedback from the pupils was overwhelmingly positive
- Raised the profile of RE with year 7 and with those staff involved with the day (Geography teacher has decided to do a Design-a-Country module for Year 8, including the Religion of that country)
- Raised the profile of RE with the senior leadership team.

There are a number of secondary schools offering a rich and diverse programme of educational visits and visitors to support their RE curriculum, as well as global partnership links to enrich the wider curriculum.

The local authority's three advanced skills teachers (ASTs) for RE continued to work closely with schools providing advice, support and training to good effect. Unfortunately, the AST role ended in August 2013, so this invaluable support is no longer available to schools. SACRE would like to take this opportunity to thank Margaret Gibson, Amanda Head and Sue Grey for the huge contribution they have made to supporting teachers of RE and for their significant role in developing the new Agreed Syllabus.

Special schools

Separate regulations covering maintained special schools require them to ensure that as far as practicable a pupil receives opportunities to explore RE. There is no evidence to suggest that this is not the case in special schools within the local authority's control. There are examples of outstanding practice in both the teaching and learning experiences. Several special schools contributed to the development of a resource to accompany the new Agreed Syllabus, that aims to support the teaching of RE for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The resource includes a guidance document, revised P' scales and examples of adapted units of learning. The resource is available on 'Fronter' in the Humanities Room.

The Dales School

Number on role: 49

The Dales School teaches children from 3 to 14 with severe or profound multiple learning difficulties and disabilities and 14 to 19 year olds with any learning difficulties or disabilities.

In Early Years, KS1 and 2, the curriculum is planned over a three year rolling programme with a new theme each term, through which all subjects are taught. During the unit 'Time to celebrate and party', pupils learnt about the importance of light. They looked at bonfire night, Divali, candles, advent, Hannukah and Christmas, exploring the themes in a practical, experiential and sensory way.

Following a visit to a candle factory, pupils made christingles to explore the meaning of advent. They smelt and tasted the oranges, helped choose the elements for and assemble the christingles and then experienced a moment of 'awe and wonder' as the christingles were lit, lights turned out and music played.



Quality of leadership and management in Religious Education

The local authority continues to support the leadership and management of RE, and thus teaching and learning in all schools, through facilitating secondary subject leader termly network days and an annual network day for primary RE subject leaders. These are provided free to all schools in the Q&I SLA and at a charge to other schools.

Agendas have included:

- Updates on local and national issues and developments
- Teaching the new RE Agreed Syllabus
- SEND and RE
- Effective differentiation
- Teaching outstanding RE lessons
- Literacy through RE
- Sharing ideas on visits and visitors
- Sharing good practice

In addition to the support provided by its Advanced Skills Teachers, the local authority employs a Humanities Education Development Adviser who provided valuable support to schools at a time when other authorities are cutting back support.

RE subject leadership in many primary schools, particularly the smaller primary schools, is carried out by a teacher or headteacher with other leadership and management responsibilities. In some schools where this happens this can give the subject a high profile and this is associated with successful outcomes, in others R.E. can become less of a priority.

Subject leaders in many secondary schools continue to face an increasing challenge in securing the place of RE within the curriculum. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate has put pressure on optional subjects with the inclusion of Modern Foreign Languages and History/Geography, but not RE. In some schools this has led to a reduction in time allocations for RE putting pressure on teachers to cover too much in too little time.

Effectiveness of the North Yorkshire agreed syllabus

The new North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus was launched in February 2013, followed by free training events across North Yorkshire for primary and secondary subject leaders.

The new syllabus was produced following a year of consultation, discussion and debate. The syllabus is illustrated with children's art work following a competition held across the county. The cover shows the winning design by Libby Hickson, a pupil from Scalby School in Scarborough.



The Agreed Syllabus is supported by a range of guidance documents and units of learning. They include:

Six guidance documents:

- Good learning in RE: guidance for teachers;
- Beginners guides to the religions and beliefs recommended for learning;
- Glossary of terms;
- A SACRE tool for using the 8 level scale of expectation in RE;
- RE and assessment: six sample tasks
- SEND and RE resource pack

19 units of learning from KS1-3

A poster illustrating the 8 level progress scale

The resources are available free to schools in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) via 'Fronter', North Yorkshire's virtual learning platform or are available to purchase by other schools.

The new syllabus and associated resources have been very well received by schools and the feedback from the training was very positive.

Collective worship

The revised and updated SACRE guidance on collective worship published in 2007 remains in place in schools. A number of schools have indicated how useful they have found this and SACRE continue to keep it under review.

In some schools collective worship is linked to the RE curriculum, and in many schools members of different faith groups, preserving the statutory requirement for a predominantly Christian character, have been involved. Links between collective worship and social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are well-established in many schools, but care needs to be taken on occasions where "celebration", "sharing" and/or "golden" assemblies are regarded as acts of collective worship.

Management of the S.A.C.R.E. and partnership with the local authority

SACRE meetings

The SACRE maintained its normal annual pattern of three meetings during the school year 2012/13. Two meetings were held at County Hall and the third at Mowbray School, where there was an opportunity to walk round the school and talk to students and staff. SACRE wishes to express their thanks to the pupils and staff at Mowbray School for providing us with this opportunity and in particular, Caroline Byrne, the subject leader for RE. SACRE is professionally clerked by a member of the local authority's committee services team, for which members and advisers are grateful.

The majority of members of the SACRE in place for the full year attended at least two of the three meetings held during the year.

Membership and training

Mrs Margaret Gibson was elected chair of SACRE for the school year 2012/13.

SACRE were delighted to welcome new members to SACRE: Olivia Seymour representing the York Church of England Diocese, Rachel Oates, teacher from Forest of Galtres CE/Methodist Primary School, Teresa Laverick, representing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Middlesborough and Alice McNeill an RE teacher from Ampleforth College.

There is currently a vacancy for a representative from the Salvationists and Society of Friends. SACRE welcome applications for membership from anyone who has an interest in supporting the teaching of quality RE in North Yorkshire.

Mr Nasr Moussa Emam attended the national SACRE conference and continues to be an Executive Member for NASACRE for 2012-15. Nasr's articles, 'United in Grief' and 'Responding to Traumatic incidents- Woolwich 2013', were published in the York Interfaith Newsletter and the NASCRE's Newsletter in August 2013.

Improvement and development planning

During the course of the year the SACRE has considered a number of issues, including:

- National changes and developments in RE;
- The revision of the RE Agreed Syllabus, launch and training roll-out;
- The provision of supporting resources for the RE Agreed Syllabus;
- Self-evaluation of North Yorkshire SACRE and action planning;
- RE in Special Schools;
- The RE Quality Mark.

Information and advice

The SACRE continues to employ the wide range of knowledge, skills and experience represented in its membership to provide information, advice, support and wise counsel to the local authority and its schools on matters relating to RE, collective worship and the wider agenda of inclusion, diversity and community cohesion, for which the local authority is grateful.

In turn, professional advice has been provided to the SACRE by the Humanities Education Development Adviser, supported by other colleagues, and the Advanced Skills Teachers in RE. The engagement of a national renowned and very experienced RE consultant to support the revision of the Agreed Syllabus has proven to be particularly valuable in ensuring the syllabus and supporting guidance materials are at the forefront in RE educational thinking.

Membership of the North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education 2012-2013

Baptist	Mrs G Sellers
Buddhist	Mrs C Taylor
Hindu	Ms K Bali JP
Jewish	Dr N Packter
Methodist	Mrs B Belsham
Muslim	Mr N M Emam
Roman Catholic	Mr C Devanny - Mrs T Laverick (from July 2013)
Salvationist	Vacancy
Sikh	Mr Roop Singh
Society of Friends	Vacancy
Church of England (Ripon and Leeds Diocese) (York Diocese)	Mr R Marks (until April 2013) Miss M Haigh MBE Rev R Davill - Mrs O Seymour (from April 2013)
Teachers	Mrs M Gibson (hair) Mrs S Grey Mrs A Head - Mrs R Oates (from July 2013)
Local authority	County Councillor D Blades County Councillor J Clark County Councillor Mrs P English County Councillor R Heseltine County Councillor J Savage
Co-opted	Professor J Adams (Humanist) Mrs A McNeill (Teacher, Ampleforth College)
Local authority advisers	Ms R Mason
Clerk to SACRE	Mrs S Mitchell

Contact us

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