

Peterborough Standing Advisory Council for
Religious Education

ANNUAL REPORT
2012 – 2013

**Peterborough Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education
Annual Report 2012-2013**

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Peterborough City Council
SACRE Annual Report 2012 – 2013

Chairman's Introduction
From Reverend Ian Forsyth

March 2013 saw the launch of the Revised Agreed Syllabus at the Peterborough Town Hall. The key note speaker was Lat Blaylock, who gave his time to deliver a session for all teachers on 'Inspiring and challenging RE. All the RE teachers from Peterborough schools were invited to attend this launch event. Councillor John Holdich OBE, Cabinet member for Education, Skills & University, made opening remarks on the Revised Agreed Syllabus.

We are hugely grateful for the guidance, knowledge and commitment of our adviser Sue Ward in helping SACRE members to this point. Thanks must also be said for the excellent support by the Clerk to SACRE, Lucia Hawes and to Sally Weald, an officer from Children's Services, for guiding the syllabus through its creation and adoption processes. Further work will be done by teachers to enhance this invaluable resource with schemes of learning and further sessions in the network meetings to support RE teachers embed the new syllabus in the classroom.

Over the year we have welcomed new members of SACRE to enrich our different skills within the committee. We are grateful to those who have previously given their time to be members of SACRE, namely Councillor David Over, Rachel Coombe and Reverend Chris Mason. Devinder Kaur has stepped down from being Chair of SACRE earlier in the year and Sukaina Manji has been elected as deputy chair of SACRE.

Three schools have been awarded the Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) congratulations to these on this achievement which is a reflection on their dedication and hard work.

A level RS continues to be a strength and GCSE numbers continue to increase.

SACRE is kept up to date on national RE issues and is member of the National Association of SACREs.

SACRE will continue to meet the challenges below in forthcoming year:

1. Work to support teachers to provide meaningful and challenging RE
2. Involve wider representation (faith/belief/universities/academies)
3. Pupil/student involvement with SACRE
4. Meeting the challenges of the new curriculum settlement.

Rev I J Forsyth

Chair of SACRE

The purpose of the report:

The Education Act 1996, Section 391 (6) and (7) requires that each year the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) from each Local Authority will 'publish a report as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by the representative groups on the Council during the last preceding year'.

Management of SACRE

SACRE is very pleased to report that the local authority has continued to support the work of SACRE by providing a clerk for the meetings and securing the services of a RE Adviser to support SACRE and schools. Extra funding over the last year and this year has been provided for the work of revising and launching the new Agreed Syllabus.

Peterborough SACRE, which has met once a term, comprises of four statutory groups. The four groups are as follows:

- Group A -representatives of non-Anglican Christian denominations, other religions and religious denominations,
- Group B -representatives of the Church of England,
- Group C - representatives of the teachers' associations,
- Group D – representatives of the LA.

Membership has changed again this year. There have been resignations from the Hindu and Buddhist community and a lack of replacement from these groups. Councillor David Over retired from SACRE having given over 10 years of service to SACRE as chairman and LA member. There are fewer members attending the meetings regularly and on two occasions SACRE has not been quorate and had to postpone ratifying decisions. New members are always being sought and there are vacancies for an NASWT representative, as well as for a Hindu and Buddhist representative from the local community.

Membership has been discussed, especially in the light of the census detail and the rich diversity of Peterborough's population. SACRE has reviewed its constitution and agreed to allow associate representatives to continue, but also to maintain the current legal requirements of SACRE membership, as spelt out in the 1996 Education Act.

Members of SACRE have taken active roles in various sub groups, though the main focus of SACRE work has been to ratify the new agreed syllabus, to plan and support the launch of the syllabus and decide upon the next stage of the development plan to ensure the new Agreed Syllabus is embedded in the schools.

The Development Planning Sub group has met and reduced the number of objectives due to restraints on people's time available.

Details of the agenda items, attendance at the meetings and minutes of the meetings can be found on the Peterborough City Council web site

http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/children_and_families/schools/standing_advisory_council_for_meetings_agenda_and_minutes.aspx

Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education

There have been a number of national consultations set up by the Religious Education Council (REC), the National Association for SACRES (NASACRE) the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) for RE, the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) about the changing face of RE and the impact upon standards and provision of RE in the curriculum. The changes have come about from significant changes in education brought about by the Department for Education (DfE). SACRE has

been asked to contribute to several reports and papers. This has been a busy time for members to keep up to date with all the changes that are affecting RE and collective worship.

Impact of the Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM):

The three Peterborough's schools that were awarded the Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM), namely The Phoenix Special School, William Law C of E Primary School and Jack Hunt Secondary School, have supported other schools in a number of ways. Subject coordinators, Nicola Lord from the Phoenix School, Julia Blower from William Law C of E School and Katie Wilkins from Jack Hunt School, have been models of good practice, written schemes of work for the new syllabus, encouraged teachers to visit their schools, supported network meetings by delivering training on persona dolls, or supported colleagues on a one to one basis as suits their needs. These subject leaders have been deployed to support other colleagues in other schools to gain the REQM.

Impact of Academy Programme

This has impacted upon the work of SACRE. Nearly all the secondary schools are academies and there are moves to promote clusters of primaries into an academy trust, for example by the diocese. There is a good working relation ship between the Academies and SACRE. RE network meetings for both primary and secondary schools have continued and been supported, though numbers attending have been declining this year. Representatives on SACRE from Academies are totally committed to its work and the individuals support the new syllabus.

Despite the changes about the significance of the English Baccalaureate by the DfE, there has not been a decline in the number of students taking GCSE Religious Studies nationally but rather a change from entries numbers in the short course to an increase for entries to the full course. Other national changes that have also impacted on Religious Studies Short Course exam are the DfE's decision to discount points from the Short Course in league tables. There is also uncertainty about the direction of future exam courses and the drive to push for schools to build upon the English Baccalaureate. Nationally there has been an overall decline in numbers taking any GCSE RS by 14%, though there has been a significant increase in the numbers taking a full course, and a decline in short course numbers. To see national statistics see www.icq.org.uk or www.gcse.org.uk

Secondary Schools (see Appendix 1):-

- **Good news story: A level:-**SACRE are delighted to see that the numbers and standards of A Level Religious Studies (RS) results show that there continues to be a 100% pass rate and with record numbers of entries recorded in 2013 compared to the last 6 years. There has also been an increase in the number of centres entering A level candidates for the exam. This is pleasing to see such an increase in the number of sixth forms offering this subject at A level. Evidence suggests that RS remains an important subject to students.
- **AS Exam:** The decline in the AS level numbers reflects the phasing out of these exams and a move to have a linear test at the end of a two year course. It is pleasing to see that the pass rate for AS level has returned to its highest level in 2010.
- **GCSE Full Course:** the GCSE RS full course results show that there is an increase in the number of entries which mirrors what has happened nationally. There is also a significant increase in the number of schools entering students for GCSE. This would suggest that RS remains an important subject in Peterborough schools. SACRE are pleased to report this increase, as it suggests that all schools are now trying to address KS4 provision of RE in some way. However the % A*-C pass rate has decreased this year, from 66.9% to 60.9%. Compared to the national %A*-C pass rate (England) for full course -72.1%, Peterborough is

significantly lower. This raises questions about how SACRE can support schools to improve results.

- **GCSE Short Course:** The number of students entering the GCSE RS short course declined significantly, reflecting the national picture. Numbers are down by 40% compared to last year in Peterborough schools. There has been a decline of 7 % in the %A*-C pass rate since last year. Compared to the national picture in England there was a negative difference of 5.7% between the pass rate for students in England and those in Peterborough. (see Appendix 1)
- In the **Appendix 1** this year the table shows the GCSE full course English Language outcomes for the 2013 cohort in Peterborough, in order to compare the pass rate for %A*-C between the two subjects. In Religious Studies there is a lower pass rate and a difference of 28.2% between the two scores. This suggests that students in Religious Studies are not achieving as well as they are in other subjects.
- Regarding KS3 teaching assessments, it was decided to invite secondary schools to share teacher assessment levels at Key Stage 3 in July 2014 following the implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus. So there is no data available for this year.

Primary Schools

- It is difficult to state accurately and objectively information about the provision and quality of RE in primary schools. The new syllabus, launched in March 2013, asks for teachers to submit to SACRE annually teacher assessment levels for Key Stage 1-3 at the end of each key stage. This will begin from July 2014. This will provide a data base from which one can begin to see trends and outcomes of RE compared to other subjects and nationally. Moderation between colleagues at network meetings will be developed in the forth coming year to address the issue of having a common understanding of assessment and progression in RE across the schools.
- Since the launch of the syllabus there has been a significant increase in the number of schools sending colleagues to network meetings and CPD training events to be informed about the new Agreed Syllabus. They are eager to find out about the new direction of the syllabus and how to develop communities of enquiry that promote rigour, challenge and progression at all key stages. Over 66% of schools came to the launch and the number of individual consultancies the RE Adviser has delivered on the new syllabus has risen dramatically. The evaluations from the events and courses show a recurring concern by teachers about the new syllabus, since its launch in March 2013. They have a lack of subject knowledge and lack confidence to assess AT1 and AT2 accurately. SACRE are supporting schools by offering courses through the RE Adviser in the forthcoming year.
- There are frequent changes of leadership of primary RE making it difficult to ensure continuity and development of the subject in some schools. Where there is a stable subject coordinator there is evidence to show a greater depth of understanding and implementation of RE in such schools.

Special Schools

- SACRE is delighted to report that Nicola Lord from The Phoenix Special School, is currently pursuing further studies that support RE through the Farmington Trust. She has a focus upon the development of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of children through RE This will be shared with SACRE at a later date.
- Colleagues from special schools have attended the training events and the network meetings.

How SACRE has supported schools:-

The new Agreed Syllabus:

The syllabus was approved by the City Council early January 2013 and successfully launched in March 2013 in the town hall. Lat Blaylock was the key note speaker and there were contributions from faith communities and schools at the launch.

The RE Adviser from Cambridgeshire has been bought in to support Peterborough schools and SACRE. The focus of the network meetings through the year have been to help teachers plan for enquiry based learning and develop new school designed units for the new syllabus. Both primary and secondary network meetings have had a focus upon developing enquiry based learning and assessment of AT2. Each primary network meeting has also had a focus upon one of the core units and a presentation by a teacher from William Law School about the use of Persona Dolls in the classroom. Some teachers have joined an ELY diocesan writing group to produce some draft schemes of work for the syllabus. From September 2012 until August 2013, on behalf of SACRE, the RE Adviser visited 9 schools that have had a new subject coordinator. The purpose is to support and guide them through the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

Extra training events have been offered and delivered to meet the teachers' needs, as well as the normal 5 courses offered in the year to meet the CPD needs of primary teachers. These include training to improve teacher subject knowledge about the faiths, developing high quality enquiry based learning, assessment of AT2 and promoting spirituality across the curriculum. All have run and been well received by the teachers.

SACRE has offered funding for schools to develop Interfaith project sponsored by NASACRE but no schools took up the offer.

Effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus

The new direction of the Agreed Syllabus has received a very positive response from both faith members on SACRE and teachers. Enquiry based learning supports rigorous and challenging RE. This has been a challenge to many teachers though welcomed. Many teachers have reported that their RE has been revitalised because of the new syllabus but they also have requested more help and support with planning and embedding the syllabus alongside the new national curriculum. The Agreed Syllabus Conference recognised that further work and support was needed with assessment and for the first time Peterborough SACRE decided to stipulate a number of core units of work that all schools in all key stages should follow, so that moderation of standards across the LA could happen effectively.

A more cohesive approach about which religions were to be studied and when was also determined.

Prior to the launch event of the syllabus teachers were invited to attend a workshop led by the Key note speaker, Lat Blaylock. In the summer term there were extra courses on planning for the implementation of the new syllabus and embedding assessment in RE. Attendance at these training events has been very high, exceeding the target set by SACRE in primary schools. Evaluations from the teachers show an increase in confidence to teach the new syllabus but needing on going support.

Due to lack of time for teachers to plan in detail SACRE have agreed that the RE Advisor writes supporting schemes of work for the core units and adapt the existing schemes from the old syllabus into enquiry based units. This is on going work and will be rolled out gradually over the forthcoming year to schools.

In support of the new syllabus, and for any new RE coordinator, SACRE can offer support through the RE Adviser to any school. Contact susan.ward@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Collective Worship

SACRE sent out a questionnaire to schools about the use and value of collective worship in schools but the returns were so small that it was not statistically viable to analyse and report. Support for collective worship was decided to be put on hold until the new Agreed Syllabus had been launched and was being implemented.

SACRE support the guidance document on collective worship produced by NASACRE. The guidance document is available for all Peterborough Schools and can be found on the Peterborough web site under collective worship.

http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/children_and_families/schools/standing_advisory_council_for_collective_worship_guidance.aspx

Contribution of SACRE to social and racial harmony agenda

SACRE now has its own web page on the City Council Web site. Minutes and agendas are available http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/children_and_families/schools/standing_advisory_council_for.aspx

SACRE has been very supportive of a number of initiatives to support social and community cohesion, as well as promote interfaith dialogue. The Anne Frank Ambassadors Programme has been promoted in schools in the city, along with support from the Holocaust Education Trust to secondary colleagues. "Footprints of faith" is another initiative that has been promoted. Links to faith groups have been established, to encourage schools to visit places of worship and meet faith representatives. Links to the local Inter faith group are on going and there is a regular exchange of information between each group and passed on to aid schools with Religious Education.

Appendix 1

GCE AS and A Level and GCSE results for Religious Studies in Peterborough schools: Summer 2013

A Level Religious Studies

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Number of candidates entries	123	105	78	69	91	59
Number of candidates obtaining A-E grades	123 (100%)	105 (100%)	78 (100%)	69 (100%)	91 (100%)	59 (100%)
Number of centres entering candidates	8	7	7	6	7	4

AS Level Religious Studies

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Number of candidates entries	18	28	21	17	14	14
Number of candidates obtaining A-E grades	17 (94%)	25 (89.3%)	17 (81%)	16 (94%)	13 (93%)	13 (93%)
Number of centres entering candidates	7	5	6	6	6	5

GCSE Religious Studies (full course)

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Number of candidates entries	1103	1032	1048	965	1177	806
Number of grades A* -C	672 (60.9%)	690 (66.9%)	666 (64%)	574 (59%)	648 (55%)	486 (60%)
Number of centres entering candidates	10	7	8	6	7	6

GCSE Religious Studies (short course)

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Number of candidates entries	385	648	733	838	776	895
Number of grades A* -C	184 (47.8%)	355 (54.8%)	337 (46%)	394 (47%)	374 (48%)	444 (50%)
Number of centres entering candidates	10	8	6	9	6	8

GCSE English Language GCSE Full Course in Peterborough

	2013					
Number of candidates entries	1078					
Number of grades A* -C	89.1%					
Number of centres entering candidates	10					

GCE A Level England only Religious Studies	2013	2012
Numbers of candidate entries	19173	18950
% of the total no. sat	2.5%	2.4%
% of A*-E Grades	98.8%	98.6%




GCE AS Level England only Religious Studies	2013	2012
Number of candidate entries	29889	28682
% of the total no. sat	2.4%	2.3%
% of A* - E grades	92.0%	92.2%

GCSE National (England only) Religious Studies (full course)	2013	2012	2011
Number of candidate entries	239409	216373	199752
% of the total no. sat	4.8%	4.5%	
% of A*-C grades	72.1%	73.6%	73.2%

GCSE National (England only) Religious Studies (short course)	2013	2012	2011
Number of candidate entries	150621	211269	233998
% of the total no. sat	65.7%	64.8%	
% of A*-C grades	53.5%	53.1%	51.8%

Appendix 2

Course Details 2012-2013

	= Primary Schools
	= Secondary Schools
	= Both phases

Course/workshop	No. of attendees	No. of schools represented
New to subject leadership of primary Religious Education	8	8
Developing Communities of Enquiry	9	9
“SOS : Spirituality, Ofsted and Subjects”	10	10
Workshop led by Lat Blaylock prior to the launch of the syllabus	16	13
Launch of the Agreed Syllabus	57	37
Primary network 1	12	12
Primary network 2	7	7
Primary network 3 : Using Persona Dolls workshop	10	10
Secondary network 1	5	5
Secondary network 2 (Anne Frank Ambassadors programme)	4	3
Secondary network 3	5	5
Implementing the new Agreed Syllabus	20	18
Help! How to assess in RE	19	19