

BOROUGH OF SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (S.A.C.R.E.)

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF SACRE

I am pleased to introduce the Annual Report on the work of the Southend-on-Sea SACRE. This is a particularly interesting time to be involved in Religious Education both locally and nationally. The Borough's new Agreed Syllabus, *Improving Learning Together in Religious Education*, was launched last year and training has been provided to enable schools to implement it effectively. Feedback from schools has been positive with teachers reporting that they value the flexibility in the syllabus that enables them to plan and deliver RE that is relevant to the contexts of their schools.

The Agreed Syllabus aims to develop a range of skills and dispositions including, reflection, empathy, creativity and the ability to engage in investigation, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis. SACRE believes that well taught RE can make a significant contribution to good community relations and to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through exploring questions of identity and community and helping young people to gain a deeper understanding about themselves and others. It is good to see that the network groups for primary and secondary teachers are flourishing.

SACRE has a responsibility to support and monitor the provision of RE in the Borough's schools. The analysis of GCSE results presented in this report highlights some considerable achievements but also evidence of underachievement. Governors are reminded of their responsibility to ensure that RE is delivered in accordance with statutory requirements. SACRE also encourages a strong Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural ethos to be evident within all our schools.

A number of significant national reports have been published during the last year, all of which highlight the need for high quality training to enable teachers to teach RE that is engaging and effective. SACRE members have discussed and noted the issues raised in the reports and their implications for the Borough's schools.

Members were saddened to hear of the death of Mrs. Sybil Greenstein who represented the Jewish community on SACRE. She had made a significant contribution to RE in the Borough through hosting visits to Westcliff Synagogue and giving talks about Judaism in local schools.

This report provides an overview of RE in the Borough's schools and the work of SACRE. I commend it to you.

Kevin Ryan, Chair, Southend-on-Sea SACRE

1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

1.1. STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The SACRE continues to fulfil its responsibility to monitor standards and quality in RE, collective worship and spiritual development. Examination results at GCSE, A/S and A level are monitored as part of the Borough's overall monitoring and evaluation of standards.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES EXAMINATION RESULTS 2014

School entry policies for GCSE RE differ, depending on the arrangements for statutory RE within the Key Stage 4 curriculum and the availability of RE within the school's Key Stage 4 option choices. It should be noted that the short course no longer counts towards the school performance tables and data relating to the short course is no longer available. The comments that follow on achievement will clearly be affected by the overall patterns of entry.

Achievement at GSCE Religious Studies

1121 students sat the full GCSE which, at 51%, is above the national average of 42%. The number of students entered varied from 8 to 218.

Overall achievement for the full course GSCE RE is in line with national figures with 71% achieving a grade A*-C. In four schools 100% of students achieved A*- C grades. In three schools achievement was significantly below the national average.

Achievement at the higher grades (A*/A) for full course GCSE RE is slightly above achievement at this level nationally (30.2%), although it is significantly exceeded in four schools with one school achieving 89% A*/A grades with an entry of 147 students.

Achievement at Advanced Level in Religious Studies

Eight schools entered a total of 123 students for A level Religious Studies. Cohorts ranged from 6 to 27. Five schools achieved significantly above the national average of 25.5% for A*-A grades. In one school over 70% of students achieved A*- A grades. In all eight schools 100% of students achieved A*-E.

Governors will generally want to satisfy themselves that:

- the statutory requirements for the provision of RE are being met at Key Stage 4
- the overall proportion of pupils being entered for any accreditation in RE at GCSE (full or short course) are appropriate
- the arrangements the school has made now that the short course RE no longer 'counts' in the school performance tables are suitable
- the achievement of pupils in RE at A*-C and A*/A is sufficiently good,

1.2. Teacher training and support

An experienced RE teacher/head of department supports the secondary RE network, which meets termly, on a voluntary basis. Recent training has included 'Body and Soul', a NATRE/RE Today conference on the theme of relationships, attended by 80 students from key stage 2, their teachers and members of SACRE.



Discussions and group activities at the Body and Soul Day

Training sessions on implementing the new Agreed Syllabus have been held for primary teachers. The Borough is fortunate to have been offered the chance to participate in the Project for Excellent RE in Primary Schools, a fully funded CPD programme provided by RE Today and NATRE with Culham St Gabriels. An experienced trainer has been working with a group of teachers for 3.5 days, with a focus on curriculum planning and pedagogy, promoting engaging and effective learning in RE. The teachers have access to many high quality resources and activities. This training also supports teachers in implementing the Borough's Agreed Syllabus.

An experienced RE specialist provides support for primary and secondary schools. There are regular networking opportunities for primary and secondary RE subject leaders and heads of department. There are network groups for primary and secondary teachers which meet regularly on a voluntary basis.

The primary network has set up an online forum for sharing practice and ideas relating to developing schemes of work, raising questions and providing support. Teachers have identified Hinduism as an area they would like to teach better and this has been addressed in the network meetings. Teachers are encouraged to participate in national and local conferences and training courses.

The secondary network group has discussed the proposed changes to GCSE and A-level courses. Other topics for discussion included: Literacy and numeracy in RE;

increasing A*s at GCSE and A level; targeting under-performance in lower socio-economic groups and the use of technology to engage learners.

1.3. INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR SACRE

During the year SACRE has discussed a range of national and local developments in RE including:

- Ofsted Report: RE: realising the potential:
- The Religious Education Council for England and Wales: A Review of Religious Education in England:
- All Party Parliamentary Report on RE: The Truth Unmasked – The supply of and support for RE teachers

The implications of these reports for the work of SACRE have been noted.



Primary school students take part in co-operative games at the Body and Soul Day

1.4. GOVERNOR TRAINING

No governor training on RE or collective worship was held during the year.

1.5. TEACHER TRAINING

Specialist advice and support is available for schools through the Primary and Secondary termly network meetings and through training courses run in conjunction with NATRE.

1.6. COMPLAINTS CONCERNING RE

No formal complaints were made about religious education under the local statutory complaints procedure during 2014.

2 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1. MONITORING T

THE SACRE HAS HIGHLIGHTED MONITORING OF THE PROVISION AND QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND THE PROVISION OF TRAINING FOR SCHOOLS AS A PRIORITY FOR 2015.

2.2. TRAINING

There has been no training for schools on collective worship during the year.

2.3. DETERMINATIONS

There were no applications for determinations to alter the character of collective worship for all or some pupils in a particular school during 2014.

2.4. COMPLAINTS CONCERNING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

No formal complaints were made about collective worship under the local statutory complaints procedure during 2014.

3. LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

3.1. NATIONAL

Southend SACRE is a member of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). Members attend conferences and other events and report to full SACRE meetings.

3.2. LOCAL

During the year SACRE meetings have been held at local schools and places of worship, including a visit to Southend and Westcliff Hebrew Congregation Synagogue where Mrs. Sybil Greenstein gave an informative talk and tour. Meetings in schools have included contributions from the Headteachers and teaching staff followed by opportunities for members of SACRE to discuss their provision for RE and collective worship.

4. OTHER ISSUES

4.1. BUDGET

The Local Authority has delegated a reasonable sum of money to SACRE to enable the group to function independently and effectively. The funds are allocated carefully. Expenditure includes national association affiliation fees and incidental expenses, for example, travel and venue costs. Funding was allocated to cover the costs of producing and disseminating the new agreed syllabus.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONSTITUTION, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND

APPENDIX B

MEMBERSHIP OF SOUTHEND SACRE FOR 2014

Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership of the Southend SACRE

Constitution of the Southend SACRE

Role and Functions

- i. To advise the LEA upon matters connected with religious worship in its schools.
- ii. To advise the Authority upon the religious education to be given in its schools in accordance with the Southend Agreed Syllabus. In particular it can offer advice on methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- iii. To determine and review the cases in which the requirement for Christian collective worship is not to apply.
- iv. To review the Local Authority's Agreed Syllabus.
- v. To write an annual report on its work which will:
 - specify any matters in respect of which the SACRE has given advice to the Authority;
 - broadly describe the nature of the advice given;
 - where any such matter was not referred to the SACRE by the Authority, give the SACRE's reasons for offering advice on that matter.

Copies of the report must be sent to schools, the Schools' Curriculum Assessment Authority and the local teacher training institutions.

- vi. At the discretion of the Authority the SACRE may:
 - monitor RE provision to inform their advice and reporting;
 - be involved in the Complaints Procedure;
 - arbitrate, as necessary, whether acts of worship provided for withdrawal groups meet the requirement of Section 351 of the Education Act 1996.

For i. and ii. above the Authority may refer matters to the SACRE or the SACRE may decide its own areas of work.

Officers

- i The Chief Executive and Town Clerk of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council shall be the Clerk to the SACRE.
- ii. The Corporate Director for People shall attend and participate in discussions of the SACRE as professional adviser.

Membership

In accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (Section 390);

- i. the SACRE is to comprise four groups representing respectively:
 - a. such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the Authority, will appropriately reflect the principle religious traditions in the area;
 - b. the Church of England;
 - c. such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the Authority, ought to be represented, having regard to the circumstances of the area;
 - d. the Local Education Authority;
- ii. the Authority has to take all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed under i. are representative of the denominations or association in question;
- iii. the Authority may remove a member of the SACRE if in the opinion of the Authority that member ceases to be representative of the denomination or association which he/she was appointed to represent;
- iv. any member may resign at any time.

The composition of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council SACRE is set out in Annex A.

Term of Office of Members

The term of office for members of the SACRE shall be for four years from the date of appointment by the relevant body.

Disqualification from Membership

Where a nominated representative fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the SACRE she/he shall cease to be a member of the SACRE and the nominating body shall be invited to nominate another representative. See also 3 iii. above.

Vacancies

A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired term of office of the member in whose place he/she is appointed.

Any vacancy occurring within three months of the expiration of the term of office of a member need not be filled.

Deputies

- i. Each nominating body* having not more than 5 representatives on the SACRE may nominate one named deputy.
- ii. Nominating bodies having 6 or more representatives may appoint 2 named deputies.
- iii. Only named deputies may attend or vote in place of a member.

Chairman & Vice-Chairman

- i. The Chairman shall be elected annually for a period of one academic year. The election of Chairman shall be the first item of business on the agenda for the ordinary meeting held

every Autumn Term. The election will be by a simple majority of those members of the SACRE present at the quorate meeting.

ii. The Vice-Chairman shall be elected annually for a period of one academic year. The election of Vice-Chairman shall be the second item of business on the agenda for the ordinary meeting held every Autumn Term. The election will be by a simple majority of those members of the SACRE present at the quorate meeting.

Voting

i. With the exception of the appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman, on any question to be decided by the SACRE only the representative groups on the SACRE shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Decisions made within each group require a majority vote as do decisions made by the SACRE.

ii. Each representative group has a single vote on the question of whether to require a review of the Authority's agreed syllabus except the Authority group (See 1 iv).

Co-options

The SACRE may co-opt members on the nomination of any of the groups. Such co-opted members may participate fully in the discussions of the SACRE but may not vote.

Quorum

The meeting of the SACRE shall be quorate only if each of the four groups is individually quorate as follows. A quorum shall consist of 5 members of each group or one third of the members of each group, rounded to the nearest whole number, whichever is the lower, i.e. a quorum shall consist of:

Church of England Group 2

Other Faiths Group 3

Teachers' Associations Group 2

Local Education Authority Group 2

* Note: Individual teacher associations within Group C and individual political parties within Group D are to be regarded as "nominating bodies" for this purpose.

Frequency of Meetings

The SACRE shall normally meet at least once in every school term. The four Groups may meet beforehand if they wish.

Notice of Meetings

At least 7 clear days before each meeting of the SACRE the clerk shall send notices to every member setting out the business to be transacted. Items for the agenda may be submitted by any of the four groups, and such items should be sent to the Clerk, and at the same time to the Corporate Director for People, not less than 14 days before a meeting.

Meetings of Four Groups

Each of the committees of the SACRE may hold its own meetings, and shall make its own arrangements to appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Sub-Committees

The SACRE may constitute sub-committees to deal with particular matters as and when it sees fit. Seven clear days notice of meetings of any such sub-committees should be given to the members thereof.

Minutes

Minutes of each meeting shall be sent by the clerk to each member as soon as practical after a meeting. The minutes shall be confirmed and signed at the next meeting.

Submission of Minutes to the Local Authority's Cabinet

Decisions which cannot be made by the SACRE shall be referred to the Local Authority's Executive decision making body (The Cabinet) and shall be eligible for call-in to the People Scrutiny Committee. The Clerk shall submit the minutes of SACRE meetings

Availability of Papers to the Public

- i. All papers of the SACRE shall be available to the public, except in relation to any information defined as confidential in regulation 9 of the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994.
- ii. All meetings of the SACRE and of any sub-committee of the SACRE including the four groups which constitute the SACRE, shall be open to the public, except that the public may be excluded from any meeting during an item of business whenever it is likely that, if members of the public were present, confidential information as defined in regulation 9 of the Religious Education (Meetings of Local Conferences and Councils) Regulations 1994 would be disclosed.

Annex A

Composition of the Southend-on-Sea SACRE

Group	Membership
A. The Church of England Nominated by the Diocese of Chelmsford	5
B. Other Faiths Comprising:	12
Representatives of the Free Churches Nominated by the Free Churches Council	(3)
Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church Nominated by the Diocese of Brentwood	(2)
A representative of the Jewish Community	(1)
A representative of the Hindu Community	(1)
A representative of the Muslim Community	(1)
A representative of the Sikh Community	(1)
A representative of the Buddhist Community	(1)
A representative of the Humanist Community	(1)
A representative of the Salvation Army	(1)

C.	Associations representing Teachers	7
	Nominated by the recognised Teachers' Associations	
D.	Southend-on-Sea LEA	7
	Elected Members of the Borough Council	
	Total:	31

Group A: Representatives of the Church of England:

Ms M Larkin

Ms P Draycott

Mr M Buckley

VACANCY x 2

Group B: Other Faith Group Representatives:

Free Churches (3):

Mr C Pegler (Vice-Chairman)

VACANCY x 2

Roman Catholic (2):

Ms L Hopkinson

VACANCY x 1

Jewish Community

Mr J Greenstein

Hindu Community

VACANCY x 1

Muslim Community

Dr N Khokha

Salvation Army

Ms S Hart

Sikh Community

VACANCY x 1

Humanist Community

Mr G Licence

Buddhist Community

VACANCY x 1

Group C: Representatives of the Teachers' Associations:

Mr K Ryan (NASUWT) - (Chairman),

VACANCY (PAT),

VACANCY (UCU)

Mr B Maddison (NUT)

VACANCY x 3 – NAHT, SHA, ATL

Group D: Representatives of the LEA:

Cllr Betson

Cllr Davidson

Cllr Evans

Cllr Davies

Cllr Borton

Cllr Ware-Lane

Cllr McGlone