

INTERIM REPORT - FEBRUARY 2014

Project: Enquiry – what does it mean to live in a religiously diverse society?

- The project began in September 2013 and involves teachers and students from 12 schools (9 Durham schools, 3 South Tyneside schools).
- Teachers attended meetings to discuss the project and develop ideas/resources for its introduction to students. A group of students (eg high ability Year 8) were identified by each school.
- Students were introduced to the diversity of religions and beliefs in the local area through analysing census material and other stimuli (eg the use of buildings which used to house religious communities).
Students identified questions they would want to ask members of belief communities (including non-religious beliefs).
- Students attended an Interfaith Conference at County Hall, Durham, on 20 November 2013 to coincide with national interfaith week. The conference consisted of short workshops where students' questions were addressed by individual faith members. The conference concluded with a Question Time panel for all students and faith members. Representatives of local faith groups (including SACRE members): Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Bahá'í, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, Church of England, Pentecostal, Methodist, Salvation Army, Roman Catholic, Humanism, Paganism.
- Schools are continuing the project, analysing their findings and planning a visit to faith communities outside the region. This will take place in the Summer term.
- Teachers will be meeting later this term to discuss and evaluate the project and its impact on student knowledge, understanding and attitudes.
- Paul Welch, member of SACRE is working with the RE inspector to help support this project.