



MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL

# **Manchester SACRE Annual Report 2017- 2018**

## Foreword

Welcome to the Manchester SACRE Annual Report. It gives me great pleasure to write a brief introductory comment to this record of our activities during the period autumn 2017 through to autumn 2018.

Manchester SACRE continues to strengthen its links with the schools in our area, and is working to offer support to those schools whenever it is needed. I am pleased to note that we have commissioned high quality CPD for our schools this year which will strengthen the teaching of RE in our schools. Focussing as it did on the Manchester Agreed Syllabus this CPD will also encourage and support the use of this valuable document.

I am pleased that during the year we have broadened our membership to further strength our links with faith groups across the city. We have welcomed this year new members from both Sikh and Hindu faiths. To further strengthen our knowledge and appreciation of other faiths we are inviting members to give short presentations at the start of meetings covering the key tenets of their faiths.

I am grateful for the help we have received from Nick Paul from the Manchester City Council particularly with regard to contact and communications between SACRE and the schools in the City.

In finishing, I would like to note the quality of discussion that occurs in our SACRE meetings, this discussion is often very stimulating and I offer my wholehearted thanks to the whole membership for their contributions.

**Cllr. Ahmed Ali JP**  
Chair Manchester SACRE

## Membership of Manchester SACRE at the end of year 2017-2018

Name	Committee	Representing
Cllr Ahmed Ali	Committee D (Chair)	Local Authority (LA)
Rachel Kemp	Committee C Co-opted	RE Teacher

	Member	
Cedric Knipe	Committee A (Vice Chair)	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Heather Steward	Committee A	Methodist
Nick Paul	Committee D	Local Authority
Maureen Curley	Committee B	Church of England
Erik Keasberry	Committee A	Chinese Christian
Robin Ginter	Committee A	Humanist
Grange Williams	Committee A	Bahai
Julie Darbyshire	Committee C	RE Lecturer
Christine Howard	Committee A	Baptist Denomination
Mike Chesterton	Committee A	Evangelical
Simon Caplen	Committee A	Jewish
Rachel Skelton	Committee A	Unitarian and Free Christina Churches
Rev Ruth Watson	Committee A	Utd Reformed Church
Valerie Clark	Committee A	Quaker
Nidhi Sinha	Committee A	Hindu
Dr S Sinha	Committee A	Hindu
Danielle Gordon- Lanes	Committee C	RE Teacher
Sukbhir Singh	Committee A	Sikh
Imran Naseem	Committee A	Islam
Rev. Fujo Malaika	Committee A	Interfaith Minister Christian
David Levien	Committee C	VOICE
Helen Tidesley	Committee C	NASUWT rep

### **The role of the SACRE**

The SACRE is independent of the Local Authority and its main function is to advise the Local Authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools.

Also it:-

- can require the Authority to review its current agreed syllabus
- and must consider applications made by a head teacher that the requirement for collective worship in Community schools or Schools which have not been designated as having a religious character to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the collective worship provided for some or all of the pupils at that particular school.

The broad role of the SACRE therefore is to support the effective provision of Religious Education and collective worship in schools.

## **Meetings held:**

11<sup>th</sup> October 2017

14<sup>th</sup> March 2018

13<sup>th</sup> June 2018

17<sup>th</sup> October 2018

The October 2017 meeting was held in the traditional venue of Manchester Town Hall. The Irish World Heritage Centre welcomed SACRE for the March 2018 meeting with subsequent meetings being held at the Friends Meeting House in Central Manchester. SACRE remains open to offers from faith groups who may wish to host meetings.

In attendance at the March meeting was Hannah Malcolm from the Diocese of Manchester who spoke about 'God and the Big Bang project. The project supports science and RE teachers as they explore the relationship between science and faith with their students. It questions what there was before the 'Big Bang' and whether evolution takes away the need for God. It provides interactive events in schools and cathedrals; training of teachers and provides experienced session leaders who are top scientists and theologians from across the UK.

SACRE undertook to help publicise this initiative amongst its schools.

## **RE CPD**

During 2018 through the LA SACRE commissioned two full days of CPD for Primary teachers. These sessions were designed and led by Lat Blaylock from RE Today. Lat is a co-author of the Manchester Agreed Syllabus.

The sessions were held at Gorton Monastery in May and July

Comments from Rachel Kemp (Primary RE Specialist)

She highlighted that the session explored how RE was about the experience of learning in different ways and shared outcomes of children's work from schools that have provided quality RE. Members also noted that a tool had been devised to track progress on outcomes and evidence such.

There were 20 attendees for the Manchester session which was disappointing. It was felt that communication of these events needed to be stronger.

Rachel also explained that she had been asked to visit other schools in Manchester to provide RE guidance to teachers, often after school (without any reimbursement to Rachel or her school).

In March 2018 Rachel also reported back regarding her attendance at the NASACRE Commission in Birmingham. There was a report titled “Interim report on RE for all”. It was claimed in the report that the British model of RE is highly regarded and has earned international esteem

There is likely to be no change in legislation but the Committee is looking to have realistic proposals for a national entitlement for RE with a national syllabus, and this would clearly have an effect on the role of SACRE that reviews locally delivered RE. The national entitlement would be for all pupils in state-funded schools with a consultation with the independent sector regarding their adoption of it.

### **SACRE Art Initiative**

During the period covered by this report have discussed an Art Initiative to be opened to schools similar to the RE Today Spiritual Arts Initiative. At the time of writing this is still in the planning stage as members look to source a suitable exhibition venue.

### **R.E Data**

Score	No of entries	%	National data
9	123	5.0	7.3
7-9	580	23.7	30
5-9	1336	54.7	60.3
4-9	1587	65.0	71.8
1-9	2360	96.6 (96.9)	98.1
	2443 (2470)		

### **Commentary**

2018 saw the first year that Religious studies was assessed on the 9-1 score rather than the grades A\*-G. This means that direct comparison with previous year's outcomes is difficult. These are the % of entries that have achieved each score not the total KS4 cohort.

### **Commission on Religious Education**

SACRE noted that the Commission for RE Final report and its recommendations and undertook to maintain a watching brief to see how Government will action the recommendations of the report.

In particular it was noted that:

- a) SACRE would be renamed as an Advisory Body for Religion and World Views.
- b) An Annual Report will still need to be prepared and submitted to DfE.
- c) The new body would not have responsibility for syllabus matters.
- d) Better training and support will be available from bursaries.
- e) RE can be linked to maths and literacy subjects.

- f) Rob Grinter welcomed the world views element in the report, from a humanist perspective

### **SACRE communication with schools**

Through the SACRE LA Officer schools continue to receive regular communications via the Children and Families Directorate Circular letter system. These communications include notification of events, requests for contact details and training /support materials from SACRE members or other faith organisations. In autumn 2018 SACRE used the schools circular to issue a survey to all schools. This survey was designed by SACRE and issued in the form of a link to a Google form. The initial responses to be analysed at the first meeting in calendar year 2019.

### **Provision of information for SACRE members**

During the last academic year the provision of information for members was improved through sending the link to the regular updates produced by NASACRE. Manchester SACRE continue to be members of NASACRE and all members have access details to the website, including the regular briefings. Throughout the academic year Nick Paul provided an overview of performance of RE in Manchester schools (with grateful assistance from Ruth Watson), following OFSTED inspections. Members were pleased to note that 86% of schools were classified as Good or better.

Primary progress at 93% is above the national average. Secondary progress was short of national average, at 58% and Special School progress was 93%. In broad terms progress measures capture the progress pupils make between entering and leaving the relevant phases of education.

### **SACRE membership**

During the academic year Manchester SACRE was pleased to welcome Sukbhir Singh (Sikh) and Dr S Sinha and Nidhi Sinha (Hindu). Efforts were ongoing to secure new Roman Catholic and to further broaden faith representation more generally.

### **Freedom of Information requests (FOI)**

SACRE received one FOI request during academic years 17-18. This was a press request for information concerning schools at which parents have requested pupils be removed from RE Lessons together with further more detailed supplementary questions. The response was that such information is not held by the LA because schools are not required to report it.

### **Requests for a determination**

SACRE did not receive any requests for determinations with regard to Collective Worship during the last academic year. Any school wishing to explore the relevance of a determination (daily collective worship which is other than 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character) in their context should contact SACRE via the local authority officer, Nick Paul (n.paul@manchester.gov.uk). Church schools are not eligible for a determination and for an academy wishing to apply for a determination the correct process is for the Trust to apply through the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to the Secretary of State.

### ***Complaints concerning RE***

There have been no complaints concerning RE.

### ***Complaints concerning Collective Worship***

There have been no complaints received about collective worship.

### **Finance**

SACRE does not have a dedicated budget; however the LA covers the costs of a professional clerk, meeting costs and the membership of NASACRE. The LA representative on SACRE has the authority to consider requests for financial support for SACRE activities and to authorise payment where funds exist and there is a clear benefit to the role of SACRE.

Nick Paul  
Manchester City council