

Torbay SACRE Annual Report 2016/7



Forward by Chair of Torbay SACRE

It is an enormous privilege to have been elected Chair of Torbay SACRE during the year 2016/17 and continue to be part of the work of supporting RE in Torbay schools. In particular I would like to thank David Hampshire and Ed Pawson for their work leading SACRE and supporting the place of RE in our schools. Several respected members of SACRE have left during the year and we take this opportunity to thank them for their service; we would also like to welcome the new members of SACRE, who join us from faith communities, teaching organisations or as Torbay councillors.

In a time of ever-increasing financial constraints, SACRE is helping to sustain teachers of RE. The Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) programme continues to offer significant support to teachers of RE and SACRE recognises the important role that the LTLRE hub is now playing in providing high quality RE professional development. It is exciting to note that LTLRE is increasingly being recognised nationally as a beacon of excellence in the way it is providing teachers with grass-roots support and empowering new leadership in the subject.

Important Interfaith work during this year involved training more faith and belief visitors, launching an online directory of interfaith visitors and hosting an interfaith conference on extremism and resilience.

Devon and Torbay SACREs have worked together on Assessment in RE to provide teachers with a new assessment policy and materials. These materials have been well received and are helping to guide teachers in their assessments. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the project.

Torbay SACRE would like to congratulate students and staff in its secondary schools for all the hard work put into studying for exams. RE continues to be a subject that the majority of schools in Torbay take seriously, recognising the important part it plays in helping to prepare young people for life in modern Britain.

The role of Torbay SACRE continues to be vitally important, during this tumultuous period in education. SACRE's work enables teachers to be supported in providing high quality Religious Education for young people in Torbay. I look forward to another very positive year for Torbay SACRE in 2017/18.

Corrine Guntrip

Chair of Torbay SACRE 2016/17

1 SACRE organisation

a) Membership

SACRE would like to thank Andrew Strachan for his excellent service as chair of Torbay SACRE. He has made a very important contribution to the way SACRE has worked over recent years. During the year we said goodbye to Rev Peter Killick, Chaz Singh, Jan Mughrabi and Gina Bourne. SACRE would like to thank all of them for their commitment and contribution over many years.

b) Professional support for RE

SACRE would like to express sincere thanks to David Hampshire his excellent service to Torbay SACRE in his role as adviser over a number of years. David worked very hard to

improve standards in RE in Torbay and he has given SACRE a real sense of leadership and direction.

c) Local Authority support

SACRE is grateful to Debbie Horn and her team for putting in place a more efficient system of local authority support. This has put SACRE's activities on a much firmer footing.

2 SACRE activity

a) Assessment

In collaboration with Devon SACRE, work has been carried out through a teacher working party to develop assessment policy and materials for RE. This material has been disseminated and posted on the Torbay SACRE website. It consists of a guidance document, a generic template and sets of exemplars for KS1, 2 and 3. It has been very well received by teachers and is already making a significant impact in classrooms.

b) Agreed Syllabus

Work has been done to start the process of reviewing the agreed syllabus, with evaluation of the current agreed syllabus being carried out through Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE) hub groups. There is broad agreement that teachers feel the need for the next syllabus to be much more fully supported by detailed learning plans, programmes of study and activities than the current agreed syllabus.

c) Learn, Teach, Lead RE (LTLRE)

The Torbay LTLRE hub group has continued to thrive, meeting after school 6 times a year. Led by Corrine Guntrip and based at Warberry Primary school, it has established itself as an important provider of high quality RE professional development. The lack of a secondary hub leader has meant that the hub tends to be less well attended by KS3/4 teachers. A number of teachers from Torbay schools attended the LTLRE annual conference at St Mellion in October 2016. They gave strongly positive evaluation comments for the event, being especially appreciative of Helen Matter's primary RE materials and teaching plans.

d) Training and CPD

Teachers in Torbay have accessed professional development courses run by Babcock/LDP and the Diocese of Exeter. Courses for primary schools have included subject knowledge courses on Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, RE subject leaders' conference, Fundamental British values and Philosophy for Children. Courses to support secondary (GCSE and A level) teachers have included a day at Exeter Mosque on Islam and a day at the Hartridge Buddhist monastery.

e) Support for Understanding Christianity units and training

SACRE has worked in support of the extensive training provided by the Diocese of Exeter to roll out the Understanding Christianity programme. This new initiative provides a coherent approach and an extensive set of resources to support schools in the way they teach about Christianity, from Foundation Stage up to Key Stage 3. These resources have been very well received by teachers in community schools and Church schools alike, and they are already making an impact on the quality of RE where they are being implemented. Additional support has been provided through LTLRE hub group twilight meetings.

f) South West SACRE conference

Torbay SACRE was pleased to be able to send a delegate to the SW SACRE conference at Dillington House in March 2017 who led a workshop on the LTLRE programme. Evaluations showed a very positive appreciation of the address by Dr Joyce Miller, who was outlining the developing work of the Commission on RE. Delegates also gave a strong recommendation for the presentation by Ian Jamison on Building a Global Generation. Ian has subsequently led workshops at the LTLRE conference, attended by Torbay teachers.

g) Interfaith Activity

During the year SACRE has worked in collaboration with Devon SACRE, Devon Faith and Belief Forum and Torbay Interfaith Group to run training courses for faith and belief visitors to schools. This has succeeded in training volunteers from a diverse range of religion and belief traditions and a database of approved visitors is now available for schools to access on the Learn, Teach, Lead RE website (ltlre.org.uk).

h) Interfaith Week 2016

SACRE provided guidance to schools on activities and resources to support Interfaith Week 2016. School leaders, teachers and governors were also invited to attend the ‘Not in God’s Name’ interfaith conference in Exeter to explore ways in which prejudice, intolerance and extremism can be countered in our schools.

i) Commission on Religious Education

Torbay SACRE made a formal contribution of evidence to the Commission on RE. SACRE also encouraged members to make their own personal contributions. Members of Torbay SACRE also attended the consultation event at Exeter University in June 2017, where they presented verbal evidence.

j) Half termly RE newsletter

The half termly RE newsletter gives extensive details about cpd events, conferences and teaching resources for primary and secondary schools. This is very much valued by our schools.

3 Standards in Religious Education

a) Monitoring standards and compliance in RE in Torbay schools

One of SACRE’s roles is to monitor standards and compliance with the law for religious education. This is not an easy task, given the lack of available evidence. Working alongside the Diocese of Exeter (C of E schools) and the Diocese of Plymouth (Roman Catholic schools) we are confident that RE is taken seriously in the church schools across the Authority, given that these features form part of their Section 48 inspection frameworks. However, we lack significant mechanisms to fully understand the provision and impact of RE in community schools.

GCSE (and A level) results are the only external measures available, so this means that we have little understanding of how schools are performing at EYFS-KS3. Even GCSE results give us a very retrospective view, given that they represent what has taken place in a school, not what is currently happening. In recent years exam data has been very slow in coming through to SACRE officers, creating a significant delay in being able to report about the

previous year's RE results. This is something that has been raised with the Torbay Local Authority and solutions are being explored.

In order to gain a better understanding of the place of RE in Torbay schools, SACRE is putting in place mechanisms to monitor RE. This will involve taking a sample of schools and monitoring their websites, in order to investigate what schools say about their RE provision. This will give some indication of where further monitoring contact and visits might be appropriate. However, it needs to be born in mind that schools are often wary of enquiries and visits seeking to monitor their activities. This needs to be done with extreme tact and understanding, especially where schools have become academies. Given the increase in federations and MATs, it is also relevant to explore the policies of the wider school groupings with regard to RE.

b) Torbay schools GCSE RS

Full course GCSE results

National average (state funded): A*-C: 70.0%

Torbay average (state funded): A*-C: 62.3%

On the whole, Torbay secondary schools continue to take RE seriously at KS4 and proportionately more students are entered for GCSE RS than the national average (64% are entered for GCSE full course in Torbay schools in comparison with approximately 50% nationally). However, although most Torbay schools remain committed to students' entitlement to RE at KS4, results in some schools lag significantly behind the national average for A*-C grades and this remains a significant concern. SACRE has been in contact with several of these schools and can report that in one school in particular, significant improvements in staffing and expertise are expected to make a difference in the coming year. More monitoring investigations and conversations are under way.

Short course (SC) RS

The LA data team was unable to access short course data, so no comment can be made about this.

4 The contribution of Torbay SACRE to the wider Local Authority agenda

Torbay SACRE works to support a wider community cohesion agenda through its support for interfaith and inter-cultural activity and education. Advisers to Torbay SACRE are active participants at a national level on Interfaith and Religious Education bodies. David Hampshire is very active at a national level with the Interfaith Network and NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs). Ed Pawson is a member of the Board of the Religious Education Council and on the national executive of NATRE (the National Association of Teachers of RE). He is the former chair.

5 Collective Worship

SACRE's guidance on collective worship gives advice for schools on legal requirements, spiritual development, a rationale and a policy exemplar.

There have been no formal complaints about Collective worship in schools and no applications for determinations.

APPENDIX 1: MEMBERSHIP OF Torbay SACRE 2017

Group A: Christian denominations other than the Church of England and other religious traditions

Mrs Sylvia Kennedy	Roman Catholic
Mr Yousif Al-Nassar	Torquay Islamic Centre

Group B: the Church of England

Rev Ian Blyde
Mrs Charlotte Calouri
Rev Angela Sumner
Mr Philip Mantell

Group C: Teacher Associations

Mrs Heather Savini	UCU
Mr Andrew Strachan (Chair)	ATL
Mrs Corrine Guntrip	NATRE
Ms Claire Entwistle	NATRE

Group D: the Local Authority

Cllr Jane Barnby	Conservative
Cllr Julian Parrott	UKIP
Cllr Jackie Stockman	Independent
Cllr Di Stubley	Conservative

Co-opted members

none

Officers

Mr David Hampshire	Adviser
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