

Norfolk Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12



Introduction by the Chair of Norfolk SACRE

I am delighted to present this annual report on behalf of the Norfolk SACRE. The Members of this SACRE have been diligent in the execution of their statutory duty to ensure the highest standards of Collective Worship and RE in Norfolk schools. This is a SACRE which understands its responsibilities and acts effectively to ensure that schools, teachers and the Local Authority are fully informed of, and involved in, all our deliberations.

The Council is proud of the quality and diversity of its membership. All major Faith Communities are represented, as are teachers and County Councillors. Their commitment is exemplary and the work of the Council reflects the deep insights, wide experience and intelligence that each member brings. All our meetings are distinguished by depth of debate and an astounding degree of co-operation and understanding. The fact that we all have shared purpose and vision enables us to speak with a united and authoritative voice.

Much of our work this year has been focussed on the Revised Agreed Syllabus which was presented to the SACRE by the Agreed Syllabus Conference. After careful reflection and analysis, coupled with stimulating dialogue and input from both bodies, we were pleased to present our final document to Norfolk County Council Cabinet. We feel that this revision is an excellent aid to effective teaching and learning in RE and one that can be confidently used in all Key Stages as an informative and clear guide to developing good practice. We were delighted to note that Cabinet were extremely impressed by the Syllabus and acknowledged our efforts with gratitude.

Due to budget restrictions, we have not been able to be involved in some of the high profile activities of previous years but, with the introduction of the RE Quality Mark, we are encouraging teachers of RE to achieve excellence in their classrooms. We will be launching the Revised Syllabus with a number of workshops throughout the County to ensure that teachers can familiarise themselves with the document so that they can develop and enhance their teaching.

This has been a year of uncertainty about the future place of Religious Education within our schools. We have been assiduous in following developments at a national level and have voiced our reactions and opinions to proposed changes in the status of RE by making representations to the relevant bodies with a united voice. We eagerly await the result of these national debates.

We continue to reinforce our contact with the wider faith community and hence encourage social, religious and racial harmony. This is a vital part of SACRE's identity and the diversity of this SACRE reflects the changing demographic of the County. The careful analysis of statistical data and examinations results means that we monitor the provision and quality of RE and Collective Worship keenly and, as a result, provide accurate and relevant feedback to interested parties.

I would like to thank all members of SACRE for continuing to display such total commitment and responsibility in the execution of their duty and for the good humour they always bring to all our discussions. As always we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Kathryn Wright, the RE Advisor for Norfolk, whose wisdom and knowledge have been invaluable to the success of our meetings and to David Orsborne our Clerk for guiding us along the right path. Thanks must also go to Julia Idiens for ensuring that we are all kept informed and cared for.

I am please to commend this report to you.

James McGarry, Chair of SACRE

1. Standards and Quality of provision of RE

SACRE has continued to explore ways in which it can carry out its statutory duty to monitor the provision and quality of RE in its schools. Examination results are analysed annually, and Ofsted reports have been looked at particularly in relation spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision and quality of RE in Church of England VA schools is also monitored through Section 48 inspections. The RE advisers have made visits to some schools and clusters this year providing training on the new agreed syllabus.

a. Primary, secondary and special schools

The primary RE adviser has supported schools throughout the year as part of his wider role. The adviser to SACRE has had limited contact with secondary schools this year. Contact has been made through emails, newsletters and a network meeting. Discussions took place about the new Ofsted framework, particularly those aspects relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. SACRE were pleased that RE departments were able to showcase how they were promoting this important area of education. SACRE wrote informally to academies asking whether they planned to use the new agreed syllabus. The majority replied positively and some have attended training. A project ran across the two Diocese encouraging schools to make life-size cribs for exhibiting in churches during advent. There was good uptake of this, particularly in West Norfolk. Norfolk was chosen as a pilot authority for the new RE Quality Mark. We were delighted that Archbishop Sancroft VA High School and Flegg High School achieved the Gold award, Thurton VC Primary the silver award and St Michael's VC (now VA) Primary the bronze award.

b. Examination Results

GCSE Short Course

Based on entries	Size of cohort	Norfolk A/A*	National A/A*	Norfolk A*-C	National A*-C	Norfolk A*-E	National A*-E
2012	3995	10.7	18.5	47.8	53.8	79.2	81.3
2011	4355	12.9	16.9	48.2	51.8	76.8	79.6
2010	4787	15.0	15.6	51.8	52.3	80.4	80.7
2009	4438	13.2	15.0	49.8	54.3	82.1	81.8
2008	4265	13.4	15.0	48.6	53.7	78	80
2007	3957	11.6	14.6	48.3	53.4	80	80
2006	3984	13.7	15.1	50	54.1	82	81

GCSE Full Course

Based on cohort	Size of cohort	Norfolk A/A*	National A/A*	Norfolk A*-C	National A*-C	Norfolk A*-E	National A*-E
2012	2158	30.9	32.1	70.3	73.7	90.2	91.9
2011	1725	28.8	31.8	73.1	73.2	92.2	91.5
2010	1261	28.7	29.0	72.4	72.1	90.5	91.3
2009	1319	25.9	29.4	69.7	71.9	91.8	91.4
2008	1422	23.5	29.0	66.5	72.5	91	91
2007	1314	24.1	27.9	67.9	71.5	89	90
2006	933	29.9	26.3	77	70.6	95	90

Whilst there is candidate decrease in entries for the short course, the full course entries rose by 433 candidates this year, which means that, over the last two years, there has been an increase of almost 900 students taking the Full Course paper. It is likely that this increase in entries accounts for the slight drop in A*-C results. Overall there has been a slight increase in those sitting a Religious Studies exam, which is particularly encouraging in the current educational climate. The increase in Full Course entries suggests that some RE departments have worked hard to secure a future for the subject - despite

pressure from the EBacc. Schools are working well with the most able students, the A/A* % has increased steadily, and more of the most able are being entered for the Full Course. There appears to be a need to focus on the 'D' grade students to enable them to obtain a C grade or above.

AS and A2 results

AS	Norfolk				National			
	Entries	% A - B	% A - E	UCAS mean points	Entries	% A - B	% A - E	UCAS mean points
2012	86	22.1	74.4	76.05	23042	55.9	92.5	Not available
2011	68	27.9	91.2	92.9	29387	43.2	91.6	Not available
2010	57	38.6	91.2	98.4	4660	30.1	87.9	90.9
2009	26	34.6	96.2	98.7	4627	30.8	88.9	91.9

A2	Norfolk				National			
	Entries	% A - B	% A - E	UCAS mean points	Entries	% A - B	% A - E	UCAS mean points
2012	187	43.9	100.00	Not available	23042	55.9	98.6	Not available
2011	171	56.1	98.8	230.0	18463	54.6	98.5	Not available
2010	176	50.6	98.9	223.6	11447	50.2	99.4	222.8
2009	171	64.9	99.4	231.6	11492	52.7	99.5	223.4

There has been an increase in the number of schools offering AS and A2 examinations in Religious Studies. Candidates of a wider range of abilities appear to have sat the examinations this year.

c. Complaints

There were no complaints received this year.

d. Initial Teacher training

The adviser to SACRE leads the subject knowledge days for the Secondary GTP programme. Both students this year gained posts - one in Norfolk and one in Suffolk. In addition, the course leader for the primary and secondary PGCE programmes at the University of East Anglia is a co-opted member of SACRE. The University also hosted the annual International Children and Spirituality Conference this year, which some SACRE members were able to attend.

e. Professional Development

The Adviser to SACRE provided CPD on the new agreed syllabus. This included well supported twilight sessions in Norwich and King's Lynn. The Annual SACRE workshop had to be cancelled due to lack of uptake by delegates. This was very disappointing. SACRE reviewed their plans for INSET as a result and will be running twilight sessions in 2012-13 as this was felt to be the best approach to meet the requirements of teachers and schools. The two Anglican Diocese (Norwich and Ely) provide CPD on both RE and collective worship. Through the year these included: network meetings; teaching and world religions; the new agreed syllabus and concept cracking. An increasing number of publications and on-line resources are being produced across the region by 'Church Schools East', including: *A Gift for All Musical Nativity*; *The Promise* - A musical play and RE resources for Pentecost; and *SMSC - A Christian perspective*. *Christianity, The Knowledge* was a residential course sponsored by Keswick Hall Trust for approximately 20 teachers across the three East Anglian Diocese. This took the form of an intensive two days looking at five key Christian concepts and included time for personal reflection.

2. Management of SACRE

SACRE met four times during 2010-11 on the following dates:

6th October 2011 at Norwich PDC

3rd February 2012 at West Norfolk PDC

23rd May 2012 at County Hall, Norwich

12th July 2012 at UEA Islamic Centre

Julia Idiens took up post as Assistant Clerk to SACRE. Attendance at SACRE meetings has continued to be very good and a number of new members were appointed through the year. In February, long serving member and previous Chair of SACRE and then the Agreed Syllabus Conference, Alison Thompson, stepped down and SACRE would like to acknowledge their thanks and gratitude for her contribution and leadership in recent years. In the May meeting, the SACRE development group was re-established so that future projects could be managed effectively. SACRE have also spent time in meetings discussing guidance materials for the agreed syllabus, including a paper on spirituality. Norfolk SACRE was represented at the NASCRE AGM in May. One member also attended a conference organized by TED Conferences on the Education Revolution in September.

3. The Effectiveness of the Local Agreed Syllabus

The revised Agreed Syllabus was adopted by cabinet in May and becomes statutory in September 2012. The Agreed Syllabus Conference met on four occasions this year, and additional meetings have taken place concerning particular aspects of the syllabus. The changes to the syllabus include:

- An enquiry-based learning approach. This is rooted in recent research, and is influenced by the Ofsted Report 'Transforming Religious Education' (2010)
- A recommended framework for effective enquiry which is outlined in the statutory part of the syllabus
- Recognition of a range of pedagogies and approaches teachers may use to establish effective enquiry based learning
- Clear principles for creating a climate for effective learning in RE
- A broader field of enquiry, including more specifically Humanism and other non-religious views. This is reflected in the terminology of the two new attainment targets:
 - Attainment Target 1: Learning about religion and belief
 - Attainment Target 2: Learning from religion and belief
- A revision of the level descriptors which reflects the enquiry approach of the syllabus.

The areas of study remain the same, but their headings have changed so that each Key Stage has the same number and titles. The aim behind this was to ensure better progression.

Guidance materials to support the syllabus are in two stages. The first stage went out with the syllabus in June. This included detailed information about the enquiry approach and exemplars for Key Stages 1-3. Further guidance will follow in November 2012, focusing on concepts and planning using the assessment criteria.

4. Collective Worship

The two advisers continue to provide support for schools on collective worship. There have been no courses planned by the county on collective worship this year, but the Diocese offer regular training for church and non-church schools.

5. Contribution of SACRE to social and racial harmony, and community cohesion

The Muslim representative on SACRE is involved with the Norwich Peace Camp and Peace One Day projects which are advertised to schools through the E Courier Service. Members of SACRE regularly visit schools and many have attended training on the agreed syllabus to meet with, and talk to, teachers.

Each year SACRE is hosted by members of a faith community. This year we were grateful to the UEA Islamic Centre for their hospitality.

Appendix: SACRE Membership 2011-12

Committee A:

Shan Barclay
Alan Berry (until July 2012)
Alpkadara Haworth
Ujjal Sing Kular
James McGarry (Chair)
Simon Oldfield
Robert Ogden
Shelagh Phillips
Masha Smith
Mark Taylor (until May 2012)
Alison Thompson (Chair of ASC, Until May 2012)
Gayatri Verma
Natasha Willkinson
Michelle Woodhouse
Jane Norris (from May 2012)
David Knighton (from July 2012)

Committee B:

Shirley Buxton
Juliet Corbett
Gill Hipwell
Shirley Hall

Committee C:

Melinda Derry
Clive Foden
Pat George
Russell Hammond
Sue Paice
Tom Pull (from May 2012)
Helen Hitchens

Committee D:

Cllr Bert Bremner
Cllr Dr Marie Strong
Cllr Paul Rice
Cllr Tony Wright

Co-opted:

Jackie Watson
Linda Rudge (Until July 2012)

Officers:

David Orsborne: Clerk to SACRE
Kevin Blogg : Adviser
Kathryn Wright: Adviser to SACRE