

**Nottinghamshire County Council
Standing Advisory Council
For Religious Education
Children and Young People's Services**

Annual Report
2015/2016

Nottinghamshire SACRE

Chair's introduction

This has been an amazing year for our SACRE! It has met each term to consider various issues, which are itemised in this report and has taken the initiative on several fronts.

SACRE agreed on two documents which were consequently circulated to schools through Governor services. One was on the position of RE in the curriculum and was sent to raise Governors' awareness of the status of the subject in the curriculum. The second was on Collective Worship written by a working group formed from within SACRE which was finalised in the summer term to go out to schools at the start of the next academic year.

Following on from our very successful day at the Holocaust Centre for young people we were pleased to be able to continue this venture for next year. I was so pleased to see many young people from different schools working together at the Holocaust Centre with survivors of the Holocaust.

As Chair of SACRE I have enjoyed our meetings through which we have supported the work of our teachers in schools across our Local Authority. It has also been good to hear of teachers supporting and benefitting from our various CPD events which have also attracted teachers from out of the local area.

Our meetings have been well supported throughout the year and there has been a constructive exchange of views which have lead to developments which will benefit the young people in our authority. We were privileged to be encouraged by an enthusiastic student from Trent University training to teach RE. We are also building up our relationships with interested communities in our County and visited a Hindu Temple in Beeston as well as the Holocaust Centre near Ollerton.

We also saw the start of our use of Social Media through our **SACRE in Notts** on *Facebook*, a closed group for the benefit of SACRE members and teachers in our authority.

This Annual Report I am pleased to commend to you as an overview of the hard work of the dedicated members of Nottinghamshire County SACRE, who give of their time to the development of Religious Education and Collective Worship in our various institutions of education. They do this for the benefit of our young people, helping them to become informed, tolerant and well-rounded citizens of 21st century Britain.

Councillor Liz Plant

Chair

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1. What is SACRE?

The 1988 Education Reform Act established the statutory requirement for all local authorities (LAs) to establish a permanent body called a **Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)**. The Nottinghamshire SACRE is an independent body which advises the LA on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education.

Nottinghamshire SACRE comprises four groups:

Group A: Elected County Council Representatives

Group B: Church of England Representatives

Group C: Teacher Representatives

Group D: Representatives of Christian denominations and other religions reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area

Each group has equal status and voting rights.

Functions of SACRE

Executive functions:

- To consider and determine (in accordance with Section 12 of the 1988 Education Act) applications from county schools to be disapplied from the requirements concerning Collective Worship being broadly Christian.
- To consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus.
- To publish an annual report.

Advisory functions:

- To give advice on methods of teaching the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
- To advise the LA on the provision of training for teachers.
- To monitor inspection reports and standards of achievement in Religious Education.
- To give advice on Collective Worship.

Purpose

Within its statutory responsibilities SACRE is concerned with supporting and enhancing the provision of Religious Education within Nottinghamshire schools where the Agreed Syllabus is in use. SACRE seeks to encourage the provision of high-quality in-service training for those whose responsibility it is to deliver this aspect of the basic curriculum.

Decision making

This is determined by one block vote from each of the four groups listed in the membership above.

Co-opted members do not vote.

2. Meetings of SACRE

During the academic year,2015-2016, SACRE met termly to discuss a range of issues itemised below:-

November 2015 SACRE met at



- Presentation by a student training at Trent University to teach Humanities and why RE was important to her.
- Discussion concerning initiating a *Facebook* page for teachers in the County.
- Revised Constitution was accepted in October 2015 with 3 Council representatives
- A slimmed down day at the Holocaust Centre for Years 5 & 6 was being planned, even though we had not received a grant from NASACRE.
- Nottingham University was organising a day for post 16 students – Aim Higher in 2016, continuing our links with the Department of Theology & Religious Studies.
- Letter for Parents on the New Agreed Syllabus was waiting for approval by the Authority.
- Discussion on providing items for Governor Services to circulate drawing attention to the position of RE and Collective Worship.
- Report received on two CPD events on Assessing RE which had been well received and supported by teachers.
- Discussion on an event planned to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers sailing in 1620 was discussed as to how this might assist the teaching of British Values in RE.
- Our Draft Annual Report was presented for consideration by SACRE; we could no longer give GCSE short course results or the number of schools entering candidates.
- The SACRE Development Plan was presented for comment and modification. The question of how can SACRE monitor RE in schools was raised.
- An update was presented on RE nationally and locally which covered the Quality Mark and the NASACRE SACRE Members Survey which members were encouraged to complete.

February 2016 SACRE met at the Sri Thurkkai Amman Temple in Beeston



- SACRE members received a tour & presentation concerning the Temple.
- University of Nottingham Aim Higher day had attracted 55 young people from various schools.
- The letter concerning the Agreed Syllabus had been well received by many schools, some of whom had put it onto their web sites.
- A paper to be sent to Governor Services concerning the provision of RE for the attention of Governors was discussed at length. This was to go out in the Summer Term.
- A working group was established to draft a paper concerning Collective Worship for the next meeting to be circulated at the start of the Autumn Term to schools.
- National & local developments in RE were reported on to members of SACRE, this summarised the various reports concerning RE and Collective worship that had been published. This also considered the time line from the RE Council for the Review of RE.

June 2016 SACRE met at the



- Louise Stafford updated members on the work of the Centre and its increase in visitors along with the developments of its new project "The Forever Project".
- The paper on RE had been well received and feedback from schools had been passed back in some of the CPD courses.
- SACRE in Notts was now up and running as a closed group on *Facebook* and could host some of the documentation in addition to the SACRE pages of the RSResource Centre web site.
- A report was given on our first year 5/6 day at the Holocaust Centre when 64 pupils from 11 schools engaged in looking at British Values and meeting survivors. It was felt that such was the value of this experience we ought to offer it again.
- The document on Collective Worship by the working party of SACRE members was welcomed and discussed. Some amendments were agreed so this document could go to schools for the attention of governors and be made available of teachers as well.
- National & local developments in RE were reported on to members of SACRE. This included a report on the Aim Higher Day which engaged many of the young people who attended it, giving them an insight into studying at University.

- Faith Experiences in County Schools were mentioned along with the enquiries to engage with faith representatives in schools through Nottingham Inter Faith Council.
- A report on the NASACRE AGM was presented to members.
- CPD Opportunities for 2016-17 were highlighted.
- SACRE had been invited to work with RE Today & NATRE in offering a project for Excellent RE led by Fiona Moss. The project being partly funded by Culham St Gabriel's. This would involve teachers coming to 3½ days in the next academic year.
- NASACRE Survey results were shared concerning what RE is for completed by SACRE members.

3. Determinations

There were no requests by schools in Nottinghamshire for a determination that the specific requirements regarding the character of collective worship, as set out in the Education Act 1996, should not apply to them.

4. Professional development opportunities 2015-2016

The Primary Network met for two half days.

At the Autumn Session, RE Coordinators met to consider amongst other things their role as co-ordinator in school and ways to develop the subject. This was the main focus after considering local and national developments in RE.

Some of the comments received in evaluation reflected the value of the afternoon:-

- How to make RE important in schools perhaps by ensuring other teachers feel confident to teach the subject.
- Ideas to think about for raising the profile of RE & for an action plan of how to develop the profile of RE.
- Lots of useful information about the role of coordinator.
- Encouraged me to be more proactive with RE & voice my wishes to SMT.
- It has made me more confident in what I should be doing in my role and challenging this back at school.

As always, people valued the time to talk and discuss with others on the afternoon.

The second afternoon followed up the request for time to plan and work together.

Some of the comments received in evaluation welcomed:-

Getting practical examples.

- Dipping fingers into the Agreed Syllabus.
- Info about RSResources, websites and experiences.
- Planning, sharing and being able to ask questions.

In response to SACRE's request concerning future training needs, we received requests for:-

- More on SEN, teaching pupils with P levels.
- Collective Worship.
- Assessment.
- Using drama & other creative media to develop/deepen understanding of RE.
- More information about getting visitors in for "RE" days & making it cross curricular.
- More time to work together on schemes, to share units of work, practical examples.
- British Values training.

Colleagues who attended the Network thought the time was valuable as there was time to network and share which can be difficult when in a school on your own.

Assessing RE standards and Achievement with the New Agreed Syllabus

This course was offered twice and was led by our consultant from REToday Lat Blaylock. In their evaluations delegates commented that what had really worked well for them was the engaging approach adopted throughout the course; coupled with useful assessment and lesson ideas. They felt that clear assessment procedures were offered and that their understanding of the 8 Assessment steps was clarified.

Delegates were intending to return to their schools to create portfolios of evidence to show the different steps of assessment as well disseminating the information to their colleagues.

One colleague wrote:-

"The more practice I get, then the more familiar and confident I will become. Thanks for the starting point and the numerous different opportunities/ activities for assessing RE. The day has made me realise that many activities I do have assessment opportunities which I will be more aware of now that the assessment seed has been planted in my mind."



Challenging RE A day supporting the Agreed Syllabus led by RE Today Advisors

Our Annual SACRE RE Conference was once again well supported by teachers as well as giving some members of SACRE the chance to meet our teachers. The fantastic practical ideas which offered ways to use creative

approaches to teach values education were welcomed by delegates who found that both their knowledge and understanding were enhanced by the day.

Many were going to return to school with ideas to try out in order to challenge and develop the thinking skills of pupils with new skills which they had discovered from the conference. There was a feeling of moving forward in order to make RE more interactive and broader in their establishments by using a range of strategies as they strive to make learning deeper and more fun.



One teacher wrote that the day had *“Made a difference to my enthusiasm & ability to energise school.”*

5. Post 16 Study Day 2016

The University of Nottingham’s Department of Theology and Religious Studies, in association with Nottinghamshire SACRE, hosted a study day on the University Park campus for those taking Religious Studies AS/A Level.

The aim of the day was to offer a series of interactive sessions offered by lecturers on a variety of topics relating to the RS syllabus. These sessions were designed to encourage students to re-examine topics already covered during AS/A Level RS from new angles, and to provide an insight into the excitement and significance of studying Theology and Religious Studies.

The day conference was aimed at motivating post-16 students in their study of RS, and thereby helping to set them up for exam success in school/college and beyond.

Over 30 students came for the day and in their evaluations of the day wrote:-

“Very interesting giving new and fascinating information delivered in an entertaining way.”

“Brilliant lecture, on a subject I usually don’t enjoy – but he made it super interesting and engaging.”

“Great enthusiasm and good exploration of the ideas as well as his personal beliefs”

“I really enjoyed this explanation and it has helped me with my understanding of religion and what it is.”

Teacher comments on the day:-

“Fantastic engagement with pupils. Short, concise but added research not covered by the specification. “

“Very engaging way of speaking. Explained points well, clear + concise.”

Teachers who were present found this a useful and motivating experience and SACRE is grateful to the University for assisting us with putting on this conference as we continue to liaise and work with various institutions and communities in our area.

6. **‘British Values, human values: investigating what matters ‘at the National Holocaust Centre – Beth Shalom**

Working alongside the National Holocaust Centre; Lat Blaylock from RE Today supported SACRE in offering our first ever day event for years 5 and 6 pupils. The pupils who attended the course were challenged to take their learning back from the day, to share in their own communities. We had 64 students representing 11 schools at the event.



SACRE wished for pupils and teachers to enjoy great RE through a dynamic encounter with the work of Beth Shalom as well as be able to develop and express ideas of their own about suffering and goodness in our world today.

Our day was intended to contribute to education into diversity; to enable young people who have a faith and those with no faith, to learn from each other in a Jewish setting. The course was designed to illustrate how RE can be delivered in different ways, to engage and motivate young people looking at big issues affecting our society which fits in with the Agreed Syllabus of Nottinghamshire that **‘RE is for All’**.

We were grateful for the involvement of two holocaust survivors who talked with the pupils and answered their questions, as well as staff at the Centre.

Pupil voice:



The pupils said that they liked working with pupils from other schools, meeting the survivors and engaging with the artwork challenges. A variety of activities, which involved some hands on and discussion were enjoyed by the pupils. They reflected on the testimonies they heard and began to understand how people felt, realising *‘what it was like for people in the holocaust’*. They also reflected on how *‘we treat people today’*, *how we can help others*” as well as realising that the *‘World would be a better place if these things didn’t happen’*. One school wondered how we could be involved in *‘passing wisdom to the next generation?’*

Governor view

The chair of governors of one school, who was present, said of the day:

“I’ve had the honour and privilege of accompanying six of our children today. They’ve certainly had time to reflect about their position in life; their spiritual journey; the fact that they’ve been able to talk to survivors of the holocaust, has given them a great insight into history, though the eyes of living people, rather than just reading texts.

Their sculptures and art work has made them think about how symbols and art can represent values, ideas etc from around them.

It has been an absolute privilege to be have been here to watch the children grow and develop. I am hoping that some of the things they have learned can be taken back into the classroom and we can see more evidence of it around school.”



The Holocaust survivors said

“The day has really been about human values and looking at how they want to change their world. It’s been very interesting to listen to what they have to say in terms of their focus; which has been on being kind and compassionate. They have been aware of other people and considering others as opposed to focussing on their own needs.” Susi



“They were involved in a project investigating British and human values asking what matters. Though that seemed to be ambitious, I heard from the organisers what it involved with its purpose. I told them my story I was amazed at the interest shown by the students and the questions they asked which were so involved, so knowledgeable and profound. I am sure that whatever lessons this centre deems to provide to people when they come to visit here was learned. From that I got a lot of satisfaction and it gave me great pleasure to come here and to be involved with this project.” Simon

Teacher view

“The value of this day for my pupils has been getting together with lots of other pupils from other schools and hearing stories from holocaust survivors. It has made them realise that it was a real thing that actually happened. They were blown away by it. A brilliant day. Thank you.”

Lat Blaylock from RE Today said

“Beth Shalom has been an amazing environment to use as a classroom for 64 children today. The children themselves have been amazing. I really think SACRE has done a good job in facilitating some special deep learning about the Holocaust and issues of respect and British Values.”



I think every SACRE should copy this and model itself on this. I am also really pleased that the children have been so enthusiastic to go back to school to try out some of the activities. So it is not just about a one off day but something which will make a difference back in a dozen schools all round the county. I think the children will make good teachers there; they’ve got some good ideas to go back with and work with the children back at their own schools.”

Louise Stafford Lead for Adult Education Beth Shalom

“Today has been an absolutely fantastic day to encourage students to consider what it is that makes them who they are; the values that they consider as central to their role as young people in their communities.

It gave them the opportunity to consider what kind of values they wish to form Britain and British societies. It has been wonderful to see the interaction and conversations which have taken place between the survivors of the Holocaust, who share their own experiences with students and described for them the consequences of a society in which the rights of individuals are not respected and the ways in which a lack of understanding of the perceived differences of others can lead to societal breakdown. From there the students have been encouraged to reflect on their own faith within their communities. The second part of the day was encouraging students to express this in a creative way, which allowed them to bring to the fore some of the most important themes of the day.

Seeing them place their stones in the memorial to the victims of the holocaust and to be able to consider when they go back to school what it is that they will be taking back with them was a reflective moment which drew together everything the day has asked in terms of questions.”



SACRE did receive feedback from some schools of how they had shared this message in different ways back in their own communities, often using the sculptures they had made on the day.

7. Faith Experiences in County Schools

Ten different schools benefited from faith experiences in their schools in the academic year, some schools hosting more than one day.

This is when the RSResource Centre brings a faith into the school and is given a teaching space to makeover and create what a place of worship might look like in the faith chosen by the school.



Over 1,300 young people in County Schools have benefited from these experiences. Faith experiences have also been delivered out of the County into Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire as well as within the City of Nottingham. The RSResource Centre also loans out artefacts to subscribing schools to enhance their RE and has been operating since 2000. The RSResource Centre is the only Centre which offers Faith Experiences and is based in our County.

Some of the teacher evaluations from County schools said:-

“Parents watched the session and said it was fantastic, that the children gained a lot by being involved in drama, movement and looking at artefacts. It was a very enjoyable, interesting and worthwhile experience for the children (and staff!)”



“An excellent ‘hands on’ experience! The children were motivated & interested. Thank you. Very well matched to the year group. Good use of a range of media.”

“The Islam experience is a fantastic way to educate children and encourage them to learn about different religions.”

“It opened up a whole other life for the pupils.”

“The children were fascinated from the first to the last moment.”

“A fantastic addition to our RE week on Hinduism! Very insightful, enjoyable and enthusing.”

8. SACRE National Conference involvements

Nottinghamshire SACRE was represented at the NASACRE AGM in London. SACRE has also been aware of discussions held at The Religious Education Council as well as NASACRE through various publications from these bodies.

9. Standards in RE in Nottinghamshire

As the nature of Ofsted inspection reports has altered it has become difficult to comment upon their findings with regard to RE and Collective Worship.

Examination performances *These are Provisional Figures*

National Figures are taken from the Joint Council for Qualifications Provisional Results

Our breakdown of results no longer indicates which examination boards are used by our schools.

GCSE Full Course

SACRE noted that 34 Centres entered candidates at this level compared to 35 in the previous year and the number of candidates was slightly fewer than in the previous year – 2,086 compared to 2,308.

Nationally there was another increase in the number of candidates at this level –296,010 compared to 295,730 last year.

Summary of GCSE Results 2012- 2016

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A*-C and A*-G grades in the full GCSE:

Nottinghamshire		Exam Year	National Results	
A*-C	A*-G		A*-C	A*-G
76.1	98.9	2012	73.7	98.5
74.1	98.1	2013	79.2	97.6
66.0	96.9	2014	71.5	98.0
71.4	98.4	2015	72.2	98.3
72.2	97.9	2016	71.6	98.0

SACRE was pleased to see a slight improvement in A*-C taking us above the national results but a slight decrease A*-G which was just under the National Figures.

Gender in the County Entries

	Entries	A*-C	A*-G
Female Candidates (2015)	1,158 (1310)	79% (78.9)	98.6% (99)
Male Candidates (2015)	928 (998)	63.7% (43.0)	97.1% (97)

GCSE Short Course

In the light of changes nationally, the information we receive on qualifications comes from the Department for Education's secondary school performance tables. Under new rules introduced in 2014, qualifications which were smaller in size / value than a GCSE were no longer included in performance tables measures. As short courses are half the size of a full GCSE they are no longer counted. As a SACRE we no longer receive information on GCSE short courses in our data feeds.

This does not necessarily mean schools are not offering these qualifications but just they are not included in official school figures and therefore we do not have access to this data.

Nationally there was a continued decrease in entries at the Short Course from 91,476 to 75,590 which reflects the fact that Short course GCSE is no longer counted and entries to this course are no longer seen as viable for inclusion in performance tables.

Summary of GCSE Short Course Results 2012- 2016

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A*-C and A*-G grades for the last five years in the short GCSE:

Nottinghamshire		Exam Year	National Results	
A*-C	A*-G		A*-C	A*-G
33.3	89.6	2012	53.8	95.5
43.8	91.7	2013	65.6	96.1
43.7	93.0	2014	56.8	95.8
		2015	57.5	96.3
		2016	56.4	95.2

A/S

A/S Level results are for pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 (typically 18 year olds) and are based on those students who did not continue this qualification onto full A Level or are those who achieved a grade U at full A Level – they are not based on total AS Level entries.

94 (90 in 2015) candidates were entered.

Summary of A/S Results 2012 - 2016

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A-C and A-E grades for the last five years at A/S level:

Nottinghamshire		Exam Year	National Results	
A*-C	A*-E		A*-C	A*-E
47.0	88.8	2012	67.2	92.5
52.7	81.5	2013	61.7	91.0
47.7	85.5	2014	67.3	92.2
47.7	84.4	2015	69.4	93.2
41.0	86.0	2016	69.3	93.0

Nationally there was a decrease in candidates this year from 40,067 to 38,493 which was not reflected in the County where numbers entered slightly increased from 90 (2015) to 94.

Gender in the County Entries	Entries	A*-C	A*-E
Female Candidates	67	43 %	87 %
Male Candidates	27	37%	85 %

SACRE was pleased to note the increased number of entries at this level.

A Level

SACRE was pleased to note the increase in entries from 179 to 196.

Nottinghamshire		Exam Year	National Results	
A*-C	A*-E		A*-C	A*-E
72.9	100.0	2012	80.3	98.6
82.1	100.0	2013	87.5	98.9
76.6	100.0	2014	79.5	98.5
78.7	99.5	2015	80.1	98.6
79.0	100.0	2016	80.4	98.4

Nationally there was another increase in the number of candidates from 25,773 to 27,032.

SACRE noted that though our A*-E results were above the National Average, our A*-C results were slightly lower.

Gender in the County Entries	Entries	A*-C	A*-E
Female Candidates	126	81 %	100 %
Male Candidates	70	74%	100%

10. Areas for further improvement 2016-2017

Targets for further improvement:

1. To maintain our work with HE institutions in order to consider ways of enhancing exam performance of students.
2. To continue to explore and report on how SACRE support the delivery of RE & Collective Worship in all schools/academies.
3. To continue to offer support teachers in delivering the Agreed Syllabus in the County through the CPD programme.
4. To continue to offer support to Governors in meeting their legal obligations.

Support for schools in bringing about further improvement 2016-2017

1. To support the continued development of networks for teachers/coordinators/lead teachers of RE in schools/academies.
2. To continue to promote the Agreed Syllabus as a means of making RE more effective and contributing to British Values.

Conclusion

SACRE continues to develop its role in supporting schools and advising the Children and Young People's Cabinet on RE and Collective Worship and would welcome feedback and suggestions for its continuing work.

If you have any comments on the work/role of SACRE or require any further information please contact:

Rev Ken Johnson
Secretary of SACRE
Children and Young People's Services
40 Lawn View House
Sutton-in-Ashfield
Notts
NG17 5GA

11. SACRE Members

2015-2016

Group A *Three Elected County Council Representatives*

Councillor Liz Plant (Chair of SACRE)
Councillor Muriel Weisz
Councillor Darren Langton

Group B *Five representatives of the Church of England*

Dr Anne Lumb
Mrs Tania Goldsmith
Mr David Maddison
Mr Craig Moxham
Mrs Kate Charlesworth

Group C *Eight representatives of teachers in Nottinghamshire*

Mrs Gail Brockway	(Secondary Teacher)
Ms Fiona Hunter	(Nottingham Trent University)
Mr Mike Follen	(NAHT)
Mrs Bethan Inglis	(Secondary RE teacher)
Mr Richard Linford	(Primary Teacher)
Mr Andy Vickers	(NASUWT)
Mr Andrew Widdowson	(NUT)
<i>Awaiting appointment</i>	(ATL)

Group D *Thirteen representatives of Christianity (other than Church of England) and other religious faiths representing the principal religious traditions of Nottinghamshire*

Mrs Gemma Pettifor	Assemblies of God
Mr Mike Arnold	Baptist
Mrs Mel Gotheridge	Buddhist
Mr Suresh Gunpatrao	Hindu
Mrs Naomi Posner	Jewish
Mr John Heard	Methodist
Mr Ali Asif	Muslim
Mrs Pippa Ling	Religious Society of Friends
Mr Michael Groves	Roman Catholic
Mrs Krys Pietryka	Roman Catholic
Mr Andrew Whitehouse	Salvation Army
Mr Santokh Singh Nijran	Sikh
Dr Graham Jennings	United Reformed Church

Co-opted members

Mr Godfrey Nix	Baha'i until June 2015
Mr Ashley Mortimer	Pagan Network from February 2015