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Date Published: 26 February 2008



NOTICE OF MEETING

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

04 MARCH 2008

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

You are requested to attend a meeting of the above Committee on **04 March 2008 at 5.00 pm** in the Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell, to transact the business set out in the attached agenda.

Alison Sanders
Director of Corporate Services

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- 1 Leave the building immediately**
- 2 Follow the green signs**
- 3 Use the stairs not the lifts**
- 4 Do not re-enter the building until told to do so**



THE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
04 March 2008 (5.00 pm)
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell.

AGENDA

	Page No
1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [PRAYER TO BE LED BY COLIN HICKSON]	
2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2007	1 - 6
3. MATTERS ARISING	
4. THE NEW SACRE CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP	7 - 8
5. BUDGET REPORT FOR 2007/08 AND EXPECTED BUDGET FOR 2008/09	
6. ARTEFACTS UPDATE AND REVIEW	
7. BRAKENHALE SCHOOL - RE INSPECTION REPORT UPDATE	
8. QCA/NASACRE NATIONAL CONFERENCE 17 JANUARY 2008 - RE AND COMMUNITY COHESION:THE FUTURE FOR SACRES	9 - 10
9. BRACKNELL FOREST SACRE PRIZES TO PUPILS FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN RE - DISCUSSION	
10. NASACRE /WESTHILL AWARDS 2009/10 FOR YOUNG INTER-FAITH PROJECTS	11 - 16
11. NASACRE AGM - 8 MAY 2008	
12. BERKSHIRE SACRES' CONFERENCE - JUNE 2008	
13. SELF EVALUATION OF BRACKNELL FOREST SACRE (PARTS 1 AND 2)	17 - 32
14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	
Wednesday 9 July 2008	
Thursday 6 November 2008	

Agenda Item 2

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
13 NOVEMBER 2007
(5.00 - 6.45 pm)**

- Present:**
- The Free Churches:**
 - Revd M. Bentley
 - Mrs I. Robinson
 - Roman Catholic Churches:**
 - Mrs A. Gibbons
 - Other Religions:**
 - Dr K. Hadfield (Bahai Faith)
 - Mrs K. Trikha (Hindu Faith)
 - The Church of England:**
 - Mr G. Anderson (Chairman)
 - Mrs M. Beadsley
 - Mrs J. Mintern
 - Associations representing teachers:**
 - Mrs K. Nugent
 - Mr C. Hickson
 - Mrs F. Allen
 - Bracknell Forest Borough Council:**
 - Councillor Burrows
 - Councillor D. Hayes
 - Councillor Kensall
 - Councillor Thompson
 - Observers:**
 - Mr A. Rashid
- In attendance:**
- Mrs J. Fageant, SACRE's Associate Adviser
 - Mr T. Eccleston, Director of Education, Children's Services & Libraries (BFBC)
 - Mr M. Surrell, Senior Adviser, Bracknell Forest Borough Council
 - Mrs P. Patel, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Blatchford, Ridgway, Louise Birley and Hunt

28. Welcome [prayer to be led by Cllr Thompson]

The Chairman, Gordon Anderson, welcomed all those present to the meeting.

29. Election of Chairman (clerk in the Chair)

On the proposition of Mrs Beadsley, seconded by Mrs Hayes it was

RESOLVED that

Gordon Anderson be appointed as the Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the academic year 2007-08.

30. Election of Vice-Chairman

On the proposition of Gordon Anderson, seconded by Michael Bentley it was

RESOLVED that

Louise Birley be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education for the academic year 2007-08.

31. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2007 (attached)**

The Chairman asked that the clerk add Councillor Thompson as an attendee. With this addition, the minutes of the SACRE meeting held on 10 July 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(Action: Priya Patel)

32. **SACRE Membership (verbal)**

The Chairman reported that a proposed updated constitution and membership for SACRE would be presented in the next item on the agenda. The original intention had been that Mr Arfan Rashid would fill the vacant co-opted position, however with constitutional changes being proposed, it was likely that Mr Rashid could become a nominated member of SACRE.

33. **SACRE constitution - proposed amendment (attached)**

The Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries presented a report that sought the agreement of members to a revised constitution and membership for the SACRE. The purpose of the change was to bring the membership of the SACRE into line with the range of faiths represented in the Agreed Syllabus. It was therefore proposed to increase the number of representatives in Group A to include one member for each of the faiths covered in the Agreed Syllabus. This would increase the size of the group by three members. The Bahai faith which had been represented in this group, but was not one of the main religions in the Agreed Syllabus could still be represented through co-opted membership if SACRE agreed this. It was not intended that a co-opted place would be reserved for a representative of the Bahai faith in perpetuity.

Members expressed concern that the Bahai representative had been very active and as a co-opted member she would lose her vote. The Chairman stated that it was very rare for SACRE formally to use its voting rights, as a result he hoped that this would not limit co-opted members from participating fully.

It was noted that on page 10 of the agenda, NUT was listed twice, one of these references needed to be amended to NAHT.

Members expressed that they were happy with the changes proposed to the SACRE's Constitution. The Chairman asked that once it had been approved by the Executive Member that the clerk write to relevant bodies to seek nominations for the 'other religions' category, and then endeavour to make the relevant appointments in consultation with the Chairman.

It was agreed that the revised composition of SACRE attached at Appendix A of the report, be recommended to the Executive Member for Education and Libraries for adoption.

(Action: Priya Patel)

34. **Resources Centre and Artefacts report (verbal)**

Martin Surrell, Education Officer (Bracknell Forest) reported that £539 had been spent on artefacts by SACRE. The artefacts were mainly Hindu and Sikh artefacts as these had the greatest demand. He thanked Samantha Hunt for her efforts in acquiring the artefacts. He confirmed that the artefacts were being stored and exhibited at the Education Centre at Easthampstead Park Mansion.

Members noted that at their last meeting there had been concerns about the loaning system for artefacts and how it was working. Martin Surrell, stated that the Resources Centre Manager at the Education Centre had left. Two members of staff were now in post, who were responsible for the management of the artefacts as well as having other responsibilities at the Education Centre. These staff ensured that a log was kept of artefacts being loaned and returned. They also recorded the condition of artefacts when they were returned. One member asked if a log could be kept as to which year group was using the artefacts, as well as writing a short feedback summary on how the artefacts were being used by the school. Martin Surrell agreed to speak to the staff at the Education Centre about this and to arrange for it to be raised at a meeting of RE co-ordinators.

One Member reported that the artefacts had been well observed and looked at, during the recent 'Welcome to Bracknell Forest' for new teachers meeting. She felt that the artefacts presented a wonderful opportunity to raise the profile of SACRE.

It was noted that the artefacts were covered by the general insurance held by Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

The Chairman asked that Martin Surrell write to all schools to provide the contact details of the two members of staff that now managed the artefacts.

(Action: Martin Surrell)

35. Raising the Profile of SACRE (verbal)

The Chairman expressed that he was delighted that as a SACRE, Bracknell Forest had good, highly qualified representatives. He stated that the session for new teachers had been very successful in that Members of SACRE had enjoyed speaking to numerous new teachers and had encouraged them to stop and look at the artefacts on display. In particular, the teachers had been very impressed with the Buddhism cabinet and the Christian artefacts on display. The Chairman stated that he was keen that all local schools understood what SACRE did and of the resources that were available.

36. Provision of RE Teaching Materials (verbal)

The Chairman reported that a query had been made by a local school, as to whether SACRE could fund materials for an individual school. The meeting agreed that SACRE's budget was not intended to fund individual schools' needs and felt that generally, it was more effective to fund a central pool of resources that could be utilised by all schools. However, it was noted that SACRE would be happy to consider any requests received by it. It may be that a school made a request that involved acquiring resources that could be loaned to other schools within the Borough.

37. Update on Curriculum Matters (verbal)

SACRE's Associate Adviser, Jo Fageant informed members that the revised QCA (Qualifications & Curriculum Authority) Schemes of Work had now been published on the QCA website under the Subjects section. There was one unit of work per year

group and the themes were exactly the same as those set out in the Bracknell Forest Council Agreed Syllabus. However the allocation of religions did not match those of Bracknell Forest Council.

She stated that it was a very detailed and useful resource. Some areas were more useful than others, for example, where religions did match those within Bracknell Forest's Syllabus, there may not necessarily be a match with the way that schools had allocated religions to year groups.

She stated that having attended a recent SACRE Conference and having read various reports from the HMI and QCA, there were several references to (from John Keast) the progress of a feasibility study, around the possibility of Government support for a national strategy for RE. This was likely to be comparable to the Literacy Strategy. However as a result of recent staff changes within Government departments, it was uncertain how this would develop. The RE Council had become a little dispirited with the recent responses they had been receiving from Government departments.

Ofsted reports had recognised the interface between RE and the Community Cohesion agenda. Ofsted would now be looking at the extent to which teachers thought and planned towards community cohesion.

The Chairman thanked Jo Fageant for her informative update on curriculum matters and stated that a strong SACRE, might be a good example of strong community cohesion in itself.

38. Draft Bracknell Forest SACRE's Annual Report 2006/07 (attached)

SACRE's Associate Adviser, Jo Fageant presented the Annual Report 2006-07. She stated that she had used last year's report and the minutes of the last three meetings as a basis for the Annual Report. She highlighted that she had presented the Standards information in a slightly different format on page 15, to acknowledge the difficulties faced around Key Stages 1-3.

She also circulated a revised paragraph to replace paragraphs 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 as follows:

2.3.1 Termly meetings have been provided for RE subject leaders. The format has been a presentation and then discussion and follow up. The Autumn 2006 meeting looked at the new Agreed Syllabus with three subject leaders explaining what they had done followed by an activity in groups to plan a unit of work for about six weeks. Spring 2007 looked at Sacred texts. Summer 2007 started with a presentation on 'Special People' followed by another, by two subject leaders, on work developed in their schools and in networking together. Each of the meetings was well attended with approximately 20 teachers at each one – about two thirds of the Primary subject leaders.

The Chairman welcomed this addition and thanked Jo Fageant for a deeper and broader report.

Members confirmed that they were happy for attendance and apologies at meetings to be publicly recorded in the Annual Report.

The Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries congratulated the SACRE on the work that they had undertaken over the past year and beyond. He stated that he was heartened by the strength of Bracknell's SACRE and the

commitment of all its members. He hoped that members would continue to promote RE in schools.

The Chairman thanked the Director and added that he was also delighted that Bracknell's SACRE experienced such a strong attendance and commitment from members. He had been made aware of other SACREs that were not nearly as well attended and active.

The Chairman stated that Jo Fageant would put together a final version of the Annual Report in consultation with the Chairman. Once finalised, the Annual Report would then be e-mailed to all members for confirmation and then sent on to the QCA.

(Action: Jo Fageant/ Gordon Anderson)

39. **Review of SACRE's Development Plan 2005-09 (attached)**

The Chairman provided an update on each priority as follows:

Priority 1: In terms of training programmes, there had been good representation when opportunities had arisen.

Priority 2: This was covered last year.

Priority 3: It was noted that there was a lack of a flow of information from primary and secondary co-ordinators. There were still challenges under a) and b), c), d) and e) were progressing well.

f) Any updated information from members on this would be welcomed. Jo Fageant reported that she would be doing some work in this area and would pass on the information she gathered.

Priority 4: The commissioning of a review was now likely to take place in the New Year.

Priority 5: The Chairman proposed that this exercise could be part or fully completed by members completing self evaluation forms. It would be very helpful to get every members input on this.

In terms of Priority 4a), Jo Fageant reported that other authorities had tried to find ways to address this action and it was proving to be an on-going difficulty. Whilst SACRE had a remit to monitor, they were not able to request this information from schools.

The Chairman suggested that one way in which SACRE could raise its profile was to consider awarding prizes to primary/secondary pupils who had done exceptionally well in RE. Members agreed that this was a good idea and further suggested that perhaps an evening event culminating in an award presentation could be arranged.

Kusum Trikha stated that in terms of priority 3(b), which related to cultural development, that there were many opportunities within Bracknell to learn in this area. She stated that there were a number of Hindu social functions taking place in October/November and that she would forward an invite to all SACRE members to the events.

(Action: Martin Surrell)

40. **Any other business**

The Chairman reported that a letter had been received from Ofsted in relation to Brakenhale School. The letter stated that Brakenhale's standards in RE were below average and achievement in RE was inadequate, this was clearly an area of concern for SACRE. Martin Surrell advised that the school would need to address the issues raised by Ofsted by putting together an action plan.

The Chairman asked that SACRE be kept informed of developments on this and the progress made by the School.

41. **Dates of future meetings**

The dates of future meetings were noted as:

Tuesday 4 March 2008 (Council Chamber, Easthampstead House)
Wednesday 9 July 2008 (Bedford Room, Easthampstead Park Mansion)
and Thursday 6 November. (Council Chamber, Easthampstead House)

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 4

BRACKNELL FOREST SACRE MEMBERS LIST

As at March 2008

GROUP A CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND OTHER RELIGIONS (10)

The Free Churches (3)

Revd Michael Bentley	Baptist	01344 424451
Mrs Paula Ridgway	Bnell Family Ch	01344 450440
Mrs Irene Robinson	Methodist	01344 488080

The Roman Catholic Church (2)

Ms Louise Birley	Catholic	01344 427132
Mrs Anne Gibbons	Catholic	01344 451847

Other Religions (5)

Mrs Kusum Trikha	Hindu	01344 487273
Vacancy	Buddhist	
Vacancy	Muslim	
Vacancy	Jew	
Vacancy	Sikh	

GROUP B THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND (4)

Mr Gordon Anderson	Anglican	01344 620060
Mrs Maureen Beadsley	Anglican	01344 443136
Mrs Julie Mintern	Anglican	01865 208242
Vacancy	Anglican	

GROUP C ASSOCIATIONS REPRESENTING TEACHERS (6)

Mrs Samantha Hunt	ATL	01344 775678
Mrs Kathleen Nugent	NAHT	01344 426413
Ms Felicity Allen	NASUWT	01344 421122
Mr Colin Hickson	NUT	01344 645570
Vacancy	PAT	
Vacancy	SHA	

GROUP D BRACKNELL FOREST EDUCATION AUTHORITY (5) [4/1]

Cllr Andy Blatchford		
Cllr Scott Burrows		
Cllr Mrs Dorothy Hayes		01344 882360
Cllr Trevor Kensall		
Cllr Cliff Thompson		01344 775349

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (Non-voting)

Dr Kathy Hadfield	Baha'l	01344 778424
Ms Gill Ledsham	Quaker	01753 866342

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RE and Community Cohesion: the future for SACREs

I am very grateful for the opportunity to attend this very interesting day as a representative of our SACRE, which I was fortunate to share with Gordon Anderson. The venue in Bloomsbury was easy to find, very comfortable with good food.

The keynote speaker was Jim Knight MP, Minister of State for Schools and Learners. He began by reiterating the importance of RE with its distinctive nature that enables the reflection on philosophical ideas and ethical questions. He then went on to tell us that RE is the third fastest growing GCSE subject. He mentioned the shortage of RE specialists and told us that there is now financial help for people who want to train for RE plus a golden hello package. We were told of the secondary curriculum review, its roll out and the £1m available to support it, mainly through IT initiatives. However, his big announcement was that this month a review of Circular 1/94 will start. This is the circular that established the requirements for RE and Collective Worship (CW) in the then new National Curriculum. Now RE will be reviewed on its own in order to bring its regulations up to date in view of the national framework and to take account of its role in supporting community cohesion. He expects this review to take at least one year then they will move on to review CW. After a few questions to clarify points made he was on his way.

We then moved into coffee and group discussions. These provided a valuable opportunity to talk with members of other SACREs. I was struck by the large number of 'professional' members in the SACREs, i.e. teachers, advisers and inspectors. Perhaps they are the only ones who can get away for the day.

In my group several points were made:

- We need to have representatives from all major faiths.
- It is difficult to know what is happening in schools. Peterborough has a system of giving SACRE members half a day training then they go into the school in the term following the inspection to go through the relevant parts of the self - evaluation form with the subject leader. Is this something for us to consider?
- Language can be a barrier for some new members especially for people from other cultures. One area holds at their meetings in a variety of places alternating between a school, council offices and a place of worship.
- It is important to reach out to young people. Sue Ganter spoke about the Portsmouth Interfusion project, established with a Westhill grant. This gives young people an opportunity to meet and make friends across faiths and cultures. It is spread by word of mouth. Lewisham has a young mayor elected by its young people.

Curriculum Developments

During the introduction to the new secondary curriculum we were told it aims to enable all young people to become

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress, and achieve.
- confident individuals who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Dave Francis from the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education, the group responsible for putting the new secondary curriculum into place, gave a detailed briefing on areas in which SACREs can offer advice to their local authority. I believe these points could inform our development plan and agendas over the next three years. His points for us to consider covered:

- The advice we offer to schools to ensure that RE does not miss out on the opportunities presented in the new curriculum.
- How to gather information from schools on the impact of the new curriculum on RE.
- The impact of the framework on our own agreed syllabus. *I wondered how well we each understand what 'concept-based planning' really means.*
- The direct professional support that can be offered to RE teachers especially in the contribution of the subject to community cohesion.
- Ways for the SACRE to best support young people in relation to the aims of the new curriculum.
- Ensuring that our schools are being well supported by the regional subject advisers.
- Encouraging our subject leaders to take advantage of the training opportunities offered.

Mark Chater then spoke about monitoring and evaluation. It seems that the pilot reporting scheme for the SACRE report has not really changed since the very complicated and challenging one we saw in the Spring 07. He did assure us that the primary curriculum will be reviewed once the secondary curriculum is out.

Community Cohesion and SACRE

The characteristics of a cohesive community are given as:

- A common vision and sense of belonging for all
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

Joyce Miller, who now works for the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants, spoke about a Bradford project which she managed. They worked through several agencies, including the SACRE, to ensure a common understanding of the community and the contributions that different people can make to it. Her constant questions were:

What does it mean? What does it look like? How do we get there?

Julie Grove reported on a pilot training scheme for minority faith SACRE members. This is very limited in accessibility and it seems to me it would benefit all members of SACRE.

During the workshop it became clear that to have community cohesion we all need to be aware of the parallel experiences in our own lives such as different attitudes to the food and people of certain areas in the world, the layers of diversity within our own communities, the need to raise the profile of RE leaders.

I was left with a question for our own SACRE: *How well do the individual members of the SACRE know each other - our values and our experiences?*



To: SACRE Chairs

3/1/08 via bfbc

Dear SACRE Chair,

YOUNG INTER-FAITH PROJECTS
The NASACRE/WESTHILL AWARDS 2008/9

Following on three successful years of NASACRE/Westhill Awards to SACRES for young Inter-Faith projects in 2005/6, 2006/7 and 2007/8, I am pleased to advise you that the Westhill Foundation Trustees have allocated a sum of money for further awards to SACRES of up to £5,000 for comparable projects during the academic year 2008/9. Details of the previously successful awards are given in the attached papers, for your information and interest.

Applications are now invited for this next round of awards. Please read the attached briefing notes, and submit your SACRE's application on the form enclosed to the address indicated. Applications should be received by March 31st 2008. We will aim to announce the names of the successful SACRES at our AGM on May 8th 2008

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Denise Chaplin'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' at the beginning.

Denise Chaplin
Chair



YOUNG INTER-FAITH PROJECTS

BRIEFING NOTES

THE NEED

The need for good inter-faith dialogue is self-evident. The need for it to begin with young people is also self-evident. They need to be able to encounter and talk to those who have beliefs and views different from their own, to break down barriers constructed through ignorance and fear of the unknown, and challenge the resulting stereotypes which emerge in popular culture. This is an essential learning tool in the development of a respectful and tolerant society.

The Golden Jubilee Young People's Faith Forum set an excellent example of how young people can come together to discuss matters of faith and belief, listening to each other without prejudice and discovering the common ground and accepting the differences. This can apply within a faith as well as across the boundaries of the faiths. The young people on that occasion also expressed the opinion that such discussion should not be confined to those already within a faith, but extended so that belief and unbelief may talk together, and the spiritual search be respected.

WHAT NASACRE IS DOING

NASACRE is encouraging SACREs, themselves bodies that include an inter-faith dimension, to take an initiative in encouraging the schools within their remit to engage in dialogue in ways which are appropriate to them. To this end, NASACRE is offering grants of up to £5,000 to support such work by the SACREs. In this way we hope to develop inter-faith dialogue among young people and to build up a bank of ideas and good practice for others to use in their own ventures, to the benefit of their locality and society more generally.

The enthusiastic response to the first awards in 2005 demonstrated how important SACREs consider this opportunity and the extent to which the idea has caught the imagination. In the first year, NASACRE received bids from many SACREs across the country, and gave five awards. In the second year, the number of bids increased, and their quality was encouragingly high; a further five awards were made. To date, a total of seventeen awards have been made. SACREs may find it interesting and helpful to look at the attached summary showing the successful bids.

WHAT YOUR SACRE SHOULD DO

If you wish to take part, then apply for funds from NASACRE with full details of the proposed project. A project may take one of any number of forms involving young people, for example: conferences, the performing arts, exhibitions, student exchange visits – or other ways to engage pupils and set something going which has the potential to develop into long-term dialogue. Might co-operation with Colleges or the Youth Service be productive? Areas where some faith communities are sparsely represented may wish to develop a twinning project with another area possibly by e-mail.

The award is designed to include provision for a consultant to advise on the project and assist in its write-up and evaluation. You may suggest someone with whom you already have a connection, to work with you on a consultancy basis; or ask for someone to be suggested by NASACRE. The successful projects will be published by NASACRE, in order to disseminate good practice across other SACREs, and encourage effective inter-faith dialogue between young people elsewhere.

IMPORTANT ADVICE

WHEN BIDDING, please show clearly how your project:

- promotes dialogue between young people of differing faith positions;
- might achieve community benefit in your area (be specific);
- might be sustained in some way beyond the initial impact of this funding and how:
 - your SACRE would be involved;
 - NASACRE's money would be allocated.

Some description of your locality would be helpful, and an indication of why you have chosen the method you propose.

SACREs are encouraged to seek extra/matched funding from other sources, but this is not a pre-condition of NASACRE's grant.

We should also be pleased to consider bids from SACREs who propose to act jointly in an enterprise.

NASACRE/Westhill Young Inter-Faith Projects

The 2005 Awards

Bristol SACRE, working with Bristol City Council to defuse racism and bullying in school settings and to link RE with Citizenship, held a "Unity and Diversity" Forum on 28th March this year, based on responses to a questionnaire on faith and values.

Hounslow SACRE circulated a questionnaire on RE around all Sixth-Formers, and mounted an initial major conference in July, which will stimulate the creation of RE resources, particularly for Sixth-Form General Studies.

Hull and East Riding SACREs sponsored a student video project, leading on to a high profile "Faith2Faith" Conference for the secondary age range in November 2006. Both of these have been featured at NASACRE AGMs. A second phase is planned with a regional dimension building towards a conference in Bridlington in Spring 2008.

Portsmouth SACRE initiated a representative inter-faith Forum of 15-18 year olds, now called "Interfusion", who have taken an active role in developing inter-faith work among young people and built up a strong public profile. A multicultural music and faith event was successfully mounted on 3rd Dec 2005. Home Office funding was obtained to enable the project to continue.

Solihull SACRE invited all schools with pupils in the 8 to 18 age range to enter a competition on the theme of "Breaking down Barriers – What do we believe?" The winners will be celebrated in a large multi-faith festival for schools late this year, from which the intent is to establish a Young People's Faith Forum.

The 2006 Awards

Blackburn with Darwen SACRE have helped develop a primary school programme "Kids United". 240 children in 4 diverse Primary Schools have been engaged in interfaith exchanges and activity days (e.g. art, music, sport, computers), and used various media to record and share their experiences, including a colourful newspaper. A new secondary school programme "My home town" is in progress, with a mix of youngsters interviewing a mix of adults.

Kirklees SACRE are creating and helping to fund a Virtual Learning Environment linking local educational and faith-community and inter-faith websites, due to be available to schools from this September and more widely from January 2008. This will increase the facility for sharing inter-faith resources and conducting dialogue between young people and across generations.

Newham SACRE have involved their Student SACRE in amending their schools' Sex and Relationships Education. Faith perspectives on these topics have arisen from student discussion within and among different faith-groups, and this has been incorporated in a series of DVDs for use in all Secondary Schools and in support of Governor training, excerpts being highlighted at NASACRE's AGM this year.

Surrey SACRE, responding to the impetus of their Youth SACRE, have sponsored a residential interfaith weekend for young people exploring the ideas of respect, acceptance and transformation, and recorded on DVD as a resource for RE and for the Youth Service and Youth Parliament.

Tameside SACRE's project, building on an initial interfaith event in November 2005, focussed on presenting a large exhibition for four days in March 2007, on the theme "Belonging to Faith Communities", involving pupils from both LA and supplementary religious schools in preparation and displays. Its DVD is being circulated. A third event is now being planned and a Young People's Faith Forum is under discussion.

The 2007 Awards

Bedfordshire SACRE. Focussing on three striking faith buildings (mosque, gurdwara, Anglican church) in an economically poor area of Bedford, the project builds on existing educational and community resources to prepare KS2/3 pupils for visits to the buildings and contacts with faith community members, with follow-up.

Greenwich SACRE. A new young people's inter-faith forum will plan a conference to enable young people to express their hopes, aspirations and faith, portraying these through art and a DVD which will both give young people a voice and be a versatile resource for schools in e.g. collective worship and citizenship.

Guernsey SACRE. A group of Year 9 pupils, having electronic links with a Solihull school, will travel to the school and join in visits to faith communities in Birmingham, creating a base for long-term links, the project being posted as it develops on Guernsey's Grid for Learning to enable all Guernsey's Year 9 pupils to engage with the experience.

Hampshire SACRE. In partnership with Children's Services, faith groups and Winchester University, the project will establish a sustainable framework for promoting interaction among young people aged 13-19 from different faiths, with opportunities to influence and inform local policy and decision makers.

Lewisham SACRE. Modelled on an earlier successful initiative, SACRE will organise a two day event "Going to Secondary School" for Year 6 pupils in five primary schools, coming from many faith communities, which will address issues of concern for them about faith and its practice in their new schools.

Liverpool SACRE. A major inter-faith conference for all Year 12 pupils is being planned for 2008 (when Liverpool will be the European Capital of Culture) by Liverpool's SACRE and Youth SACRE and a local community partnership, supported by Merseyside Council of Faiths, Liverpool Hope University and other significant organisations. (Conference date: June 26th 2008.)

Portsmouth SACRE. Interfusion, the Portsmouth Youth Diversity Forum created following an earlier successful Award bid, is continuing to develop its scope and activities; the part award will enable equality of access for a range of visits to religious centres to promote discussion on spiritual and inter-faith issues.

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SACREs and self-evaluation

A guide

Better
education
and care

Age group	Published	Reference no.
Secondary	May 2005	HMI 2467

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Introduction

Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs) have an important role in the development of effective learning in religious education and supporting good practice in collective worship. The work of SACREs has become increasingly challenging and diverse. In many ways SACREs reflect the work of governing bodies in schools, in so far as they act as critical friends to the local education authority (LEA) on matters of religious education and collective worship. They also mirror the work of governing bodies in that members are unpaid volunteers who give up their time to support religious education (RE) and collective worship locally.

A key question for a SACRE to consider is if SACREs were abolished tomorrow, who would miss them? This guide to SACREs and self-evaluation is designed to help individual SACREs evaluate their role and, in particular, to consider their impact on pupils' learning. The guidance highlights five key dimensions of a SACRE's work and provides exemplification of good practice. Using the self-evaluation guidance should enable a SACRE to have a clear picture of its strengths and areas which could be further developed. It encourages SACREs to consider their key priorities, their organisational patterns and structures, and their partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders.

This self-evaluation tool has been developed from three main sources:

- the recent Ofsted report on the inspection of SACREs (*An Evaluation of the work of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education*, HMI 2269, published in November 2004)
- the Qualification and Assessment Authority's (QCA) annual analysis of SACRE reports
- the National Association of SACRE's (NASACRE) work in exemplifying effective practice in SACREs.

Rationale

The purpose of the self-evaluation tool is to help SACREs and LAs assess the quality and effectiveness of their work and to identify where they might develop further.

The tool focuses on a range of aspects of the work of SACREs including:

1. the monitoring and improvement of the standards, quality of teaching and provision in RE
2. the partnership between the SACRE, the LA and other key stakeholders
3. the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
4. the monitoring and improvement of the provision and quality of collective worship
5. the contribution of the SACRE to the promotion of social and racial harmony.

Each SACRE should be able to identify where it is in relation to three broad stages of development: **Developing**, **Established** and **Advanced**. Wherever possible some examples of good practice are included.

Stage 1: developing

SACREs at this stage of development may be fulfilling their statutory obligations but do so at a fairly basic level and are not able to take a lead in providing advice to the LA or the initiative in promoting developments. They are often unclear about their roles and responsibilities and are not particularly well informed about the strengths, weaknesses or priorities for development in schools. They often have a formal relationship with the LA but have little input in or awareness of the LA's priorities.

SACREs at this stage may:

- find it difficult to meet their statutory responsibilities
- experience low levels of attendance at SACRE meetings
- have limited awareness of the quality of provision for RE and collective worship in schools
- have limited subject specialist or financial support from the LA
- little information about the impact or effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
- have limited representation from religious diversity in the local community
- have no development plan to focus the future work of the SACRE.

The objectives for SACREs at this stage of development are to focus on ways of providing more proactive leadership, so as to move beyond the basic fulfilment of their statutory obligations. Key targets might include:

- reviewing and extending the membership of the SACRE
- making SACRE meetings more purposeful
- identifying sources of specialist advice to support the SACRE's work
- producing an action plan to focus ways of developing the work of the SACRE
- creating stronger links with RE teachers in local schools.

Stage 2: established

SACREs at this stage will have a well-established relationship with their LA and have a clear idea about their priorities for development. Good acquisition of resources enable it to carry out its functions effectively. Members will be reasonably well informed about the quality of provision in local schools and, as a result, are in a position to challenge and support the work of the LA. Meetings will be seen as purposeful and worthwhile occasions.

The issues facing SACREs at this stage may be:

- limited opportunities to take the initiative in promoting new ideas
- gaining better information about the quality of provision in schools
- the need to extend the links with wider LA priorities and activities
- ways of extending their analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus.

At this stage, maintaining momentum may be important and key targets might include:

- exploring ways of measuring the impact of their work more effectively
- extending the ways in which the SACRE can contribute to the LA's priorities
- investigating opportunities to promote and initiate activities to improve quality and provision
- exploring ways in which the SACRE can extend its contribution to the promotion of social and racial harmony.

Stage 3: advanced

SACREs at this stage will have very effective practice. Members will have a shared vision and understanding of their aims and purpose, and will seek to sustain their positive work in the light of changing needs and priorities. Meetings will be very purposeful and focused on the major priorities for improvement in schools. There will be a very effective partnership with the LA, and SACREs will be well supported by subject specialist advice, training and funding. They will be very well informed about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in schools, and about wider LA and national priorities and developments. The process of reviewing, revising, implementing and evaluating the locally agreed syllabus will be very robust, ensuring that schools are well supported in their work. Objectives at this stage will be concerned with innovation and sharing good practice to sustain the momentum and success.

Key targets might include:

- extending the range of initiatives taken to improve standards and quality in schools
- ensuring pupils' progress can lead to recognition of achievement through, for example, GCSE accreditation
- exploring ways of sharing good practice more widely with other SACREs and schools.
- improving the ways in which evidence is gathered about standards and the quality of provision in schools, particularly in the light of changes in the nature of Ofsted inspections
- developing the ways in which the SACRE can contribute to the promotion of social and racial harmony.

The responsibilities of SACREs

The legal responsibilities of the LA are to:

- ensure that there is a SACRE
- ensure all four committees¹ are represented on the SACRE
- ensure there is an agreed syllabus which is reviewed at least once every five years
- ensure that support is in place for the SACRE to enable it to discharge its responsibilities
- take note of, and respond to, any advice it receives from the SACRE.

Reference to SACREs from the LA may include advice on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training.

A SACRE must:

- publish an annual report of its work and send this to QCA
- consider requests for determinations on collective worship when required
- advise the LA upon such matters as collective worship and the religious education to be given, in accordance with an agreed syllabus.

A SACRE is also likely to:

- monitor the provision for both RE and collective worship
- provide support and advice on RE and collective worship to schools.

¹ There are four committees on every SACRE representing the Church of England, other religions and denominations, teachers, and elected members.

1. Standards and quality of provision of religious education

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools?

How effective are the strategies to improve standards and the quality of provision?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar of good practice
<p>1a Compliance and time allocation for RE</p> <p>23</p>	<p>Little knowledge of levels of compliance with the legal requirements for RE in schools. Little information about the time schools are allocating to RE.</p>	<p>Informed about levels of compliance and time allocations but limited opportunities to establish strategies for action where evidence of non-compliance or inadequate time allocation is reported.</p>	<p>Well informed about levels of compliance and time allocations and factors impacting on these. Clear understanding of effective ways schools can provide adequate time for RE. Established strategies to take action to support schools which are non-compliant and receive feedback on the impact of interventions.</p>	<p>Where a school self-evaluation shows it to be non-compliant or to provide inadequate curriculum time for RE, the SACRE requires the LA to investigate and report back on the action being taken by the school to address the situation.</p>
<p>1b Public examination entries in RE</p>	<p>Limited knowledge of the number of pupils in the LA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations.</p>	<p>Informed about the number of pupils in the LA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations and how this compares with national figures but few strategies to increase the number of entries.</p>	<p>Well informed about the number of pupils in the LA entered for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations and how this compares with national figures. Clear strategies in place to increase the number of entries.</p>	<p>The SACRE receives a detailed analysis of examination entries in RE from the LA, including a breakdown by grouping (e.g. gender and ethnicity) and how this compares with national figures. The SACRE works collaboratively with the LA to promote examination courses as a means of fulfilling statutory requirements.</p>

<p>1c Standards and achievement: including standards at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, GCSE, AS and A2 level</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about standards within schools and no clear SACRE or LA strategies to address areas of concern or share good practice.</p>	<p>Informed about standards of RE in schools locally and by comparison with national figures, but limited analysis of the data and little opportunity to develop strategies to address weaknesses.</p>	<p>Detailed information about standards with careful analysis of data against national figures and trends. Information about standards extends to primary schools and Key Stage 3. Clear strategies in place to tackle areas of weakness. Developing independent mechanisms to gather data about performance.</p>	<p>The SACRE receives detailed analysis of examination performance and requires the LA to explain how it will intervene in schools where there is clear evidence of under-performance. The SACRE requests schools to provide details of pupils' levels of performance at the end of each key stage.</p>
<p>1d Quality of teaching</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about the quality of RE teaching in schools.</p>	<p>Information provided about findings in relation to quality of teaching derived from LA intelligence and RE subject self-evaluations, but limited analysis of strengths and weaknesses and little opportunity to develop strategies to tackle weaknesses.</p>	<p>Clear and detailed information about the quality of teaching, with some analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses. Good strategies to share good practice and target improvement strategies on areas of weakness.</p>	<p>The SACRE receives regular presentations from teachers about good practice in teaching and learning in RE. The SACRE works with the LA to provide guidance to schools about effective RE teaching in primary and secondary schools, including guidance on effective and rigorous subject self-evaluation.</p>

<p>1e Quality of leadership and management.</p>	<p>Limited knowledge about the quality of leadership and management of RE in schools.</p>	<p>Information provided about findings in relation to quality of leadership and management derived from LA intelligence and RE subject self-evaluations, but limited analysis of strengths and weaknesses and little opportunity to develop strategies to tackle weaknesses.</p>	<p>Clear and detailed information about the quality of leadership and management, with some analysis of trends and strengths and weaknesses. Good strategies to share good practice and target improvement strategies on areas of weakness.</p>	<p>The SACRE works with the LA to provide guidance to schools about effective leadership and management of RE in primary and secondary schools, including guidance on effective and rigorous subject self-evaluation.</p>
<p>1f Recruitment and retention issues. Level of specialist provision</p>	<p>Little knowledge of data and issues related to the recruitment or retention of specialist RE teachers in schools.</p>	<p>Some investigation and analysis of subject recruitment and retention issues. The SACRE is aware of the level of non-specialist teaching of RE but has limited opportunity to take action to deal with its concerns.</p>	<p>Detailed knowledge of patterns of recruitment, retention and specialist provision. The SACRE is active in promoting strategies to improve recruitment and provide training to address the needs of non-specialist teachers of RE.</p>	<p>The SACRE recommends to the LA that a comprehensive analysis is undertaken of the provision of specialist staffing for RE across the LA. Together they build links with local teacher training providers to explore ways of improving recruitment of specialist staff.</p>
<p>1g Resources</p>	<p>Little knowledge about issues related to the quality of resources for RE in schools</p>	<p>Some information about issues related to resources for RE in schools but limited opportunity to address areas of concern.</p>	<p>Detailed knowledge of issues related to resources for RE in schools. The SACRE is active in promoting the development of resources and setting benchmarks about appropriate levels of funding for the subject in schools.</p>	<p>The SACRE works in partnership with the LA to develop a subject website which incorporates guidance about current high quality resource materials.</p>

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?

Key area	Developing	Established	Advanced	Exemplar of good practice
<p>2a SACRE meetings</p> <p style="text-align: center;">26</p>	<p>Meetings are held regularly. Routine administrative arrangements are in place. Agendas and papers are distributed appropriately. Attendance is satisfactory. Business is dealt with in a prompt and orderly way. There are limited opportunities for teachers and representatives of faith communities to be invited to share their work. Business tends to be focused solely on routine statutory requirements.</p>	<p>Attendance is good and all four committees are well represented. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance ensuring all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members. Meetings move beyond routine matters to consider wider issues about the quality of RE and collective worship.</p>	<p>SACRE members contribute to development of the agenda. Meetings are lively and purposeful with wide variety of contributions. Teachers and representatives of faith communities regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience and insights. Meetings are held in a variety of venues, including local places of worship and schools.</p>	<p>The SACRE frequently holds meetings in local places of worship providing opportunities for members to develop their understanding of the religious communities in the local area.</p>

<p>2b Membership and training</p>	<p>The membership fulfils the basic statutory obligations. The arrangements to fill vacancies are not always effective. There are limited induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.</p>	<p>The membership strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious and professional community. There are some opportunities for SACRE members to participate in training activities.</p>	<p>Very good use is made of co-option to ensure membership of the SACRE is well informed and is highly representative of the diversity of the local community. There is a strong and co-ordinated programme of induction, and training opportunities for SACRE members.</p>	<p>The SACRE has a well-developed process of co-option of local teachers of RE to ensure it has a broad representation from all types of school in the LA.</p>
<p>2c Improvement/development planning</p>	<p>The SACRE does not have an action plan to focus its future work and there is little overt linkage between the priorities of the LA's development / improvement plan and the work of the SACRE.</p>	<p>The SACRE has a basic action plan which is reviewed regularly and updated on an annual basis. This provides an effective focus for the SACRE's work. There is some attempt to link the plan to the wider LA priorities.</p>	<p>The SACRE has a well-defined action plan with clear objectives and success criteria. Resource implications are clearly defined. There is a clear link between the plan and the wider objectives of the LA. The SACRE is regularly represented at national events relevant to its work; for example, NASACRE.</p>	<p>The SACRE is provided with a summary of the current LA priorities and identifies ways its action plan can incorporate relevant objectives related to these priorities</p>

<p>2d Professional and financial support</p>	<p>Representatives of the LA attend meetings but there is limited subject specialist advice available. There are resources for basic SACRE functions but there is no specific budget for the SACRE and little opportunity for the SACRE to take initiatives requiring funding.</p>	<p>The SACRE has some access to subject specialist advice. The LA is represented at meetings and can provide a means of communication with the wider LA. The SACRE has a modest budget which enables it to fund some initiatives.</p>	<p>The SACRE is well supported by a subject specialist who provides effective advice and is well informed about the provision and quality of RE in the LA and about national developments. The SACRE is also attended by a lead officer from the LA who can provide a strong link between the work of the SACRE and the wider LA. The SACRE has access to funds to enable it to make decisions about its priorities and ensure these can be properly resourced.</p>	<p>The SACRE in an LA with no subject specialist adviser co-opts a local advanced skills teacher (AST) with expertise in RE and secures release time for her to undertake development work for the SACRE and schools.</p> <p>In another case a SACRE develops a partnership with a neighbouring LA's specialist adviser to provide advice and support</p>
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<p>2e Information and advice</p>	<p>The SACRE receives limited information about public examination data from the LA. Limited information is provided about wider national and local developments. The SACRE tends to receive information from the LA rather than ask questions of the LA and challenge its work.</p>	<p>The SACRE is regularly provided with clear information relevant to the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in local schools. The SACRE receives the information in a way that enables it to challenge and question the LA's work.</p>	<p>The SACRE receives detailed and well-analysed information about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship. As a result SACRE uses this information effectively to give advice to the LA which leads to strategic action to improve standards and quality in schools. The SACRE has a strong partnership with the LA and plays an active role in promoting ideas and initiatives.</p>	<p>The SACRE, as a result of receiving detailed evidence about pupil performance, identifies significant underachievement by boys. It advises the LA to undertake an exercise to identify good practice and provide guidance to schools that is effective in raising boys' achievement.</p>
<p>2f Partnerships with other key stakeholders (for example pupils, parent, ASTs, specialist schools, ITT providers, local religious organisations and groups, Commission for Racial Equality)</p>	<p>The SACRE has little contact with or awareness of other local agencies, and rarely has contact with pupils or parents.</p>	<p>The SACRE is well informed about other key stakeholders supporting RE and has some contact with the groups involved.</p>	<p>The SACRE has opportunities to hear the views and experience of pupils and parents about RE. Representatives of key support networks such as ASTs and higher education providers are regularly involved with the SACRE. The SACRE's activities build effectively on local networks.</p>	<p>The SACRE invites RE trainees on the PGCE course at the local university to attend one meeting a year to provide an opportunity for the trainees to develop their understanding of the role of the SACRE and provide a forum to discuss issues of mutual interest.</p>

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