

Durham SACRE

The RE Inspector Reports

A summary of some of the support in RE provided by the RE Inspector, Isobel Short, since the last SACRE meeting in March 2014. Also, a brief overview of national developments.

Leading RE Course

The second day of the Primary RE Co-ordinators' course was held in May with 11 delegates (the first was held in October 2013). The course has particular focused on writing a policy, evaluating provision of RE and development planning.

The teachers were a joy to work with and have come up with an excellent plan for future collaborative work around the monitoring of RE. As such, a task group is being set up to meet regularly, plan together and discuss findings. This could provide very useful information for SACRE in terms of their role in monitoring of RE and providing advice and support to the Local Authority (LA) and schools.

Year 6/7 Bridging Unit

I have produced detailed overview and lesson planning with some resources on our statutory Year 6 unit "So What Do we Now Know about Christianity?" The idea is that schools deliver this to bring together learning across the primary school on Christianity as well as introducing pupils to the RE Concepts (Belief, Authority, Expressions of Belief, Impact of Belief). This will provide a foundation for secondary colleagues to build on. The planning materials will be put on the Local Authority Education Portal for schools and they will also be handed out at networks this term.

The Year 7 statutory unit is "How do the RE Concepts help us Understand Religion". Some secondary colleagues have planned to further develop pupil knowledge on Christianity in this unit. Others are studying a different religious tradition or a variety of religions for each concept. I will continue to encourage partner schools to contact each other about this work so that there is real continuity of RE learning for our children.

RE Networks

As part of the Service Level Agreement between schools and Durham's Education Development Service (EDS), teachers of RE can attend free networks.

- Networks for this term (primary, secondary, special) take place in July.
- 14 teachers attended the Spring term secondary network (March).
- Items explored:
 - specialist teaching and future CPD needs
 - different ways to deliver Key Stage 4 statutory RE; colleagues discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of models in order to help them make decisions about delivery in their own schools
 - using story to enable students to ask questions and develop reasoned and informed opinions
 - Karenza Passmore from NERLRC informed us of new resources to match to the Durham Agreed Syllabus.
- The special school network (February) only had 1 attendee but I worked with him to produce long term planning to meet the needs of his school.
- Networks will be offered each term next year.

- We have a growing number of delegates attending the secondary network from schools outside the LA – Sunderland, Darlington, Newcastle.

Contracts

Schools continue to request Inspector/Adviser time to support the development of RE. I am currently working with several primary and secondary schools, particularly around the planning of RE units to implement the Agreed Syllabus. Some of these school contracts are very long (20 hours) so will extend into next term.

Enquiry Project

This is the main development project in RE this year in Durham. Please see separate agenda item.

National Developments

GCSE and A Level Reform

Michael Gove announced in April reforms to GCSE and A level for non-EBACC as well as EBACC subjects. RE will, therefore, be reformed for first teaching in September 2016. The Religious Education Council (REC) has established a qualifications committee to work in partnership with the awarding organisations and the DfE in delivering these reforms. The REC has also set up a qualification reference group to provide opportunities for consultation with representatives from religious communities in relation to these qualifications. Further details are available on the REC website: www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk

Regional Strategy for RE

The REC published their review of RE in October 2013. This contained a non-statutory framework for RE and also several recommendations for the future of RE. One of these recommendations was to “ensure that there are more robust arrangements for training and supporting teachers of RE”. The review suggests that regional hubs are set up to enable communications between teachers and various stakeholders and to become regional centres of CPD (for teachers who are not able to benefit from SACREs). As a result of this, a strategy of regional support has been set up by NATRE, REC and Culham St Gabriel’s. Regions have been invited to apply for some pilot funding. I have met with Karenza Passmore (Director of NERLRC) and Natalie Chapman (CofE Diocesan RE Advisor) to discuss initial ideas and ways in which we can co-ordinate our support of RE more effectively. This strategy may be something for Durham SACRE to discuss and explore further.

APPG on RE

The APPG on RE remains active and continues to raise profile of RE nationally. They have recently collected evidence (through 3 oral sessions) and published a summary report on the way RE can contribute to good community relations. The role of LAs, SACREs and ASCs are highlighted throughout. Please see attached report.

NERLRC	North East Religious Learning Resources Centre
REC	Religious Education Council
NATRE	National Association of Teachers of RE
APPG	All party Parliamentary Group
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EBACC	English Baccalaureate
ASC	Agreed Syllabus Conference