

Plymouth SACRE Annual Report 2022/3

Forward

Introduction from the Chair of SACRE

Huge thanks to our SACRE members for their attendance at and contribution to meetings over the last year, and thanks to the Council for enabling us to hold 'hybrid' meetings, allowing for members to attend through an internet platform if they are unable to join in person.

During this year we have embarked upon the process to review our Agreed Syllabus. This has been undertaken in partnership with Torbay and Devon SACREs and once again with the support of RE Today. Feedback from teachers gave a very clear sense of direction to the review with the emphasis on revising in line with national developments rather than any substantial re-writing.

SACRE has been pleased to support the work of the Plymouth Learn Teach Lead RE and PTSA local hub group. We are also aware of the need to seek positive partnerships with Multi Academy Trusts and work continues to engage with them at leadership level.

Tess Blight (SACRE Chair)

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1 Introduction

Membership

During the year we were pleased to welcome new members: Cllr Sue Dann, Cllr Sally Cresswell, Cllr Tess Blight, Cllr John Mahony, Cllr Chip Tofan, Father David Bailey, Clare Wills and Rev David Evans

Many thanks to all the members who have recently stood down: Jayesh Bhagat, Bakari Arabi, Emma Butler, Elizabeth Hill, Cllr Jonny Morris, Cllr Jonathan Drean, Cllr Andrea Johnson, Cllr Ian Tuffin. Special thanks goes to Cllr Mary Aspinall for her expert chairing.

Details of Plymouth SACRE meetings

December 2022: 14 attendees, plus clerk and LA adviser, hybrid meeting

March 2023: 13 attendees, plus clerk and LA adviser, hybrid meeting

July 2023: 17 attendees, 3 visitors, plus clerk, LA adviser and RE adviser, hybrid meeting

2 SACRE's statutory responsibilities

Review of the Local Agreed Syllabus

Work has been ongoing to review the current Agreed Syllabus for RE (AS), which runs from 2019-2024.

During the year an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was set up to advise SACRE in how to proceed with the AS review. SACRE has given due consideration as to whether the introduction of a new syllabus should be delayed beyond 2024, given the expected publication of new exemplar frameworks on a worldviews approach in 2024. However, it was agreed that a new, updated syllabus is needed in 2024 to ensure that schools continue to see the SACRE syllabus as the most fit-for-purpose way to teach high quality RE.

This review is taking place in conjunction with Devon, Torbay and Cornwall SACREs, (although Cornwall's AS runs until 2025). Teacher panels and online surveys have been utilised to gain feedback on the way the current syllabus is working, and to gather views on what needs changing or updating. Evidence shows that the current syllabus, which marked a significant change from the previous one, has been well received by teachers and schools.

This means the new syllabus will not look radically different from the current model.

However, there is a need for it to embody the significant changes in approach to the subject and new ideas being introduced at a national level, in particular around a developing understanding about a religion and worldviews approach.

RE Today have been working on this syllabus update and will be presenting a draft version in Autumn 2023.

SACRE wants the LA to be aware that additional resources will be required for the introduction of a new syllabus. The LA has indicated that it is prepared to underwrite the changes being proposed.

Here is a summary of changes to the AS:

- Availability of more 'lesson-ready' resources
- Teaching units to embody more diversity
- Teaching units to reflect the local lived experience of people's religious and non-religious worldviews
- More input on Humanism required in primary phase
- More detail on assessment
- More input for special schools
- More input on progression in language and vocabulary across the syllabus
- Updated use of terminology and information on demographics
- More materials on how to link learning into local places of interest and places of worship

Launch events are planned for June 2024 with teachers being offered opportunities for follow-up training

Standards and monitoring in RE

Secondary schools

SACRE is keen to be recognised by schools as a critical friend in developing better RE across the city. Data from the DfE annual workforce survey points to the fact that a number of local secondary schools do not teach any/enough RE. Schools have been contacted and conversations with headteachers and senior leaders have taken place to explore further and offer input to enable them to develop the place of RE in the curriculum.

GCSE exam results 2023

Appendix 1 shows entry data for Plymouth schools for 2023 GCSE exams. This identifies that there are a number of schools who didn't enter any students for GCSE RS in 2023 (or 2022). These schools are being contacted to offer support and encouragement to ensure that RS is a viable option for GCSE choices.

The Plymouth Agreed Syllabus sets out a clear expectation for maintained schools that 5% of curriculum time should be allocated for RE at KS3 and 4. Where a school is academized Ofsted requires that it should show that its curriculum offers equivalent 'breadth and ambition'. Using the schools' workforce survey data, schools have been contacted where they are clearly not offering sufficient RE in their curriculum provision.

Primary schools

Monitoring of RE in primary schools continues through sampling of websites and scrutiny of recent Ofsted reports. Schools have been contacted where issues arise or where RE does not appear to be taught or delivered well. Where RE is mentioned positively schools have been contacted to thank them for their strong provision.

Resources have been shared and advice has been given to a number of schools with regard to parental requests for withdrawal from RE (and/or collective worship).

Monitoring RE in Multi-Academy Trusts

Plymouth SACRE continues to monitor RE in schools which are in Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) to ensure that RE is given its statutory place in the curriculum. There are an increasing number of MATs who have appointed RE leads across their schools, which is a positive development. SACRE, along with NATRE and RE Hubs, is active in drawing these hub leaders together and working with them to develop an understanding of how MATs need to make provision for the subject.

3 Collective Worship

Guidance from Plymouth SACRE on collective worship and school assemblies has been well received by schools. This guidance supports schools in developing an up-to-date policy and encouraging active pupil participation in collective worship/assemblies. SACRE aims to help schools put in place effective practice, offering opportunities for reflective experiences for their pupils. The guidance document offers an explanation of the legal obligations, including the right to withdrawal, and outlines some of the rich opportunities that assemblies/collective worship can offer pupils for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

There have been no formal complaints about collective worship in schools and no applications for determinations.

4 Links with other bodies

Plymouth SACRE has strong links and partnerships with a number of organisations. It works closely with Plymouth City Council, the Diocese of Exeter and the Universities of Exeter and St Mark and St John. The new RE adviser to SACRE coordinates the SW AREIAC network of advisers (SWARE), and organises the annual SW SACRE conference. We were pleased to invite Trevor Cooling (former Chair of the RE Council) to speak at the 2023 SW SACRE conference, with a number of other workshops offering a range of important inputs for SACRE member training.

SACRE members and SACRE advisers across the SW often collaborate and share training and initiatives. A number of SACRE members have accessed training from NASACRE and the adviser attended the NASACRE national conference in May 2023 in London.

SACRE has discussed issues raised in recent NASACRE reports. The Still Standing report has helped SACRE members consider how SACREs may need to evolve their membership to be responsive to the representation of the diversity of local religion and worldviews communities.

SACRE members continue to be fully informed about national developments being made by the REC. In particular to understand how a new vision for RE is being developed through a worldviews approach. SACRE is aware of the new national Religion and Worldviews resource which has been produced to enable syllabus writers to construct a new generation of RE syllabi. SACRE members are fully supportive of development of a National Content Standard for RE.

SACRE works closely with the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity (PCFCD) to establish strong links to local faith and belief organisations. This enables schools to draw on visitors to school classrooms and to inform who will be the most suitable faith and belief representatives when member vacancies occur.

PTSA and Learn, Teach, Lead RE

Plymouth SACRE is pleased to continue its support of the local RE hub, in partnership with PTSA and Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE). The Plymouth hub is making a significant impact, with Primary Hub Leader Katie Freeman continuing to support teachers of RE, offering termly twilight meetings and networking opportunities. This year we have been pleased to welcome Jasmin Wheeler (now Rhead, Head of RE at All Saints Academy) to the role of Secondary Hub Leader.

The recent evaluation of the LTLRE programme has brought forward a number of recommendations which are being put in place. This includes a better system for sending out hub meeting dates in advance, and encouraging more recognition for the hub leaders' roles from their leadership teams in their schools.

A teacher survey with regard to LTLRE showed that engagement with a local hub had given teachers greater confidence in leading RE and Hub leaders were reported as approachable and supportive.

The LTLRE conference in October 2022 took place online and attracted over 100 delegates. Feedback was very positive, valuing the input from speakers and workshops. Delegates were especially interested in the address from Dr Richard Kueh, Ofsted lead for RE.

5 SACRE: local involvement

SACRE works closely with PCFCD to connect with local faith and belief groups. PCFCD's annual Interfaith Week events at the Guildhall have been well received by schools, and they continue to seek and train new schools' visitors.

SACRE has found analysis of data from the 2021 census very informative, in terms of gaining a fuller understanding of the demographics of the local area.

Thanks go to Jonathan Marshall who continues to offer Holocaust Memorial Day workshops to schools on the life of Solly Irving.

6 SACRE: regional and national involvement

SACRE has been keen to be updated on the development of the RE Hubs initiative, which is providing teachers with a 'one-stop-shop' website, offering links to school speakers, places of interest, CPD events, local network groups, blogs and resources etc.

7 SACRE organisation

Plymouth City Council is responsive to SACRE's needs and supportive in its administration and organisation. It is well supported financially. SACRE is well served through its clerk (Asif Siddique), LA lead (Michael House). Responding to the need for more informed professional guidance, identified by SACRE members, Ed Pawson was appointed as RE adviser in July 2023

SACRE membership is vibrant and well-engaged, although there are still some significant vacancies, with a need to appoint more serving teachers onto this group.

SACRE is aware of the need to continue to increase the diversity of its representation.

All meetings in the year 2022/3 have been quorate.

A number of SACRE members have taken advantage of useful training opportunities over the last year, both through attendance at the SW SACRE conference and national online NASACRE training events.

8 Appendices

Appendix 1

Entries and results for Full Course GCSE Religious Studies Entries 2023

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Source: KS4 Provisional Results 2023							
	GCSE Religious Studies 2023							
	Schools	Number of students studying	% of year group entered/studying RS	Boys	Girls	% 9-5	% 9-1	% YG entered 2022
8794002	St Boniface College	48	76.2	48	0	25.0	95.8	88.6
8794004	Scott Health and Medical College	0	0.0	0	0			0
8794005	UTC Plymouth	0	0.0	0	0			0
8794006	Millbay Academy	0	0.0	0	0			0
8794007	Marine Academy Plymouth	0	0.0	0	0			0.8
8794152	Devonport High School for Girls	58	46.8	0	58	98.3	100.0	31.7
8794155	Plymouth High School for Girls	30	26.1	0	30	80.0	100.0	25
8794172	Sir John Hunt Community Sports College	0	0.0	0	0			0
8794178	Plympton Academy	149	85.1	85	64	51.0	98.7	74.6
8794179	Hele's School	36	17.3	11	25	69.4	100.0	18.9
8794180	Plymstock School	22	7.5	5	17	77.3	100.0	19.9
8794181	Coombe Dean School	9	5.5	<9	<9	44.4	100.0	8
8794185	Eggbuckland Community College	0	0.0	0	0			5.9
8794186	Tor Bridge High	178	89.0	91	87	28.1	90.4	96.1
8794187	Lipson Co-Operative Academy	19	10.7	9	10	63.2	100.0	0
8794190	Stoke Damerel Community College	200	94.8	108	92	23.0	95.0	97.3
8794605	Notre Dame School	102	76.7	0	102	37.3	100.0	96
8795406	Devonport High Schools for Boys	51	28.5	51	0	96.1	100.0	18
8796905	All Saints CE Academy	0	0.0	0	0			19.3
	PLYMOUTH	902	31.0	411	491	45.5	96.6	33.7

Appendix 2

Membership of Plymouth SACRE August 2023

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations, not including Church of England

Eight places

David Evans	Baptist Church
Jayesh Bhagat	Buddhist Community
Vacant	Hindu Community
Bakari Arabi	Muslim Community
Dr Judith Beckman	Jewish Community
Vacant	Methodist Church

Lesley Clark	Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
<i>Vacant</i>	United Reformed Church
Ben Kerr	Humanist
Nic Gibson	Pagan Community

Group B: The Church of England, appointed by the Exeter Diocesan Board of Education

Five places

Dr Catherine Bowness	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Alex Parks	University of St Mark and St John
Katie Freeman	Bickleigh Down Primary
<i>Vacant</i>	
<i>Vacant</i>	

Group C: Teachers' Associations, who should nominate RE teachers

Nine places

<i>Vacant</i>	NASUWT
Ms Gwen Hughes	NUT
<i>Vacant</i>	PASH
AnnMarie Allchurch	NATRE
<i>Vacant</i>	VOICE
<i>Vacant</i>	UCU
<i>Vacant</i>	PAPH (NAHT)
<i>Vacant</i>	ATL (no longer exists)
Claire Wills	Special Schools
Father David Bailey	School Governors

Group D: The Local Authority

Cllr Sue Dann	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Tess Blight	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Dr John Mahony	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Chip Tofan	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Sally Cresswell	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Tina Tuohy	Plymouth City Council

Co-opted Representatives

Six places

Sara Wells	Community (<i>Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity</i>)
Prof. David Salter	Quaker Community

