

**Standing Advisory Council
For Religious Education
Children and Young People's Services**

Annual Report
2013/2014

Nottinghamshire SACRE

Chair's introduction

Since becoming chair of SACRE, I have been impressed by the hard work and dedication of its members to assist teachers in providing good quality RE in our schools. Good quality RE teaching in our schools is crucial to developing pupils' experience, understanding and tolerance of the multi-faith society in which we live. I found the presentation by the RE Ambassadors at Redhill a very moving and uplifting event to start my membership of SACRE.

Our Annual Report reflects the various opportunities we have provided for teachers and students of RE to develop their understanding and knowledge over the academic year. On behalf of SACRE I wish to acknowledge the work done on producing our new Agreed Syllabus for 2015 and the reports shared at the ASC meetings during this year.

We have continued through our termly meetings to discuss important agenda items concerning RE nationally and locally but also to hear of the work being done in our schools. We were pleased to receive an award from NASACRE and Westhills for our first ever young people's event to be held in the Autumn Term 2014 and also to have the opportunity to share with other SACREs some of the work we have been doing at the NASACRE AGM. Through our meeting at the Holocaust Centre it was encouraging to hear what a valuable resource we have in our County to assist in the work of developing spiritual awareness and understanding.

It has been my pleasure to chair our SACRE, a group which continues to devote so much time in a voluntary capacity to support the continued development of RE within the County of Nottinghamshire. I would also like to thank all those who work so hard in our schools, academies and special schools for making RE accessible and relevant to our young people.

Councillor Liz Plant

Chair

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1. What is SACRE?

The 1988 Education Reform Act established the statutory requirement for all local authorities (LAs) to establish a permanent body called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The Nottinghamshire SACRE is an independent body which advises the LA on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.

SACRE comprises four groups:

Group A: Elected County Council Representatives

Group B: Church of England Representatives

Group C: Teacher Representatives

Group D: Representatives of Christian denominations and other religions reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area

Each group has equal status and voting rights.

Functions of SACRE

Executive functions:

- To consider and determine (in accordance with Section 12 of the 1988 Education Act) applications from county schools to be disapplied from the requirements concerning Collective Worship being broadly Christian.
- To consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus adopted by the Cabinet.
- To publish an annual report.

Advisory functions:

- To give advice on methods of teaching the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
- To advise the LA on the provision of training for teachers.
- To monitor inspection reports and standards of achievement in Religious Education.
- To give advice on Collective Worship.

Purpose

Within its statutory responsibilities SACRE is concerned to support and enhance the provision of Religious Education within Nottinghamshire schools where the Agreed Syllabus is in use. SACRE seeks to encourage the provision of high-quality in-service training for those whose responsibility it is to deliver this aspect of the basic curriculum.

Decision making

This is determined by one block vote from each of the four groups listed in the membership above.

Co-opted members do not vote.

2. Meetings

There were three meetings of SACRE in the academic year 2013-2014.

Main issues discussed at the meetings:

October 2013

- SACRE members were given a presentation by the Redhill Academy RE Representatives and observed the main meeting
- SACRE agreed to put in an application, working with the RE Ambassadors for a NASACRE/ Westhills Award for a young person's conference for 2014
- The Draft Annual Report was presented and considered by SACRE
- Lat Blaylock presented to SACRE concerning the needs for a Revision of the Agreed Syllabus
- An Agreed Syllabus Conference was called for by members of SACRE to the Authority with RE Today as the consultants. A proposed timeline was discussed for this work.
- The RE Ambassadors would be working on a leaflet, with the secretary to accompany the Revised Syllabus aimed at parents
- There would be a primary Course for teachers in January Better RE
- Plans for the SACRE RE Conference were outlined for the Summer Term 2014
- Primary Networks for RE teachers in the County were continuing
- The Ofsted report on RE, realising the potential was discussed.

March 2014

- SACRE met at the Christian Centre in Nottingham and received a presentation of the work of the Youth Ministry section and considered how this might be applied in the educational sphere
- Progress was reported on NASACRE Award and leaflet
- Updated reports were given of the CPD events and Primary Teacher networks which were appreciated by those attending
- National Developments in RE were reported on to members of SACRE

- The Post 16 Conference with the University of Nottingham and St John's College was planned and an outline was given of the day
- SACRE supported a presentation to NASACRE by the secretary on how we have been working in partnership with institutions of higher education and the RE Ambassadors
- SACRE Effectiveness Plan was discussed which was developed from the SEF and is a tool to assist our development
- SACRE noted that we had no official guidance on Collective Worship as schools had contacted the secretary for model policies on worship and RE
- The Local Authority was asked to note the comment from the Ofsted report that sufficient funds are made available for SACRE to operate and for the ASC to carry out its functions. A letter was sent to the Authority by the Vice Chair of SACRE
- Feedback was shared from the Survey of Schools regarding the Review of the Agreed Syllabus concerning time allocation to the subject, funding to resource RE and the qualifications of those who teach the subject mainly in Primary schools
- ASC chair was elected
- ASC Meeting followed on under the elected chair Gemma Pettifor.

ASC

- Members were told we had 13.5 consultancy days to produce the Agreed Syllabus in
- A working Party had been established consisting of five teachers who were covered for their time in meetings and also we had a number of volunteers who wished to assist with the Syllabus, including the Holocaust Centre and the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham
- Our new syllabus could be marketed to other authorities
- A writing group would be established in the Autumn Term 2014 to work on exemplary schemes of work
- Introductory courses to the syllabus would follow in different formats
- The Agreed Syllabus to be available in hard format as well as electronically.

June 2014

- Met at The Holocaust Centre and SACRE was informed about the developing work there which was being developed for the benefit of young people and also teachers
- SACRE was invited to meet at the Holocaust Centre each year for one of its meetings



- Revised Constitution is still awaited being passed by the various committees in the Authority
- A response to the letter sent from the Vice Chair to the Authority was discussed.
- A report was given of the presentation form SACRE at the NASACRE AGM and the interest which had been created
- Some of the challenges from NASACRE to SACRE's were shared from the AGM
- SACRE was successful in obtaining a grant from NASACRE for the Young People's event for November 2014
- The Baha'i Co-option was renewed for a further two years
- SACRE members were informed of developments in RE from NASACRE and REC Council.

ASC

- The latest draft version of the Proposed Syllabus was discussed in some depth and feedback was obtained to assist in the process. These comments were fed back to our consultant and the working party
- The ASC acknowledged the work which had gone into the documentation so far and were very appreciative of everyone's time and energy. The format of the proposed syllabus was welcomed
- The ASC supported the planned launch of the New Syllabus.

3. Determinations

There were no requests by schools in Nottinghamshire for a determination that the specific requirements regarding the character of collective worship, as set out in the Education Act 1996, should not apply to them.

4. Professional development opportunities

Courses offered for 2013-14

The Primary Network met twice during the academic year.

The first meeting in the Autumn Term attracted 16 RE Lead teachers who met to receive an update on local and national issues in RE, to discover more about Nottinghamshire Specialist Leader in RE and the Holocaust Centre and Museum as well as having time to share approaches to teaching a non Christian faith in school.

The Teachers comments reflected on how useful it had been to meet and to share ideas of approaches to teaching RE. They appreciated discovering the support which was available from various sources in the Authority. Confidence was improved in some

delegates through the dialogue which occurred. Many expressed that they could return to their schools with more resources to encourage colleagues in developing creative schemes of work inspired by their sharing time.



“A really interesting, inspirational course – I am looking forward to next year’s. It’s a shame I cannot bring my colleagues to this.”

“These RE courses are integral to help raise standards in RE and helping to ensure that RE remains prevalent in primary schools.”

“Important that meetings and conferences like this continue to get new ideas or refreshed ideas into schools effectively and the subject raised.”

At the second half day in February the group was led by Fiona Moss from RE Today and focussed on AFL in RE.

Co-ordinators felt they had benefited from spending time together and could have done with a longer session. The benefit of seeing examples of different activities and how they can be differentiated as well as a range of useful strategies which can be adopted and modified to your needs. People felt a lot more confident about assessments and how to use transferable skills more.

Comments were received that delegates felt they could return to school and develop their assessment policies and implement assessment and moderation in RE. They felt more confident to share with colleagues about AFL and some would be presenting to staff meetings and engaging in dialogue with their heads following the course. Delegates felt that this had been a course which clarified Assessment for Learning and would enable them to go and improve assessment in their schools as well as developing adequate tracking systems.

5. SACRE RE Conference

“Growing Spiritual Awareness”

was our theme for 2014 annual RE Conference.

The aim of the conference was to assist teachers across all key stages in developing their teaching of RE to enable young people to develop their skills and knowledge of the spiritual.

Our conference was led by RE Today Specialist Advisers Lat Blaylock, Fiona Moss and Stephen Pett.



We had over 66 delegates this year who were involved in the key note by Lat “*Into the future.*” This active session pictured RE for the coming 5 years in Nottinghamshire, focusing on how learners from 5-16 can make better progress in RE through a focus on spirituality

The delegates had selected two seminars to attend from the menu of:-

- Teaching sacred places imaginatively for 4-11s
- Sharing stories of faith with 4-7 year olds
- Assessing achievements
- Film & RE
- Enabling special pupils to access the RE curriculum
- Deepening learning with 11-16s values, virtues & ways of living

The Conference closed with Stephen asking
Is your school a happiness factory?
Exploring what matters most in RE and what it means for how we teach.

Once again extremely positive evaluations of the conference were received. We have included a selection below:

- Just about to revamp RE Curriculum/syllabus – want to work on themes- this has really focussed my ideas for planning and continuity
- Implement assessment/tacking system on school
- Help me to re-introduce active learning in RS
- Update provision and try to promote progress across key stages
- Getting staff to explore spirituality / prayer
- Cascade ideas to colleagues to develop more thoughtful and creative curriculum
- Enabled me to gather practical ideas which will give teachers back at school the confidence to teach such a wonderful and awe inspiring subject
- Plan for progression through the school
- Foundation have better RE provision need to use Film in KS 2
- New to leading RE- been inspired by the enquiring and philosophical slant the conference has shown toward RE. I have renewed confidence in inspiring my staff to deliver RE that first with this ‘outstanding’ pedagogy we have developed in terms of enquiry, thinking skills and P4C. Lots of lessons learned – thank you
- Promoting a happy school through RE
- Awareness of resources and support available

- Encourage more practical activities through school using faith stories
- Need to develop AT2 more
- Have an RE meeting on “making RE creative and thoughtful”
- Going back with enthusiasm and great ideas.

As is our usual practice delegates were asked suggestions of content and ways of enhancing the Annual SACRE Conference and these ideas are incorporated into the next year’s CPD opportunities whenever possible and viable.

- How to implement the New Agreed Syllabus
- More of the same
- More ideas to use in the classroom
- More connection with applied ethics
- Less focus on Christianity, good to look at others more
- Examples of recorded evidence / class port folios- creative ways to keep evidence
- Ideas for EYFS
- “Messy” RE ideas
- Play based awareness of religion
- Cross curricula links
- How to teach RE through other areas
- How to write high level answers at GCSE and A level
- Practical session to help teachers move from syllabus guideline to themes of work outlines and thence to learning activities
- Explore outstanding teaching of RE – what does such a lesson look like?

6. Post 16 Study Day

SACRE supported this day as we worked with Nottingham University Department of Theology as well as St John’s College based in Bramcote. The day also involved some under graduate students to share their experiences with Post 16 students.

This was part of SACRE’s effectiveness plan to work more closely with institutions of higher education in the County to see how we can assist young people in their future learning and development alongside teachers of Religious Education.



We developed the programme, based on previous evaluations by delegates to include a session on writing examination answers. There were also sessions on Darwinism, Euthanasia and the Teleological Argument as well as looking at the next steps in Education – University degree course and St John’s courses. We also invited the delegates to enter into a debate.

Comments from those who attended included the following:-

- ❖ First two speakers on Darwinism and Euthanasia were very interesting & brilliant
- ❖ Controversial speakers which got students thinking
- ❖ University talk helped me, hearing why students chose their courses
- ❖ Being able to see different ways of structuring answers and revising
- ❖ Revisiting information & exam technique
- ❖ Different ideas on independent learning
- ❖ How to write effective essays
- ❖ Listening to Theological argument
- ❖ Debate allowed us to share our own ideas
- ❖ Hearing other people’s opinions and how they interpret the same information
- ❖ Listening to specialists discuss the same topics, good opportunity to listen to others thoughts
- ❖ Chance to hear university style lectures and to ask questions about university.

Delegates also expressed their thoughts for a future event and what to include.

Looking at the development of science and religion - quantum theories;
How to get top grades; How to link Philosophy & Ethics in the exam;
More areas like euthanasia, abortion, animal rights, just war, miracles & religious experience; Cosmological Arguments and Situation ethics;
Focus on ethical theories; Freud & Kung; Utilitarianism.

We also asked why the delegates had chosen RE at this level as we wished to consider what motivates young people in their subject choices.

The range of answers included;

Interesting debates; Good grade at GCSE and enjoyed it;
Interesting wide range of subjects; learning about other people’s viewpoints and lifestyles;
Interest with society’s key issues; Interest in ethics / current affairs and how religion is integrated in modern society; Enthusiastic teacher who makes each lesson interesting and different; Interest in contemporary issues that affect society

7. Faith Experiences in County Schools



County Schools have continued to use the opportunity to bring in Faith Experiences into their schools. These experiences are provided from the RSResource Centre which co-operates with the Nottingham Inter Faith Council. During the academic year Faith experiences had visited 25 County Schools; some of these visits were for two or three experiences. New schools had booked into these experiences during the academic year.

In their evaluations, teachers were asked to comment on what they thought was valuable from such experiences being in their schools.

- “An excellent presentation which provided the children to see resources and listen to information from first hand sources”
- *“I would most certainly recommend this RE Faith experience to others: even our Year 6 were engaged with the teaching and learning (which isn’t always the case in R.E!)”*
- *“Having the opportunity to wear and handle real life objects were also a much more exciting and memorable experience for the children”*
- “This was a fantastic day and very good for our children
- To see a wide range of artefacts which we haven’t got access to in school
- The knowledge of the leaders, to be able to answer their questions. I liked the feely bag idea – got them involved more”
- We wanted an introduction to Hinduism and received an exciting, detailed session full of information
- “A valuable experience that helps develop a respectful attitude in young children”
- The children were treated to an interactive, fun and creative way of learning
- An interesting experience for children and teachers (helpers). All can take away extra knowledge from this afternoon. – Parent helper
- “We loved the atmosphere created within the Hindu temple. Taking our shoes off, washing our hands whilst listening to music and smelling incense sticks was very calming”
- Really enjoyed it and so did the children, a good range of activities that kept year 1 engaged for an hour and they were able to recall lots the following day
- The playacting was well received, the children loved watching and taking part
- “The resources used held a particular interest for the children.



Experiences were also used within Secondary schools this academic year and also were designed to fit more specific requests from those schools involved.



From the use of Faith Experiences in schools, we have discovered a genuine interest from the young people in discovering about the different faiths within Nottinghamshire. Many children were able to show their knowledge and understanding from lessons prior to the visit reflecting the good work being undertaken in schools by teachers.

Many pupils who had received experiences in previous years were able to relate to some of them when the different experiences visited their school and this displayed a good retention of the learning and a deepening awareness of concepts between different faiths.

8. SACRE National Conference involvements

Nottinghamshire SACRE was represented at the NASACRE AGM and contributed to workshops there on our 16+ Aim higher conference in partnership with St John's College & Nottingham University and we shared our Working with the RE Ambassadors to engage parents in preparation for the New Agreed Syllabus.

9. Standards in RE in Nottinghamshire

As the nature of Ofsted inspection reports has altered it has become difficult to comment upon their findings with regard to RE and Collective Worship.

Examination performances *These are Provisional Figures*

GCSE Full Course

31 Centres entered candidates at this level

It was noted that there was an increase in the total number of candidates at this level from 1,949 last year to 2402 pupils. Nationally there was an increase as there was the previous year sitting at this level – 282,099 compared to 263,988 last year.

SACRE notes that there is a need to work to support candidates to move into the A* - C category.

Edexcel continued to be the most popular examination board across the County's schools followed by OCR.

Summary of GCSE Results 2010- 2014

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A*-C and A*-G grades in the full GCSE:

	A*-C	A*-G
2010	64.8	98.1
2011	61.2	97.4
2012	76.1	98.9
2013	74.1	98.1
2014	66.0	96.9

National results

2010	73.1	98.6
2011	73.3	98.4
2012	73.7	98.5
2013	79.2	97.6
2014	71.5	98.0

GCSE Short Course

Our entries for the short course showed another decrease this year from 2194 to 1057 and only 10 schools entered candidates at this level compared to 24 the previous year.

Nationally there was a decrease in entries at the Short Course from 174,364 to 123,393.

SACRE was pleased to note the improved results for A*-G by candidates in the County.

Summary of GCSE Short Course Results 2008- 2012

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A*-C and A*-G grades for the last five years in the short GCSE:

	A*-C	A*-G
2010	47.3	95.8
2011	43.1	93.8
2012	33.3	89.6
2013	43.8	91.7
2014	43.7	93.01

National results

2010	54.6	96.1
2011	51.8	94.9
2012	53.8	95.5
2013	65.6	96.1
2014	56.8	95.8

OCR was for the most popular examination board across the County's schools followed by Edexcel.

A/S

69 candidates were entered from 3 centres compared to 36 entries last year.

Summary of A/S Results 2010 - 2014

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A-C and A-E grades for the last five years at A/S level:

	A-C	A-E
2010	62	90.7
2011	47.4	88.5
2012	47	88.8
2013	52.7	81.5
2014	47.7	85.5

National Results

2010	67.6	92.5
2011	67.0	92.0
2012	67.2	92.5
2013	61.7	91.0
2014	67.3	92.2

SACRE was pleased to note the increased number of entries at this level and an increase in results A-E but we need to support candidates to obtain higher A-C grades.

A Level

SACRE was pleased to note the increase in entries from 146 to 179 from 12 centres.

Summary of A Level Results 2010- 2014

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A-C and A-E grades for the last five years at A level:

	A*-C	A*-E
2010	74.1	99
2011	76.2	97.6
2012	72.9	100.0
2013	82.1	100.0
2014	76.6	100.0

National Results

2010	79.3	100
2011	81.2	100
2012	80.3	98.6
2013	87.5	98.9
2014	79.5	98.5

Though we noted a 100% pass rate SACRE was disappointed to see that there was a decline at A*-C.

10. Areas for further improvement 2014-2015

Targets for further improvement:

1. To maintain our work with HE institutions in order to consider ways of enhancing exam performance of students
2. To explore and report on how SACRE may best advise and support the delivery of RE & collective worship in all schools/academies
3. To develop and produce a New Agreed Syllabus for use in the County
4. To support teachers with CPD events to support the introduction of the Agreed Syllabus for 2015

11. Support for schools in bringing about further improvement 2014-2015

1. To support the continued development of networks for teachers/coordinators/
lead teachers of RE in schools/academies
2. To promote the new Agreed Syllabus as a means of making RE more effective

12. Conclusion

SACRE continues to develop its role in supporting schools and advising the Children and Young People's Cabinet on RE and Collective Worship and would welcome feedback and suggestions for its continuing work. If you have any comments on the work/role of SACRE or require any further information please contact:

Rev Ken Johnson
Secretary of SACRE
Children and Young People's Services
40 Lawn View House
Sutton-in-Ashfield
Notts
NG17 5GA

13. SACRE Members 2013-2014

Membership of Nottinghamshire SACRE

Under the chair of Councillor Liz Plant, SACRE membership comprises four groups:

Six Elected County Council Representatives

(Group A)

Councillor Liz Plant (Chair of SACRE)
Councillor Kate Foale
Councillor John Allin
Councillor John Wilmott
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor John Peck JP

Five representatives of the Church of England

(Group B)

Mrs Anne Lumb
Mrs Tania Goldsmith
Mr David Maddison
Mr Craig Moxham
Mrs Elizabeth Youngman

Eight representatives of teachers in Nottinghamshire

(Group C)

Mrs Gail Brockway	(Secondary Teacher)
Mr David Cokeham	(ASCL)
Mr Mike Follen	(NAHT)
Mrs Bethan Inglis	(Secondary RE teacher)
Mr Ian Jowett	(ATL)
Mr Richard Linford	(Primary Teacher)
Mr Mike Wilson	(NASUWT) until February 2014 then Mr Andy Vickers
Vacancy	(NUT)

Thirteen representatives of Christian (other than Church of England) and other religious faiths representing the principal religious traditions of Nottinghamshire

(Group D)

Mrs Gemma Pettifor	Assemblies of God	(Chair of ASC)
Mr Mike Arnold	Baptist	
Mrs Mel Gotheridge	Buddhist	
Mr Suresh Gunpatrao	Hindu	
Mrs Naomi Posner	Jewish	
Mr J Heard	Methodist	
Mr Ali Asif	Muslim	
Mrs Pippa Ling	Religious Society of Friends	
Mr Michael Groves	Roman Catholic	
Mrs Krys Pietryka	Roman Catholic	
Mr Andrew Whitehouse	Salvation Army	
Mr Santokh Singh Nijran	Sikh	
Dr Graham Jennings	United Reformed Church	
Afro-Caribbean United Council of Churches		(Awaiting nomination)

Co-Options
Mr Godfrey Nix Baha'i