

NASACRE EGM

17 November 2020

Questions raised in Chat in response to Chair's Questions:

What does your SACRE want to change?

How can we speak for all our constituents?

1. Ken Johnson (Nottinghamshire SACRE)

One of the issues which has been sent to me by some Secondary teachers is a concern about possible examinations next summer and no reduction in content of RE courses. Some subjects have had content decreased but not in RE.

Can NASACRE make any representation on behalf of teachers who feel stressed by this situation?

Answer: members of the NASACRE Exec meet regularly with the Department for Education and can discuss this at our next meeting with Ministers. We will also raise it immediately in an email saying that our member SACREs are concerned about exams and raised the issue at our EGM. Member SACREs might also wish to make personal representation to the DfE on this matter, copying NASACRE into their communication.

2. Anne Andrews (Milton Keynes, Bracknell Forest, Windsor and Maidenhead SACREs)

There is always much more focus on RE than on Collective Worship.

Are there any plans to raise the profile of Collective Worship?

Alison Stowe (Harrow SACRE)

I would be interested in more about Collective Worship

Ros Garside (Chair, Bradford SACRE)

I agree that we need more focus on Collective Worship

Answer: NASACRE is working at present with AREIAC to set up a collaborative project on Collective Worship for 2021. The intention is to try to bring more up to date the existing advice offered by NASACRE and AREIAC, which is based on the original Circular 1/94 government guidance.

3. Jane Yates (Cumbria SACRE)

Our Secondary RE teachers talk about marginalisation and entanglement of RE with PSHE, PD, RSHE, Citizenship, etc

Answer: It is really important that SACREs support teachers facing this issue. There are a number of different ways of doing this, for example:

- Ensure your agreed syllabus clearly states the difference between RE and PSHE (RSHE), as well as any commonalities between them
- Use recent statements from government and the DfE about RE, reinforcing its aims and legality

- Ensure you have annual SACRE training opportunities with governors on RE and CW, working with the LA's Governor Services, building knowledge of the importance of RE in a broad and balanced curriculum
- Get regular updates about RE into Headteachers' Briefings
- Ensure you communicate RE 'good news' stories from Primary and Secondary schools in your area (examination results, school winners in e.g. NATRE's *Spirited Arts* competition)
- Highlight the RE Quality Mark as a way of raising the profile of RE in schools.

4. Helen Sellers (North Yorkshire SACRE)

Ideas on encouraging greater member participation would be welcome

Answer: Being known and understanding your part are important features of SACRE's work. Ensure you have a programme of professional development for SACRE members. There are plenty of materials to work from on the NASACRE subscribed members' section of website.

One SACRE ensures in their meeting agenda there is a document or a set of questions for SACRE members to read and come to the meeting, ready to share their thoughts. 30 minutes are allocated for one of these tasks in each meeting, so people get to work in a smaller group (breakout rooms in virtual meetings).

However, SACRE culture takes time to build up and develop. Other ideas:

- Starting each meeting with sharing of food (usually linked to a religious festival or special day)
- Holding meetings in - or visiting - a place of worship of one of the members and hearing them talk about the building, what goes on there and how it benefits their community
- Have project working groups meeting outside the main SACRE meetings
- Establish an induction process for new members.
- Every new member gets a SACRE buddy that they meet and chat with before and after each SACRE meeting for their first year
- Encourage SACRE members to represent your SACRE at conferences, on local collaborative working groups (e.g. for Holocaust Memorial Day) or Inter Faith Groups on behalf of SACRE with responsibility to feed back.
- Have a variety of SACRE members leading on items in meetings.

5. Ken Johnson (Nottinghamshire SACRE)

What is the role of SACRE in the light of academisation growth and lack of LA schools?
Does SACRE have a future?

Answer: SACRE funding is for **all** schools in the LA's area, not just maintained schools. Many academies choose to teach the local AS, recognising the local support behind it from faith members and local communities. SACRE may follow the lead of the Local Authority in taking responsibility for the religious education of all children in the area, whether they are in maintained or non-maintained schools. Many SACREs invite representatives of academies - Primary and Secondary - to join SACRE and also to join the Agreed Syllabus Conference. If there is a youth SACRE, academies are invited to send students and SACREs may include academies in school monitoring visits and in training teachers. This ensures that SACRE's work in supporting RE is relevant and inclusive of every school in the area.

6. Ken Johnson (Nottinghamshire SACRE)

Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City SACREs are in the midst of launching a joint Agreed Syllabus. Yesterday we had 122 delegates another 70+ this evening and then another 30 tomorrow. Notts is looking at its Constitution next month to make it more diverse and perhaps this an area NASACRE could consider?

Answer: NASACRE is currently working with a number of SACREs on a Religious Education Council project looking at the CoRE recommendations around the future of SACREs. One idea being investigated is that of SACREs widening their membership. This is something that many SACREs have already done, and present statute does not prevent. Having more communities involved in SACRE can surely only be a good thing?

7. Julia Ewans (Cambridgeshire SACRE) Are there any Humanists on NASACRE?

Answer: We do not ask NASACRE Exec members to declare their faith position. NASACRE is not a SACRE, constituted by different religious, teaching and local government representatives. As the NASACRE Chair mentioned in her address at the EGM, NASACRE is an umbrella organisation, made up of all the SACREs in England, and the Executive constitutes those who are nominated by their SACREs to serve our organisation in a voluntary capacity. Any SACRE can nominate one of their members for the Executive, this is then voted on by members at an AGM/EGM. Members of the Executive are not there to represent a particular stance or belief system, but to further the work and influence of all SACREs.

8. Helen Sellers (North Yorkshire SACRE)

It would be good to share the work being done on virtual visits in the NASACRE members' area

Answer: We agree! Part of NASACRE's current agenda is to refresh our website. And we intend to provide an interactive area where subscribed SACREs can share all sorts of useful resources.