



# Annual Report of the Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2014/15

## *Celebrating Religious Education in Cheshire East*



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# **ANNUAL REPORT** of the Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2014-5

## **1 Introduction**

*I am delighted to introduce the latest SACRE annual report for the authority of Cheshire East. The report covers the period from September 2014 to September 2015.*

*We have continued to provide support for religious education in our schools once again through careful management of our resources and through our two consultants who have advised SACRE, led twilight and network meetings and supported the subject in schools through supportive emails and telephone calls. The ongoing support of Anne Gadsden our local authority officer continues to ensure religious education remains high on the local authority agenda.*

*Understanding the diversity of faith has continued to be extremely important in the light of the government 'Prevent' strategy and ongoing developments in education which continue to bring a rapidly changing landscape. The service provided to our school is vital in keeping religious education at the forefront of all our minds.*

*The first meeting of the Cheshire East SACRE 2014-5 took place on 13th October 2014 at Brereton CE VC Primary School with presentations from members of the school community including a tour of the school. This opened the meeting with a discussion on how RE is implemented and marked within school. Books were shared with SACRE members with pupils work in them. The Spring Term SACRE meeting was kindly hosted Fallibroome High School on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and this included a presentation from the head of RESPECT team which is where RE is located in the curriculum. On June 8th we were welcomed by Underwood West Primary School RE subject leaders and examined pupils work and asked questions about how RE is monitored in school. As a result of all our visits we have asked schools to focus on specific areas when welcoming us to their school.*

*Colette Hannon, Clerk to the SACRE has provided the ongoing invaluable administration support for all our activities.*

*Once again I am grateful for the knowledgeable support provided by my fellow councillors and members of our local faith communities as well as our officers.*

**Councillor Gillian Merry**

**Chair of CE SACRE**

*April 2016*

## 2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHESHIRE EAST SCHOOLS



### 2.1 Locally Agreed RE Syllabus



### *Engaging Encounter & Reasoned Response*

**The Cheshire East Religious Education Agreed Syllabus was launched in July 2011.** The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory syllabus for RE in Cheshire East schools prepared under schedule 31 to the Education Act of 1996. The SACRE began to think about the process of reviewing the syllabus in the summer term of 2015 ready for the review year from September 2015 to July 2016.

**This syllabus must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination and all church controlled schools within the local authority.** Copies of the syllabus CD Rom can be obtained from Colette Hannon clerk to the SACRE or PDFs of the syllabus can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website. <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

Ofsted use the local syllabus as the yardstick by which their inspectors make their judgements on the delivery of the RE curriculum in individual Cheshire East schools.

The existing syllabus is further supported by in-service training (INSET) led by two part-time consultants who are also available to lead INSET for staff in response to requests from schools, provided that schools are able to buy in their support. Telephone and email advice is also often sought and provided by the consultants.

### 2.2 Monitoring the Agreed Syllabus

**The SACRE have a statutory duty to monitor the impact of the locally agreed syllabus.**

**Analysis of Ofsted Reports** – Please refer to minutes of SACRE meetings for full details which can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website.

Analysis of Section 5 Ofsted inspection reports which identifies the performance of schools with respect to spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum continues to give a simple indicator and pointer to school performance in RE. The reports for schools in the authority which have been visited by Ofsted are analysed for each SACRE meeting and reported upon. If concerns are raised then advice and support can be offered by the two advisory consultants, Sue Glover (Primary) and Sue Wilson (Secondary).

Under the Ofsted reporting system, detailed information about RE is not available, unless it was through a previous HMI religious education subject survey visit. HMI subject surveys have now been discontinued. SACRE members remain concerned about how RE is often marginalised in schools. A lack of contact with diverse communities or other cultures within the local area continues to make it difficult for schools to fully demonstrate a well developed understanding of other faiths and cultures. Consultants have highlighted this concern with colleagues at network meetings and encouraged staff to consider how they could ensure that more visits to places of worship or visiting guest speakers can become a regular part of the RE curriculum. Anecdotal evidence show more schools are addressing this issue especially in light of the new government policy incumbent on teachers to address the development of British Values in schools.

## 2.3 Standards in Religious Education

### 2.3.1 Examinations in Religious Studies

The report is based upon the provisional statistics for 2015.

A total of 11 Cheshire East secondary schools entered candidates for A and 12 for AS level; 18 entered candidates for the full GCSE course in Religious Studies in 2015. This is one less than last year. 12 schools entered candidates for the short course. The four main examination boards were used.

#### GCSE Full Course

In GCSE full course 78.9% of candidates achieved grades A\*-C. This is above the national average of 71.9%

#### GCSE Short Course

In GCSE short course 62.8% of candidates achieved A\*-C grades. Again this is above the national average of 53.8%

#### GCE 'A' level

89 students were entered for this examination, a slight increase on last year (88). 96.8% achieved grades A\*- E (National average 98.9) 66.3% achieved grades A\*-B.

**GCE AS level** 103 students were entered

90.8% achieved grades A-E (National average 92.1%). 44.6% achieved grades A-B

### Comment

- It is not clear if the percentages of the cohort who are not entered for any examination are receiving their entitlement of RE lessons in KS4. We know that some students are not, yet Ofsted rarely tackle this issue. The changes to the short course make this area difficult to monitor.
- Some schools are starting GCSE courses in Year 9. Early entry means that KS3 has been impoverished in time and depth. The foundations for good understanding at GCSE are undermined.
- We know anecdotally that some schools are still entering candidates for the short course, but the devaluing of the points, means that the statistics are not being registered.
- The increase in the numbers opting for full course and A level is reassuring confirmation of the popularity of the subject amongst students.

### 2.3.2 Monitoring of Secondary RE Departments

Support was offered by Sue Wilson (employed for 8 days) through telephone calls, emails and network meetings. The **network meetings** covered areas of concern such as changes to examinations at A level and GCSE, reviewing KS3, as well as allowing colleagues to share good practice and resources.

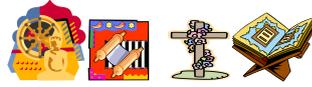
#### Subject strengths

- GCSE results are above the national average
- The popularity of the subject remains, in spite of pressures from the E Bacc etc.
- More candidates were entered for AS and A level this year.
- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions, two in the north and two in the south of the authority, to ensure some access to professional development for teachers of RE.

#### Areas for development

- Schools needs to be supported through the changes to A level and GCSE courses next year
- Ofqual have yet to approve most courses, text books are not available and yet the courses are already being delivered.
- Courses provided by examination boards are of variable quality
- Some schools are not fulfilling the legal requirements at KS4, in terms of time allocation.
- Early entry for GCSE means that the KS3 RE curriculum is reduced and in some cases, Year 11 students are not receiving their legal entitlement to RE. However, this is becoming more widespread due to the increased content at GCSE

## 2.4 Teaching Methods, Advice, Materials, Training



### 2.4.1 Artefact Bases- Materials

- A substantial collection of religious artefacts purchased previously by SACRE are held at Knutsford Academy who will lend it to local primary schools on request. *Please contact Chris Perry 01565 633294.*
- There is another collection of artefacts in the south of the authority at Sir William Stanier High School. *Please contact Bryony Fordham 01270 583431*

### 2.4.2 Advice and Inset Training for Teachers- Provided by Consultants

#### Primary Schools

- More than 50 primary schools were given email or telephone advice during the academic year. Support was mainly given to RE subject leaders or Headteachers. Advice was primarily based on planning the primary RE curriculum, teaching religious concepts, assessment and implementing the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. A small number of queries about collective worship were made by parents and schools. All schools were invited to take part in a questionnaire on the forthcoming review of the agreed syllabus during the summer term.
- Sample medium term plans (2012) circulated to schools and short term lessons (2013) continued to support the implementation of the syllabus as a supplement to the locally RE Agreed Syllabus (2011). They are a flexible tool for assisting teachers to use with their own school planning. Copies can be obtained from Sue Glover, Primary RE Consultant, (sue.glover62@gmail.com).

#### Autumn Term 2014

- Due to a high subject leadership turn over in primary schools the first meeting of the new term was aimed at new subject leaders held at Rode Heath Primary on Sept 30<sup>th</sup> 2014. This was well attended by over 18 new subject leaders. It gave a good opportunity for new subject leaders to consider all expectations of the agreed syllabus focussing on good teaching and learning.
- On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October at Shavington Primary School, over 20 experienced RE subject leaders came together to consider the implications of the new primary syllabus. Using concepts in religious education and assessment without levels was also highlighted on the agenda.

#### Spring Term 2015

- Three further primary school network meetings sponsored by SACRE were held in different areas of the county during the spring term of 2015. SACRE is grateful to Goostrey, Hermitage, and Vernon primary schools for hosting these meetings. These were attended by approx. 50 teachers. This was a unique opportunity for subject leaders to come together to share good practice. The main emphasis of the meetings was to look at current delivery of the agreed syllabus.

#### Summer Term 2015

- A twilight meeting was held at Rode Heath Primary School on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The main subject for this meeting was the review of the agreed syllabus, where data was collected on teacher's views on the current syllabus. Over 18 teachers attended.

#### Secondary Schools

- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions. Two in the summer term 2015 and two are planned for Spring term 2016. Ruskin, Tytherington and Wilmslow High schools kindly provided the venues.
- New resources from the BBC were reviewed and resources for teaching Christian Denominations, developed by Sue Wilson, were offered to colleagues in the summer term. In the spring meetings colleagues were updated about the new agreed syllabus review and we spent time considering the strengths of the various examination boards' specifications for GCSE and A level.
- 12 colleagues attended the meetings in the summer term and 10 attended in the spring.
- One of our meetings featured in the NATRE newsletter in September 2015.
- Other support was offered through telephone calls and emails
- We also welcomed new heads of department and said farewell to long standing colleagues.

**Notices about courses, networks and 'twilights' initiatives are given via the Cheshire East Bulletin.**

## 2.5 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of RE, requiring the LA's Special Appeals Committee to be convened.

## 3 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### 3.1 Supporting Collective Worship

All previously published material giving guidance for collective worship still stand in respect of the law.

The School and Standards Frameworks Act 2006 continues to reflect the current law governing collective worship. NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Council for RE) have produced a paper giving further insights into collective worship which is available on request.

Under the Ofsted framework, inspectors do comment on the opportunities for spiritual development in schools.

Further advice and materials are available from both the primary and secondary RE consultants. The revised Cheshire East Collective Worship guidelines accepted by SACRE in September 2014 can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website.

### 3.2 Determinations

The SACRE has not been called upon during the past year to make any determinations concerning collective worship.

### 3.3 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of collective worship requiring the LA's special Appeals Committee to be convened.



## 4 LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

### 4.1 National and International

The Cheshire East SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE). Jane Brooke, previously both chair of NASACRE and RE Project Development Officer for the National Society is a member of Cheshire East SACRE. Jane is an independent consultant and the Principal Consultant for Chester Diocese. Together with her colleague Mary Myatt Jane pioneered the national REQM (RE Quality Mark). Several awards have been given to Cheshire East schools including the gold standard. The overall aim is to celebrate outstanding RE practice in schools and further details can be found at [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org). Sue Glover Cheshire East Primary RE Consultant is an REQM assessor.

Between 2013 and 2015 a number of new publications have been distributed which have the potential to govern and shape the future of religious education.

**Living with difference: community, diversity and the common good** Sept 2013 Woolf Institute covers some ground of interest to SACRE in determining RE and collective worship policy. <http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/uploads/Living%20with%20Difference.pdf>

The last HMI subject inspection report for religious education was published by Ofsted in November 2013. The report draws on evidence from 85 school visits, telephone surveys of 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of SACREs and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. **'Realising the Potential'** the full report can be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential>

The non-statutory religious education subject review led by the RE Council designed to complement the review of the rest of the curriculum was published in 2013. Sue Wilson Secondary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East was a member of task group two in this **National Review of Religious Education**. Copies of this document are available on the REC website. [http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE\\_Review.pdf](http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE_Review.pdf)

**REforREal** project 2015 developed at Goldsmiths University of London by Professor Adam Dinham and Martha Shaw calls for a need to review the purpose and remit of SACREs and a national syllabus. <http://www.gold.ac.uk/faithsunit/reforreal/>

**A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in schools** presented by Charles Clarke and Linda Woodhead to NASACRE in May 2015 and subsequently to government also calls for a national syllabus for RE and a full review of collective worship. <http://faithdebates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/A-New-Settlement-for-Religion-and-Belief-in-schools.pdf>

The full impact of these reports and their influence on the existence of SACREs, the future of agreed syllabuses, the potential impact of a national RE syllabus and the law governing collective worship is still unknown at this time. The RE Council is commissioning a full review over the next two years with a final report expected in 2018.

Sue Glover Primary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East attended the NASACRE AGM in Birmingham in May and reported back the key messages to the Cheshire East SACRE. Members of Ofsted, REC and the DCSF also took part. It is hoped that SACRE members will continue to attend national events in future years, funding permitting. The NASACRE Newsletters 'SACRE News' are much valued by SACRE members, providing useful insight into the activities of SACREs and the teaching of RE across the country.

### 4.2 Local and Regional

Cheshire East SACRE has links with the local Macclesfield Interfaith Group. The Cheshire East faith audit producing local data is of valuable assistance in the SACRE's work. Cheshire East SACRE continues to have some links through the in-service programme with the University of Chester and Chester Diocese.

Jane Brooke continues to support the Rochdale SACRE and also works for Chester Diocese.

As well as supporting Cheshire East primary schools as a consultant Sue Glover also serves on Cheshire West SACRE and works for the Diocese of Chester which has continued to fund religious education and collective worship in Cheshire East church primary schools as part of their work in schools.

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## **Appendix 1 Examination Statistics 2015**

	<b>Cheshire East 2012</b>	<b>Cheshire East 2013</b>	<b>Cheshire East 2014</b>	<b>Cheshire East 2015</b>
<b><u>GCSE Short Courses in RE</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	2115	1859	Unknown	1384
Number of grades A* -C	1207	1169	“	869%
Percentage gaining A* -C	57.1%	62.9%	“	62.8%
Percentage gaining A* -G	96.3%	97.5%	“	97.4%
Percentage of cohort entered	68.9%	52.8%	“	35%
<b><u>GCSE Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	778	972	1064	1114
Number of grades A* -C	697	804	837	878
Percentage gaining A* -C	89.7%	82.8%	78.7%	78.9%
Percentage gaining A* -G	99.9%	99.7%	99.2%	98.7%
Percentage of cohort entered	26.6%	34.1%	27.3%	28.5%
<b><u>GCE 'A' Level Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	89	74	88	130
Number of grades A-E	89	74	88	118
Percentage gaining grades A-E	100%	100%	100%	96.8%
Percentage of cohort entered	5.5%	4.7%	4.9%	unknown
<b><u>GCE 'A/S' Level Religious Studies – Year 12</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	22	25	33	
Number of grades A-E	21	20	29	
Percentage gaining grades A-E	95.5%	80%	87.9%	
<b>Percentage of cohort entered</b>	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	

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## **Appendix 2 LA Publications**

All RE publications are available, generally from the clerk to SACRE, Colette Hannon. She can be contacted by email at [Colette.Hannon@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Colette.Hannon@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01270 685943.

The locally agreed syllabus and the accompanying handbook and all other documentation for religious education in primary and secondary schools are also available on the Cheshire East SACRE website. <http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/sacre.aspx>

### **LA guidance on Collective Worship**

Guidance on Collective Worship for community schools can be obtained from the RE Consultants.

### **SACRE Annual Report**

Further copies of the annual SACRE reports are available from the Clerk to the SACRE, as above.

## **Appendix 3 SACRE Development Plan**

This year 2014-15 the main areas of activity were:

- To support teachers in dissemination of good practice, teaching/resources.
- To help teachers and schools to raise standards in the quality of RE teaching.
- To help schools improve the quality of collective worship.
- To contribute towards understanding and respect between different religious groups within the community.
- To discharge its responsibilities effectively.
- To begin the review process of agreed syllabus

## **Implementation**

In order to complete the work of the Cheshire East SACRE during 2014/15, there was an initial allocated budget of over £8000 primarily to fund the work of two RE consultants who were employed by the authority to facilitate the work of SACRE, (One primary consultant and one secondary consultant each employed for 10 days).

Recent Ofsted school inspection reports were studied on RE and Collective Worship for evidence of standards and reported to SACRE. Support was offered where considered necessary.

## **Appendix 4 Statutory Functions**

### **These continue to remain the same in line with government legislation**

- To advise the LA on matters relating to RE and collective worship; methods of teaching; choice of teaching material; provision of teacher training.
- To determine any applications from head teachers for dis application in relation to the general requirements for collective worship.
- To monitor the effective provision for RE in community and controlled schools.
- To consider whether changes need to be made in the Agreed RE Syllabus or the support offered to schools.
- To support the effective provision for collective worship in schools.
- To monitor the provision of daily collective worship in schools and consider how to improve such provision.
- To publish an annual report on its work.

## **Appendix 5**

During the 2014-15 academic year the attendance figures for members at Cheshire East SACRE meetings was as follows:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014 Brereton CE VC Primary School</b>	<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 Fallibroome Academy</b>	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 Underwood West Primary School</b>
<b>A</b> Christian Denominations & Other Religions	2	2	3
<b>B</b> Church of England	3	3	3
<b>C</b> Teachers Associations	1	1	2
<b>D</b> Local Authority	1	2	1
Co-opted humanist member			1
Observers who were hoping to be co-opted as members to the SACRE representing Committee A.			3

Also in attendance at each meeting were: Sue Glover, Primary Schools Consultant, Sue Wilson, Secondary Schools Consultant and Colette Hannon, Clerk to the SACRE. Anne Gadsden, Monitoring and Intervention Manager attended all meetings on behalf of the local authority.

Regular items on the agenda include: discussion of local and national news about RE; local Ofsted reports; a summary of the consultants' work during the term and the current budgetary position.

Dates for the Cheshire East SACRE meetings during 2015-2016 academic year are as follows:

8 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	Smallwood CE VC Primary School
25 <sup>th</sup> February 2016	Congleton high School
Summer Term 2015	Date & venue to be confirmed

## **Appendix 6 Distribution**

The CE SACRE report is sent to the following:

- NASACRE (National Association of SACREs)
- Cheshire East Schools and colleges
- Members of the Cheshire East SACRE
- Lead Member for Children's Services and the members of the Children's Services Strategic Panel

- Diocesan Education Associations
- Representatives of local faith communities

The report will also be made available on the Cheshire East website [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

### **Appendix 7 - Membership of the Cheshire East SACRE for 2014-2015 Academic Year.**

<b>Committee A – Christian Denominations and Other Religions</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Denomination/Religion</b>	<b>Address</b>
Les Biddulph	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	Bridge Cottage, Buxton Road, Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffs ST13 8TT.
Mr J Vaja	Hinduism	1 Marlborough Close, Macclesfield, SK10 2LA
Rev JL Gould	Unitarian	4a Bulkeley Rd, Handforth, Cheshire. SK9 3DJ
Heather Staniland	Methodist	Church House Worthenbury LL13 0AW
Frank Vigon	Judaism	122 Windmill Street, Macclesfield. SK11 7BL
Celina Billings	Catholic	St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School, Manor Park South, Knutsford, Cheshire. WA16 8AL

<b>Committee B – Church of England</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Rev Mrs J Brooke	Church of England	3, Bridge Place, Chester, CH1 1SA
Mrs S Glover	Church of England	8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL
Rev Mr T Shepherd	Church of England	The Vicarage, 15 Offley Road, Sandbach, CW11 1GY

<b>Co-opted Member</b>	<b>Humanist representative</b>
Mr G Nicholson	Osborne House Trafford Road Alderley Edge SK9 7DN

<b>Committee C – Teachers' Associations</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Address</b>
Mrs A Boulton	NAHT	Oaklands School, Cheviot Square, Winsford, CW7 1NU
Mrs J Rippin	NUT	96 Moors Lane, Darnhall, Winsford, CW7 4DD
Mr Ian Bonner	ATL	252 Nixon Drive, Winsford, Cheshire. CW7 2JD

<b>Committee D – Local Authority</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Cllr Mr S R Wilkinson	(Chair)	Dunholme Farm, Pickmere Lane, Pickmere, Knutsford, WA16 0JL
Cllr Mrs S Jones	(Vice Chair)	10 Fairview Avenue, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 2NW
Cllr C Andrew	CEC	17 Madron Avenue, Macclesfield, SK10 3PW
Cllr Gillian Merry	CEC	217 Middlewich Road Sandbach CW11 3EL

**Officers Name**  
Mrs S Glover Primary Consultant

**Address**  
8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL

Mrs S Wilson Secondary Consultant  
Mrs A Gadsden  
Monitoring & Intervention Manager  
Colette Hannon Clerk to SACRE

3 Drumblefield, Chelford, Macclesfield, SK11 9BT

Room 1 Dalton House, Dalton Way, Middlewich, CW10 0HU  
Floor 7, Delamere House, Delamere St, Crewe CW1 2LL