



Annual Report

2007/2008

**BRACKNELL FOREST SACRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008**

**Bracknell Forest
Standing Advisory Council
for
Religious Education
(SACRE)**

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the eleventh Annual Report of Bracknell Forest SACRE. In the academic year covered by this report we have experienced a higher number of membership changes than usual, although the majority have been within the Bracknell Forest Council elected members' section. In particular we have been pleased to welcome into group A membership Arfan Rashid as a representative of the Muslim faith and Marcia Perkins for the Jewish faith. We also welcomed back David Fawcett, this time as a Church of England Group member. SACRE was delighted to have the benefit of Jo Fageant's presence in our meetings this year in her official capacity of Associate RE Adviser to Bracknell Forest Council.

The annual Berkshire SACREs' joint conference in June welcomed Alan Brine, specialist RE adviser to Ofsted, as the keynote speaker on the subject of *Making Sense of Religion - An Agenda for RE*. Seven BF SACRE members were able to attend. Those unable to do so benefited substantially from a comprehensive report written by Jo Fageant, who had done her usual excellent job of organizing the event.

During the year SACRE reviewed two Ofsted subject inspection reports of RE: one at a secondary school, which was deemed inadequate in every area and the second at a primary school, which overall, was satisfactory but with weakness in the quality of the curriculum. Naturally, both schools have been provided with support and assistance to address the problems. SACRE is also addressing the need to assist teachers in how to make more effective use of the agreed syllabus.

During the year SACRE utilized the self-assessment format to review its work. It was agreed that we had achieved the 'established' level in many sections but inevitably there were some areas where we had room for improvement, and one or two where it was felt that SACRE had no role to play (e.g., recruitment and retention) or where it is impractical to obtain detailed regular knowledge of standards in RE lessons. Nevertheless, the examination results continue to suggest there is strength and depth in the quality of RE in most Bracknell Forest schools.

At the time of writing I have been made aware that Louise Birley, the current vice chairman, will be stepping down from that role, although I am very pleased she will remain a member. It is thus an ideal opportunity for me to record my grateful thanks to her for the support and guidance she has given in maintaining and developing the interest in and work of Bracknell Forest SACRE. It is right that I conclude by thanking all members, together with the officers, for their enthusiastic support and attendance at our meetings.

Gordon Anderson

Chairman

October 2008

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(SACRE)

Annual Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Bracknell Forest SACRE has continued to meet regularly each term of the academic year 2007/2008: 13th November 2007, 4th March 2008 and 9th July 2008. All meetings, held at Easthampstead House and Easthampstead Park Education Centre, have been well attended with representation from the four constituent groups and co-opted members (See Appendix B).
- 1.2 Members of the SACRE have been appreciative of Gordon Anderson's willingness to be re-elected as Chairman of the SACRE and the continuity of vision and purpose this brings to its work. They are also grateful to Louise Birley for her work and commitment in the role of Vice-Chair.
- 1.3 An amended constitution was agreed by the Executive Member for Education and Libraries which has enabled the Authority to seek members from a wider range of faiths for inclusion in group A (See Appendix B). This will enable the SACRE more effectively to support schools in exploring the religions required to be studied by the Bracknell Forest Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The first new members to be welcomed as a result of the change were Jewish and Muslim representatives. Efforts continue to find and appoint Buddhist and Sikh representatives.
- 1.4 Bracknell Forest SACRE Development Plan for the period 2005-2009 has been the key driver for the work of the SACRE. Main elements of the plan can be found in paragraph 5.3.
- 1.5 Members continue also to review their work against the self-evaluation proforma provided by Ofsted, considering two sections at a meeting. As the Chairman has noted in his foreword, much of the SACRE's work is assessed as reflecting the 'established' judgement criteria. Following a review of sections 1 (Standards and Quality of Provision of RE) and 2 (Management of the SACRE and Partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders) it was agreed which areas might need more work.
- 1.6 The SACRE received and considered verbal reports, articles and papers about RE in order to remain well informed about issues of local and national significance in the subject, for example: the latest QCA schemes of work; the revised secondary curriculum; Ofsted's new focus on community cohesion; national initiatives funded by the DFCS through the RE Council.

2 Religious Education in Bracknell Forest

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

- 2.1.1 The current locally agreed syllabus for religious education was published and launched in July 2006. It is available on the Bracknell Forest website.
- 2.1.2 Feedback gleaned from meetings of primary school RE subject leaders continues to indicate that the syllabus has been positively received. However, an Ofsted RE subject inspection in a primary school led to questions being raised about whether all teachers found the document easy to interpret and use.

2.2 Standards in RE

2.2.1 Key Stages 1-3

The SACRE has received information about two Ofsted RE subject inspections, one of a secondary and the other of a primary school. In the secondary school all areas were judged to be inadequate. In the primary school RE was satisfactory overall with some questions about the quality of the curriculum provision. Appropriate support was provided in response to these inspections and the SACRE is supporting the development of some supplementary material to assist teachers in their interpretation and use of the local RE syllabus.

2.2.2 GCSE

- 2.2.5 *An analysis of examination data will be prepared for inclusion here when it is available.* Information about examination trends and entries can be found in appendix C. *(This needs to be inserted)*

2.3 Methods of Teaching, the choice of teaching materials, teacher training

- 2.3.1 Termly meetings continue to be provided for RE subject leaders. The format has been one of a presentation then discussion and follow up. *(Details needed from Sam/Roger)*

- 2.3.2 The SACRE has continued to monitor and support the development of the resources and artefacts collection that is kept at the Bracknell Forest Education Centre and loaned out to schools. The collection has been significantly expanded with resources purchased not only in the UK but also Israel. Particular attention has been given to the Jewish, Hindu and Sikh collections as these are the ones that are borrowed most frequently. RE subject managers have been reminded about the collection at termly meetings. In addition, at a session provided for teachers new to Bracknell Forest, some members of the SACRE were on hand to introduce them to the RE loan resource collection.

With the expansion of the collection, the catalogue needs to be rewritten. Work on this is underway and it has been decided that a pdf version will be emailed to all schools with printed versions available only on request. Changes of staff at the Education Centre have meant that there is no one with specialist RE knowledge of the collections on hand to advise teachers. It is, therefore, essential that teachers are clear about what items they want to borrow when making requests/bookings. It came to the attention of the SACRE during the year that additional artefacts were available on loan to schools from Ranelagh School.

- 2.3.3 In association with the Anglican Diocese of Oxford, Bracknell Forest's education department highlights for schools the value of the resources published termly by RE Today and offers a discount subscription rate. An index of the contents of these resources, set out religion by religion and updated termly, is available from Jo Fageant.

- 2.3.4 The SACRE was interested to receive a brief presentation about ways in which the West Berkshire SACRE, also supported by Jo Fageant, is able to collect self-evaluation information about RE from schools within its area. This is achieved through a programme of SACRE funded afternoons during which small groups of RE subject leaders meet with the RE Adviser to work through the self-evaluation proforma developed by the Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC) and available at: http://betterre.reonline.org.uk/lead_manage/toolkit.php.

- 2.3.5 The SACRE has established a small working party to devise means by which pupils' achievement in RE might be recognised and rewarded through an awards procedure.

- 2.3.6 The SACRE has established a small working party to draw up a submission for a NASACRE/Westhill Young Inter-Faith Projects award for the year 2009/10
- 2.3.7 The SACRE has decided to re-introduce a regular RE newsletter for schools with the first edition due to be published in the autumn of 2008.

2.4 Complaints concerning RE

- 2.4.1 No complaints concerning RE have been referred to SACRE during 2007/2008.

2.5 Other matters

- 2.5.1 No other RE related matters have been referred to SACRE by the Authority during 2007/2008.

3 Collective Worship

3.1 Monitoring Collective Worship

- 3.1.1 No information on the provision and quality of collective worship was passed from local authority advisers to the SACRE for discussion during the academic year 2007/2008.

3.2 Determination

- 3.2.1 Bracknell Forest SACRE has received no applications for determinations during 2007/2008

3.3 Complaints concerning collective worship

- 3.3.1 Bracknell Forest has received no complaints concerning collective worship during 2007/2008

4 Links with other Bodies.

4.1 National

- 4.1.1 Bracknell Forest SACRE has continued its membership of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE). One member was able to attend the AGM and provided a very comprehensive report of the meeting for colleagues. At this AGM the SACRE's Associate Consultant was elected to the executive of NASACRE.

4.2 Local

- 4.2.1 Several members of the SACRE attended a conference established for all the SACREs of the unitary authorities formerly part of Berkshire entitled, 'Making Sense of Religion – An Agenda for RE'. Alan Brine, HMI, provided a lively and stimulating presentation. Delegates responded positively to the evening and found it valuable to meet with members of neighbouring SACREs. A full conference report can be found in Appendix D.

5 SACRE arrangements

5.1 Professional and administrative support

- 5.1.1 Bracknell Forest SACRE continues to be served by a Borough Council Committee Administrator. Curriculum support is provided by Martin Surrell, a local authority

adviser and Jo Fageant an associate consultant. Meetings during this year have also been attended by the Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries and the Principal Adviser from Education, Children's Services and Libraries.

5.2 Finance

5.2.1 The SACRE budget for the period April 2007 to March 2008 was £3,370. The budget for the period April 2008 to March 2009 was £3,356.

5.2.2 The primary areas of expenditure for the year have been the continued expansion and maintenance of the resource and artefact collection, a subscription to the termly mailing from RE Today Services and members' attendance at courses.

5.3 SACRE Development Plan

- Priority 1: To ensure the continued development of an effective and proactive SACRE, offering high quality advice and guidance on religious education and collective worship to Bracknell Forest Borough based on:
- a) a Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
 - b) a clear understanding of the statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship;
 - c) a thorough knowledge of the quality of provision for religious education and collective worship in Bracknell Forest schools;
 - d) an understanding of the needs of Bracknell Forest schools with regard to religious education and collective worship;
 - e) a clear understanding of current advice from QCA, DCSF, OFSTED and other relevant organisations.
- Priority 2: To ensure a review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education through an Agreed Syllabus Conference and, after appropriate consultation, to recommend publication of a new Locally Agreed Syllabus for implementation from September 2006.
- Priority 3: To provide advice, guidance and resources to assist schools to improve the quality of the provision for:
- a) the teaching and learning of RE in all phases;
 - b) pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
 - c) pupils' preparation for adult life, including education for citizenship and PSHE.
- Priority 4: To monitor and report on the quality of teaching and learning, including the use of resources, in Religious Education in Bracknell Forest schools and to make recommendations to the LA based on those findings.
- Priority 5: To monitor, evaluate and review the work of SACRE and the implementation of the SACRE development plan.

APPENDIX A

BRACKNELL FOREST STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX B

BRACKNELL FOREST STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Membership and attendance record for the year 2007/2008

Group A	Christian denominations and other religions	(Attendance record)
	The Free Churches (3)	
a)	Revd Michael Bentley	(3/3)
b)	Mrs Paula Ridgway	(2/3)
c)	Mrs. Irene Robertson	(3/3)
	The Roman Catholic Church (2)	
a)	Ms Louise Birley	(2/3)
b)	Mrs Anne Gibbons	(3/3)
	Other religions	
a)	Mrs Marcia Perkin The Jewish Faith	(1/1)
b)	Mrs Kusum Trikha The Hindu Faith	(3/3)
Group B	The Church of England	
a)	Mr Gordon Anderson	(3/3)
b)	Mrs Maureen Beadsley	(3/3)
c)	Mr David Fawcett	(2/2)
d)	Mrs Julie Mintern	(1/3)
Group C	Associations representing teachers (6)	
a)	Mrs Samantha Hunt - ATL Representative	(1/3)
b)	Mrs Kathleen Nugent - NAHT Representative	(2/3)
c)	Mr Colin Hickson - NUT Representative	(2/3)
d)	Mrs Felicity Allen - NAS/UWT Representative	(2/3)
e)	PAT - Nomination not yet received.	
f)	SHA Representative - Nomination not yet received.	
Group D	The Authority	
a)	Councillor Mr Brunel-Walker (from May 2008)	(0/1)
b)	Councillor Andy Blatchford	(2/3)
c)	Councillor Scott Burrows (to May 2008)	(2/2)
d)	Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes	(2/3)
e)	Councillor Trevor Kensall (to May 2008)	(1/2)
f)	Counillor Leake (from May 2008)	(0/1)
g)	Councillor Cliff Thompson	(2/3)
2 Co-opted members –	Ms Gill Ledsham	(1/3)
	Dr Kathy Hadfield	(3/3)

Meetings were also attended by Priya Patel (3) (Borough Council Committee Administrator), Mr Tony Eccleston (1) (Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries), Mr Bob Welch (1) (Principal Adviser, Education, Children's Services and Libraries), Mr B Allison (1) (Democratic Services Officer), Martin Surrell (3) (Local Authority Adviser), Jo Fageant (3) (Associate Consultant to the SACRE) and Mr Arfan Rashid (3) (Muslim visitor).

APPENDIX C

RE GCSE data

NB. This data includes GCSE results for both Religious Studies and Religious Education GCSEs

Data needs to be inserted

Appendix D

**2008 Joint SACREs Conference
Making Sense of Religion - An Agenda for RE**

Report, already received by members, needs to be inserted.