

**SACRE REPORT**

**STANDING ADVISORY  
COUNCIL FOR  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

***Annual Report***

***2012 - 2013***

## Contents

	FOREWORD.....	1
	INTRODUCTION.....	2
1	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.....	2
1.1	The Agreed Syllabus.....	2
2	STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.....	2
2.1	Background to exemplification of Standards.....	2
2.2	Examination Results in Religious Studies (Provisional).....	3
3	COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.....	3
4	TRAINING AND SUPPORT .....	3
4.1	Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity.....	3
4.2	Courses, Conferences and Meetings	4
5	COLLECTIVE WORSHIP.....	5
5.1	Monitoring and offering guidance on Collective Worship .....	5
5.2	Complaints .....	5
6	LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES .....	5
6.1	Devon and Torbay SACRE.....	5
6.2	NASACRE .....	6
7	SACRE ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIORITIES.....	6
7.1	Development Plan for 2011 – 2014.....	6
	APPENDICES.....	7
A.	Religious Studies Examination Statistics 2001-2012 .....	7
B.	List of Organisations to Which Report is Sent.....	10
C.	The Duties of SACRE .....	10
D.	SACRE Members 2012 – 2013 .....	12
E.	Number of Meetings, Record of Attendance and a Brief Account of Main Issues Discussed at Each Meeting .....	14

## FOREWORD

This year has been yet another time of turmoil and uncertainty in the R.E. world! It would be easy to become despondent and negative about R.E. and its precarious position within the curriculum. However, Plymouth SACRE has shown that R.E. and Collective Worship are more than worthy of being valued as central to children's education.

This year has seen very encouraging examination results, comparing very favourably with national averages. The agreed syllabus continues to be well received by teachers and the resources offered by the centre for Faith and Cultural Diversity have been extensively used throughout the year.

SACRE has not been dormant in keeping track of Government discussions about the future of R.E. in our schools and has continued to support initiatives that raise the profile of R.E. and Collective Worship.

A new handbook of Collective Worship resources led by the Head of Hyde Park Infants School, Liz Hill, and teacher, Katie Freeman, will be launched in the autumn and I'm sure, greatly welcomed in Primary Schools. Our new SACRE promotional display boards are being used at every opportunity where R.E. is the focus.

This report details the many activities that our RE Advisor, Jonathan Marshall, has led, to raise the profile of R.E. and its invaluable contribution to children's education, and to support and develop further, the work of teachers in these difficult times.

We should all feel encouraged by the positive work that is being done. This SACRE is committed to supporting good R.E. teaching in our schools and helping in any way we can to raise the profile of R.E. in the curriculum. Despite the challenges that we face, R.E. will continue to enrich and nourish the understanding of human kind for all our children and young people.

Helena Mitchell  
Chair of Plymouth SACRE  
November 2013

## **INTRODUCTION**

Plymouth SACRE is pleased to produce this report as a summary of its work in religious education and collective worship. It provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on its deliberations over the last year and to inform others of its work.

SACRE is a unique organisation and amidst the challenges and issues we face, concerning the place of religion in schools and society, there has never been a more important time for the teaching and learning of RE in schools.

### **1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **1.1 The Agreed Syllabus**

The Agreed Syllabus - "Every Child Matters in RE" was launched at a combined SACRE Members and Teachers Conference at the College of St Mark and St John in July 2007. This represents the combined work of representatives from Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Local Authorities and SACREs under the direction of the RE Advisor for Devon. This was a wonderful achievement and now supports, guides and directs the teaching and learning of RE in Plymouth schools.

SACREs across all three Authorities have agreed to extend the use of this current syllabus for at least another 12 months, to the end of the next academic year. This will allow time for important decisions to be made by the Government regarding National Curriculum provision and for the Religious Education Council to complete its report/ recommendations on RE.

### **2 STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

#### **2.1 Background to exemplification of standards.**

2.1.1 For several years now the absence of specific Ofsted comments during Inspection on Religious Education has meant that SACRE has lost a major "intelligence gathering" tool. Since January 2012, a new Ofsted Framework for Inspection removed the requirement for Inspectors to report on Community Cohesion. However, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is now viewed as a key judgement contributing to the overall effectiveness of the school.

2.1.2 SACRE continues to encourage all schools to use the excellent resource, *Self-Evaluation in RE – a toolkit for subject leaders* (Endorsed by Plymouth SACRE at the June meeting 2006). This document, found on the REonline/betterRE website, provides exemplary support and guidance for teachers in schools and enables them to contribute significantly to their school's Self Evaluation. It has also proved to be an excellent resource for parents.

A key feature of the Agreed Syllabus is the use of the eight-level scale for assessment in Religious Education with supporting descriptors for Exceptional Performance and the P scales. Pupil-friendly statements ("I can") across the levels help children and young-people to understand progress and standards.

## **2.2 Examination Results in Religious Studies (Provisional)**

2.2.1 This year 14 Plymouth Secondary Schools entered a total of 900 candidates for the full GCSE examination in Religious Studies. This represents just under 32% of the year groups in these schools. Just under 67% of students achieved grades A\*-C, this compares with 72% nationally, and just over 98% achieved A\*-G grades.

2.2.2 10 Secondary Schools entered a total number of 659 candidates for the GCSE short course. This represents just over 32% of the year group. 52% achieved A\*-C grades, which was also the national average and 98% achieved A\*-G grades.

Entry numbers have fluctuated considerably over the years but it is important to highlight that results have improved significantly this year and compare favourably with national averages.

2.2.3 One candidate was entered for the Entry Level in Religious Studies. Entry Level Qualification provides opportunities for students, working below GCSE levels, to access accreditation in Religious Studies. Plymouth SACRE encourages all secondary schools, including special schools, to consider making such opportunities available.

2.2.4 9 Secondary Schools entered a total of 95 students for the Advanced Level Religious Studies examinations. 100% achieved grades A-E.

2.2.5 9 Secondary schools entered a total of 30 students for AS level and 90% achieved grades A-E.

NB: This figure represents the aggregated results for Year 13 students only. The results for Year 12 students entered for AS level are NOT included.

2.2.6 SACRE congratulates all the candidates and their teachers on their achievement at this summer's examinations in Religious Studies.

## **3 COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

No complaints about religious education have been received by SACRE.

## **4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

### **4.1 Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity**

SACRE continues to support the innovative work of the Centre which is seen as a unique and major resource for schools to support and extend the development of high quality RE at all levels.

This year the Centre, which operates as a Charitable Trust and is supported by Plymouth City Council, is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year.

The Centre's central aim is to promote education and understanding of world religion and cultural diversity. Through the exploration of different beliefs and cultures, the common thread of human and spiritual values is revealed. These are the values that ensure the future security and well-being of our local and

international community. These values are therefore central to the promotion and development of community cohesion and well-being in schools.

The Centre continues to provide schools with a wide range of services. This year 54 schools subscribed; 41 primary, 8 secondary and 5 special schools. During this period, faith speakers met with schools and other groups on 213 occasions. These included 38 visits to the synagogue, 29 Jewish Faith Speaker visits to schools, 34 Hindu Faith Speaker visits, 26 Muslim Faith Speaker visits and 20 Holocaust Memorial Day related visits. The feedback on all these visits has been extremely positive regarding the impact they have had in the classroom.

Solly Irving, a Jewish Holocaust survivor from London, spent four days with us in January. This was his 11<sup>th</sup> annual visit, in the week before Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). He visited ten Secondary Schools/Colleges and also met the Lord Mayor Cllr. Michael Wright.

SACRE and the Centre also organised a very successful schools event at the Roland Levinsky Building on the University campus. Several hundred young people attended during the day and 12 schools actively took part including The Military Kids Choir.

The Centre continues to facilitate the development of a Plymouth Council of Faiths and three meetings were held this year.

SACRE and the Centre are developing a DVD “Exploring Faith Diversity in Plymouth through the voices and experiences of young people.” This is aimed at secondary schools and all teachers to help promote the importance and further development of RE.

SACRE, in collaboration with the Centre, also organised a sponsored walk to raise funds for the Religious Education Council (now in its 40<sup>th</sup> year) and the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity, as the second nominated charity.

Thanks to all who were able to attend on the day in June. Over 30 took part and completed the walk encompassing over 20 places of worship across the City.

## **4.2 Courses, Conferences and Meetings**

The annual combined Citizenship – PSHEE and RE conference was again held in October, at Boringdon Park Conference Centre. The theme was “Promoting Equality – Celebrating Diversity”. The RE advisor spoke on “Belonging – Identity and Values for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”.

In October over 20 Secondary RE teachers gathered at Stoke Damarel Community College for the annual training day. The main focus was on spiritual development and the opportunity to share effective practice and resources.

Four Plymouth SACRE members attended the South West regional conference at Dillington in March.

The RE Advisor continues to support the LearnTeachLead RE project as a Steering Group Member (this is a three year regional project funded by St. Luke’s Trust to

address unmet needs in RE). The first (of three) Annual Conferences was held in October and the day and a half provided a most stimulating and successful teaching/learning opportunity.

The RE Advisor has led 8 INSET-twilight opportunities for Primary and Special School teachers - SACRE has funded 25 of these places.

In addition, 15 other RE focussed updates were held in schools and 3 meetings for special school teachers.

The Head of RE at Ridgeway also led a session for Secondary School teachers on 'Raising Attainment'

In November SACRE hosted the visit of John Keast, OBE, the Chair of the Religious Education Council.

John led a most absorbing evening around the current challenges RE faces and its future opportunities.

## **5. Collective Worship**

### **5.1 Monitoring and offering guidance on Collective Worship**

Ofsted reports rarely mention Collective Worship and despite national concerns about non-compliance the Government have no plans to revisit the issues. At its July 2012 meeting, SACRE considered a document produced by NASACRE "Collective Worship Revisited" as a possible way forward and suggested resource/guidance for schools.

Plymouth SACRE is supporting a Working Group, led by the Headteacher at Hyde Park Infants School, dedicated to developing resources for Collective Worship and it is hoped a resource pack will be available in the autumn.

### **5.2 Complaints**

There have been no formal complaints about collective worship in schools.

## **6. LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES**

### **6.1 Devon and Torbay SACREs**

Some collaborative work has taken place with colleagues from Devon and Torbay and the Spring Conference at Dillington allowed us time together to consider common challenges and concerns.

### **6.2 NASACRE**

SACRE acknowledges the central role of NASACRE in providing essential support, representation and guidance for local SACREs in the vital role they perform. The Annual Conference always provides an opportunity for SACRE representatives to meet and consider best practice and ways forward in these extremely challenging times for RE.

The RE Advisor attended the AGM in May on behalf of SACRE and reported back at the summer term meeting.

## **7. SACRE ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIORITIES**

SACRE meets once per term and is supported by the following staff from Plymouth City Council: The RE Advisor and a Democratic Support Officer.

Priorities have continued to be guided by SACRE's responsibility to monitor standards within Religious Education and Collective Worship.

There are also working groups established to lend support to the current Plymouth SACRE Development Plan; the revised outline is as follows:

### **7.1 Development Plan for 2011 – 2014**

- to seek on-going opportunities to raise the profile of SACRE – Miss Helena Mitchell;
- to establish a planned approach to the development of RE and particularly its contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural life of the school – RE Advisor
- to establish a biennial celebration/ exhibition of RE work – Ms Teresa Griffiths;
- with Devon and Torbay SACREs, revise, as appropriate, the RE syllabus – RE Advisor
- to revise guidance and identify key resources for collective worship – Mrs Liz Hill



## APPENDICES

### A Religious Studies Examination Statistics 2001-2012

Examination - GCSE Full Course	Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools, 2009 onward = 16)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% A*-C	% A*-G
2013	14	900	31.6	344	556	66.7	98.3
2012	15	970	36.7	387	583	62.9	97.5
2011	13	766	32.1	306	460	68.3	97.0
2010	11	600	30.3	288	312	66.0	96.0
2009	13	643	27.2	299	344	70.8	98.8
2008	13	570	25.0	239	331	67.0	99.2
2007	14	606	24.8	237	369	55.9	97.7
2006	12	620	28.7	269	351	59.2	95.2
2005	12	646	32.8	270	376	59.0	95.5
2004	13	622	27.1	262	360	69.3	97.6
2003	12	599	28.8	232	367	49.9	91.0
2002	10	506	33.7	197	309	61.5	93.1
2001	11	481	30.0	186	295	55.7	95.4

Examination - GCSE Short Course	Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools, 2009 onward = 16)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% A*-C	% A*-G
2013	10	659	23.2	315	344	52.0	98.0
2012	11 (inc ACE)	633	31.3	320	313	42.7	93.4
2011	10	969	54.0	479	490	43.4	93.1
2010	10	855	44.4	390	465	49.1	94.5
2009	11	744	41.0	342	402	48.9	92.9
2008	8	950	55.8	432	518	42.4	92.0
2007	8	958	56.3	425	533	46.8	95.2
2006	9	1055	56.8	487	568	48.6	90.1
2005	6	865	65.5	444	421	56.4	96.0
2004	7	907	56.9	433	474	59.2	95.5
2003	7	527	52.2	228	299	56.2	96.0
2002	9	979	58.2	508	471	42.0	92.8
2001	8	914	63.5	459	455	50.0	94.0

<b>Examination –ELQ(C)</b>	<b>Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools, 2009 onward = 16)</b>	<b>Number of candidates</b>	<b>% of year group entered in these schools</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>% Level 3</b>	<b>% Level 2</b>	<b>% Level 1</b>
2013	1 (Plymstock)	1	0.4	0	1	100		
2012	1 (Mount Tamar)	1	5.6	1	0	0	0	0
2011	1	3	2.3	3	0	33.3	66.7	0
2010	1	8	5.8		8	12.5	50.0	37.5
2009	2	3	1.1		3	33.3	33.3	33.3
2008	2	3	1.1		3	33.3	33.3	0
2007	1	3	2.3		3	-	33.3	33.3

<b>Examination - Advanced Extension Award</b>	<b>Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools, 2010 onwards = 16)</b>	<b>Number of candidates</b>	<b>% of year group entered in these schools</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>% D</b>	<b>% M</b>
2013	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2012	0	0					
2011	0	0					
2010	1	1		1	0	0	0
2009	1	2	0.8	2	0	0	0
2008	2	9	1.8	8	1	11.1	55.6

<b>Examination - A Level</b>	<b>Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools, 2010 onwards = 16)</b>	<b>Number of candidates</b>	<b>% of year group entered in these schools</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>%A-E (A*-E from 2011)</b>
2013	9	95	7.8	31	64	100)
2012	10	117		45	72	99.1
2011	9	120		48	72	95.8
2010	10	110		36	74	96.4
2009	13	119		45	74	99.2
2008	12	126	5.4	61	65	100
2007	11	108	5.0	48	60	100
2006	9	77	8.8	23	54	98.7
2005	8	89	11.9	35	48	100
2004	10	75	4.3	23	52	100
2003	10	69	8.3	22	47	100
2002	8	64	9.4	15	49	98.4
2001	6	31	5.9	10	21	96.8

<b>Examination -AS Level</b>	<b>Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools, 2010 onwards = 16)</b>	<b>Number of candidates</b>	<b>% of year group entered in these schools</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>%A-E</b>
2013	9	30	2.5	15	15	90
2012	10	42		17	25	88.1
2011	9	32		11	21	90.6
2010	8	31		11	20	93.5
2009	9	21	1.2	7	14	95.2
2008	9	32	1.8	16	16	93.8
2007	9	29	1.7	13	16	93.1
2006	7	27	4.1	9	18	77.8
2005	10	20	2.4	4	18	81.8
2004	10	46	2.7	10	36	91.3
2003	6	27	5.3	9	18	92.6
2002	6	22	3.6	7	15	95.5

## **B LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH REPORT IS SENT**

Our report will be sent, in electronic form, to Head teachers, Principals and Chairs of Governors of schools including voluntary schools, the Local Authority and NASACRE. It will be made available to teachers and parents on request.

The report will also be sent to the Directors of Services for Children and Young People and Chairs of SACRE in Devon, Torbay and Cornwall.

## **C THE DUTIES OF SACRE**

SACRE primarily gives advice to the Local Authority about religious education in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. It can give advice even if the Local Authority does not seek it, but the Local Authority is not obliged to act upon it. In two areas, however, SACRE's decision is binding.

### **Worship 'Determinations'**

It has a duty to make a 'determination' if a community school applies for complete or partial exemption from the requirement that most acts of worship in a school term shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character reflecting the broad tradition of Christian belief in a manner appropriate to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. (For example, there may be a preponderance of pupils of a faith other than Christianity.) It is important to note that SACRE cannot exempt a school from the requirement to provide some form of worship (even if not Christian worship) for all pupils on every school day. The act of worship need not be in the morning or for the whole school at one time and it is open to individual parents to withdraw their children by arrangement.

There have been no applications of this kind in Plymouth.

### **Review of Agreed Syllabus**

The second matter which SACRE can insist upon is that the Local Authority should set up a conference to adopt (or write) a new or revised Agreed Syllabus. The Local Authority sub-group on SACRE does not vote on this issue.

In March 2006 SACRE appointed representatives from all four houses to serve on the Agreed Syllabus Conference convened by the Devon RE Advisor. This work took place over the following year and the launch of the new Agreed Syllabus, "Every Child Matters in RE", took place in July 2007.

### **Why a Report?**

An Annual Report has been a legal requirement since the 1988 Education Act. The Education Act 1996, section 391.6 states:

'The Council shall in each year publish a report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the Council under Sub-Section 3 above during the last preceding year.

(Sub-Section 3 refers to the procedure for requiring a review of the Agreed Syllabus). The Council's report shall in particular:

- a) specify any matters in respect of which the Council has given advice to the Authority;
- b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given; and where any such matter was not referred to the Council by the Authority, give the Council's reason for offering advice on that matter'.

## **D SACRE MEMBERS 2012 – 2013**

### **Group A: Christian and other religious denominations, not including Church of England.**

Eight places

Mrs Pam Shelmerdine	Baptist Church
Mr Barry Good	Buddhist Community
Dr Jatindra Saha	Hindu Community
Vacant	Muslim Community
Mrs Anna Kelly	Jewish Community
Ms Helena Mitchell	Methodist Church
Mr Jamie Haselden	Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
Vacant	United Reformed Church

### **Group B: The Church of England, appointed by the Exeter Diocesan Board of Education**

Five places (three vacancies)

Ms Cathy Slow	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Mrs Catherine Bowness	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Ms Penny Burnside	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Ms Katie Freeman	Hyde Park Infants School
Mrs Alison Sturgeon	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter

### **Group C: Teachers' Associations, who should nominate RE teachers**

Nine places (three vacancies)

Mr Martin Edmonds	NASUWT
Ms Gwen Hughes	NUT
Mr Pete Grainger	PASH (NAHT)
Ms Teresa Griffiths	NATRE
<i>Vacant</i>	VOICE
<i>Vacant</i>	UCU
Ms Elizabeth Hill	PAPH (NAHT)
Mrs Alison Bradley	ATL
Mrs Heather Farrow	Special Schools

## **Group D: The Local Authority**

Six places

Councillor Mary Aspinall	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Ian Gordon	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Chaz Singh	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Jonathan Drean	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Steven Ricketts	Plymouth City Council
Councillor David Stark	Plymouth City Council

## **Co-opted Representatives**

Six places

Ms Caroline McVicker	AST (Secondary)
Dr Clare Hamon	Quaker Community
Father Gregory Carpenter	Greek Orthodox Community
Mr Brendan Brookshaw	Plymouth Association of Governors
Mr Ben Kerr	Humanist
Dr Barbara Wintersgill	RE Consultant

## **Officers**

Mr Jonathan Marshall	Religious Education Advisor
Mrs Helen Rickman	Democratic Support Officer

## **E. NUMBER OF MEETINGS, RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MAIN ISSUES DISCUSSED AT EACH MEETING**

Plymouth SACRE meets once per term and has met on three occasions in the academic year 2012 – 2013

The Autumn Term meeting was held on 10 December 2012 at Mutley Baptist Church. Sixteen members and two officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- Welcome to new members
- Unmet Needs Project
- SACRE Annual Report
- Summer 2012 Examination Results
- OFSTED Reports
- The future of RE
- The APPG on RE
- SACRE working groups update
- Minster Project
- Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity
- Holocaust Memorial Day plans

The Spring Term meeting was held on 4 March 2013 at the Boringdon Golf Club. Eighteen members and two officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- Welcome to new members
- SACRE Annual Report
- Holocaust Memorial Day Feedback
- Preparing for OFSTED – self-evaluation
- National and local updates
- Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity – DVD Project

The Summer Term meeting was held on 17 July 2013 at the Council House. Sixteen members and two officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair
- Welcome to new members
- Proposal to Elect a Humanist Representative to Group A
- National RE Picture
- APPG on RE
- Towards a Plymouth RE Syllabus
- Collective Worship Resource – Launch arrangements
- Local RE Updates

Clerk to SACRE – Helen Rickman– Democratic Support Officer  
Plymouth City Council RE Advisor – Jonathan Marshall