

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report September 2016 – August 2017

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1 Overview

1.1 Requirements as under the Education Act 1996

There have been no applications from Headteachers in community schools to waive the requirements that collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

2 Religious Education

2.1 Locally agreed syllabus

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE shares a locally agreed syllabus with Bristol, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. Since its adoption in 2016, SACRE has added a wealth of materials to its website to support schools in the provision of high quality RE. The programmes of study, together with all the supporting guidance, can be found at <http://www.awarenessmysteryvalue.org/>. A link to the site is also published on the Bath & North East Somerset SACRE website: <http://banes-sacre.com/>.

3 Standards in Religious Education

3.1 Reports and Monitoring

SACRE has not been informed by the Local Authority of any concerns about standards of religious education in primary, secondary and special schools.

3.2 Schools' Self-evaluation of Religious Education

In order for SACRE to gain information about RE and collective worship in Bath & North East Somerset schools, SACRE has begun to send a short survey to a proportion of schools on a rotational basis each year.

3.2.1 Since the start of the survey, replies have been received from 28 out of the 56 schools in the first two cohorts, i.e. 50%. These responses were from one community junior school, four community primary schools, two voluntary controlled junior schools, nine voluntary controlled primary schools, two voluntary aided primary schools, one infant academy, one primary academy, one church primary academy, one community secondary school, two voluntary aided secondary schools and four secondary academies.

3.2.2 While 20 of the schools were providing an average of at least 50 minutes of RE on the timetable each week, eight were not. In terms of a budget for RE, ten schools said that they had no budget and had to request money as needed, ten provided at least £1.50 per pupil for RE resources and only one less than 50p.

3.2.3 Four schools (two community primary, one community junior and one VC junior) reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *all* of RE by their parents, and four schools (two community primaries and two secondary academies) reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *part* of the RE programme.

3.2.4 14 of the schools reported average levels of attainment in RE and 14 above average. Only four schools (three church primaries and one church secondary) reported that attainment was high in relation to expected levels. None of the schools reported that

attainment was low overall. In terms of the standard of learning and progress in RE, five schools reported a need for improvement, 17 that standards were good and six (one VC primary, one VA primary, one church primary academy, one VA secondary and two secondary academies) outstanding.

- 3.2.5 All the schools that responded to the questionnaire had an RE leader in place but there was a very mixed picture of continuing professional development (CPD) with 19 of the schools not engaging in any *internal* training for staff in the previous year. At the same time, all bar three of the schools had organised training for at least one member of staff on a course *external* to the school during the year. Only one school, however (a secondary academy), reported that any teacher had received RE training of more than one day over the year.
- 3.2.6 All bar seven of the schools had organised visits for pupils in the previous year, with 14 having conducted two or more. All bar five had received at least two outside visitors to contribute to RE lessons. All bar one (VC junior school) had built up their own artefact collections, and twelve reported use of the SACRE Resources held at Salford School. Only seven schools subscribed to RE Today, and only three had current membership of National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE). 13 schools reported that they had no contact with an RE adviser (from the LA, Diocese or faith community) in support of RE during the year.
- 3.2.7 Nine schools (one community primary, one VC junior, five VC primaries, one community secondary and one VA secondary) reported that there was insufficient time for RE in some years.

3.3 Secondary schools' public examination results

- 3.3.1 This year there were 659 students entered for the **GCSE full course** in RS. This is 90 more than last year, representing 36.7% of the cohort at the 13 schools that entered students compared with 28.1% of 12 schools that entered students last year. Norton Hill Academy, St Gregory's Catholic College and Somervale School Specialist Media Arts College entered nearly all their Year 11 students for the examination, while there were significant falls in the number of students entered at Bath Academy and Oldfield School. The biggest increase in entries was at Norton Hill, where 246 students were entered this year, compared with just 45 last year. Of the whole entry, 79.9% gained A*-C grades, compared with a very similar 80.3% last year. There were notably excellent performances at St Gregory's Catholic College, where 83.7% of the 135 students entered achieved A*-C grades, and at Norton Hill Academy, where 77.6% of the 246 students entered achieved A*-C grades. Excellent results were achieved also at Fosse Way, Hayesfield Girls, the Mendip Studio, Oldfield, Wellsway and Writhlington Schools, though with lower numbers of entries.
- 3.3.2 There were 236 students entered for the **GCSE short course** in RS. This is 282 fewer than the previous year, representing 30% of the cohort at the six schools that entered students compared with

25.6% of the six from last year. This drop in entries is mostly accounted for by Norton Hill's switch to the full course. Chew Valley School and St Mark's CofE School continue to enter nearly all their Year 11 students for the examination. Of the whole entry, 54.1% gained A*-C grades compared with 61.8% last year. There was a notably excellent performance at St Mark's CofE School, where 64.5% of the 31 students entered achieved A*-C grades. Excellent results were achieved also at Hayesfield Girls and Beechen Cliff Schools, though with lower numbers of entries.

- 3.3.3 In addition, St Gregory's Catholic College entered 14 students for the **Entry Level Certificate** in RS (compared with 34 last year). All but one student (who was ungraded) achieved the top grade (3).
- 3.3.4 58 students were entered for '**A**' level Religious Studies, compared with 88 last year. The reduction in candidates was shared pretty evenly across the schools that entered students, except at Writhlington, where ten students were again entered. 31 of the total achieved an A*-B grade (six from Beechen Cliff School, nine from Hayesfield Girls School, six from Norton Hill Academy, seven from Ralph Allen School, one from Wellsway and two from Writhlington School).
- 3.3.5 98 students were entered for '**AS**' Level RS this year, compared with 108 last year. 58 of these achieved an A-C grade (17 from Beechen Cliff School, three from Chew Valley School, one from Fosse Way School, 13 from Hayesfield Girls School, five from Norton Hill Academy, one from Oldfield School, 16 from Ralph Allen School and two from Somervale School).
- 3.3.6 *SACRE sends its congratulations to the staff and students for all their efforts.*

4 Methods of teaching, material and training

4.1 Teaching materials

The agreed syllabus website <http://awarenessmysteryvalue.org/> contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study. During the year, further exemplars of schemes of learning were added, as well as updates and amendments to the assessment materials. SACRE continues to maintain a collection of artefacts for all of the major religions at Saltford Primary School, and this year a subscription was taken out for the National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) which includes regular mailings from RE Today. The termly RE Today magazine and curriculum booklets are added to the Saltford School collection. A member of staff there receives a small stipend for managing the resources and arranging free loans to Bath & North East Somerset schools.

4.2 Teacher training

Three training events for teachers took place in the year. The first was an afternoon seminar for primary and secondary RE leaders, held at Saltford Primary School in October 2016 on 'Developing and Assessing RE for a New Agreed Syllabus'. The session was led by Dave Francis (Associate Adviser), and included presentations by Anita Compton (SACRE Adviser for Haringey), Jan Lever (Discovery RE), Katy Staples (Bristol Diocese &

SACRE) and Adam Robertson (Bristol Primary School RE teacher). In March 2017, Dave Francis re-ran the training event, leading the sessions himself on this occasion. 22 teachers attended the training altogether, eleven at each event.

The third event was a World Religions seminar on the effective use of Hinduism and Judaism resources. This was led by two of SACRE's faith representatives, Yuktेशwar Kumar and Iris Segall, and held at Saltford Primary School in March 2017. Six teachers attended the event.

4.3 SACRE website: <http://banes-sacre.com/>

The SACRE website was maintained and updated during the year. A co-opted member of SACRE receives a small stipend for managing the site and ensuring it is kept up-to-date. As well as information about SACRE, the site contains ideas for RE specifically for Bath and North-East Somerset schools, including lists of resources available to borrow and reports on the use of local visits and visitors to support agreed syllabus RE.

4.4 Complaints about Religious Education

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints concerning RE.

5 Collective worship

5.1 Monitoring

As with religious education (see section 3.2), SACRE has initiated a survey of a selection of schools on a rotational basis over three years, providing schools with the opportunity to provide a self-evaluation of the provision and quality of collective worship.

5.2 Schools' Self-evaluation of Collective Worship

5.2.1 There were 28 responses to the survey on collective worship. Six of the schools surveyed (four community primaries, one VC junior and one VC primary) had between two and nine pupils being withdrawn from acts of collective worship by their parents. Two (a community junior and a VC primary) had one pupil withdrawn. The others reported no withdrawals at all.

5.2.2 All the schools bar five (a community junior, an infant academy, one community secondary and two secondary academies) received support from local ministers of religion. All bar four schools (two community primaries, one VC primary and one VA primary) received contributions to collective worship from visitors other than a local minister of religion.

5.2.3 Only seven schools (25%) reported that there was a genuine opportunity for pupils to participate in an act of worship every day. Seven further schools reported that there were, on average, only one or two genuine opportunities for pupils to participate in collective worship each week. Five of the schools considered that there were no genuine opportunities at all for pupils to participate in an act of worship.

5.2.4 Five of the schools (two VC primaries, one VA primary, one church primary academy and one VA secondary) considered that the quality of pupils' experience of assemblies / acts of collective worship was 'outstanding'. 15 reported that the experience was 'good'. In three schools (one VC junior, one VC primary and one

VA primary) the quality was judged to be 'requiring improvement', and in three schools the quality was judged to be inadequate.

5.3 Training
No training on collective worship was organised by SACRE during the year but information from other local providers, such as the Diocese of Bath & Wells was circulated to schools.

5.4 Complaints and determinations
The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints, and there were no requests from schools to vary the legal requirement for collective worship.

6 Links with other agencies

6.1 National
Three SACRE members attended the Southwest Conference for SACREs, 'Religious Education: What are we doing? Where are we going?' at Dillington House in Somerset and reported back to members. Conference workshops included material on 'Being a Humanist', 'Godly Play', 'Understanding Christianity', 'Crossing the Bridges: engaging with local faith communities' and 'the Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) Project'. There were two keynote speakers: Dr Joyce Miller, one of the Commissioners on the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) Commission on RE, and Ian Jamison, of Generation Global.

6.2 Regional
Bath & North East Somerset SACRE continued to take part in the regional Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) project, with funding from Diocesan and other charities, aiming to provide training in religious education, especially though the building of communities of RE teachers across the region. Two SACRE members and the Associate Adviser took part in the steering group for the project and another SACRE member was appointed to be a Project Leader for RE (PLRE). A regional conference was held in June with presentations from (amongst others) Satish Kumar, Deborah Weston, Denise Cush and Fiona Moss.

6.3 Local
Contact is maintained and found helpful with North Somerset, Haringey and Bristol SACREs, the Secondary Heads of Religious Education and the Bath Interfaith Group. SACRE provides small grants for schools to enable them to enhance their RE provision with visits or visitors to schools. In 2016-17, the grant was taken up by three schools, involving a Hinduism workshop day, and visits to Bristol Synagogue and Wells Cathedral.

7 Other issues

7.1 Governor training
Through SACRE's Associate Adviser, a training event for school governors to explain how governors could play an effective role in supporting the introduction of the new agreed syllabus took place in January 2017 at Keynsham Community Space. The event was attended by 15 governors. The Diocese of Bath & Wells also provides regular RE and collective worship courses for governors in a variety of schools, including non-church schools.

- 7.2 SACRE Self-evaluation
The SACRE development plan is proving a useful management tool to ensure finance is directed at priorities based on feedback from schools and national initiatives.
- 7.3 Post-16 support
A conference organised by staff at Bath Spa and Bristol Universities and supported by SACRE was held for A level students at Bristol Cathedral.

8 SACRE arrangements

- 8.1 Professional and administrative support
SACRE was supported by Dave Francis, the Associate Adviser for Religious Education and Clerk to SACRE.
- 8.2 Membership
SACRE is fortunate in having participation from a diverse representation from local faith communities (including from six of the major world religions, plus humanist), and these contacts are especially useful as a resource to RE teachers locally.
- 8.3 Finance
(See Financial Statement below)

SACRE Financial Statement 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017

Allocation	£13,000.00
BaNES Council grants to schools for RE training	£ 3,000.00
Brought forward from 15-16 for resources costs	£ 224.00

Expenditure

Production of new materials for Agreed Syllabus	1,225.00
Agreed Syllabus Review working party grants for schools	600.00
Agreed Syllabus review training – October 2016	1,695.00
Development of New Agreed Syllabus Website	750.00
World Religions Seminar – March 2017	720.00
Resource Centre & RE Today mailing	400.00
RE Visits/Visitors' grants	575.00
Secondary grants	900.00
NASACRE subscription	95.00
Meeting costs	81.50
Members' expenses & fees	289.05
Production of annual report	480.00
Monitoring of RE and collective worship	395.00
Website management	397.61
Professional fees	5,065.00

TOTAL	13,668.16
Allocation	16,224.00
Total Spend	(13,668.16)
Council recovery of unspent school grants	(2,210.00)
SACRE underspend	345.84