



Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Monday, 16th June, 2014 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston.

Agenda

No. Item

Part 1 (Open to Press and Public)

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting** (Pages 1 - 6)
- 3. Minutes of the Quality and Standards Sub Group.** (Pages 7 - 12)
- 4. The Young Ambassadors for RE programme**
A presentation by students from Broughton Business and Enterprise College.
- 5. Monitoring Religious Education** (Pages 13 - 14)
- 6. Community Cohesion report from the All Party Parliamentary Group.** (Pages 15 - 18)
- 7. Report from NASACRE** (Pages 19 - 20)
- 8. Working with Local SACREs** (Pages 21 - 24)
- 9. Observers' Contributions**
- 10. Members' News**

11. Date of the next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the SACRE will be on Monday 29th September 2014, at 10.00am in Cabinet Room C – The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston.

Roy Jones
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 2

Lancashire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 3rd March, 2014 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston

Christian and other Religious Groups appropriately reflecting the Principal Traditions in the Area

Roman Catholic Church	Ms J Busby
The Free Churches Group	Mr C Wills
	Mrs A Tidswell
	Rev P Clarke
Buddhism	Kelsang Pagpa
Islam	Ms I Hussain
	Mr I Nakhuda
Hinduism	Ms V Chauhan
	Mrs H Shukla
Teachers Associations	Ms J Crabtree (NUT)
	Ms S Greenhow (NASUWT)
	Mr P Martin (ASCL) Chair
	Mr D Fann (NAHT)
	Mr L Ridings (ATL)
Church of England	Mrs J O'Rourke
	Mr J Wilson
	Miss I Fenton
Lancashire County Council	CC A Cheetham
	CC Ellard
	CC Y Motala
	Mr F Williams
Co-opted Members	Mrs K Cooper
Observers	Mrs J Sabour
	Ms J Jarvis
	Mr P Brennand
RE Consultant	Mrs H Harrison
Officers in Attendance	Mr J Hewitt
	Mr J Mynott
	Mrs K Dale

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Mr N Anwar, Mr P Baker, County Councillor P Buckley, Mr F Farrell, Mr S Jogi, Mr S Jones, Mr B McMullen, Mrs K Murry, and Mrs H Sage.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Lancashire SACRE held on 25 November 2013, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

3. SACRE Membership

Members noted the recent appointment to the SACRE of the following members, by the Interim Executive Director for Children and Young People:

- Mr Steve Jones, representing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford,
- Rev Philip Clarke, representing the Methodist Church,
- Mrs Harsha Shukla, representing the Hindu Faith, Hindu Society Lancaster and Morecambe
- Ms Vijayanti Chauhan, representing the Hindu Faith – Gujarat Hindu Society, Preston
- Mr John Wilson, representing the Church of England, Diocese of Bradford and Ripon & Leeds
- Rabbi Katanka, representing the Jewish Faith

All to serve on the SACRE until July 2017.

4. Monitoring RE in Lancashire

It was reported that the recent Ofsted report into RE (RE: Realising the potential) found that the changes in the accountability framework for provision and achievement had made it difficult for SACREs to monitor the quality of, and achievement in RE. Whilst it had been noted that Lancashire SACRE and its support for RE did not reflect some of the major structural concerns about the work of SACREs nationally which were outlined in the Ofsted report, the report served as a reminder that SACRE has a duty to monitor the quality of provision and achievement in RE in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Lancashire.

In order to enable the SACRE to carry out its monitoring and evaluation role in the best possibly way, members considered the suggestions set out in the report under the headings:

Achievement; Teaching and curriculum; Leadership; Attitudes to learning RE;

The following comments were made:

- Through the Lancashire Youth Voice there already existed an excellent channel for feedback on the quality of RE
- The gathering of information should not be intrusive and existing information should be used wherever possible
- Monitoring by SACRE was initially about raising questions rather than giving answers
- Head teachers could be a vital link via Head teacher associations, as could groupings of Lancashire teachers at network meetings or at training courses
- All information gathered should be collated and presented to SACRE in a coordinated way

- SACRE could monitor by gathering information from a small number of schools
- As the Pupil Attitude Questionnaire had been running for several years, this provided a baseline for monitoring, however, there was no national comparator available
- The means of gathering information from schools needed careful consideration – this would be discussed by the Quality and Standards Sub-group at its next meeting
- Once the information had been gathered the aim was to feed headlines into the SACRE Annual Report

Resolved: That the Quality and Standards Sub-group be asked to consider monitoring RE at its next meeting.

5. Support for RE

The Officer to the SACRE presented a report which set out a suggested outline programme of future support for RE, (following the stepping back of the RE Consultant at the end of March 2014), drawn up following a meeting with teacher members of SACRE on 26 November 2013. Future expert support, through a number of talented Lancashire teachers, was considered vital especially in anticipation of the revision of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus (LAS) in 2015. A further meeting with the teacher members of SACRE was planned to firm up the programme of future support.

It was noted that the LAS was a valuable Lancashire resource and was available for purchase by other Authorities. Any money raised in this way would be fed back in to support Lancashire schools. Members welcomed the news that the LAS had been purchased recently by Warrington Borough Council.

Currently the LAS was not marketed to other Authorities but It was envisaged that this may happen in the future. However, in order to protect this resource, there was a need to develop a system which provided individualised passwords for schools as to date, the syllabus was only password protected generically.

The comment was made that the challenge for the SACRE was in finding out which schools needed more support and that raising the SACRE's profile was one way of encouraging the engagement of schools. It was noted that SACRE members were welcome to attend teacher network meetings.

The RE Consultant had recently led on a piece of work with faith leaders in the form of a seminar which provided an insight into the SACRE and the workings of the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus and this had helped to raise the profile.

Teacher members of the SACRE raised concerns about the Government's proposal to remove the current system of 'levels' used to report children's attainment and progress. With the introduction on the new curriculum in 2014 schools would be able to introduce their own approaches to assessment with Ofsted inspections being informed by whatever pupil tracking data schools chose to keep. This, it was felt, could lead to a lack of standardisation. Development work on assessment therefore was essential and it was hoped that the authority

together with secondary school teachers could draw up a common approach. Teacher member of SACRE, Joanne Harris, had agreed to lead on this area of work.

The comment was made that in order for teachers to feel secure, the support available to them needed to be defined.

6. Review of the SACRE Development Plan 2013 - 2015

Members noted that Priority 1: To fulfil SACRE's statutory role by providing effective leadership of RE and Collective Worship, Priority 2: To raise achievement in RE and Priority 4: To ensure that the provision of RE is informed by the views of stakeholders were all on track but that Priority 3: To improve the provision of Collective Worship, was not on track. Members would be asked to discuss this issue under the next item on the agenda.

7. Collective Worship

Members noted that the valuable resource and guidance on Collective Worship (CW) 'Mirrors and Doors' was accessible, via password, from the RE and Lancashire SACRE web site. Whilst Collective Worship was a statutory requirement, the guidance was non-statutory and Collective Worship was part of the Head teacher's responsibility. Collective Worship was statutory on a daily basis but not necessarily with the whole school coming together daily.

Members were asked to divide into small groups to consider the following:

- How to find out what was happening (including good practice) with Collective Worship in schools
- What the role of the SACRE was regarding Collective Worship

Members provided feedback on these questions as follows:

How to find out what was happening with Collective Worship in schools:

- Schools might view visits by SACRE members to find out about Collective Worship as 'inspections' and therefore schools would need to 'volunteer' to share their Collective Worship with SACRE.
- Investigation was acknowledged as difficult but could be carried out:
 - by asking teachers about it at network meetings and courses
 - through the Lancashire Schools Forum
 - through the Lancashire Association of Secondary School Head teachers' forum
 - through the Lancashire Governors network; SACRE members who were also school governors could ask about CW at their school
 - Emailing schools to raise the profile of Collective Worship and asking questions such as 'are you fulfilling your statutory requirements regarding Collective Worship'
- That schools could be invited to discuss CW on a one to one basis or in groups

What the role of the SACRE was regarding Collective Worship

- The SACRE could provide examples of good practice and share resources via the Schools' Portal
- SACRE members could visit schools to take part in Collective Worship, in accordance with the existing protocol drawn up for doing so
- SACRE could promote the difference between Assemblies and Collective Worship and also the value of the provision of a moment for spiritual reflection
- SACRE could raise school governors' awareness of the value of CW by its contribution to the ethos of the whole school

The Officer to the SACRE undertook to draw members' comments together and present a report on Collective Worship to the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group. It was also suggested that SACRE members interested in visiting schools to take part in Collective Worship be invited to attend a training session prior to making any visits. Training could take place in an afternoon following a meeting of the full SACRE in the morning with light refreshments being provided.

Resolved:

1. That a report drawing together members' comments on Collective Worship be presented for discussion at the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group.
2. A training session be arranged for those SACRE members interested in visiting schools to take part in and observe Collective Worship.

8. Report of the Quality and Standards Sub-group

Members noted the minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Sub-group held on 20 January 2014.

9. National Update

The Lancashire RE Consultant demonstrated the Religious Education Council (REC) web site found at the following address: <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/>. The REC is a national umbrella organisation for many different groups connected to RE and its web site provides information on the state of RE nationally.

The RE consultant also reported that she had made a presentation to the All Party Parliamentary Group (whose focus was on the safeguarding of the provision of RE in schools) on what Lancashire SACRE did to contribute to cohesive communities.

10. Lancashire Youth Voice Update

It was reported by the Lancashire RE Consultant that three of the Youth Voice schools, Fearn's Sports College, Broughton High School and the Hollins

Technology College were leading on the Youth Conference entitled 'working together to make RE the best it can be'. Thirteen schools and three special schools would be attending the conference which would be held at the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre.

At the conference students would be asked to identify questions that they would like answering by the Lancashire Agreed Syllabus for RE, to understand the fields of enquiry and to produce planning grids.

11. Observers' Contributions

Joy Sabour, Bahai Observer, commented that she was pleased to attend the SACRE again following her sabbatical in India.

12. Members' News

Harsha Shukla informed members that they were welcome to attend the event celebrating Holi and the Festival of Culture (arranged in partnership with Faith in Lancaster, Lancashire Constabulary, the University of Cumbria and Lancaster University), which was taking place on 8 March 2014 at the University of Cumbria in Lancaster. The event was free of charge but a raffle would be held in support of the mammary unit at Lancaster Teaching Hospital.

13. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Lancashire SACRE was noted as Monday 16 June 2014 to take place at 10am in Cabinet Room D, County Hall, Preston.

Resolved: Members agreed the following dates for the next schedule of meetings of the full SACRE:

Monday 29 September 2014
Monday 24 November 2014 (AGM)
Monday 16 March 2015
Monday 15 June 2015

Roy Jones
Clerk to the SACRE

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 3

Lancashire SACRE - Quality and Standards Sub-group

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 12th May, 2014 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

Chair

Mr P Martin, (Representing the ASCL)

Committee Members

County Councillor Y Motala, (Lancashire County Council)

County Councillor P Buckley, (Lancashire County Council)

County Councillor A Cheetham, (Lancashire County Council)

Reverend P Clarke, (Representing the Methodist Church)

Mr S Jones, (Representing the Roman Catholic Church)

Mr J Wilson, (Representing the Church of England)

Ms J Harris, (Representing Teachers in the Secondary Sector)

Officers

Mrs H Harrison, Independent RE Consultant.

Mr J Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Development, LCC Children and Young Peoples Directorate.

Mr J Mynott, Committee Support Team Leader, LCC Office of the Chief Executive

Mr M Neville, Senior Committee Support Officer, LCC Office of the Chief Executive

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Kelsang Pagpa, Mrs H Sage, Ms J Clarke, Ms C Mercier and Mrs J Sabour.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

It was noted that whilst Mrs H Harrison - Independent RE Consultant, had attended the last meeting she had been omitted from the list of officers in the Minutes.

Resolved: That, subject to the addition of Mrs H Harrison to the list of Officers in attendance, the Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th January 2014 are confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

As Mr Hewitt, the Head of Quality and Continuous Development, had been delayed the Chair informed the meeting that item 6 on the agenda would be taken as the next item of business.

3. All Party Parliamentary Group report into Religious Education and community relations - update.

Mrs Harrison, presented a report on the above and informed the Group that the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE had looked at community cohesion through a series of sessions held between December 2013 and February 2014.

It was noted that the report presented was a summary and that a more detailed report would be published in the future and made available via the RE Council website.

In considering the report the Group examined the findings of the APPG and discussed some of the issues highlighted under the 'remaining questions' section, particularly in relation to how far RE addressed issues of socio economic inequality and its importance in developing social cohesion.

It was suggested that the Lancashire syllabus already addressed many issues around community cohesion/socio economic inequality through discussions about wealth/status and attitudes towards charity. It was recognised that discussions around these subjects could involve some controversial issues and so there was a need to ensure that teachers had sufficient training/support. It was also noted that some of the available resources often highlighted the differences between people rather than the similarities and that the Lancashire syllabus focus on the shared human experience was appropriate.

There was some concern that the question of inequalities within society was not sufficiently addressed across the wider curriculum and it was suggested that more work needed to be done around intercultural attitudes and how that could affect cohesion. It was suggested that members of the SACRE be asked to provide examples of approaches to charity within individual religions which could then be used to inform the syllabus.

Resolved:

1. That the report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE regarding community cohesion be referred to the full SACRE for consideration.
2. That more work be done to consider intercultural education within the syllabus and the contribution which could be made by SACRE members.
3. That training and resources be developed to support teachers to tackle controversial issues such as inequalities.
4. That a section be included in the SACRE Annual Report in connection with how the Lancashire syllabus can help to tackle issues around community cohesion and socio economic inequality.
5. That the report of the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE on community cohesion is referred to the Youth SACRE as a possible topic for future work.

4. Support for Religious Education.

Further to the discussion at the last meeting of the full SACRE in March regarding support for teaching/learning RE in 2014/15 Mr Hewitt informed the Group that individuals had been assigned to each of the items in the programme as set out in the report.

It was reported that some marketing of available courses had already been undertaken with some of those courses being fully subscribed. Further marketing was planned and information would be circulated via the County Council and SACRE websites.

With regard to the development of the Burnley Faith Centre RE offer it was noted that previously the work of the Centre had been focused on East Lancashire but its use as a pan Lancashire resource was being considered.

The support from specialist leaders in RE through Teaching Schools was discussed and it was noted that generally the recruitment of new RE teachers in Lancashire mirrored the national position with a small number of places being available. It was reported that filling available places was also problematic and it was suggested that more detailed information on that point be presented to the next meeting.

Resolved:

1. That Helen Harrison and Joanne Harris are congratulated on the work done to date in relation to the future development of a programme of support for teaching/learning RE
2. That a report regarding the recruitment of teachers into RE is presented to the next meeting.

5. Feedback on Collective Worship from SACRE meeting held on the 3rd March 2014.

The Group considered a report on the comments made at the last full SACRE in relation to Collective Worship and noted it had been recommended that any members interested in visiting schools which took part in Collective Worship be provided with training ahead of such visits. Mr Hewitt advised the Group that the intention was for a training session to be provided after the next scheduled meeting of the full SACRE. Members agreed that this should take place in the new academic year so that visits could then be undertaken during the autumn term.

With regard to the information/guidance on Collective Worship (Mirrors and Doors) which was available via the SACRE website it was noted that Officers were in discussions with Religious Education Today in relation to future joint working arrangements and marketing of the resource.

Resolved:

1. That the views from the full SACRE on the 3rd March 2014 are noted.
2. That arrangements be made for a training session for members to be held immediately after the meeting of the full SACRE on the 29th September 2014.
3. That Officers continue to explore with Religious Education Today future arrangements in relation to the marketing of the updated 'Mirrors and Doors' guidance on Collective Worship

6. Strategies for monitoring Religious Education.

A brief report was presented in connection with the outcome of discussions at the full SACRE on the 3rd March 2014 in relation to its monitoring and evaluation role.

With regard to the proposal to gather information from a small number of schools Mr Hewitt suggested that this could be achieved by submitting an agreed set of questions to a sample of schools and that proposed questions could be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

Resolved:

1. That in order to assist the full SACRE to fulfil its monitoring and evaluation role suggestions for three questions be presented to the next meeting for discussion with a view to them being put to a sample of schools in the autumn term
2. That a report on the findings of the information gathering exercise referred to in 1 above is presented to the full SACRE on the 24th November 2014.

7. National Update on Religious Education

Helen Harrison circulated two papers to the members of the Group for discussion.

The first paper showed maps depicting the regional RE activity in relation to the following four categories and the Group noted that there was a significant cluster in the North West in relation to the first three.

- RE Quality Mark award winning schools.
- RE Leaders: Specialist Leaders of Education, Advanced Skills Teachers and Lead Practitioners.
- National Association of Teachers of RE Affiliated Schools.
- Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants Regional hubs.

The second document set out the national view of the relationship between the various potential partners involved in regional RE activity and showed RE teachers at the centre. It was noted that whilst SACREs were included on the diagram they were shown as being one of many potential partners. However, in Lancashire it was suggested that the SACRE had a much more integral role in working with partner organisations in order to support RE Teachers. In view of the apparent difference in approach and the view that nationally schools should seek to work with more independent groups it was suggested that a report be brought to a future meeting regarding the relationship between SACRE and schools in Lancashire.

Resolved: That a report be presented to the meeting on the 9th February 2015 regarding the future relationship between SACRE and schools in Lancashire.

8. Programme of Meetings for 2014/15

A proposed programme of meetings for 2014/15 was presented for consideration and whilst the Group agreed the dates it was suggested that Officers check to ensure that they did not clash with any religious events or festivals which could impact on the ability of members to attend.

Resolved: That the 2014/15 programme of meetings for the SACRE Quality and Standards Sub Group, as set out below, are agreed subject to confirmation that the dates do not clash with any religious festivals or events.

Monday 1st September 2014
Monday 20th October 2014
Monday 9th February 2015
Monday 18th May 2015

All meetings to be held at 10am in Cabinet Room B - the Diamond Jubilee Room at County Hall, Preston.

9. Date of the next meeting

It was noted that subject to confirmation that the date did not clash with any religious festivals/events the next meeting of the SACRE Quality and Standards Sub Group would be held at 10am on Monday 1st September 2014 in Cabinet Room B - the Diamond Jubilee Room at County Hall, Preston.

Ian Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 5

Monitoring the work of SACREs

At the SACRE meeting on 3rd March 2014 it was agreed that monitoring the quality of RE should include the following areas:

- Teaching and Curriculum
- Leadership
- Achievement
- Attitudes to learning RE

At the Quality and Standards Sub-group held on 12th May 2014 strategies to gather information about the quality of provision in RE were discussed and it was agreed that some key questions be identified to be raised with a small sample of schools through adviser visits and /or network meetings.

The questions will focus on the three areas of Curriculum, Teaching, and Leadership of RE.

Some possible questions include:

Curriculum

- Is RE taught in line with the Agreed Syllabus?
- Are the guidance and support materials for the Agreed Syllabus helpful in developing the RE curriculum?

Teaching

- Are teachers confident in teaching the Agreed Syllabus for RE?
- Is the quality of teaching in RE good or better?
- Do children enjoy RE lessons?
- Are there any specific professional development needs in RE?

Leadership

- Are subject leaders confident in leading RE across the school?
- Is subject leadership effective in RE?
- Are there any specific professional development needs in the leadership of RE?

SACRE is asked to discuss the proposals outlined above and agree some key questions.

RE AND GOOD COMMUNITY RELATIONS



Cohesive schools – Cohesive communities – Cohesive society

Foreword: Endorsement from Stephen Lloyd MP

Good community relations are at the heart of a society where people can live together harmoniously as neighbours, work colleagues and fellow citizens even if they may disagree over some of their fundamental religious beliefs or worldviews. Religious education is uniquely placed to help children and young people develop the knowledge and skills they need to play their part in today's society and tomorrow's world. There are many elements to RE.

The focus of this summary report is RE's role in promoting good community relations. It shows the strengths which already exist in many schools and colleges; we in the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE would like to see them become universal so that both young people and society in general reap the benefit. The debate around religion is often misinformed and even, frankly, inaccurate. Good RE teaching in schools by properly trained RE teachers is all about educating young people in the different tenets of the world's religions, and those with none.

I believe this is particularly important today when there is so much inaccuracy in our mainstream media and the internet or from our own peer groups. High quality RE teaching allows children to make 'informed' decisions around religion, and when we are better informed we are wiser, and make wiser decisions! Our children are literally our nation's future, so it is both our responsibility and our duty to prepare them properly for the multi-faceted, diverse and complicated world they will inherit, and one day lead.

I would like to thank all those who contributed evidence both at our three parliamentary meetings and in writing. In particular I would like to thank Dr Joyce Miller for all her hard work in conducting this inquiry.

Stephen Lloyd MP
Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group on RE

Introduction

This summary report is the outcome of three oral evidence sessions that took place under the auspices of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Religious Education¹ between December 2013 and February 2014. The inquiry has taken place at a time of rapid change and dwindling sources of information: for instance, Ofsted no longer inspects schools' duty to promote community cohesion. It was important that as much evidence as possible was gathered to inform the inquiry.

The evidence presented was often inspiring and demonstrated high quality RE and deep commitment to good community relations. It was heartening to learn that RE in England and Wales is highly regarded in Northern Ireland and in other European countries; the evidence set out below illustrated examples of excellent practice. But it also showed that some areas require continuing attention and the report includes some suggested actions and desired outcomes.

From the outset a short document was planned, so both evidence and outcomes are stated briefly; a longer paper will be published in due course on the REC website.

It is recognised that contributing to community relations is only one dimension of RE; it is also clear that good RE and the promotion of good community relations take place in a range of schools, including the voluntary aided sector and the increasing number of academies and free schools that sit outside the remit of SACREs.² Nonetheless, SACREs not only remain a statutory requirement, they are also uniquely placed to contribute to the areas this paper addresses, and while a growing number struggle, others thrive. Members of the APPG, the RE Council (REC) and its member organisations will continue to champion RE, aiming to improve further the quality of RE that young people experience in all our schools.

RE can be a strong contributor to good community relations through enabling students to:

- Acquire systematic knowledge and conceptual understanding of religions and worldviews
- Learn from visits and visitors through personal encounters
- Learn about religion and belief in local, national and global contexts
- Consider a range of viewpoints on religious, ethical and philosophical issues
- Articulate their own opinions while respecting the right of others to differ
- Develop their own beliefs, values and identities
- Participate with confidence and openness in dialogue
- Recognise and challenge ill-informed or prejudiced viewpoints, including those in the media
- Ask questions and address contentious issues in a safe space
- Explore reasons why misconceptions exist about some groups
- Evaluate attitudes and actions and how they impact on the community
- Be informed, active citizens and potential leaders.

¹ <http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg>

² Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

A. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAW AND POLICY

SACREs and Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASCs)

EVIDENCE

- Can provide models of good community collaboration
- Can enable high quality religious education, including through specialist advisers
- Can provide a coherent, progressive, broad and balanced curriculum framework
- Can tailor the RE curriculum to meet the needs of their local communities through local determination
- Can provide evidence of their work and good practice in annual reports, including their contributions to good community relations
- Can help to increase parental and community confidence in the teaching of religions and worldviews

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The Department for Education affirms and demonstrates its support for RE, SACREs and ASCs
- All local authorities provide specialist support to SACREs and ASCs to enable them to meet their statutory duties
- SACREs and ASCs collaborate at local/regional levels to enhance their effectiveness, including the sharing of good practice on monitoring and evaluating their work
- SACREs' annual reports, including their contribution to community cohesion, are analysed and the findings published

Law and Policy

- Since Ofsted is no longer required to inspect the duty to promote community cohesion, there is insufficient evidence on which to evaluate progress
- Religion and belief are protected characteristics in the 2010 Equalities Act
- Some bullying based on religious identity and practice is taking place in schools

- The DfE obtains evidence on community relations by commissioning a new survey to parallel the Ipsos Mori 2011 investigation of community cohesion and Prevent³ in schools
- All school and college senior leadership teams (SLTs) affirm staff/student/ community identities in the context of multi-faith Britain
- SLTs evaluate their equalities policy and practice in the light of the 'religion and belief' requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty (2010)
- Schools and RE organisations share examples of good practice in promoting equalities, particularly with regard to religion and belief

B. LEARNING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)

EVIDENCE

- LOtC can support community relations through the involvement of local faith and belief communities
- The use of sacred space⁴, through enquiry-based, participative learning, can promote effective learning about and from religions and worldviews,⁵ contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and challenge negative stereotypes

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- SACREs support learning outside the classroom in their locality, including training and support for host communities where necessary
- SACREs support their schools in the use of visitors to classrooms
- Teachers in all phases and all types of schools make LOtC an integral part of their RE curriculum

³ Prevent is one strand of the government's counter terrorism policy

⁴ 'Sacred space' is the term used by the Learning Outside the Classroom Council. It is broader than 'places of worship' and is intended to be inclusive.

⁵ 'Religions and worldviews' is used to refer to Christianity, other principal religions, smaller religious communities and non-religious worldviews such as Humanism. The phrase is intended to be inclusive.

Intercultural education

EVIDENCE

- Participation of young people in intercultural, cross-school initiatives promotes deeper understanding, meaningful interaction, respect for difference and enables them to address controversial issues
- Initiatives to promote 'Youth Voice' have been successful in enhancing community relations

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- RE professionals use existing organisations (such as 3FF, Face to Faith and the Schools Linking Network) to promote intercultural dialogue and links between schools, or develop their own. This focuses on learning and includes teachers and students in long-term collaboration, with support from governors and parents

Conflict and extremism

- Inter- and intra-religious conflicts and religiously motivated extremism exist and schools can explore these issues in RE

- The REC to update its *REsilience* materials⁶ to include resources on intra-religious conflict, the socio-political dimensions of religions and worldviews, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.
- RE professionals to work alongside colleagues in other curriculum areas to further develop pupils' skills of critical enquiry and media literacy and their understanding of human rights and genocides

C. TEACHING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Professional development

EVIDENCE

- It is through skills and attitudes, not just content, that RE can promote open-mindedness and an informed perspective on religions and worldviews
- Patterns of belief, practice and adherence are changing locally, nationally and globally in ways that need to be reflected in the RE curriculum
- There is a 'religious literacy gap' which schools can help address by teaching about religions and worldviews
- Young people's sources and use of information have changed because of social media and the internet

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- All RE organisations explore ways in which they can provide training and support for their members on community relations and how they can share good practice and research findings
- All RE organisations promote the REC Code of Practice,⁷ the PD Portal, the e-Handbook⁸ and RE:ONLINE⁹ to increase staff sensitivity, confidence and competence in teaching about religions and worldviews
- The new RE hubs consider prioritising community relations in their professional support for teachers and lecturers in FE
- Teachers develop their understanding of social media and the internet and the challenges and opportunities they bring to teaching RE
- RE teachers increase their understanding of globalisation and its impact on community relations
- Teachers are supported in their professional engagement with changing patterns of religions and worldviews
- RE advisers and teachers lead in-school professional development on understanding local communities, through structured visits and visitors.

⁶ *REsilience* is a professional development programme, managed by the REC, to help increase teachers' confidence when addressing contentious issues, particularly where such issues are sometimes used to justify extremism and violence.

⁷ http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/Practice_Code_for_Teachers_of_RE.pdf

⁸ <http://www.theredirectory.org.uk/pdportal>

⁹ <http://www.reonline.org.uk>

REMAINING QUESTIONS

- Can SACREs and ASCs continue to be viable given that an increasing proportion of schools no longer come under their remit?
- How can RE work more closely with other subject areas and curriculum initiatives to achieve shared aims for improving community relations? What other partnerships can be developed to make this happen effectively?
- How can RE professionals help to ensure that the whole school ethos supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and protects equalities in relation to religion and belief?
- How can learning about religions and worldviews be made more interesting and relevant for pupils of 'no religion'?
- How can the RE community collaborate with and better support colleagues in the Further Education sector, where there is no statutory requirement to teach RE to post-16 students?
- How far does RE address issues of socio-economic inequality? How important is this in developing social cohesion?
- How can the work of the Council of Europe on the religious and non-religious dimensions of intercultural education be more widely known and used in England and Wales?
- The 1988 Education Reform Act requires schools to contribute towards the spiritual, moral and cultural development of children **and society**. Can unpacking that phrase provide a rationale for and a means by which schools can work more effectively with and on behalf of their communities?

The APPG: The All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education was established in 2012. Its purpose is to provide a medium through which parliamentarians and organisations with an interest in religious education can discuss the current provision of religious education, press for continuous improvement, promote public understanding and advocate rigorous education for every young person in religious and non religious world views.

Oral evidence was provided by: Deborah Weston, Sharon Lambert, Aisling Cohn, Dr Julia Ipgrave, Jane Chipperton, Prof Adam Dinham; Helen Harrison, Dr Marius Felderhof, Patricia Hannam, Aliya Azam, Alastair Ross, David Raven-Hill; Young Ambassadors for RE from The Redhill Academy (Hannah Morley, Ryan Hutchings, Charlotte Hart-Shaw, Jake Chaplin and Holly Walker), Lesley Prior; Dr Norman Richardson, Robin Richardson, Revd Garry Neave, Jamie Bartlett.

Written evidence was received from: British Humanist Association; Deesha Chadha, Chinmaya Mission, UK; Prof. Robert Jackson; Lambeth SACRE; Lewisham SACRE; Mulberry School; National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom; Riaz Ravat, St Philip's Centre, Leicester; Dr Lynn Revell, Canterbury Christ Church University; Dr Barbara Wintersgill; Dr John Wise, National Council of Faith and Beliefs in Further Education.

This report was written by Dr Joyce Miller who coordinated the inquiry on behalf of the APPG on RE.



The secretariat for the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE is provided by the Religious Education Council of England and Wales

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Agenda Item 7

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SACREs (NASACRE) A.G.M. London 22nd May 2014

The Chairman and the Officer to the SACRE represented Lancashire at this meeting, held at Westminster Central Hall

Keynote speaker **Stephen Lloyd MP** spoke in connection with the work he has led as **Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education**.

Much of his content and his response to questions related to the pressure which he, his colleagues, and professionals working in RE would need to assert in the run-up to the 2015 General Election. From contributors, it was suggested that

- Every SACRE should raise its own profile - with MPs, with their Elected Members, Headteachers, and Governors who held responsibility for compliance with the law.
- Each SACRE needed to have its eye on sustainability/renewal/succession planning
- It was clear that new ways of working would need to evolve as LAs employed fewer and fewer professional RE advisors.

Workshops in the afternoon session gave useful insights into the way some Local Authorities (LAs), even with a high percentage of “academy” schools, were still engaging with them by promoting (sponsored) incentives/ competitions for pupils. Some larger LAs had begun creating a “hub” of excellence for neighbouring SACREs. Others seemed open to the enterprise of independent “trainers” to organise the dissemination of good practice and guidance for their locally agreed syllabus.

Points of note for Lancashire to consider taking forward included:

- Working with Teacher & Headteacher Associations to raise awareness of the role of the SACRE, and the importance of RE in whole school performance
- Increasing contact with ITT providers and Teaching Schools in respect of recruitment/CPD for RE teachers
- Using LA resource of Press Office to highlight good practice/relevant news
- Promoting the RE Quality Mark
- Ensuring the Annual Report was suitably disseminated within the LA which is responsible for it.
- Considering the issue of training for members of SACRE.
- Considering the role of elected members.
- Considering the role of Faith representative members of SACRE.
- Considering the development of a RE Hub with local SACREs.

PM 230514

NASACRE Conference - May 2014
20 things SACREs can do.

- Contact local MPs, including House of Lords
- Contact teaching unions (through SACRE reps) to get support for RE
- Engage with local Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers
- Engage with local and social media
- Engage school governors
- Interact with local RE teachers
- Get SACRE into schools – observe RE/Collective Worship/hold SACRE meetings there & hear from RE leaders
- Support and monitor Collective Worship (CW)
- Encourage schools to sign up for RE Quality Mark and check ongoing progress
- Make links with academies; find out which RE syllabus they teach & invite them to SACRE
- Send SACRE's annual report to LA Scrutiny Committee
- Report to Ofsted any schools that are not 'doing' RE properly
- Make a SACRE resource bank from members' contributions
- Sponsor RE competitions
- Work with local interfaith groups
- Support a programme for Young Ambassadors
- Ensure participation from councillors
- Invite a wide input from other people when reviewing the agreed syllabus
- Work with Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) and Teaching Schools
- Ensure RE is impacting on Teaching and Learning for pupils and impacting their teachers

Agenda Item 8

Working with Local SACREs through the development of Hubs

Following the recent OfSTED report on the quality of Religious Education in schools in England (RE: Realising the potential) a number of bodies have suggested that there is a need for collaborative working in order to provide support for the teaching and learning of RE.

The importance of working together to promote high quality RE was highlighted at the recent NASACRE conference (see previous item on the agenda) where a significant number of SACREs raised concerns over their capacity to sustain their support for schools in a climate where resources are increasingly stretched.

A number of different models are currently being promoted, some of which do not see a major role for SACREs in developing support for RE in the future. However, on the South Coast of England a number of local authorities have come together over the past twelve months to develop a Hub model where representatives of local SACREs meet to share concerns, challenges, good practice and coordinate resources. Although a number of the SACREs in the Hub share a common Agreed Syllabus many do not, but the feedback from members of the network has been positive.

Following a meeting of the Officer to Lancashire SACRE, the RE consultant and a teacher representative from Lancashire SACRE it was felt that the Hub model may be a useful way to strengthen the work of SACREs in the northern part of the North West. Whilst there is no blueprint for an effective network of SACREs it was suggested that a Hub approach could:

- Strengthen provision for professional development
 - Share good practice in the working of SACREs
 - Identify common challenges facing SACREs
 - Provide a stronger base for raising concerns about the future development of SACREs
 - Make more efficient use of resources across a network of SACREs
- The proposal is to invite a number of SACREs in the northern part of the North West to a meeting in July 2014 to discuss the value of developing a SACRE Hub (see attached draft letter from the Chair).

DRAFT LETTER

Dear Colleague,

I attended the Annual General Meeting and Conference of NASACRE on May 22nd, along with a number of other representatives from the North West. One of my colleagues took part in a seminar led by Hampshire SACRE which showcased the work they are doing with a number of neighbouring authorities, to highlight the issues facing individual SACREs and to consider how their work might be strengthened through collaboration.

The strengths of individual SACREs and the challenges they face may differ but the experience in the Hampshire region suggests that collaboration has proved useful. Our purpose should be to sustain the best possible support for RE in challenging times – a theme which ran through the NASACRE conference.

With this in mind, I would like to invite you to a meeting of SACREs from the northern part of the North West, at which we would discuss the value of establishing a local “hub”.

The **initial meeting will be held on 14th July at 2pm** at the Woodlands Conference Centre in Chorley, and we could cater for up to 3 representatives from each SACRE (at no charge to you).

I recognise you may already have effective links with other SACREs, but if this development is of interest to you, please let us know by contacting Tracy Matheson on or by email at tracy.matheson@lancashire.gov.uk

I look forward to working with you towards our common goal.

Yours sincerely

Peter Martin
Chairman of the Lancashire SACRE