

Wiltshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Annual Report September 2016 – August 2017

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Copies of this report are sent to the LA Executive, Wiltshire Schools and to NASACRE. Members of SACRE are invited to share the report with their own religious community or professional association.

Letter from Chair of SACRE

This academic year, 2016-17, SACRE has continued to provide guidance to the LA and training for teachers; and saw the implementation of the 'core concepts' for 6 religions to enable teachers to use the Agreed Syllabus more effectively.

SACRE has a wide range of members who work well together with a clear commitment to support the excellent teaching of RE in our schools. SACRE are grateful for the strong commitment of the LA in Wiltshire to local determination, and their firm belief that RE should continue to have a locally set Agreed Syllabus.

This year has seen an interesting development from the Diocese of Bristol launching their '*Learning and Teaching Leader of RE*' (LTLRE) programme for the few Church of England Schools in the north of the county overseen by the Diocese of Bristol. The programme offers teachers RE training including, at a subsidised cost, an annual conference and network meetings, led by local RE teachers. The Diocese of Salisbury has plans to launch their LTLRE programme in March 2018 for the Church of England schools overseen by the Diocese of Salisbury. The Dioceses of Salisbury and Bristol also welcome teachers from non- Church of England schools to the training (not subsidised). SACRE has been invited to be represented on the 'steering groups' of these LTLREs to give SACRE an opportunity to be updated on both programmes and to co-ordinate SACRE's plans for developing teacher training.

SACRE's primary network meetings highlighted the new 'core concepts'. Feedback from teachers, as detailed below, shows that these were highly successful in enthusing and supporting teachers in teaching good quality RE. SACRE's focus next year, in response to teachers' comments at network meetings, will be on how best to support teachers with effective 'assessment' of RE.

SACRE continues to be passionate about the value of RE within the curriculum and its impact on the spiritual and personal development of young people, and hope that any national changes to the syllabus will continue to acknowledge the rightful place of RE as a significant part of the curriculum.

I would like to express my gratitude to our LA Adviser to SACRE, Fred Angus, and to the members of SACRE, who have all contributed their time and passion to ensure that the children of Wiltshire have the opportunity to explore the vast and vital theme of the meaning of life itself.

Cllr Mrs Mary Douglas
Chair of SACRE

OVERVIEW OF 2016-17 (SACRE meetings)

The key functions of SACRE can be found in Appendix A.

During 2016-17 Mary Douglas continued as Chair and Ali Jenkins as Vice Chair. The Constitution and Terms of Reference of February 2010 are still in force.

SACRE usually meets 3 times per year to regularly review, as well as other items, the: -

- **National developments in RE from specialists or members attending conferences.**
- **The quality of teaching in RE from members and teachers attending network meetings and training.**

This academic year, to fulfil its statutory duty, SACRE limited its meeting period to one hour to hold a subsequent Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs) to refine the proposal for amendments to the current Agreed Syllabus for 2011 – 16.

On 25 January 2017, the main focus of the SACRE meeting & Agreed Syllabus Conference was to review the implementation of the 'core concepts' for the Agreed Syllabus and -

- On the quality assurance of the core concepts by an external professional.
- Review the development of and support the Diocese of Bristol's Learning and Teaching Lead for Religious Education (LTLRE).
- Welcome Jane Kelly, RE-Coordinator from Bemerton St John's CofE Primary School. Jane had been selected by the LA to present at the RE network meetings for 2016-17 and to advise on any matters regarding the day-to-day teaching of RE.

A summary of actions agreed were: -

- Amendments to the 'Introduction' to the Core Concepts.
- To make schools aware of the Westhill/NASACRE Award (up to £4,000) for projects that offer pupils opportunities to engage in compelling learning experiences in RE.

On 25 April 2017, the focus of the SACRE meeting & Agreed Syllabus Conference was to review a proposal for an assessment policy for teachers.

- Due to last minute cancellations from several members for the reasons of, i.e. Ofsted inspections etc and with the SACRE & ASC meetings, therefore, not being full quorate the Chair decided that the meeting should just focus on the ASC agenda which included a new proposal from Helen Southwell on Assessment.

Members agreed to the: -

- Clerk amending the syllabus to show all references to levels and attainment changed from 'elements of learning' (for targets) and 'progression statements' (for levels).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT LIE AHEAD

Challenges include: -

- Development and implementation of an amended Agreed Syllabus.
- Supporting effective RE within any new curriculum models developed by schools or introduced by the government.
- On-going need to monitor achievements effectively, in light of the paucity of information from Ofsted reports.

Opportunities include: -

- On-going enthusiasm and commitment to high quality RE of teachers, seen through network meetings and training days. Development of flexible planning to enhance RE provision as part of the new Agreed Syllabus and to link with any new curriculum provided by the government.
- Network meetings of teachers, working together to share and develop resources.
- Globalisation and extremist Islamic terrorism highlighted the pressing need for greater understanding of religions.

Compliance for RE

- There were no formal complaints about RE.
- No determinations have been made to SACRE. (A determination is an application by a headteacher to make a determination for pupils of faiths, other than Christianity, that they will not be required to attend daily worship of a Christian character. As a result of such a determination the headteacher must make arrangements for daily worship that is appropriate for those pupils.)
- The monitoring of church schools via the SIAMS inspections of Anglican indicates that there is full compliance within VC and VA areas. Church of England primary schools represent 58% of the total number of primary schools, so this is a significant finding. A request has been made to the Diocese of Salisbury for the outcomes of SIAMS inspections.

Public examination entries in RE

GCSEs and A & AS level Religious Studies/ Philosophy – see Appendix B below.

Quality of teaching

The feedback forms completed by teachers who have attended network meetings gives SACRE an insight into the teachers' understanding of areas of teaching that require development and support and this can vary from school to school.

SACRE members have taken the opportunity attend network meetings, as well as sit in on school RE lessons and Christmas plays etc to further their understanding of the day-to-day teaching of RE. However, this does not involve a judgement of the quality of teaching even though the unofficial and anecdotal feedback from visits is that it is good.

Quality of leadership and management of RE

SACRE does not have access to sufficient in-depth information to enable a well-substantiated judgement on this. However, regional network meetings and training days support the professional development of those leading RE in Wiltshire schools.

2. MANAGING THE SACRE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LA AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Membership of SACRE

The LA has worked hard to recruit members to SACRE that represent a cross section of the religions and beliefs held by the people of Wiltshire and of those taught in Wiltshire schools. The SACRE is well supported by the Chair, Councillor Mary Douglas, LA Officer, Helen Southwell and Clerk, Simone Kermode.

SACRE welcomes observers to their meetings and is made up of the following members –

Group A: Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations.

Votes	Faith Group	Representative
10	Free Churches:- Salisbury Assemblies of God Church Melksham United Church Methodist	Tony Wilson (Pastor) Revd Simon C Edwards <i>Membership vacant</i>
	Buddhist Community	Jo Backus
	Muslim Community	Wali Rahman
	Roman Catholic Church	<i>Membership vacant</i> <i>Membership vacant</i>
	Hinduism Community	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	Sikhism Community	Bal Kaur
	Judaism Community	<i>Membership vacant</i>

Group B: Church of England

Votes	Faith Group	Representative
5	Diocese of Salisbury	Verity Holloway Simon White, HT - Shaw Primary School Alison Jenkins, HT- Great Wishford Primary School (Deputy Chair) <i>Membership vacant</i>
	Diocese of Bristol	Julia Harle

Group C: Headteacher /Teacher Representatives

Votes	School position	Representative
5	Primary Headteacher	Karen Walker, Laverstock St Andrew's CE VA Primary School
	Secondary Headteacher	Vicky Bunting (Head of RS) representing Mrs Edwards, HT Kingdown, Warminster
	Primary Teacher	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	Secondary Teacher	Mark Perraton, The John of Gaunt School <i>shared with</i> Lorraine Marlow, St Laurence School
	Special Teacher	<i>Membership vacant</i>

Group D: The LA

Votes		Representative
6	Conservative	Mary Douglas (Chair)
	Labour	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	Liberal	<i>Membership vacant</i>
	Rep' for the Corporate Director for Children and Education	Helen Southwell
	Equality and Diversity Manager	<i>Membership vacant</i>

SACRE officers (non – voting)

LA Senior Officer	School Improvement Co-ordinator	Helen Southwell
Clerk to SACRE	School Improvement Officer	Simone Kermode

Training opportunities for SACRE members

- Training for SACRE members outlining the functions of SACRE and the roles of SACRE members takes place on a minimum of a 3-year cycle. Training took place on 22 June 2016 at Great Wishford Primary School and was led by Verity Holloway.
- 1 SACRE member is encouraged to attend the annual South West SACRE conference and National SACRE conference.

SACRE development

Website development has taken place to provide access to support materials:

- Religious Education and SACRE pages were included on the Wiltshire Learning Trust (WLT) website <http://www.wiltslt.co.uk/index.php/our-services/re-and-collective-worship>.
- Since 2017 however a new website has been developed by the LA - Right Choice. A lot of work has taken place to update the Agreed Syllabus for RE, SACRE minutes and SACRE constitution on Right Choice website.

Financial support

Currently SACRE is supported by the LA, which enables the continuous review of the membership and recruitment to SACRE as well as allowing for SACRE to be engaged with national events, pay NASACRE membership fees and RE consultant fees for advice to SACRE.

SACRE has been vigilant in keeping its running costs to a minimum and actively seeks support from headteachers to host SACRE meetings and network meetings at their schools. SACRE members who are also Headteachers, especially the Vice Chair Ali Jenkins and Simon White, have over the last few years hosted many meetings and SACRE are appreciate their on-going support and commitment to improving the teaching of RE across the county.

Teachers are currently charged £15.00 to attend network meetings and £160 for a day's training to cover the costs of a specialist RE consultant and venue etc.

The LA has is required to provide a high quality revised Agreed Syllabus and guidance materials. During this year finances have been used to provide a working party to introduce Concept Trees for enhancing the Agreed Syllabus to enable engaging and effective RE to be delivered.

Partnerships with other key stakeholders

- The LA has commissioned specialist advisory support to undertake regional network meetings for RE teachers per year.
- SACRE monitors and informs the range of training provided by the LA.
- Wiltshire SACRE is a member of NASACRE.

Training provided for schools

PRIMARY

Two network meetings over the academic year were repeated 3 times to ensure that teachers had access to a local venue.

'Getting to grips with the Religious Education syllabus for primary schools'

	Date	Venue	Number of teachers attended
Judaism	09 March 2017	Manor Fields Primary, Salisbury	12
	14 March 2017	Shaw Primary School, Melksham	14
	21 March 2017	Longleaze Primary, Royal Wootton Bassett	10
Islam	06 June 2017	Manor Fields Primary, Salisbury	17
	13 June 2017	Shaw Primary School, Melksham	25
	20 June 2017	Longleaze Primary, Royal Wootton Bassett	09

Network meetings covered: -

- An update on the developments relating to the Agreed Syllabus.
- Exploring with a member of the Jewish and/or Muslim faith how to go deeper with children's learning looking at religious beliefs and 'core concepts'
- Building and sharing new ideas for exciting and challenging RE teaching and learning.

Teachers feedback was **overwhelmingly complimentary about the professionalism and knowledge of the Jewish presenter, Iris Segall and Muslim presenter, Wali Rahman.**

These are just a few examples of the positive comments made by teachers: -

For the presenter on Islam: -

- Brilliant to have a Muslim presenter and to be able to openly ask questions.
- Wali Rahman speaking of own experience and talking about the religion from his perspective.
- Wali's talk on Islam helped me know about what to focus on during our up and coming sessions on Islam in Yr 1.
- Good to hear Wali's presentation – insight into Islam and how to teach it accurately and faithfully.
- Meeting Wali, excellent presentation and reminder of resources available to us.
- Wali's information about Islam, a lot that was new to me!
- Detailed core concepts of Islam – very interesting and informative!
- Talk by Wali was clear informative and covered key stages well, thank you.

For the presenter on Judaism: -

- Great to hear about Judaism from 'someone real'
- Iris was fab! It was good and I learned loads as new to the subject. Thanks
- Super informative presentation on Judaism
- Fascinating and extremely useful input by Iris.
- Very useful for supporting teacher's subject knowledge for future staff meeting.
- Excellent talk and opportunity to ask questions. Thank you!
- Jewish explanation of the Torah in comparison to Christian Bible.
- Presentation on Judaism was a joy! Inspiring.
- The talk about Judaism was fantastic – learnt more in the hour than I've learnt in my 12 years of teaching – so a BIG thank you!

Here is a summary of teachers' responses to '**How could the network meeting be improved?**' :-

- Longer with guest speaker to discuss how we could go deeper with children's learning/linked to core concepts.
- Hearing about models for age related expectations in RE when available.
- Need more input on assessment when it becomes available!
- Discuss how to implement the core concepts in the classroom planning.

Secondary teacher network meeting – 'Getting to grips with the new 'GCSE' level syllabus'

SACRE provided teachers with an opportunity to host their own informal all-day network meeting on the new GCSE specifications. All participants were pleased to share resources, expertise and have committed time to develop new GCSE resources in partnership with other professionals.

	Date	Venue	Number of attendees
1	18 November 2016	Wiltshire Council, County Hall Trowbridge	6

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL AGREED SYLLABUS

The Agreed Syllabus for RE was originally adopted in 2011 and was due for renewal by Autumn 2016. The Agreed Syllabus with all teaching support materials can be accessed on [Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus for RE on WISEnet](#)

Developing the revised Agreed Syllabus

The revision of the Agreed Syllabus has followed a pattern of setting up an Agreed Syllabus Conference; the setting up of working groups of teachers; consultation with schools via network meetings; drafting of revisions in line with national guidance and local advice; feedback from all parties and training for all teachers, leading to the completion of the process in Summer 2017.

The additional teaching materials in the form of concept trees for individual religions were produced to enable teachers to use the Agreed Syllabus more effectively. We believe it is important to help pupils to understand each religion in its own terms, presenting each as a coherent worldview. The National Society's 'Christianity Project' has achieved this for Christianity and we developed the same approach for all religions. SACRE is grateful for the hard work of our faith members and professional teachers in using their expertise to produce the Core Concepts for: -

- Christianity - Tony Wilson, SACRE member representing The Free Churches.
- Islam - Wali Rahman, SACRE member representing the Muslim community.
- Judaism – an external specialist.
- Buddhism - Vicki Bunting and Jo Backus, SACRE members representing Secondary Headteachers and the Buddhist community respectively.
- Hinduism - Vicki Bunting, SACRE member representing Secondary Headteachers.
- Sikhism - Bal Kaur, SACRE member representing the Sikh community.

Appendix A: SACRE functions

The report meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Act, which states that:

- 'The LA shall in each year publish a report of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the LA during the preceding year.'
- The report is required to specify any matters in respect of which the LA has given advice to the authority, and the nature of that advice.

The key function of SACRE is to advise the Local Authority on RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus. This includes:

1. Monitoring the provision and quality of RE, and providing advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus. This includes advice on
 - methods of teaching
 - choice of teaching material
 - provision of teacher training
2. Monitoring the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus, including whether any changes need to be made to improve the quality of teaching and learning in RE, whether in the syllabus itself or the support offered in implementing the syllabus. Central to this is the review of the locally agreed syllabus within five years of the last review.
3. Maintaining a partnership between SACRE, LA and other bodies. This includes preparing an annual report for the LA.
4. Supporting and monitoring collective worship in schools. This includes dealing with applications from headteachers for a total or partial exemption from providing Christian worship.

In addition, SACRE has two powers which are binding on the local authority:

- at any time it may require a review of the Agreed Syllabus for RE;
- following an application by the headteacher, it may make a determination for pupils of faiths other than Christianity that they will not be required to attend daily worship of a Christian character. As a result of such a determination the headteacher must make arrangements for daily worship that is appropriate for those pupils.

The composition of SACRE is set out in legislation. The four groups or committees represent the following interests within the local community.

- Committee A Christian Denominations and other faiths;
- Committee B The Church of England;
- Committee C Associations representing teachers;
- Committee D The local authority.

Members may be nominated by appropriate organisations but are appointed by the LA. Other members may be co-opted.

Appendix B: Overview of GCSE and A Level results for Religious Studies (2017)

GCSE Full Course

	Number of Entries	A* - C %	A* - G %
National (All Schools)	26,3974	71.2	97.9
National (State Funded)	24,8210	70.0	97.9
Wiltshire LA (State Funded which includes Academies)	2,471	71.1	97.7

GCE A Level

	Number of Entries	A* - A %	A* - B %	A* - E %
National (All entries)	2,1289	24.2	54.9	98.4
Wiltshire LA (State Funded which includes Academies)	225	22.6	45.2	97.1

Appendix C: Contact addresses of SACRE officers

Chair of SACRE - Councillor Mary Douglas

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