

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report September 2017 – August 2018

Contents

1. Overview
 - 1.1. Requirements as under the Education Act 1996
2. Religious Education
 - 2.1. Locally agreed syllabus
3. Standards in Religious Education
 - 3.1. Reports and Monitoring
 - 3.2. Schools Self-evaluation of Religious Education
 - 3.3. Examination results in Religious Studies
4. Methods of teaching, material and training
 - 4.1. Teaching materials
 - 4.2. Teacher training
 - 4.3. SACRE website
 - 4.4. Complaints concerning Religious Education
5. Collective worship
 - 5.1. Monitoring
 - 5.2. Schools' Self-evaluation of Collective Worship
 - 5.3. Training
 - 5.4. Complaints and determinations
6. Links with other agencies
 - 6.1. National
 - 6.2. Regional
 - 6.3. Local
7. Other issues
 - 7.1. Governor training
 - 7.2. SACRE Self-evaluation
 - 7.3. Post-16 support
8. SACRE arrangements
 - 8.1. Professional and administrative support
 - 8.2. Finance Report & Statement

All enquiries should be addressed to:
The Clerk to SACRE
Bath and North East Somerset Council
School Improvement
PO Box 25
Riverside
Keynsham BS18 1DN

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 awarenessmysteryvalue.org. A link to the site is also published on the Bath & North East Somerset SACRE website: 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 34 out of the 84 schools contacted, i.e. 40%. These responses were from 26 in the primary sector and six in the secondary sector, spread across community and church schools and an increasing number of academies.

3.2.2 While 24 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, 13 schools said that they had no budget and had to request money as needed, twelve provided at least £1.50 per pupil for RE resources and only two less than 50p.

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primary, one community junior, one VC junior and one junior academy) reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *all* of RE by their parents, and five schools (two community primaries, one junior academy and two secondary academies) reported that one or two pupils were being withdrawn from *part* of the RE programme.

3.2.4 18 of the schools reported average levels of attainment in RE and 12 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, six schools reported a need for improvement, 22 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 23 of the schools not engaging in any *internal* training for staff in the previous year. At the same time, all bar eight of the schools had organised training for at least one member of staff on a course *external* to the school during the year. Only two schools, however (a VC primary and a secondary academy), reported that any teacher had received RE training of more than one day over the year.
- 3.2.6 Ten of the schools had organised no RE visits for pupils in the previous year, though 17 has conducted two or more. All bar six had received at least two outside visitors to contribute to RE lessons. All bar three (a VC junior, a junior academy and a VC primary academy) had built up their own artefact collections, and 14 reported use of the SACRE Resources held at Saltford School. A growing number of schools subscribed to RE Today (eleven), and seven now have current membership of National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE). This is likely to increase given the number of schools taking up SACRE's offer of one year's free membership in the coming year. 15 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 Eleven schools (one community primary, one VC junior, six VC primaries, one VC primary academy, 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 702 students entered for the **GCSE full course** in Religious Studies (RS). This is 43 more than last year, representing 33.8% of the cohort at the 14 schools that entered students compared with 36.7% of 13 schools that entered students last year.

Norton Hill Academy, Saint Gregory's Catholic College, St Mark's CofE School and Somervale School Specialist Media Arts College entered nearly all their Year 11 students for the examination. Five schools again entered no students for the Full Course (or any national RS qualification): Broadlands Academy, Three Ways School, The Aspire Academy, The Bath Studio School and the IKB Academy.

This was the first year of the new grading system where candidates were scored on a 9-1 scale rather than A*-C, with 9 being the highest grade. Of the whole entry, 67.2% gained 9-4 grades, compared with 79.9% who gained A*-C grades last year. In England, overall, there was a small increase in the percentage of students gaining 9-4 grades (71.8%) compared with A*-C grades in the previous year (71.2%).

There were notably excellent performances at St Gregory's Catholic College, where 77.9% of the 154 students entered

achieved 9-4 grades, and at Norton Hill Academy, where 69.5% of the 239 students entered achieved 9-4 grades. Excellent results were achieved also at Beechen Cliff, Hayesfield Girls, Oldfield, Ralph Allen, Wellsway and Writhlington Schools, though with lower numbers of entries.

- 3.3.2 There were only 25 students (24 from Hayesfield and 1 from Writhlington) entered for the **GCSE short course** in RS. This is 211 fewer than the previous year. This drop in entries is mostly accounted for by Chew Valley School and St Mark's CofE School, who used to enter nearly all their students for the short course but did not do so this year as they move to different arrangement for RE at key Stage 4, involving more students entering for the Full Course.
Of the whole entry, 92% gained 9-4 grades compared with 54.1% who achieved A*-C grades last year.
- 3.3.3 68 students were entered for '**A**' level Religious Studies, compared with 58 last year. 40 of the total achieved an A*-B grade (nine from Beechen Cliff School, one from Fosse Way School, eight from Hayesfield Girls School, six from Norton Hill Academy, one from Oldfield School, eight from Ralph Allen School, one from Wellsway and six from Writhlington School).
- 3.3.4 117 students were entered for '**AS**' Level RS this year, compared with 98 last year. 73 of these achieved an A-C grade (15 from Beechen Cliff School, five from Chew Valley School, two from Fosse Way School, ten from Hayesfield Girls School, 23 from Norton Hill Academy (up from five last year), one from Oldfield School, 13 from Ralph Allen School, one from Saint Gregory's Catholic College and three from Somervale School).
- 3.3.5 *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 awarenessmysteryvalue.org contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study. During the year, a further exemplar scheme of learning on Key Stage 2 Islam was added, as well as updates and amendments to the existing 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

One training event for teachers was proposed: a World Religions seminar on the effective use of Buddhist and Muslim resources. Unfortunately, this was cancelled as insufficient numbers signed up for it. Instead, free

membership of the National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) which comes with RE Today mailing and further training opportunities and discounts, was offered to schools. 41 schools signed up for the offer by the deadline. Teachers at these schools were all contacted for General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) permission to contact them for future SACRE communications and 35 positive responses were received.

4.3 SACRE website: 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 32 responses to the survey on collective worship.

Seven of the schools surveyed (four community primaries, one VC junior, one VC primary and one VC primary academy) had between two and nine pupils being withdrawn from acts of collective worship by their parents. Three (a community junior, and junior academy and a VC primary) had one pupil withdrawn. The others reported no withdrawals at all.

5.2.2 All the schools bar six (a community junior, an infant academy, a junior 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 Just under a third of the schools 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, though none of these reported back in the current year.

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'. 19 reported that the experience was

'good'. In four schools (one VC junior, one VC primary, one VA primary and one VC primary academy) 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

SACRE's Associate Adviser attended three national RE conferences during the year. The first, held on 24th November 2017 in Birmingham focussed on the Interim Report of the Commission on Religious Education (CoRE). A report on this conference has been made available on the SACRE website: banes-sacre.com.

6.2 The second, held on 24th May 2018 was the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) AGM in London, featuring keynote addresses from former Secretary of State for Education, Charles Clarke and the Principal and CEO of the Mulberry Schools Trust, Tower Hamlets, Dr Vanessa Ogden. A report on this conference has been made available on the SACRE website: banes-sacre.com.

6.3 The third, held on 2nd, 3rd July 2018, was the annual conference of the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) in Bristol, which featured keynote addresses on 'Reflecting Plurality in RE' by Prof. Bob Jackson, Prof Denise Cush and Dr Farid Panjwani.

6.4 Regional

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. The conference included workshops on 'Teaching Hinduism in the Primary School', 'The Big Ideas Report', 'Controversial issues relating to faith and culture', 'The importance of councillors' roles on SACRE', 'Approaches to teaching Buddhism in KS3' and 'Examining the "Nones": handling diversity of unbelief in the RE classroom'. There were two keynote speakers: Prof Denise Cush, one of the Commissioners on the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) Commission on RE, and Stephen Pett, of RE Today.

6.5 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 have taken part in the steering group for the project and two local teachers have been appointed to be Project Leaders for RE (PLREs), one for the primary sector and one for the secondary. A second regional conference was held in June with presentations from (amongst

others) Sushma Sahajpal, Janet Orchard and Katy Freeman. SACRE members Dr Catherine Robinson and Mary Read contributed workshops and SACRE's Associate Adviser once again acted as rapporteur for the conference.

6.6 **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 2017-18, the grant was taken up by just one school and this enabled a Hinduism workshop to take place in the school.

6.7 Bath Interfaith Group (IFG) members are represented on SACRE (Committee A), and local interfaith events are publicised to SACRE members. In 2018 these included Bath IFG's event to honour victims of the European and other holocausts, *The Power of Words*, with speakers Father Bede Rowe, RC priest, and Iris Segall, Jewish representative of Bath IFG.

Other events included learning about different religions from faith practitioners (ISKCON, Bahá'í), approaches to salvation in the Islamic context, the work of three female religious leaders, and perspectives on the Environment from seven local faiths. There was also a small pilgrimage visiting several places of worship in the city of Bath. There is therefore a good variety of local faith practitioners and activities available as a resource to SACRE.

7 **SACRE arrangements**

7.1 Chair

SACRE's Chair is Dr Jane O'Hara (Group A – Bahá'í Community) and there are two Vice-Chairs, David Williams (Group B – Church of England) and Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar (Group A – Hindu Community).

7.2 Professional and administrative support

SACRE was supported by Dave Francis, the Associate Adviser for Religious Education and Clerk to SACRE.

7.3 Membership

SACRE is fortunate in having participation from a diverse representation from local faith communities (including from six of the world religions), and these contacts are especially useful as a resource to RE teachers locally.

7.4 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.

7.5 Finance

(See Financial Statement below)

SACRE Financial Statement 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018

Allocation	£12,394.00
Brought forward from 16-17 for resources costs	£ 343.00

Expenditure

Production of new materials for Agreed Syllabus	1,225.00
Support grants for NATRE/ RE Today membership	2,255.00
Primary RE Visits/Visitors' grants	80.00
Primary support for REQM	100.00
Secondary monitoring and training grants	900.00
Resource Centre including RE Today subscription	454.00
NASACRE subscription	95.00
Meeting costs	54.00
Members' expenses & fees	467.20
Production of annual report	480.00
Monitoring of RE and collective worship	395.00
SACRE Website management	279.89
AMV Website hosting and management	170.50
Professional fees	5,250.00
TOTAL	12,205.59

Allocation	12,737.00
Total Spend	(12,205.59)
Council recovery of unspent school grants	(390.00)
SACRE underspend	141.41