

Barnet Annual SACRE report 2016-7



Introduction

This year has again seen that the key role RE plays in educating our young people has been acknowledged with the publication of some exciting research projects & publications.

REC Independent Commission began its important task of looking at RE in English schools, after extensive consultation the draft report will be published in September 2017. Again, it is an exciting development with the final report due out in 2018. At our next SACRE meeting in November 2017 we will discuss the interim recommendations make suggestions.

The **'Improving Religious Literacy'** report was published by The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) in July 2016.

Fiona Bruce in the introduction states:

'We are, I believe, entering a defining period for our country, our national life and our national identity. The shape of our religious landscape is changing, as is the place of religion in the public sphere, our private lives and our local communities, and these will continue to do so for years to come. It is more important than ever, therefore, that action is taken to ensure we all have the knowledge and skills required to engage effectively with religion. It is my hope that religious literacy will enable communities and individuals to understand each other better, to communicate with one another on a more informed basis and promote community cohesion within a more inclusive and holistic society.'

The report argued that: *'high quality school-based RE is critical to improving religious literacy in society more widely'*.

SACRE met three times: 17th November 2016; 2nd March 2017 & 5th June 2017. A termly newsletter was sent out to all schools & SACRE members & is put on the SACRE website for future reference. A Holocaust pack written by Rev Bernd Koschland & Anna Sallnow is also sent out to all schools & SACRE members at the beginning of each Spring Term. The reflections of students who have participated in the 'Lessons from Auschwitz Project' have been included & form part of the Barnet Holocaust Memorial Event.

THE BIG NASACRE SURVEY was discussed & responses were included in the

reply to the survey. Members recorded that SACRE provided a diverse local forum to discuss issues of religion & culture that are particular to Barnet & that this was reflected in the locally agreed syllabus.

One important development for SACRE this year has been the **review of the Barnet Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education**. SACRE discussed the possible options. Volunteers from each of the four SACRE groups agreed to be part of an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was convened & had an initial meeting in June. A document was discussed and it was agreed that pupils should also be given the opportunity to give their views on the current syllabus & a process for organising this was discussed.

The joint Enfield & Barnet **Faith Ambassadors project** supported by the Westhill grant was evaluated & ways forward discussed. It was agreed that a presentation should be made at the Directors Briefing to Head teachers & to include the work of SACRE. This took place & resulted in Queen Elizabeth Boys School & its group of linked primary schools expressing an interest. The project began in the autumn term 2016 with the students going into their linked primary schools in the Summer term of 2017. A Project Pack had been produced which can be utilised in the future. The students have been invited to the autumn Term 2017 meeting to discuss the project & ways forward.

The Pack was also available on the Westhill/NASACRE Awards website. All the information about the Faith Ambassadors' work is available for viewing on the Westhill/NASACRE Awards website;

http://www.westhillendowment.org/assets/uploaded/downloads/Barnet_and_Enfield_Sacre_We_are_Hindus_presentation.pdf

EXAMINATION HEADLINES

The National Picture for Religious Studies.

At **'A' level** there were 23,856 RS entries a small decrease of 4.0% from 2016. Much of this is explained by the decrease in the numbers of 18-year-olds in England. However, the numbers of entries for A level RS has more than doubled since 2003 when there were 11,132 entries. This increase of 114% is greater than any other arts subject & among all subjects only Further Maths has seen a more rapid growth than RS. 23.3% of these entries were awarded an A or A*

A/S level There were 16,308 entries for RS at a decrease of 54% on 2016, this reflects the decline across all subjects where the number of entries fell by 40%. Despite the drop there are still more entries than in 2003 when 15,482 were recorded.

GCSE full course the numbers of entries has risen again up 5.3% from 2014 with 283,756 entries. However, the removal of the short course from the Department for Education performance tables is having a serious & negative impact on the numbers of pupils taking the short course GCSE with a decline of 28.8% since 2014. The combined full & short course entries for GCSE RS were 370,435 a decline of 4.5% from 2014 (387,915).

A very worrying trend is the number of schools entering **no** pupils for any RS qualification (1197 in 2014 up from 268 in 2010).

Barnet Results

A level Results 2017

There were **211 entries** a rise in numbers from 2016 when there were 191 entries & 2015 when 165 pupils were entered. This is a real increase as the numbers of students in the age cohort have dropped by 1.7%. The following schools 16 schools entered students: Ashmole; Bishop Douglass, Copthall, East Barnet Finchley Catholic High, Hasmonian High, Hendon, J Coss, London Academy, Menorah High, Mill Hill High, Queen Elizabeth Girls, St James', St Michaels The Compton School & The Wren Academy. An increase in the numbers of schools entering pupils with East Barnet, Menorah High & The Compton School entering students this year.

In 2017, 6.1% achieved an A* (national average 5.7%) with 31.1% achieving an A* or A grade (national average 24.2%) 53.8% achieving an A*-B grade (national average 49.2%) so an increase in achievement in A* & A grades with more entries as compared with 2016 when 22.3% achieved an A* or A result & 62.6% achieved an A*-B grade.

A/S level

In 2017 there were 179 entries compared with 335 entries in 2016 a drop in numbers, nationally there has been a decrease of 54% on 2016, this reflects the decline across all subjects where the number of AS entries fell by 40% across England and Wales, this is due also in some part to the fact that all A/S level examinations are being phased out. Despite the drop there are still more entries than in 2003 (15,482 entries were recorded in 2003) the numbers of students in the age cohort have also dropped by 1.7%. The following schools 13 schools entered students: Ashmole, Bishop Douglass, Copthall, East Barnet, Hasmonian High, Hendon, J Coss, London Academy, Mill Hill High, Queen Elizabeth Girls, St James', St Michaels & Whitefields.

In 2017, with 32.8% achieving an A-B grade compared with 2016 when 42.5% achieved an A-B grade.

Barnet GCSE full course 2017

In 2017 there were 1807 entries, compared with 2016 when 1751 students were entered **a continued rise in numbers** from 2015 when 1635 students entered. The trend seems to be upwards after a drop in 2014 (1353) & nearer to the numbers of entries in 2013 (1800). So, the numbers of students being entered for the full course is increasing.

The following 20 schools (compared with 24 schools in 2016) entered pupils for GCSE full course: Bishop Douglass, Christ College, Copthall, East Barnet, Finchley Catholic High, Friern Barnet, Hasmonian High, Hendon, J Coss, London Academy, Menorah High, Mill Hill High, The Queen Elizabeth's Girls, Queen Elizabeth's School, St James', St Michael's, The Compton, Henrietta Barnet, Whitefield & Wren Academy. There were no entries from Northgate, The Pavilion Centre. Ashmole has now transferred to the short course for its whole cohort

In 2017 A* passes were 21.3% compared with the national average of 8.8% A* - C passes were 83.4% as compared with 2016 when A* - C passes were 79.9% so more entries & higher grades.

Barnet GCSE short course

In 2017 data was available again for the short course with 321 pupils entered compared with 570 in 2016. 49.2% obtained an A*-C pass compared with 53.2% in

2016. Again, following the national trend. Ashmole, The Totteridge Academy, Queen Elizabeth School & Mill Hill County entered their whole cohort with small numbers being entered from East Barnet, Finchley Catholic, Hendon, JCoSS Mill Hill & the Wren Academy. However, the data from schools shows that while some schools are entering the **whole cohort** for the full course RS examination: Bishop Douglass, Copthall, East Barnet, Finchley Catholic High, Hasmorean High, Hendon, JCoss, , Menorah High, The Queen Elizabeth's Girls, St James', St Michael's & Wren Academy & for the short course Ashmole, The Totteridge Academy, Queen Elizabeth School & Mill Hill County. Other schools are only providing RS as an option.

Membership

Thanks, must be given to the local Authority & their representatives who support the work of SACRE with their time expertise & resources. Thanks too, to all the volunteers who give of their time & expert knowledge with great generosity, without all this support SACRE would not be able to function as it does.