



The Surrey
Standing Advisory Council
on
Religious Education

Annual Report
2011-2012

May 2013

INTRODUCTION

Introduction by the Chairman

I am delighted to send you Surrey SACRE's Annual Report for the academic year 2011-2012. As QCDA no longer exists, every SACRE is required to submit its report to NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and circulate it to all schools. A change in LA advisers mid-term has caused the unforeseen delay of this report, which should have been published in December, for which we apologise.

The annual report provides an excellent opportunity to reflect upon the many achievements that Surrey SACRE and schools have made in the whole area of Religious Education.

The main foci for SACRE this year have been:

- enabling, supporting and funding the revision of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2012-2017);
- the training programme for the implementation of the revised syllabus;
- reviewing our constitution and membership to ensure we represent the variety of faith positions represented in the county.
- considering our response to the ongoing process of curriculum reform across the primary and secondary phases, and to the various reports reflecting on the quality of RE nationally.

More details of all of the above can be found within this Report.

While it is felt by many that the place of RE is threatened by the many changes within both primary & secondary curricula, Surrey SACRE wishes to reiterate that the legal basis for RE and Collective Worship remains unchanged. We are continuing to seek opportunities to improve our provision for RE and Collective Worship in a way that is relevant for learners and helpful for teachers. RE and Collective Worship have a clear and vital contribution to make in our duty to support and enhance the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral Social & Cultural) development of all learners in our schools.

We continue to work in partnership with the Local Authority and urge for the work of SACRE to be shared more widely so that the communities we serve might have a greater understanding of the valuable work SACRE undertakes. Of course, all such endeavours require adequate funding and it is vital in times of economic uncertainty that this is balanced against appropriate outcomes that ensure value for money.

SACRE would like to acknowledge the valuable work, over several years, of our previous adviser, Ivan Stevenson, who has moved on from his role as adviser to SACRE, and would particularly like to acknowledge his significant contribution to the newly-revised Agreed Syllabus. We extend our thanks also to John Withers and Diana Smith after many long years of service, and wish them well in their 'retirement'!

We also welcome some new members to our team and look forward to the valuable contribution they will make to our SACRE, especially in keeping it a relevant and dynamic body, with strong connections with the local religious communities.

I would also like to extend my thanks to all the continuing members of SACRE, who give their time voluntarily, and Surrey teachers for their continued support and dedication to raising the status of Religious Education within our schools.

Margaret Hicks
Chairman of Surrey SACRE

May 2013

1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 The Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Surrey Schools (2012-2017)

The Agreed Syllabus is the statutory document for maintained Surrey schools, including those with Voluntary Controlled status. Academies without a religious designation are also required to follow the Surrey Agreed Syllabus. A number of independent schools continue to request copies of the syllabus with a view to implementing it. Voluntary Aided schools, of course, follow their relevant Diocesan Guidelines. Schools are reminded that the Agreed Syllabus has the equivalent legal standing of a National Curriculum order and that RE continues to be a statutory entitlement for all registered pupils, in addition to the National Curriculum.

The main focus for SACRE over this academic year has been the process of revising the Agreed Syllabus for Surrey. Following a period of consultation with Surrey schools via questionnaire, and with Secondary heads of RE and RE subject leaders in Primary schools by means of the RE network meetings, it became clear that one of the key issues to address within the review would be relating to progression, both within and across Key Stages. The focus for the review therefore included:

- more rigour and challenge throughout, with a clearer focus on progression, both within and across Key Stages & particularly in relation to Christianity;
- altering the Compulsory and Core requirement and reducing the flexibility around Additional Study Units to enable better progression;
- altering the structure of the units to make the Statutory Learning Objectives more prominent; removing the 'Resources' section which quickly becomes outdated; creating a new section for Skills (including Literacy);
- enhancing the coverage of non-religious beliefs, in particular Humanism. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils will now have studied at least 5 religions to facilitate better progression at Key Stage 3;
- improving guidance on assessment, taking into account recent developments in APP (Assessing Pupil Progress).

The one frustration of this revision was the fact that the long-awaited changes to the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) curriculum nationally were published after the Agreed Syllabus went to print, so were not able to be taken into account during the revision.

In July 2012, a successful (and very over-subscribed!) programme of Entitlement Training for teachers from Primary & Secondary phases was undertaken, with the following aims:

- to outline the contextual changes to the new syllabus;
- to introduce teachers to the new structures and assessment principles;
- to provide an overview of the syllabus content and suggest how to initiate planning.

There remains an issue for schools who were not able to secure a place on one of the Entitlement Training sessions. Some support in implementing the Agreed Syllabus continues to be provided for schools through the Secondary & Primary RE network groups. The revised syllabus was formally adopted by the Local Authority and launched to Surrey schools in November 2012 at an event hosted by Royal Alexandra and Albert School, Reigate. The launch was attended by schools, SACRE members and representatives from Babcock 4S. Speakers included teacher members of the Syllabus writing group, Ivan Stevenson (LA adviser to SACRE) and Margaret Hicks (Chairperson to SACRE).

Our sincere thanks go to all those involved in this crucial process of review and implementation.

1.2. Standards

OfSTED conducted two subject inspections in Surrey schools during 2011-2012, with reasonably positive outcomes. The reports confirm what has also been observed during visits to schools during this academic year, which are:

- that there are often issues in year 7 (either through learning 'gaps' or repetition of knowledge), as pupils transfer to the secondary phase;
- that pupils benefit greatly from opportunities to investigate learning independently, in ways that develop key skills in RE;
- that schools need to secure greater coherence, continuity and progression in their planning;
- that a more robust processes of assessment need to be incorporated.

These issues have been key features of the Agreed Syllabus review, so it will be interesting to observe the impact of this in future years.

The position of RE within the E-Bacc has been a topic for much discussion during the year. The government confirmed that Religious Education would not be included in the E-Bacc, citing its statutory position and a perceived lack of academic rigour as key reasons. Over this year, there has been grave concern in the 'RE Communities' that the government's lack of support and the disparity within the RE 'Communities' themselves will rapidly lead to the fracturing of RE provision in England. Partly in response to this, the Religious Education Council (REC) is currently working alongside an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), launched in June 2012, to 'discuss provision for the subject, promote a clear positive image of RE and advocate that all young people receive excellent RE teaching.' The group has initiated a review of the RE Curriculum, to sit alongside the review of the National Curriculum. The first phase will report on the supply of and support for RE teachers.

Religious Studies Examinations:

GCSE Religious Studies (Philosophy & Applied Ethics)

Across the board, Short Course figures have dropped because Full Course numbers have risen: it's likely that with the Government deciding that the Short Course no longer counts towards league tables, more schools have opted for the Full Course. In total 8378 Surrey pupils entered either the GCSE Full or Short Course, which shows a drop of 553 pupils across the County on the 2011 figures. However, the number of entries for the Full Course has increased again from the 2011 figures, and for both the Full & Short course, a higher percentage of pupils were awarded A*-C grades than in previous years. A higher proportion of pupils in Surrey are awarded A*-C grades in both the Full and Short Courses compared with pupils nationally.

GCSE results with National Comparators:

Full Course	2010	2011	2012	
National entries	155,424	169,464	210,600	↑
Surrey entries	2963	3799	3844	↑
National A*-C	72%	72%	74%	↑
Surrey A*-C	80%	75%	77%	↑
Surrey A*-G	99.5%	99.1%	99.1%	↔

Short Course	2010	2011	2012	
National entries	205,040	177,455	176,827	↓
Surrey entries	5822	5132	4534	↓
National A*-C	52%	50%	53%	↑
Surrey A*-C	62%	57%	58%	↑
Surrey A*-G	99.5%	96.3%	96.4%	↑

Full course – results by gender:

As can be seen, girls continue to significantly outperform boys entered into the Full Course, with a higher grade gap of 16%.

	Entries	A*-C	A*-G
Boys	1844	1285 (67%)	1815 (98.5%)
Girls	2000	1658 (83%)	1993 (99.65%)
Total	3844	2943 (77%)	3808 (99%)

Short course – results by gender:

The gender gap follows the same trend as with the Full Course, with 12% more girls achieving A*-C grades than boys entered for the Short Course.

	Entries	A*-C	A*-G
Boys	2506	1337 (53%)	2387 (95%)
Girls	2028	1313 (65%)	1982 (96%)
Total	4534	2650 (58%)	4369 (96.4%)

Compared to previous years:

Full course attainment at grades A*-C is up for girls and down for boys, but reversed for Short Course. Overall attainment is up for both courses on the 2011 figures.

	Full Course 2010	Full Course 2011	Full Course 2012	Short Course 2010	Short Course 2011	Short Course 2012
Boys A*-C	75%	69%	67% ↓	56%	49%	53% ↑
Girls A*-C	84%	82%	83% ↑	68%	66%	65% ↓
Total	80%	75%	77% ↑	62%	57%	58% ↑

ELQ (Entry Level)

	2010	2011	2012
Entries	44	32	45 ↑

Religious Studies at 16+

A total of 263 students were entered for **AS Level Religious Studies** (168 at KS4 and 95 at KS5 (Post 16)). The same gender gaps can be observed between girls and boys at AS Level as at GCSE.

	Entries	A-B	A-E
Boys	99	30 (30%)	91 (92%)
Girls	164	67 (41%)	157 (96%)
Total	263	97 (34%)	248 (94%)

At **GCE A Level**, a total of 195 students were entered (62 boys and 133 girls). 1 boy and 6 girls were awarded the A* grade, with a total of 27% achieving A*-A, and 53% of students being awarded A*-B. A similar gender gap as for other examination results exists between girls and boys for all grading bands.

Whilst scoring a slightly lower proportion of A* grades, Surrey A level performance is above the national average for all other gradings.

	A*	A*-A	A*-B	A*-E
Surrey Entries	7 (3.6%)	53 (27%)	103 (53%)	195 (100%)
Boys	1 (2%)	12 (19%)	28 (45%)	62 (100%)
Girls	6 (5%)	41 (31%)	75 (56%)	133 (100%)
National Entries	4.3%	22%	51%	99%

1.3. Methods of teaching, choice of materials and teacher training

RE courses offered during the past year have included:

- Networking Groups for Primary RE Co-ordinators in East and West Surrey, which meet termly. These are very well attended, attracting about 40 co-ordinators and are useful for SACRE to gauge school needs in relation to RE. During this academic year, focuses have included the teaching of Christianity and the place of RE in SMSC provision, as well as considering the impact of the new OfSTED framework on the teaching of RE.
- A new format for the Secondary Networks was launched, responding to the difficulties that teachers experience attending twilight sessions. The bi-annual conference-style half-day events provide more time and better opportunities for professional development and networking.
- A half day course for RE is offered as part of the Surrey Graduate Teachers' Programme. This is the only input that many teachers on the programme will have to equip them to teach the Agreed Syllabus. The lack of funding for ITE (Initial Teacher Education) for RE is a cause for concern nationally.

The Surrey RE Website is now located within two sites. The Agreed Syllabus can be found on the Fronter portal at www.surreymle.org The syllabus is available to download in Word or pdf format, and the suggested Resources for teaching the Agreed Syllabus can also be downloaded from this 'room', as well as materials used during the programme of Entitlement Training. There are many other useful documents included on this site, including SACRE information, and, in due course, this report. There is also a link on the front page to the Surrey Virtual Visits website, which enables schools to visit, virtually, Guildford Cathedral, North West Surrey Synagogue and Shah Jahan Mosque.

The places of worship database is located at www.surreyplacesofworship.org.uk. This online database of Surrey churches and information on other places of worship continues to be updated regularly. It is an excellent tool for organising school visits to places of worship in and around Surrey.

1.4 Complaints concerning RE

No complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Religious Education in Surrey schools.

2. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship has been in the news over the past academic year, following the publishing of a report by the National Secular Society, which indicated that many schools do not comply with the law and that parents do not support it. Whilst this has not been observed during visits to Surrey schools during 2011-2012, there has been increased concern reported from schools about the nature of Collective Worship, and how to discuss issues that arise with parents in an inclusive manner. SACRE has noted a need for revised guidance to schools on Collective Worship.

2.1. Determinations

In November 2011, SACRE renewed a determination for Sythwood Primary school for a period of five years. Existing determinations for Maybury Infants and New Monument Primary are currently under review.

2.2. Complaints

No complaints were received under Section 23 of the Education Reform Act 1988 regarding Collective Worship in Surrey schools.

3. GENERAL

3.1. Links with other agencies - National

Surrey SACRE is a member of NASACRE (National Association of SACREs) and a representative attends national meetings. A representative also attends the regional meetings for SACRE. The Babcock 4S Adviser for RE is a member of AREIAC (The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants).

3.2 Surrey Youth SACRE

Surrey Youth SACRE has not met during this academic year owing to ongoing difficulties in securing adequate support from schools, and releasing teachers to accompany pupils. In the past, SACRE has greatly benefitted from the views and discussions with and alongside Youth SACRE, which demonstrated how these young people cared about their environment and responded to the diversity of faith and belief in Surrey. We hope that a new way forward can be found in the future.

3.3. Governor Training

The role of the Governing Body in monitoring the coverage of the Agreed Syllabus is critical for the successful implementation of the Agreed Syllabus. Governors also have a key role in providing a challenge to schools to raise standards in specific areas and SACRE believes that this can have a significant impact on standards in RE. Schools are encouraged to identify a governor with specific responsibility for RE.

3.4. List of organisations to which SACRE report has been sent

Copies of the SACRE Annual Report are distributed to all maintained schools in the County with a request that governing bodies consider the report and take any appropriate action. A copy has also been sent to NASACRE.

3.5. Contacts

If you have any issues which you would like to raise with the Surrey SACRE, please contact Rachel Boxer, Associate RE consultant, and Adviser to SACRE via Vivian Stacey, Clerk to SACRE by email: vivian.stacey@babcockinternational.com.

Additional copies of this annual report are available from Vivian Stacey, Clerk to SACRE, on 01372 834321 or email vivian.stacey@babcockinternational.com.

Appendix 1: SACRE Membership (as at May 2012)

Chair	Mrs Margaret Hicks (SCC Member)
Vice-Chair	Mrs Sarah Harris
Committee A – Other Faiths	
Kauser Aktar	Muslim
Rev Marie Greenwood	Methodist
Peter Ward	Roman Catholic
Ann Gunn	Roman Catholic
Mrs Sarah Harris	Jewish
Rajendra Pandya	Hindu
Mr Inderjeet Singh Rehncy	Sikh
Dr Tony Wenman (Group Chair)	United Reformed Church
John Withers (retiring)	Baptist
Nabil Mustapha	Baha'i
Jennie Johnson	Humanist
Committee B – The Church of England	
Mr Shaun Burns	Southwark Diocese
Mrs Heather Henderson	Guildford Diocese
Canon Derek Holbird (Group Chair)	Guildford Diocese
Committee C – Teachers	
Mrs Janet Harris (to July 2012)	NAHT
Mrs Liz Esdon	NASUWT
Deborah Drury	NUT
Gemma Papworth	Secondary teacher rep.
Vacancy	Primary teacher rep.
Committee D – Local Authority	
Mr Keith Taylor	SCC Member
Mrs Angela Fraser	SCC Member
Mrs Dorothy Ross-Tomlin (Group Chair)	SCC Member
Ms Diana Smith	SCC Member
Ms Denise Turner	SCC Member
Officers in attendance	
Ivan Stevenson, Adviser (outgoing)	Education Consultant Babcock Four S
Rachel Boxer (Adviser)	Associate Consultant for RE Babcock Four S
Vivian Stacey	Clerk to SACRE Babcock Four S
Mrs Janice Taylor & Mr Antony Sanderson	Managers for REMA