



Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Date Thursday 21 June 2012
Time 1.30 pm
Venue Committee Room 1B - County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

**Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend.
Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's
agreement.**

1. Introductions, Welcome and Apologies
2. Declarations of interest, if any
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2012 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairs Comments
6. SACRE Development Plan - Specialist Inspector for Religious Education
7. Respect Conference - Specialist Inspector for Religious Education
8. RE Art Competition - Education Development Advisor
9. SACRE Updates - Report of the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education (Pages 5 - 12)
10. Date of the next meeting
11. Any other business
12. Launch of Durham Agreed Syllabus for SACRE Members - Specialist Inspector for Religious Education
13. Any resolution relating to the exclusion of the public during the discussion of items containing exempt information

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
13 June 2012

To: **The Members of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education**

1. Church of England

Canon L Burton, Revd. J Jewsbury, J Katsambis and D Mowbray-Pape

2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

J Bainbridge	- Methodist Church
W Gray	- Buddhism
B Guymer	- Baptist Church
J Kidd	- Methodist Church
I Osborne	- Roman Catholic
J Pallister	- Roman Catholic
S Purba	- Sikhism
Bhakti Rasa Dasa	- Hinduism
D Sadlik	- Judaism
S Brown	- Assemblies of God
C Spencer	- Bahá'í Faith
M Stephenson	- United Reform Church

3. Teachers Associations

C Callaghan	- NUT
A Carter	- R E Curriculum Group
S Baker	- NUT
A Hartley	- NASUWT
P Lamb	- SHA
J Pearce	- R E Curriculum Group
P Welch	- NUT

4. County Council Representatives

Councillors J Blakey, M Dixon, S Iveson and M Simmons

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

Educational Development Advisor

Catherine Robson

Contact: Jo March

Tel: 0191 383 3481

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) held at the County Hall, Durham on Thursday 1 March 2012.

Present:

J Bainbridge in the Chair

1. Church of England
Canon L Burton (Vice-Chair), Revd. J Jewsbury and D Mowbray-Pape

2. Other Religious Denominations and Faiths

Methodist Church

J Bainbridge

J Kidd

Buddhism

W Gray

Judaism

D Sadlik

Roman Catholic

I Osborne

United Reform Church

M Stephenson

3. Teachers Associations

NUT

S Baker

P Welch

NASUWT

A Hartley

RE Curriculum Group

A Carter

4. County Council Representatives

Councillor M Dixon

Specialist Inspector (Religious Education)

Isobel Short

Educational Development Advisor

Catherine Robson

1. Introductions, Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Blakey, Councillor Iveson, Councillor Simmons, C Callaghan, J Katsambis, J Pallister, S Brown and C Spencer.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 3 November 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

No matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 November 2011.

4. Chairs Comments

The Chair asked to record SACRE's thanks to David Ford, Head of Achievement Services for his support. A retirement card was circulated for members to sign.

The Chair informed members that she had written a letter on behalf of SACRE to Hamsterley Primary School. She had been told that children from the school had visited a local church exhibition and behaved very well.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to the Specialist Inspector for Religious Education and the Education Development Advisor for their continuing good work.

5. Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education informed members that teachers will receive a 3 hour training and launch package which includes a copy of the revised Agreed Syllabus, training and guidance materials.

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education was asked a question about whether Durham would be selling the Agreed Syllabus to other Authorities. The inspector replied that Sunderland and Hartlepool local authorities have a contract with Durham for buying and adapting the Syllabus. Durham has ensured that they have maintained the copyright so that schools in the Authorities have the right only to use the Syllabus in their own schools. The Inspector also stated that other institutions would have to get permission from the Local Authority at a cost.

Further discussions took place regarding Academies using the Agreed Syllabus. The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education advised members that the Local Authority are 'Academy friendly'. The aim is for Academies to buy into services. Decisions about funding agreements for use of the Agreed Syllabus were still being considered. The Inspector will be writing to Head Teachers shortly about this.

6. Agreed Syllabus Launch Dates

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education circulated the Agreed Syllabus launch dates (for copy see file of minutes). She invited members to attend the launch dates to show their support.

7. Respect for RE Conference

The Specialist Inspector for Religious Education informed SACRE that the Lat Blaylock Conference for primary and secondary schools will be held on Friday 29 June 2012 at Willington.

The Education Development Advisor will be in touch with members closer to the time.

8. Art Competition

The Education Development Advisor asked if any members were interested in judging the Art Competition which was taking place in the Durham Room at County Hall from 12.00pm on Monday 12 March 2012 to let her know after the meeting.

9. SACRE Vodcast

The Education Development Advisor informed SACRE that Gayle Hackett will be producing more short films for schools on aspects of religion and belief. Filming will be on 9 March 10am to 11am and 23 March 10.30am to 11.30am at the Durham Education Development Centre, Spennymoor.

If any interested members were not available on the dates suggested, the Education Development Advisor would try to accommodate.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

Thursday 21 June 2012.

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SACRE - NATIONAL UPDATES June 2012

Please see below an overview of the current work of RE organisations and the latest news and developments in RE.

There remains some real concerns in the 'RE world' about the position of RE and the effect of some government policies and reduced funding for Local Authorities. However, there is also some really positive work going on in the differing organisations to support RE and raise its profile. Indeed on the morning this update is due to be sent to SACRE members with the agenda, there was an item on Radio 4's Today programme about the role of RE in schools (June 11th). This follows the publication of a survey which reports that 53% of adults in England and Wales think RE should remain a compulsory subject in schools (news release attached). John Keast Chair of REC and Father Gardner, RE Adviser for the Catholic Education Service outlined their views on the nature and purpose of RE. The interview lasted five minutes and illustrates the efforts being made throughout RE communities to safeguard RE and raise its profile.

Please see page 3 for abbreviations.

Religious Education Council (REC)

Nick Gibb (MP) addressed the REC at their AGM in June. He talked generally about the vision of the government for education but also the role of RE in schools. He reiterated the position that "the teaching of RE remains a compulsory requirement for schools. It is not a matter of choice." He also stated that (based on The School Workforce Survey):

- the number of RE teachers has increased from 10,400 in 2010 to 20,700 in 2011
- the number of hours at Key Stage 4 for teaching RE has increased from 47,300 to 47,600
- the number of pupils entered for GCSE continues to rise.

REC are going to undertake a review of the RE curriculum in line with the National Curriculum review. This will not be statutory. The timeline for this has not yet been published.

NASACRE

NASACRE are publishing 2 guidance leaflets on their website:

- Collective Worship
- Academies. This leaflet is aimed at Headteachers, Chairs of Governors, and subject leaders of RE in Academies and Free Schools. Whilst this is very useful, I do have some concerns about the leaflet, particularly in relation to the role of SACRE (nothing is said about a funding relationship between Academies, SACRE and Local Authorities). This is an issue for SACRE to discuss further.

NATRE

The Chair of NATRE, Ed Pawson, wrote to Michael Gove in May after meeting him during a school visit. His letter outlines some of the current concerns of RE and SACRE. It is available to read on the NASACRE website www.nasacre.org.uk I am not yet aware of Michael Gove's reply.

Ofsted

- A new Section 5 evaluation schedule (for general 2-day school inspections) was implemented this January. Guidance for SMSC does draw to the attention of inspectors the vital role of RE in SMSC development. Inspectors are also expected to check that a school is fulfilling its statutory requirements (eg teaching RE) and investigate if it appears they are not.
- The long report on RE (every 3 years) is due to be published at the end of 2012.
- The RE HMI (Alan Brine) doesn't feel that there is evidence of the feared 'meltdown' of RE that some anticipated last year with the introduction of E.Bacc.

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for RE

This was set up several months ago (probably as a result for the Early Day Motion on E.Bacc last year). This is the first APPG that has ever been set up for RE. It is anticipated that MPs who are members of this can become well informed about RE, speak out in support of the subject and comment on proposals that affect RE. We are being asked to contact our MPs and ask them to join this APPG.

Department for Education

The Department has announced that the duty of Local Authorities to consider complaints about the curriculum, sex education and religious worship in maintained schools will be removed in July 2012. This has an impact on the responsibility and work of SACRE regarding collective worship. This has prompted a reaction from several Local Authorities and members in the RE world. The issue is being discussed by the REC. They intended to raise this with Nick Gibb (MP) when they met him; I have not yet heard the outcome of this.

Collective Worship

AREIAC and NASACRE have jointly pressed the Government on the need to withdraw Circular 1/94 on collective worship. Ministers are stating they do not intend to do this or review the guidance at present (this is why NASACRE/AREAIC are producing some guidance).

RE Quality Mark

A scheme is being trialled in the North West to develop a RE Quality Mark, to raise the profile and promote excellence in RE. It will be similar to Artsmark, with schools being awarded bronze, silver and gold. This is very positive and I will update on the findings of the pilot when they become available.

Short Course

Religious Studies GCSE Short Course will remain for schools from September 2012 but, from 2014, the Short Course will not count in school performance tables. It will also not be possible to accredit 2 Short Courses together (eg Citizenship/RS) as a Full Course.

Also, schools must only enter students at the **end** of a course, so it will no longer be possible for schools to enter students for RS Short Course at the end of Year 10 and then make this up to Full Course at the end of Year 11.

This may have some real implications for our schools. Several are now stopping teaching Short Course altogether and will teach Full Course in core curriculum time (less than for other subjects although many will begin teaching in Year 9, not year 10). SACRE may need to monitor this and offer support to schools in some way.

The Daily Mail and Paganism

Durham Local Authority received a Freedom of Information request regarding the teaching of paganism in RE, which I responded to (we neither encourage or forbid the teaching of paganism). The Daily Mail published an article (April 2012) about the teaching of paganism in Cornwall where the Agreed Syllabus has programmes of study for each key stage.

Abbreviations

APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group
AREIAC	Association of Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants
CYPS	Children and Young People's Services.
E.Bacc	English Baccalaureate. The measure that some schools are using for student performance - students who gain C+ at GCSE in English, Mathematics, Science, a modern foreign language, and a Humanities (Geography/History). This exclusion of RE is having some negative consequences for the subject.
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector. Work for Ofsted. Alan Brine is the HMI who is the Ofsted National Adviser for RE
NASACRE	National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education
NATRE	National Association of Teachers of RE
REC	Religious Education Council. The Chair is John Keast OBE, formerly at QCA and DFES as Adviser for RE.
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural development

SACRE - LOCAL UPDATES

June 2012

I received a phone call query (passed on from Governor Support) from a Durham parent regarding a faith visitor in school. The issue was over a neighbourhood policeman speaking to children (primary school) about his Muslim faith; an article about this was published in the local paper. I spoke at length to the headteacher and parent. Schools inviting faith members into school is something SACRE has always encouraged. It may be worth, however, reissuing our guidance to schools to ensure that they are aware of the nature and purpose of these visits and communicate these effectively to everyone concerned, including parents.

Launch and training sessions for the Agreed Syllabus are about to take place, with most schools having signed up for one session. I may offer an extra training session in September for those unable to attend in June. Academies have been charged a fee for use of the Agreed Syllabus in their school.

Gayle Hackett is beginning to edit and put together short films based on interviews with faith members. We will show these at later SACRE meetings. Thanks to all SACRE members who were interviewed.

Sharon Lupton is continuing to research and plan a unit for Key Stage 3 pupils on how religions use the arts to express spiritual ideas and beliefs. Please contact me if you have any ideas for resources from faith traditions.

We will be running various courses and networks for schools next academic year. These include:

- 3 primary networks
- 3 secondary networks
- A one day course on planning RE in the primary school
- A one day course on teaching Christianity in the primary school
- A half day course on implementing the new KS2 / KS3 bridging unit
- A day course, run by Lat Blaylock from RE Today Services on teaching GCSE in one hour a week
- A one day secondary RE conference to include several visiting speakers e.g. HMI Alan Brine, Dilwyn Hunt

We may add more courses if the need arises.



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Working together to strengthen the provision of religious education in schools, colleges and universities

Embargoed until 00.01am, 11 June 2012

NEWS RELEASE

RE for good – wide public support for RE in schools

New research published today reflects public endorsement for high quality Religious Education (RE) in our schools. Good quality RE is widely understood to be at risk of being squeezed out of the curriculum despite it being highly valued. This new research shows over half (53%) of all adults in England and Wales who gave an opinion say RE should remain a compulsory subject. 58% agreed it is beneficial for all pupils to participate in RE lessons. This rose to a majority (63%) among 18-24 year olds.

Today's research on attitudes to RE was conducted by YouGov on behalf of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) and results are announced as MPs prepare to attend the first meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group on RE. The views of all those who expressed an opinion on RE are:

- Over half (53%) of all adults in England and Wales think that RE should remain a compulsory subject in state funded schools
- 58% think it is beneficial for pupils to study RE
- The above two percentages rise to 63% in each case among 18–24 year olds
- 1 in 2 adults think RE provides a valuable space in the school day where young people can learn about all religious and non-religious beliefs

With religious and non-religious diversity increasing, these figures reflect the value adults attach to young people being able to articulate their own beliefs, as well as engaging with, respecting and understanding others. 50% of those who gave an opinion said RE was an essential component of a multi-faith society, as it promotes mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. This rose to over half among 18-24 year olds (52%) and 25-34 year olds (56%). In contrast, only 9% said they thought it was 'harmful' for pupils to study RE and only 13% thought it should not be taught in schools at all.

Chair: John Keast OBE **Deputy Chair:** Dr Joyce Miller **Treasurer:** Prof Trevor Cooling **Secretary:** Deborah Weston
Registered Charity no: 1116543. A Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England No: 5907308

Higher support among younger adults

RE has been on the curriculum since 1944 and in that time has changed from Biblical study to include world religions and non-religious worldviews. For children and young people, RE is an important opportunity in the school day when they are taught to recognise and respond to the challenges of growing up in a diverse, multi-cultural society. The research uncovered especially positive views of RE from those with most recent experience of school:

- Of those with an opinion, 60% of full time students agree RE is essential to a multi-faith society (a rise on 50% of all adults)
- 65% of full time students agree that it is beneficial for pupils to study RE (a rise on 58% of all adults)

In response to the survey and its findings John Keast, chair of the REC said:

“RE is a core part of the education system and we and our member bodies are committed to offering all the support we can muster to help schools deliver high value RE. Our ambition is to promote widespread understanding of how academically rigorous and personally inspiring good RE can be and how it equips young people to appreciate a range of religious and non-religious beliefs in our world. It’s positive to see such a strong belief in the importance of the subject among the public.

“As part of the REC’s on-going commitment to ensure RE teaching keeps up with proposed changes to the National Curriculum, we are working on a revised subject framework for RE. We look forward to now working with MPs in the newly-formed All Party Parliamentary Group on RE, informed by this new and encouraging research.”

- ends -

For further media information:

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Notes to Editors

1. Established in 1973, the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) brings together some fifty national organisations. These comprise academic and professional associations specialising in religions and religious education, as well as the individual religion and belief organisations inclusive of the range of faith communities found nationally, including the British Humanist Association. The REC's shared priority is to strengthen the quality of provision for the subject throughout the educational system.
2. The REC is a national organisation that represents a wide range of faiths and beliefs and members include the Church of England, the Catholic Church, the Free Churches, the Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Jain, Zoroastrian and Bahá'í faiths, the British Humanist Association and professional teaching associations.
3. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1825 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 9th – 12th March 2012. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all English and Welsh adults (aged 18+).
4. The All Party Parliamentary Group on Religious Education is chaired by Eastbourne and Willingdon MP Stephen Lloyd with its secretariat provided by the REC. The group will be formalised at an AGM and reception on 11 June 2012. For a media pass to this event please contact info@3nine.co.uk or call 0207 736 1888.

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