

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for Bath and North East Somerset

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE Annual Report September 2021- August 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 Words from the Chair

Welcome to our Annual Report 2021 – August 2022

We have had another successful year of SACRE work despite the limitations of meetings on-line and inability to visit schools in person. We learned to adapt with zoom meetings and monitoring of school's RE activities via surveying their websites, together with on-line teacher training and other activities to maintain the profile of RE.

As the country was still coping with uncertainties around the continuing COVID pandemic, the SACRE made small steps to resume 'in person' meetings – the first such was held in June. Meanwhile, we offer congratulations to local schools who have continued teaching during this difficult period, coping with restrictions and Covid after effects. For the first time in two years, exam results will be available in this report.

One big change happened this year, with the retirement of our long-standing Advisor Dave Francis, who has also been a major part of the changes in the Revised Agreed Syllabus. We welcomed Adam Robertson as his replacement in April, and the AS was launched in March 2022 by Dave with training for local teachers. The next revision happens in five years, but we are already becoming aware of major changes in the pipeline nationally.

The SACRE continued to meet during the year, with good attendance at meetings. We are fortunate to have a diverse membership, particularly in respect of representatives of different local faith communities, and actively seek to recruit when vacancies arise. There is a good link with the local Bath Interfaith Group which has been active in the area for over 30 years, and is represented on the SACRE by myself. There is thus a valuable link for local RE teachers who are kept informed of local interfaith events, and can access visitors for their schools.

We are looking forward to further work with the local schools, developing our SACRE membership and continuing support for schools next year – although recognising that we are somewhat constrained by our budget for the year ahead.



Jane O'Hara

Chair of Bath and North East Somerset SACRE

October 2022

1.2 Overview – SACRE

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is legally constituted by a Local Authority with the responsibility for overseeing Religious Education and Collective Worship in community, Voluntary Controlled foundation schools without a religious character and trust schools.

Academies, Free schools & Voluntary Aided schools lie outside the SACRE remit, but a good SACRE will try to establish links with any of these schools in its area.

SACRE has met three times in the last academic year. Two meetings were held online and one was held 'in person' at Bath Spa University. All meetings were quorate and well attended.

In meetings the following aspects were discussed:

- Agreed Syllabus review and funding, suggested RE resources
- SACRE membership
- OFSTED research review
- Westhill award
- Government White Paper on Education and Schools
- Religion and Worldviews (and its potential impact on teaching of RE)

1.3 Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE has developed and shares a locally agreed syllabus with partner SACREs in Bristol, North Somerset, and the London Borough of Haringey. On 1st July 2021, our SACRE recommended that the updated Syllabus be formally adopted by Bath & North East Somerset Council. The updated Syllabus was agreed by Bath Council in Autumn Term 2021, and launched in March 2022; training for teachers was held early in 2022. The new syllabus (Awareness Mystery and Value) will run for a period of 5 years to 2026

2. Religious Education

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

The locally agreed syllabus in schools is Awareness Mystery Value (<https://www.awarenessmysteryvalue.org/>). This is shared by Bristol, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. It is utilised by many schools across the authority, including Academies. During the last year training was held across the 4 authorities who share the agreed syllabus. A total of 9 schools from Bath and North East Somerset attended the training offered in March. In addition, Bridgwater College Academy in Somerset decided to use the Awareness Mystery Value syllabus all through their Academy for Early Years – KS4. The Adviser worked with and trained the Subject Lead on the syllabus.

2.2 Standards and monitoring of Religious Education: Ofsted and SIAMS reports

SACRE accesses Ofsted reports on local schools throughout the year. During the period of this report (2021-22), 6 schools received inspections as the process re-started fully following the lifting of Covid restrictions. The following table highlights where RE or Collective Worship was noted.

School	Date of inspection	Grade	Mention of RE or Collective Worship
Chandag Junior School	November 2021	Requires Improvement	Mentions assemblies as a positive influence on pupils. RE mentioned in curriculum conversation with staff.
Abbot Alphege Academy	January 2022	Requires Improvement	Deep dive in RE Praised for pupils' involvement in assemblies. Sequencing and progression in learning highlighted as area for improvement.
Three Ways School	May 2022	Good	RE or Collective Worship not mentioned
St Michael's Junior Church School	June 2022	Good	Pupils celebrate their own and other world religions.
Somervale School Specialist Media Arts College	June 2022	Good	No specific mention, but comments that 'pupils are welcoming and embrace difference in others.'
St Saviour's Infant Church School	June 2022	Good	Highlights carefully planned assemblies and visitors to school.

SACRE, through the Adviser, is offering support to schools where RE or Collective worship is highlighted as an area for improvement.

In addition to Ofsted inspections, all Church of England schools are inspected as a designated church school through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). SIAMS inspections restarted in October 2021, were paused during January and February 2022 due to Covid and its ongoing impact on schools before resuming in March. The schools inspected during the timescale of the annual report are detailed below:

Date of inspection	School	Previous outcome	Outcome
9.11.21	St Mary's VC Primary, Timsbury	Good	Good
6-7.12.21	St Mark's CofE Secondary School, Bath	Good	Good
4.5.22	Weston All Saints	Outstanding	Good

18.5.22	St John's VA Primary, Midsomer Norton	Outstanding	Excellent
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2.4 Standards and monitoring of Religious Education: Analysis of school websites

Each year SACRE monitors school websites to examine the RE curriculum and to ensure schools are meeting their legal obligations. Due to the number of schools, this is done over a 3-year cycle. In 2021-22 SACRE members reviewed a total of 30 websites. A simple 'traffic-light' system is being used to indicate whether each website contains information about the legal requirements for RE and collective worship, and to credit them where further information had been uploaded regarding aspects of programmes of study and contributions to pupils' understanding of British Values and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Results of the surveys showed that 20 of the schools were rated 'green' for evidence that RE is being taught and offered. This is very encouraging. 3 schools were rated 'red' and letters were sent to them setting out how essential this information is and recommending they make changes. 10 of the 30 schools also did not set out their Religious Education policy or information on the right to withdrawal. SACRE would like to congratulate those schools who have improved their websites this year, and monitoring will continue annually. In addition, guidance on 'good practice' is being shared with the schools as needed, and also via the CEOs of local MATs.

2.5 Standards and monitoring of Religious Education: Public Examination results in Religious Studies

The information from public examination results is not available until mid-January 2023. This will be added to the report once it has been released by the Department for Education.

2.6 Support for Teachers and schools: Syllabus teaching materials

The Agreed Syllabus website <http://awarenessmysteryvalue.org/> contains a wealth of resources for teachers as well as the statutory programmes of study. During the year updates and amendments were made to the existing materials and Syllabus review meetings with our partner SACRE advisers were held. 8 mini schemes of learning been added to the 'RE Live' section of the website to offer additional materials for KS2, 3 and 4 teachers. This was funded using the Westhill Award that the SACRE won in 2020.

2.7 Support for Teachers and schools: Resource centre

SACRE continues to maintain a collection of artefacts for all of the major religions at Saltford Primary School. A member of staff there receives a small stipend for managing the resources and arranging free loans to Bath & North East Somerset schools. During the period of this report there was some discussion at SACRE meetings about whether to continue with this, as the artefacts are in need of refreshment and also there are not many loans taking place. However, improvements are visible since a different member of staff has taken over this responsibility at the school, and so it was decided to continue for now, recognising that there is little money for refreshment of the items.

2.8 Support for Teachers and schools: SACRE website

The SACRE website <http://banes-sacre.com/> was maintained and updated during the year. A co-opted member of SACRE receives a small stipend for managing the site and ensuring it is kept up to date. As well as information about SACRE, the site contains ideas for RE specifically for Bath and North-East Somerset schools, including lists of resources available to borrow, and reports on the use of local visits and visitors to support the agreed syllabus for RE.

In addition, and after some effort, we now have a presence on the Bath and North-East Somerset local authority website – which enables members of the public to have access to SACRE information via the link to our website.

2.9 Support for Teachers and schools: Communication and Complaints

Termly newsletters have continued, with all schools receiving a SACRE newsletter three times per year. The newsletter contains contact details for various communities and resources, as well as ideas for the classroom and information on upcoming events and CPD.

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints concerning RE nor was it notified of any disputes relating to withdrawal for RE. However, it should be noted from our earlier report on school websites (see 2.4 and also below), that information about the Right for Withdrawal is rarely obvious.

3. Collective Worship

3.1 Analysis of school websites

As for religious education (see 2.4), SACRE analysed the websites of 30 schools using a simple ‘traffic-light’ system. It was found that 16 schools included a substantial reference to Collective Worship on their websites, which was an improvement on the previous year. 5 of the sites included a partial mention. Despite

the legal requirement to let parents know of the right to withdraw children from the daily act, however, 13 of the sites failed to mention it. As for RE, SACRE has provided feedback for schools about its findings on Collective Worship on school websites.

3.2 Training and support

No training on Collective Worship was organised by SACRE during the year but information from other local providers, such as the Diocese of Bath & Wells was circulated to all schools through the newsletter.

3.3 Complaints and determinations

The Local Authority/SACRE received no formal complaints, and there were no requests from schools to vary the legal requirement for Collective Worship. Information for schools on how to do this can be found at: <http://www.banes-sacre.com/collective-worship>

4. Links with other organisations

4.1 National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE (NASACRE)

The SACRE retains an annual membership of this organisation which provides access to important updates on national issues and the use of recommended templates for policies and guidance documents.

The NASACRE AGM and conference was held on-line which enabled several SACRE members to attend. The theme of the event was 'Ambitious SACREs', with keynote Ed Pawson presenting on the new statement of entitlement for Religion and Worldviews. A variety of workshops were available on subjects such as Ofsted, determinations and using vocabulary in RE. Three members attended this conference.

4.2 Regional

Six SACRE members attended the online South-West Conference for SACREs in February, which featured a keynote address by Stephen Pett from RE Today on the worldviews curriculum and the work of the Religious Education Council project. A full report on the conference was shared with SACRE members and implications for future SACRE work and Agreed Syllabus review noted.

Bath and North East Somerset SACRE continued to take part in the regional Learn

Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) project, with funding from Diocesan and other charities, aiming to provide training in religious education, especially through the building of communities of RE teachers across the region. The conference ran in June 2022. It featured keynote addresses by Adam Robertson, the new Adviser for Bath and North East Somerset SACRE.

4.3 Local: Learn, Teach, Lead RE

The Bath and North East Somerset Hub is led jointly by Mary Patterson (Hayesfield School) and Paul Marvin (Farrington Gurney Primary school). Hub leaders get access to high quality training and facilitate three Hubs per year aimed at both primary and secondary teachers, and teaching assistants.

All meetings have happened online and have been mostly well attended. Feedback has been incredibly positive and there is a real sense of a shared RE community in this group with some innovative exciting ideas shared.

Unfortunately, another Hub meeting scheduled for mid-year had to be cancelled due to poor attendance.

4.4 Local: Faith Communities

We are fortunate to have representatives from a diversity of local Faith communities sitting on SACRE: Baha'i, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim and now Buddhist. We are in the process of seeking another Humanist to replace the one who left.

The current Secretary of Bath Inter Faith Group sits on SACRE and gives regular updates on local activities which are circulated. This is a useful resource for RE teachers, and has also been invaluable as a resource for review of materials in the revised Agreed Syllabus.

Another member of SACRE represents the C of E Diocese of Bath and Wells and ensures we are updated on current training available from this source, as well as news of the SIAMS inspections of local Church schools.

5 SACRE arrangements

5.1 Organisation and support

Bath and North East Somerset Council contract with an Adviser who offers professional advice to SACRE, arranges and clerks the meetings, maintains the website, organises monitoring of RE and Collective Worship, and writes the Annual Report. Adam Robertson took over from long-serving Adviser, Dave Francis, in April 2022. The handover process and the process of appointing a new candidate were both carried out with input from SACRE. The new contract is with RE Today Services.

5.2 Membership and recruitment

Chair – Jane O’Hara

Vice-Chairs – Kevin Burnett and Cllr Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar

Local authority link officer – Olwyn Donnelly, Head of Education Commissioning

Kevin Burnett was elected in October 2020 and Dr Yuktेशwar Kumar was elected in March 2021 for a three-year term.

SACRE recorded its grateful thanks to the following members who left its service this year, Dave Francis – Adviser, Mary Read – Roman Catholic, and Rob Hardy – Humanist. During the year a new representative for the Catholic community, Julie Justin, was appointed, and also a Buddhist representative Chris Nuttall.

Further recruitment for representation is needed on Group A, as there are several faith communities locally that would benefit from representation on SACRE. Also there is a vacancy on Committee B.

5.3 Financial report

SACRE Financial Statement 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

There was a budget of £15, 543.70 for SACRE to meet its responsibilities. This included £4,000 for agreed syllabus review, £2,000 for ‘RE-Live’ Westhill project.

Expenditure

Agreed Syllabus Review & Development	5,288.88
Resource Centre including RE Today subscription	264
Members’ training, expenses, fees & NASACRE subscription	335
1 x REQM Payment for St Nicholas school	475
Monitoring of RE and collective worship and production of newsletters and annual report	1125
SACRE and Agreed Syllabus websites hosting and management	437.79
Completion of ‘Education into Diversity: RE-Live’ Westhill / NASACRE Project	2,000.00
Professional fees	5,626
TOTAL	15,550.79

To be brought forward 2021-22	-£7.09
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The Budget for the new period 2022 – 2023 was presented at the SACRE meeting in June 2022, and shows a more limited budget of £9,500 after deduction of the Matrix fee. There has already been discussion of how this limits the scope of the work SACRE can carry out, and we are in process of petitioning the LA for more funding.

The current Development Plan for 2022-2023 is at Appendix A.

Adam Robertson

SACRE Adviser

October 2022

Appendix A: Bath & North East Somerset SACRE Development Plan 2022-23

Priorities	Targets	Cost £
A. To maintain and develop the Agreed Syllabus and began the review process	i. Clerking tasks: attend and minute agenda-setting and full SACRE meetings; prepare agendas, financial statements and book venues; distribute minutes, agendas and papers to members; liaise with Chair, Senior advisers and Support assistant;	5,630
	ii. To work with the AMV family of SACREs in the development of materials and online resources for the Agreed Syllabus	800
B. To improve teaching and learning of RE within the authority	i. To provide support for Primary and Secondary schools, through a choice of activities (requested through the newsletter)	450
	ii. Pro-actively build relationships with schools to act as 'friendly inquisitor' (e.g. meeting with Trust leads through School Standards Board, offering of Governor training)	
	iii. Reactive support for schools (in terms of Ofsted reports, website monitoring, or those raised by local authority).	
	iv. To maintain, review and develop the RE Resource Centre	150
	v. To update and improve items in the RE Resource Centre	50
C To develop the capacity of SACRE to monitor RE, CW, the effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus and standards of teaching and learning	i. To fill the vacancies on the council	0
	ii. To develop the capacity of SACRE members to participate in the work of the council [Training, NASACRE subscription, travel expenses, room hire]	280
	iii. To continue the cycle of regular monitoring of RE teaching and collective worship across the authority using self-evaluation and website surveys and to follow-up with schools as required	700
	iv. To Inform and update schools about local and national RE developments through the Annual Report and the SACRE website	1,000
	v. To develop and maintain the SACRE & Agreed Syllabus websites [Sam Cavender £120; SACRE Domain £193; Management £127]	440
Total cost	9,500.00	