



SACRE

Annual Report 2012-2013

Message from the Chair

It is a pleasure to introduce the annual report of the Bedford Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for 2012-2013.

The aim of this report is to update readers about the work of the members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). Our function is to advise the Local Authority (LA) on matters relating to collective worship in community schools and on Religious Education (RE) given in accordance with the agreed syllabus. The SACRE monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the agreed syllabus, which is formally reviewed every 5 years. This process took place and the new syllabus was implemented in schools in September 2012.

I would like to thank all the dedicated teachers of RE who impart knowledge and are shaping the views of the next generation. The best teaching of RE produces mutual respect and understanding of others faiths and beliefs and, therefore, tolerance in our communities of different faiths and cultures. We should not underestimate the positive impact that high quality RE teaching has in both the short and long term on our society.

It has been a significant year for RE as the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) conducted an enquiry on RE, RE: The Truth

Unmasked: The supply of and support for Religious Education Teachers.

This report concluded that too many people are teaching RE without the necessary qualifications or expertise in the subject; some of them are not even qualified teachers; there are insufficient opportunities for continuing professional development to put this right; teaching is not as good as it should be; as a result, standards in RE are not as high as they should be; RE teacher training numbers are being reduced and SACREs are being underfunded. The report said this mattered because 'Our young people are entitled to good teaching, whatever the subject. Every lesson counts.' The world is changing into a global labour market and with increased migration, understanding others becomes an important issue. The 2011 census showed there are more people of minority faiths than those who profess no affiliation at all. For educators there is a clear imperative: understanding others. The report can be viewed online by searching 'APPG RE The Truth Unmasked'. The report suggested actions for Ofsted, the Department for Education and others including schools.

The APPG suggested all schools should:

- ensure that all teachers of RE

meet the Teaching Standards in respect of the subject and develop their confidence and expertise in teaching RE;

- make proper provision for continuing professional development for subject leaders, specialist teachers and others responsibility for teaching RE in order to improve its quality.

Primary/Lower schools should:

- review, where relevant, the wide spread practice of using staff other than the classroom teacher to teach RE;
- provide regular opportunities for RE subject leaders to train their colleagues in subject knowledge and planning and assessing RE.

Secondary/Middle schools should:

- review as a priority, where relevant, the practice of using non specialist teachers to teach RE and where non specialists are teaching RE;
- ensure that the same few teachers teach the subject every year rather than fill timetable gaps with any teacher who is free at the time;
- ensure that all non specialists receive high quality subject specific training.

Locally RE courses are available from Bedford Borough and Beds RE Society. It is important to stay up to date with current teaching techniques and share

good practise. I would encourage all schools to invest in staff training in RE. The benefits will include improving our children's educational standards and the development of tolerance in our multi faith society. Support is on offer from SACRE through Carrie Traill - LA adviser to SACRE (who works with the teaching school alliance) Carrie.traill@bedford.gov.uk. Free materials for teaching RE are available at The Bedfordshire Resource Centre, located at St Mark's Church, Calder Rise, Brickhill, Bedford MK41 7UY. Free DVD's, artefact boxes, over 500 books and articles of faith to support excellent RE teaching. Visit the website www.beds-re-resources.org.uk for downloads and a list of available resources. The office is open at St Mark's on weekdays between 9am-5pm.

Ofsted Inspections

Currently schools monitor Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) in RE lessons. Bedford Borough School Standards and Interventions Team have been tracking SMSC as part of the Ofsted results and note that Ofsted are focusing on SMSC in the leadership and management of the school. Therefore we strongly advise that schools are tracking SMSC across the whole school and not just in RE lessons. SACRE will continue to monitor SMSC results.

NASACRE

At the AGM of NASACRE (the board that oversees all SACRE boards) both the speakers and groups attending expressed a clear desire for a positive outcome for SACRE's and their future to support RE education in their local areas.

I would like to express my

thanks to Jane Winterbone Chief Education Officer at Bedford Borough Council who has maintained the commitment of funds to Bedford SACRE. This funding enables training to take place, bursaries for RE school visits and bursaries to enable schools to achieve the RE Kite mark which in the coming year will be part of improving teaching standards in our schools. And I would like to record the debt of gratitude to the previous Chair of SACRE Jane Chipperton whose dedication and understanding of RE has provided a wealth of knowledge over many years for Bedford SACRE, Jane remains a valuable part of the RE community in a number of roles.

January 2013 saw Bedford Council of Faiths lead the annual Holocaust Memorial event at by the Anne Frank Tree in Russell Park, Bedford. Guests then attended The Civic Holocaust Memorial day commemoration at The Harper Suite, Bedford. Newnham Middle school and Goldington Academy students performed songs, a Bedfordshire University group performed a drama and local group Promethidion performed. Eleven memorial candles were lit by individuals representing different parts of our community and Newnham Middle school pupil Freddy Budek (who is a descendent of a Holocaust survivor) composed and performed his own song, a very talented 13 year old. With standing room only the venue was full of individuals who had come to remember all those who suffered and lost their lives in the Holocaust. All the choirs, actors and singers delighted us with their performances. This was a

successful event and a key date in our community calendar.

I would like to thank Carrie Traill, LA adviser to SACRE and SACRE clerk, Greg Jeffrey for their commitment and professionalism in enabling Bedford SACRE to run efficiently. There have been some membership changes this year, we have said thank you and goodbye to those who have come to the end of their term as SACRE members and welcomed new members. Greg has patiently made the many emails and phones calls to enable these changes.

And finally I will complete my report by thanking all of you who teach RE to our children, teach well and let us all be inspired by the words of Nelson Mandela;

"No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."
Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
Nelson Mandela

I am pleased to commend this report to you.



Kristy Adams
(Chair of the Bedford SACRE, 2013)

Standards in Religious Education

From January 2012 SMSC continues to be reported on in the Ofsted framework but does not have a separate grade. Community Cohesion no longer features in the framework.

Between September 2012 and January 2013, a total of twenty Bedford Borough Schools were inspected under the new Ofsted framework. Of these twelve were lower schools, four were middle schools, three were upper/secondary schools and one was a special school.

Evidence of SMSC was used to contribute to overall judgements in the four key areas on some but not all occasions:

- Quality of teaching – 3 times leading to an overall judgment in those schools of good.
- Leadership and management – 12 times leading to 3 outstanding judgements and 9 good.
- Behaviour and safety of pupils – 5 times leading to 1 outstanding, 3 good and 1 requires improvement judgements.

This analysis is worked out on 20 comments made in 19 Bedford Borough School inspections. One school received SMSC comments in two areas and two schools received no SMSC comments at all.

Bedford Borough RE Examination Results in 2013

Religious Studies: Exam: GCSE Short Course

Across the Borough 461 students were entered for this examination across five Bedford Borough Schools. Of these 53.8% gained a grade between A* and C and 95.2% between A* to G. 'White British' students made up the majority of these entries (290) with "Pakistani" students in the next largest group (32). The cohort was made up of 222 girls and 239 boys. Girls outperformed the boys at grades A* - C (62.6% to 45.6%)

Comparison to 2012

The number of students entered for this examination fell by 71 students in 2012; this reflects a two year downward trend. The percentage gaining between A* - C also dropped by 4.3% from 2012. The picture regarding gender representation remains the same as in 2012 as girls continue to outperform

boys at grades A* - C however the gender gap in performance grew by 5%.

Religious Studies: Exam: GCSE Full Course

Six of the seven Borough's upper schools entered students for this examination. 795 students were entered across the Borough. One school entered considerably more students than the other five. (Sharnbrook 397) the next closest was Wootton Upper School (289 students). 72.3% of students gained grades A* - C with 99.5% gained A* - G. Again, White British students represented the largest group entered (573). Any Other White Background students were the second largest group entered (62). The cohort was made up of 422 girls and 373 boys. Girls outperformed the boys at grades A* - C (76.5% - 67.6%).

Comparison to 2012

77 more students were entered for this examination than 2012. This is the third year of increased student numbers studying full course RE in Bedford Borough schools. Since 2010, 420 more students have studied full course RE. The percentage of students gaining an A* - C rose slightly on 2012. 1.9% but the percentage of students achieving A*-G rose by 1.3%. In 2012, girls also outperformed the boys at grade A* - C and for the second year running girls attainment fell, 1.3% from 2012, 2.7 since 2011.

End of Key Stage 5 outcomes

The data shown reflects those students leaving school in Year 13 and does not include the Year 12 results for the current year. These will be reported when the students are at the end of Key Stage 5.

Religious Studies: Exam: GCE AS Level

33 students completed Key Stage 5 from 4 different upper schools with an AS in RE. 18.2% gained a grade between A - B. Of the 33 students entered, 16 were White British. The cohort was made up of 26 girls and 7 boys. Girls outperformed boys at grade A - B (23.1% to 18.2%)

Comparison with 2012

9 more students were entered for this examination in 2013 compared to 2012. Outcomes at grades A-B fell by 6.8%.

Religious Studies: Exam: GCE A Level

64 students were entered across 4 upper schools. Of these 3.1% gained an A* in their examination. 20.3% gained between A* - A, 53.1% between A* - B and 100% between A* - E. White British students represented the majority ethnic grouping at 32 students with the 7 Any Other White students forming the second largest group. The cohort was made up of 45 girls and 19 boys. Boys outperformed the girls at grades A* - B (57.9% - 51.1%).

Comparison with 2012

Entries were slightly down in 2013, (+4 students). The percentage of students attaining at either a grade A* or A rose in 2013 by 1.1% but the percentage of students obtaining grade A* - B dropped by 1.3%. For the second year running, boys outperformed girls with girls attainment at grades A* - B, the attainment gap grew to 6.8% from 0.2% in 2012.

LA Agreed Syllabus and Launch Events

Three events were planned with "RE Today" to support the new LA Agreed Syllabus.

- Effective and Engaging Teaching and Learning with the new Syllabus, 4 July 2012;
- Assessment for Learning in RE: Beyond the tick box, 8 October 2012;
- Teaching Three Religions, 30 January 2013.

Flyers advertising these events were circulated around our local schools on numerous occasions.

Syllabus Event	Effective and Engaging Teaching and Learning with the new Syllabus, 4 July 2012	Assessment for Learning in RE: Beyond the tick box, 8 October 2012	Teaching Three Religions, 30 January 2013
Total Number of Schools	22	29	29
Lower Schools	4	4	4
Middle Schools	0	0	0
Upper Schools	0	0	0
Special Schools & PRU	0	0	1

In school support

Across the academic year, no schools requested in school support for RE.

Development opportunities for RE teachers

The first lower school RE PSG in 2012/2013 was held on 25 October 2012 with a focus on SMSC in the curriculum. Five lower schools attended this meeting.

The first Middle and Upper School PSG meeting for leaders of RE was scheduled for 17 December 2012 however this had to be rescheduled for 4 February 2013 for pragmatic reasons.

Lower School PSG meetings were held on 12 February and 24 April 2013. Five lower schools attended these meetings.

The second Middle and Upper School PSG meeting

for leaders of RE was held on 4 February 2013; the focus of the session was sharing good practice in the classroom and curriculum development. Five schools attended this meeting. The final meeting was held on 1 July 2013. The focus of this session was SMSC development and ten schools attended.

Advice and Support for Schools

Many schools use the support and resources provided by Jane Chipperton, Religious Education Adviser for the Diocese of St Albans, who oversees a resource base at St Mark's Church Centre, Brickhill. The resource collection and Beds RE website (www.beds-re-resources.org.uk/), support the multi faith approach of the agreed syllabus, which is available throughout the day and in school holidays. SACRE members wish to express their thanks to the Diocese of St Albans, St. Mark's Brickhill and Jane Chipperton for providing this service.

The RE Society for Bedfordshire has been active in publicising courses running in the area, organising visits to places of worship for different faiths and providing after-school workshops for teachers. SACRE receives copies of the RE Society's informative newsletter which the LA sends to all schools.

Support for SACRE

SACRE wishes to express its appreciation for the support given by Bedford Borough in terms of funding for SACRE's work and for enabling the Council to benefit from the services of Greg Jeffrey from Members' Services.

Your comments on any aspects of SACREs work and areas of interest are welcomed. Please contact:

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 greg.jeffrey@bedford.gov.uk

Bedford Borough SACRE Members 2012-2013

Group (A) representing Christian and other Major Faiths

- Mary O'Sullivan, Roman Catholic
- Sister Aidan Richards, Roman Catholic
- William Speed, Free Churches
- Marion Roberts, Free Churches
- Barry Shine, Judaism (part of year, resigned)
- Susanne Combe (part of year - replaced Barry Shine)
- Anjani Singhal, Hinduism
- Tirath Singh Bhavra, Sikhism
- Munawar Hussain, Islam (part of year, resigned)
- Venerable Akurula Samitha, Buddhism

Group (B) representing the Church of England

- Jane Chipperton (part of year, resigned)
- The Rev. Jay MacLeod (part of year, resigned)
- Rev. Richard Howlett (part of year, replaced Jane Chipperton)
- Petra Yates

Group (C) representing Teachers' Associations

- Ann Parish, Head teachers
- Lindsay Fraser, Lower Schools (part of year, resigned)
- Karen Watts, Middle Schools (part of year, resigned)
- Robin Rice, Upper Schools
- Rachel Francis, Special School

Group (D) representing the Local Authority (LA)

- Deputy Mayor Borough Councillor Charles Royden
- Borough Councillor Kristy Adams
- Borough Councillor Pat Olney
- Borough Councillor Mohammad Masud

Group (E) Others on SACRE (No voting powers)

- The Rev. Cassandra Howes, Co-opted (Higher Education)
- Dr. Graham McFarlane, Co-opted
- Corinne Royden, Co-opted (Independent Schools) (part of year, resigned)
- Jonathan Hooper, Co-opted (Independent Schools) (part of the year, replaced Corinne Royden)
- Judy Ruff, Chair of Bedfordshire RE Society (part of the year)
- Carrie Traill, LA Adviser
- Greg Jeffrey, Clerk to SACRE

