



# Annual Report of the Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2012/13

## *Celebrating Religious Education in Cheshire East*



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# **ANNUAL REPORT** *of the* Cheshire East Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education **2012-13**

December 2013

## **1 Introduction**

I am delighted to introduce the latest SACRE annual report for the authority of Cheshire East. The report covers the period from September 2012 to August 2013.

During this past academic year we have once again been able, by careful management of resources, to continue to provide support for religious education in our schools through our two officers who have advised SACRE, led twilight and network meetings and supported the subject in schools through emails and telephone calls. During such an important year for education this has been invaluable in keeping religious education at the forefront of our minds in the sea of change.

The first meeting of the Cheshire East 2012-13 took place on 2nd October 2012 at Knutsford Academy with presentations from two Cheshire East schools who had been awarded the REQM. Holmes Chapel Academy & Sixth Form College then kindly hosted the next SACRE meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and in June we were welcomed by the RE department of Shavington High School.

Lois Wilkinson, clerk to the SACRE has continued to provide invaluable administration support for our activities.

Once again I am grateful for the knowledgeable support provided by my fellow councillors and members of our local faith communities as well as our officers.



**Councillor Steve Wilkinson**  
**Chair of CE SACRE**

## 2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CHESHIRE EAST SCHOOLS



### 2.1 Locally Agreed RE Syllabus



#### ***Engaging Encounter & Reasoned Response***

**The Cheshire East Religious Education Agreed Syllabus was launched in July 2011.** The locally agreed syllabus is the statutory syllabus for RE in Cheshire East schools prepared under schedule 31 to the Education Act of 1996.

**It must be followed in maintained schools without a designated denomination and all church controlled schools within the local authority.** Copies of the syllabus CD Rom can be obtained from Lois Wilkinson clerk to the SACRE

Ofsted use the local syllabus as the yardstick by which their inspectors make their judgements on the delivery of the RE curriculum in individual Cheshire East schools.

The existing syllabus is further supported by in-service training (INSET) led by two part-time consultants who are also available to lead INSET for staff in response to requests from schools, provided that schools are able to buy in their support. Telephone and email advice is also often sought and provided by the consultants.

## 2.2 Monitoring the Agreed Syllabus

**The SACRE have a statutory duty to monitor the impact of the locally agreed syllabus.**

**Analysis of Ofsted Reports** – Please refer to minutes of SACRE meetings for full details which can be found on the Cheshire East SACRE website.

Analysis of Section 5 Ofsted inspection reports which identifies the performance of schools with respect to spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum continues to give a simple indicator and point to school performance in RE. The reports for schools in the authority which have been visited by Ofsted are analyzed for each SACRE meeting and reported upon. If concerns are raised then advice and support can be offered by the two advisory consultants, Sue Glover (Primary) and Sue Wilson (Secondary).

Under the Ofsted reporting system, detailed information about RE is not available, unless it was through a previous HMI religious education subject survey visit. No RE HMI subject surveys were made during the last academic year and these have now been discontinued. SACRE members remain concerned about how RE is often marginalized in schools. A lack of contact with diverse communities or other cultures within the local area continues to make it difficult for schools to fully demonstrate a well developed understanding of other faiths and cultures. Consultants have highlighted this concern with colleagues at network meetings and encouraged staff to consider how they could ensure that more visits to places of worship or visiting guest speakers can become regular parts of the RE curriculum.

## 2.3 Standards in Religious Education

### 2.3.1 Examinations in Religious Studies

The report is based upon the provisional statistics for 2013.

A total of 17 Cheshire East secondary schools entered candidates for the full GCSE course in Religious Studies in 2013. This is one more than last year. 18 schools entered candidates for the short course and 14 entered candidates for both. The four main examination boards were used.

#### GCSE Full Course

In GCSE full course there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils taking the examination. 82.8% of candidates achieved grades A\*-C. This is a fall from last year (89.7 %)

The comparable national figures are unavailable at present.

#### GCSE Short Course

A smaller number of students were entered this year. 62.9% achieved grades A\*-C. This is above last years' result (57.1%).

The national figures are unavailable at this time.

#### GCE 'A' level

74 students were entered for this examination, a fall on last year (89, 92 in 2011) 60.8% achieved grades A\*-B, 100 % achieved grades A-E. This reflects a lot of hard work by students and staff, who are to be congratulated.

### Comment

- It is not clear if the percentages of the cohort who are not entered for any examination are receiving their entitlement of RE lessons in KS4. We know that some students are not, yet Ofsted rarely tackle this issue.
- Some schools are starting GCSE courses in Year 9. Early entry means that KS3 has been impoverished in time and depth. The foundations for good understanding at GCSE are undermined.
- The significant fall in numbers entered for GCSE short course may be the result of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate and the other changes to the short course in 2014. The fall in numbers doing AS and A level will need to be monitored.
- The increase in the numbers opting for full course is reassuring confirmation of the popularity of the subject amongst students.

### 2.3.2 Monitoring of Secondary RE Departments

Support was offered by Sue Wilson (employed for 10 days) through telephone calls, emails and network meetings. The **network meetings** covered areas of concern such as changes to KS4 and 5, the new Ofsted HMI report, the RE review, as well as allowing colleagues to share good practice and resources. We also said farewell to three long serving heads of department.

#### Subject strengths

- 100% of students at 'A' Level achieved A-E grades. 60.8% of these were grades A\*-B. an increase on last year (52.8%)
- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions, two in the north and two in the south of the authority, to ensure some access to professional development for teachers of RE.

#### Areas for development

- The continuing impact of the changes to KS4 needs to be carefully monitored
- Some schools are not fulfilling the legal requirements at KS4, in terms of time allocation.
- Early entry for GCSE means that the KS3 RE curriculum is reduced and in some cases, Year 11 students are not receiving their legal entitlement to RE.

## 2.4 Teaching Methods, Advice, Materials, Training



### 2.4.1 Artefact Bases- Materials

- A substantial collection of religious artefacts purchased previously by SACRE are held at Knutsford Academy who will lend it to local primary schools on request. *Please contact Chris Perry 01565 633294.*
- There is another collection of artefacts in the south of the authority at Sir William Stanier High School. *Please contact Bryony Fordham 01270 583431*

### 2.4.2 Advice and Inset Training for Teachers- Provided by Consultants

#### Primary Schools

- More than 35 primary schools were given email or telephone advice during the academic year. Support was mainly given to RE subject leaders or Headteachers. Advice was primarily based on planning the primary curriculum, assessment and implementing the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. A small number of queries centred around collective worship.
- Four primary school network meetings sponsored by SACRE were held in different areas of the county. SACRE is grateful to Goostrey, Smallwood CE, Monks Coppenhall and Vernon primary schools for hosting the meetings. These were attended by over 60 teachers. This was a unique opportunity for subject leaders to come together to share good practice. The main emphasis of the meetings was to look at practical delivery of the agreed syllabus. Following the success of sample medium term plans circulated to schools last year, short term lesson plans were developed to support the implementation of the syllabus. These were sent to all primary schools in the summer term. The plans are a supplement to the locally RE Agreed Syllabus (2011) and a flexible tool for assisting teachers to use with their own school planning. Copies can be obtained from Lois Wilkinson clerk to the SACRE or Sue Glover, Primary RE Consultant, ([sue@gloves.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:sue@gloves.freeserve.co.uk)). Schools are free to use, improve on or disregard the supplementary documents as required. (NB These plans are not an actual RE Scheme of work that can be picked up and used without alteration).

#### Secondary Schools

- Cheshire East SACRE has been able to fund 4 'twilight' inset sessions. Tytherington, Kingsgrove and Wilmslow High schools kindly provided the venues.
- Other support was offered through telephone calls, emails and network meetings included: supporting new heads of department.
- We also said farewell to three long serving heads of department, who have served our youngsters generously. Dr David Kay at Holmes Chapel who has been promoted, Mrs Sheila Collins at Macclesfield High and Mrs Kath Schorah from Kingsgrove who have both retired. We wish them every happiness and success in this next stage of their lives.

**Notices about courses, network 'twilights' and other initiatives are given via the Cheshire East bulletin.**

## 2.5 Complaints

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of RE, requiring the LA's Special Appeals Committee to be convened.

## **3 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **3.1 Supporting Collective Worship**

All previously published material giving guidance for collective worship still stand in respect of the law.

The School and Standards Frameworks Act 2006 continues to reflect the current law governing collective worship. NASACRE (National Association of Standing advisory Council for RE) have produced a paper giving further insights into collective worship which is available on request.

Under the Ofsted framework, inspectors do comment on the opportunities for spiritual development in schools.

Further advice and materials are available from both the primary and secondary RE consultants.

### **3.2 Determinations**

The SACRE has not been called upon during the past year to make any determinations concerning collective worship.

### **3.3 Complaints**

There have been no complaints to the LA during the past year in respect of collective worship requiring the LA's special Appeals Committee to be convened.

## **4 LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

### **4.1 National and International**

The Cheshire East SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (NASACRE).

Jane Brooke, previously a chair of NASACRE is a member of Cheshire East SACRE. Jane is an independent consultant and has previously worked as an RE Project Development Officer for the National Society. She is also the Principal Consultant for Chester Diocese and together with her colleague Mary Myatt has pioneered the national REQM (RE Quality Mark). Several awards have been given to Cheshire East schools including the gold standard. The overall aim is to celebrate outstanding RE practice in schools and further details can be found at [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org). Sue Glover and Sue Wilson, Cheshire East RE Consultants are REQM assessors.

October 2013 saw the publication of two new documents which have the potential to govern and shape the future of religious education.

The first report which was the last HMI subject inspection report for religious education published by Ofsted. The report is based on evidence drawn from 185 schools visited between September 2009 and July 2012. It also draws on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of standing advisory councils on religious education (SACREs) and other RE professionals, and wider surveys carried out by professional associations for RE. 'Realising the Potential' the full report can be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/religious-education-realising-potential>

The second report was a non statutory religious education subject review led by the RE Council designed to complement the review of the rest of the curriculum also published last term. Sue Wilson Secondary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East was a member of task group two in this National Review of Religious Education. This was launched at the Houses of Parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013. Copies of this document are available on the REC website [http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE\\_Review.pdf](http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/media/file/RE_Review.pdf)

The report 'RE in English schools Non Statutory Guidance 2010' was the last government document published that gave in depth guidance on RE. The DFE have welcomed the two new reports from the REC and Ofsted. We await further guidance on how they may impact RE in the future.

Sue Glover Primary Schools Consultant for Cheshire East attended the NASACRE AGM in London in May of this year and reported back the key messages to the Cheshire East SACRE. Members of Ofsted, REC and the DCSF also took part. It is hoped that SACRE members will continue to attend national events in future years, funding permitting. The NASACRE Newsletters 'SACRE News' are much valued by SACRE members, providing useful insight into the activities of SACREs and the teaching of RE across the country. The Diocese of Chester has continued to fund Sue Glover, Primary Schools Consultant to support religious education in Cheshire East Church primary schools as part of their work in schools.

### **4.2 Local and Regional**

Cheshire East SACRE has links with the local Macclesfield Interfaith Group. The Cheshire East faith audit producing local data is of valuable assistance in the SACRE's work.

Cheshire East SACRE continues to have some links through the in-service programme with the University of Chester and Chester Diocese

Jane Brooke continues to support the Rochdale SACRE and also works for Chester Diocese.

As well as supporting Cheshire East primary schools as a consultant Sue Glover also serves on Cheshire West SACRE and works for Chester Diocese supporting RE and Collective worship in Church of England schools.

## Appendix 1 Examination Statistics 2013

	Cheshire East 2013	Cheshire East 2012	Cheshire East 2011	Cheshire East 2010
<b><u>GCSE Short Courses in RE</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	1859	2115	2189	1931
Number of grades A* -C	1169	1207	1151	1102
Percentage gaining A* -C	62.9%	57.1%	52.6%	57.0%
Percentage gaining A* -G	97.5%	96.3%	95.4%	97.2%
Percentage of cohort entered	52.8%	68.9%	54.2%	58.7%
<b><u>GCSE Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	972	778	760	639
Number of grades A* -C	804	697	647	520
Percentage gaining A* -C	82.8%	89.7%	85.1%	81.5%
Percentage gaining A* -G	99.7%	99.9%	99.5%	99.2%
Percentage of cohort entered	34.1%	26.6%	18.8%	20.9%
<b><u>GCE 'A' Level Religious Studies</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	74	89	92	106
Number of grades A-E	74	89	92	106
Percentage gaining grades A-E	100%	100%	100.0%	100.0%
Percentage of cohort entered	4.7%	5.5%	5.7%	6.3%
<b><u>GCE 'A/S' Level Religious Studies – Year 12</u></b>				
Number of candidates entered	25	22	26	43
Number of grades A-E	20	21	22	40
Percentage gaining grades A-E	80%	95.5%	84.6%	93.0%
<b>Percentage of cohort entered</b>	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	2.2%

## **Appendix 2 LA Publications**

All RE publications are available, generally from the clerk to SACRE, Lois Wilkinson. Lois can be contacted by email at [Lois.Wilkinson@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Lois.Wilkinson@cheshireeast.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01606 2743083.

The locally agreed syllabus and the accompanying handbook and all other documentation for religious education in primary and secondary schools are available on the Cheshire East website.

### **LA guidance on Collective Worship**

Guidance on Collective Worship in community and controlled schools can be obtained from the RE Consultants.

### **SACRE Annual Report**

Further copies of the annual SACRE reports are available from the Clerk to the SACRE, as above.

## **Appendix 3 SACRE Development Plan**

This year 2012-13 the main areas of activity were:

- To support teachers in dissemination of good practice, teaching/resources.
- To help teachers and schools to raise standards in the quality of RE teaching.
- To help schools improve the quality of collective worship.
- To contribute towards understanding and respect between different religious groups within the community.
- To discharge its responsibilities effectively.

## **Implementation**

In order to complete the work of the Cheshire East SACRE last year, there was an initial allocated budget of £8000 primarily to fund the work of two RE consultants who were employed by the authority to facilitate the work of SACRE, (One primary consultant and one secondary consultant each employed for 10 days).

Recent Ofsted school inspection reports were studied on RE and Collective Worship for evidence of standards and reported to SACRE. Support was offered where considered necessary.

## **Appendix 4 Statutory Functions**

**These continue to remain the same in line with government legislation**

- To advise the LA on matters relating to RE and collective worship; methods of teaching; choice of teaching material; provision of teacher training.
- To determine any applications from head teachers for dis application in relation to the general requirements for collective worship.
- To monitor the effective provision for RE in community and controlled schools.
- To consider whether changes need to be made in the Agreed RE Syllabus or the support offered to schools.
- To support the effective provision for collective worship in schools.
- To monitor the provision of daily collective worship in schools and consider how to improve such provision.
- To publish an annual report on its work.

## **Appendix 5**

During the 2012-13 academic year the attendance at Cheshire East SACRE meetings was as follows:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>2nd October 2012</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> February 2013</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> June 2013</b>
A	6	4	4
B	2	2	2
C	2	2	1
D	2	3	2

Also in attendance at each meeting were: Graham Nicholson (Humanist Observer); Sue Glover, Primary Schools Consultant, Sue Wilson, Secondary Schools Consultant, and Lois Wilkinson, Clerk to the SACRE. Anne Gadsden Excellence and Equity manager attended all meetings on behalf of the local authority.

Regular items on the agenda include discussion of Ofsted reports; a summary of the consultants' work during the term and the current budgetary position.

Dates for the Cheshire East SACRE meetings during 2013-2014 academic year are as follows:

9<sup>th</sup> October 2013: Sandbach Community Primary School  
25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 Middlewich High School  
Summer Term 2014 Date & venue to be confirmed

## **Appendix 6 Distribution**

The CE SACRE report is sent to the following:

- NASACRE (National Association Of SACREs)
- Cheshire East Schools and colleges
- Members of the Cheshire East SACRE
- Lead Member for Children's Services and the members of the Children's Services Strategic Panel
- Diocesan Education Associations
- Representatives of local faith communities

The report will also be made available on the Cheshire East website [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

**Appendix 7 - Membership of the Cheshire East SACRE for 2012-2013 Academic Year.**

<b>Committee A – Christian Denominations and Other Religions</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Denomination/Religion</b>	<b>Address</b>
Les Biddulph	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	Bridge Cottage, Buxton Road, Upper Hulme, Leek, Staffs ST13 8TT.
Mrs R Habibi	Baha'i	Little Beeches, Bollin Way, Prestbury, SK10 4BX
Mr J Vaja	Hinduism	1 Marlborough Close, Macclesfield, SK10 2LA
Rev Penny Johnson	Unitarian	Fairfield, London Road, Adlington, Macclesfield, SK10 4NA
Heather Staniland	Methodist	
Mark Cohen	Judaism	
Mr J Ahmed	Islam	71 Ruskin Road, Crewe, CW2 7JS

<b>Committee B – Church of England</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Rev Mrs J Brooke	Church of England	3, Bridge Place, Chester, CH1 1SA
Mrs S Glover	Church of England	8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL
Rev Mr T Shepherd	Church of England	The Vicarage, 15 Offley Road, Sandbach, CW11 1GY

<b>Committee C – Teachers' Associations</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Address</b>
Mr I V Bonner	ATL	252 Nixon Drive, Winsford, CW7 2JD
Mrs A Boulton	NAHT	Oaklands School, Cheviot Square, Winsford, CW7 1NU
Mrs J Rippin	NUT	96 Moors Lane, Darnhall, Winsford, CW7 2JD

<b>Committee D – Local Authority</b>		
<b>Name</b>		<b>Address</b>
Cllr Mr S R Wilkinson	(Chair)	Dunholme Farm, Pickmere Lane, Knutsford, WA16 0JL
Cllr Mrs S Jones	(Vice Chair)	10 Fairview Avenue, Alsager, Stoke-on-Tent ST7 2NW
Cllr C Andrew		17 Madron Avenue, Macclesfield, SK10 3PW

**Officers Name**

Mrs S Glover Primary Consultant  
 Mrs S Wilson Secondary Consultant  
 Mrs A Gadsden  
 Monitoring & Intervention Manager

**Address**

8 Pipers Court, Hoole, Chester, CH2 3JL  
 3 Drumblefield, Chelford, Macclesfield, SK11 9BT  
 Room 1 Dalton House, Dalton Way, Middlewich, CW10 0HU