



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

**ANNUAL REPORT
2010/2011**

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Bracknell Forest SACRE has continued to meet regularly each term of the academic year 2010-2011 and have been well attended with representation from the four constituent groups and co-opted members (See Appendix B):
10th November 2010 at Easthampstead House
10th March 2011 at Easthampstead House
7th July 2010 at Easthampstead Park Education Centre.
- 1.2 Members of the SACRE have continued to be 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 welcomed the appointment of Maureen Beadsley as Deputy Chairman and expressed their thanks to Paula Ridgway who stood down from the role choosing not to be re-elected.
- 1.3 The SACRE was pleased to welcome a new Free Church representative in John Baildam. However one of the other Free Church representatives, Irene Robinson, resigned during the year thereby creating another vacancy. Maureen Beadsley also resigned at the end of the year after long and active service in the Church of England group on the SACRE. Both were thanked for their commitment and valuable contributions. Two new members of group D were welcomed following the May elections: Councillors Dr Gareth Barnard and Peter Heydon.
- 1.4 Bracknell Forest SACRE Development Plan has driven the work of the SACRE. Full details can be found in Appendix C.
- 1.5 The SACRE received reports, articles and papers about RE in order to remain well informed about issues of local and national significance in the subject. In particular, members received and considered The Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum Report as well as up dates from Michael Bentley and Madeline Diver both of whom were involved with the forum. Members also discussed the implications of the proposal to omit RE from the English Baccalaureate arrangements and the likelihood that RE would not feature within the review of the curriculum to be undertaken between 2011-2014. Members were alerted to a range of relevant events and initiatives: the national celebration of religious education which took place throughout March 2011; the opportunity to develop RE Trails in response to the Joint SACREs Conference in June 2010 and two conferences provided by the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

2 Religious Education in Bracknell Forest

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

- 2.1.1 Members of the SACRE were alerted to the requirement for the locally agreed syllabus for RE to be reviewed beginning in the summer of 2011. The process of the necessary establishment of an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) to complete this task was explained. To ensure everyone was adequately informed and prepared for this undertaking, the Joint SACREs Conference, held every year for the SACREs of the area formerly known as Berkshire, focused on what it would involve (A full report of the conference can be found in Appendix D). Members of the Bracknell Forest SACRE, like the other five local SACREs, agreed to a joint review of their shared syllabus.
- 2.1.2 The SACRE recognised the importance of taking teachers' views into account in the syllabus review process. For this reason, along with the other participating SACREs, they sent out a questionnaire to all schools to canvass teachers' views, concerns and aspirations. Responses were received from 2 secondary schools and 11 primary schools. The replies were collated and analysed by Jo Fageant. Results were shared

with the SACRE (the full report can be found in Appendix E) and also in combined form at the Joint SACREs Conference (see Appendix D).

2.2 Standards in RE

2.2.1 Key Stages 1-3

The SACRE continued to find it difficult to develop a strategy which would enable it to monitor the provision of and standards in RE in Key Stages 1-3. However, funding was provided for the heads of RE in secondary schools to meet to discuss a number of issues. One area of focus was the quality of religious education teaching in Bracknell Forest secondary schools. The resulting report was not available in time to come to the final SACRE meeting of the year. Members will be particularly interested in this item when it comes to them next year.

2.2.2 GCSE and Advanced Level

GCSE Full Course

GCSE Short Course

Advanced Level

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

2.3.1 *?Termly meetings continue to be provided for primary RE co-ordinators. The format has been one of presentation followed by discussion. The aim of the sessions has been to provide practical advice and guidance on teaching a variety of aspects in religious education. ?*

2.3.2 The SACRE 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. Members were regularly updated with information about the extent to which the resources were borrowed. It was noted that in the autumn term considerable use had been made of these resources, in particular the Islamic collection. However, during the remainder of the year they were borrowed by few schools. Catalogues setting out details of the RE resource collection held at Easthampstead Park Education Centre were, once again, distributed to schools throughout the authority. There was discussion about the feasibility and possible benefits of enabling the collection to be loaned to schools outside of the authority and charging for this facility.

2.3.3 Some teachers from Bracknell Forest attended a three session course provided jointly by the Schools Department of the Diocese of Oxford and Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) on RE and Global Citizenship. This was a thought-provoking course resulting in changed practices in some schools.

2.4 Complaints concerning RE

2.4.1 No complaints concerning RE have been referred to SACRE during 2009/2010.

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 2010/2011.

3.2 Determinations

- 3.2.1 Bracknell Forest SACRE has received no applications for determinations during 2010/2011.

3.3 Complaints concerning collective worship

- 3.3.1 Bracknell Forest has received no complaints concerning collective worship during 2009/2010.

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) though no one was able to attend the year's AGM. The SACRE's Associate Consultant continues to serve on the executive of NASACRE and be its representative on the RE Council of England and Wales and was, therefore, able to provide regular news updates.*

4.2 Local

- 4.2.1 Several members of the SACRE were involved during the year with the Bracknell Forest Faith and Belief Forum. Michael Bentley attended meetings of the steering group. A number attended the Forum's conference in November which was part of the National Interfaith Week. Two members contributed brief talks at this conference.
- 4.2.2 Several members of the SACRE attended a conference established for all the SACREs of the unitary authorities formerly part of Berkshire. The conference reviewed the current shared RE syllabus and initiatives and guidance documents that would need to be taken into consideration during the syllabus review to be undertaken in the academic year 2011/12. 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 continued to be assisted by a Borough Council Committee Administrator. Curriculum support was provided by Martin Surrell, a local authority adviser and Jo Fageant an associate consultant. .

5.2 Finance

- 5.2.1 The SACRE budget allocation for the year of this report was £1,500 with additional funding to support the syllabus review shared with other nearby local authorities.
- 5.2.2 The primary area of expenditure for the year has been the work of the associate consultant.

APPENDIX A

BRACKNELL FOREST STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

CONSTITUTION

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is established in accordance with Section 11 of the Education Reform Act 1988 (as amended by Section 255 of the Education Act 1993) by Bracknell Forest Borough Council acting as Local Education Authority.

1. MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Authority shall appoint the members of the SACRE (other than co-opted members or any member representing grant maintained schools) so that they shall represent the following groups:

Group A Christian denominations and other religions

The Free Churches	3	
The Roman Catholic Church	2	
Buddhism	1	
Hinduism	1	
Islam	1	
Judaism	1	
Sikhism	1	
		Sub-total 10

<i>Group B The Church of England</i>	4	
		Sub-total 4

Group C Associations representing teachers

ASCL (previously SHA)	1	
ATL	1	
NAS/UWT	1	
NAHT	1	
NUT	1	
VOICE (previously PAT)	1	
		Sub-total 6

<i>Group D The Authority</i>	5	
		Sub-total 5

<i>Co-opted members</i>		
<i>– not more than</i>	2	
		Sub-total 2

Total 27

APPENDIX B

BRACKNELL FOREST STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

Membership and attendance record for the year 2010-2011

Group A Christian denominations and other religions (Attendance record)

The Free Churches (3)

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|-------|
| a) | Mrs Paula Ridgway | (2/3) |
| b) | Mrs. Irene Robinson | (2/2) |
| c) | Mr John Baildam | (1/2) |

The Roman Catholic Church (2)

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------|
| a) | Mrs Anne Gibbons | (3/3) |
| b) | Mrs Carol Nicholls | (3/3) |

Other religions

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| a) | Mr Joel Roszykiewicz | The Buddhist Faith | (2/3) |
| b) | Mrs Kusum Trikha | The Hindu Faith | (1/3) |
| c) | Rabbi Zvi Solomons | The Jewish Faith | (0/3) |
| d) | Mr Arfan Rashid | The Muslim Faith | (1/3) |
| e) | Mrs Ranjit Kaur Bilkhu | The Sikh Faith | (0/3) ? |

Group B The Church of England

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------|
| a) | Mr Gordon Anderson | (2/3) |
| b) | Mrs Maureen Beadsley | (3/3) |
| c) | Mr David Fawcett | (3/3) |
| d) | Mrs Julie Minter | (2/3) |

Group C Associations representing teachers (6)

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| a) | Mrs Samantha Hunt - | ATL Representative | (1/3) |
| d) | Mrs Felicity Allen - | NAS/UWT Representative | (3/3) |
| c) | Mr Colin Hickson - | NUT Representative | (2/3) |
| e) | Madeline Diver - | VOICE (previously PAT) | (2/3) |
| f) | ASCL Representative - | Nomination not yet received. | |
| b) | NAHT Representative - | Nomination not yet received | |

Group D The Authority

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-------|
| a) | Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard | (1/1) |
| b) | Councillor Andy Blatchford | (3/3) |
| c) | Councillor Peter Heydon | (1/1) |
| d) | Councillor Alvin Finch | (2/3) |
| e) | Councillor Mrs Dorothy Hayes | (1/3) |
| f) | Councillor Cliff Thompson | (2/3) |

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| 2 Co-opted members – | Revd Michael Bentley | (2/3) |
| | Dr Kathy Hadfield - The Bahai Faith | (3/3) |

Meetings were also attended by Martin Surrell (3) (Local Authority Adviser), Jo Fageant (3) (Associate Consultant to the SACRE), Bob Welch (1) (Local Authority Chief Adviser), (3) (Local Authority Administrator)

Bracknell Forest Standing Advisory Council

on Religious Education (SACRE)

Three Year Development Plan 2009 - 2012

SACRE Development Plan Objectives: 2009 – 2012

To be revised Spring 2012

Objective 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 schools through Bracknell Forest Council based on:

- a) a clear understanding of the statutory requirements for religious education and collective worship;**
- b) an understanding of the needs of Bracknell Forest schools with regard to religious education and collective worship;**
- c) a clear understanding of current advice from QCA, DCSF, OFSTED and other relevant organizations.**

Objective 2:

To ensure the commencement of a review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education through an Agreed Syllabus Conference by mid 2011 and, after appropriate consultation, to recommend its publication and implementation

Objective 3:

To provide advice, guidance and the maintenance of 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 and the promotion of community cohesion.**

Objective 4:

To develop an assessment system from available sources in order to monitor and report on the quality of teaching and learning, including the use of resources, in Religious Education in Bracknell Forest schools and, where necessary, to make recommendations to the LAs.

Objective 5:

To monitor, evaluate and review the work of SACRE and the implementation of the SACRE development plan.

Objective 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 schools through Bracknell Forest Council

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria
Programme of SACRE meetings	Chairman, Clerk and Adviser	Termly	Clerk and Advisers Appropriate meeting facilities	All meetings held and minutes created
Prepare 3-year Development Plan	Chairman and Working Group	Summer 2012	Adviser and Clerk Appropriate meeting facilities	Plan approved by SACRE
Consider reports and initiatives from QCA and other relevant bodies. Make recommendations to the LA	Chairman, Members, Advisers	Termly	Clerk and Advisers Appropriate meeting facilities	Comments recorded in Minutes Correspondence with LA
Provide Training opportunities	All	Life of Plan	Allocation of Budget funds	Attendance at AGMs and conferences Written reports to SACRE

Objective 2:

To ensure the commencement of a review of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education through an Agreed Syllabus Conference by mid 2011 and, after appropriate consultation, to recommend its publication and implementation.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria
Review of Locally Agreed Syllabus	Chairman, Advisers, Members	Commence mid-2011	Convene meetings of an Agreed Syllabus Conference. Clerk and Advisers Appropriate meeting facilities	Amendment and acceptance after full consultation with all relevant organizations. Plan approved by SACRE and recommended to the LA. Approval by the LA

Objective 3:

To provide advice, guidance and the maintenance of 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.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria
Establish Working Groups to develop ideas and make recommendations	SACRE	Life of Plan	SACRE Members and Advisers as required	Reports and recommendations approved by SACRE
To maintain and expand the collection of RE Artefacts and resources	SACRE	Life of Plan	SACRE Members, Advisers and assistants at Teachers' Centre	Inventory record and annual reports of loan activity
Monitor the use of RE artefacts and resources	Adviser and assistant at Teachers' Centre	Annually	Budget provision to maintain and add to collections. Clerical assistance to manage loan system	Regular borrowings
Develop further the concept of the BF SACRE prize for RE in schools	SACRE	Life of Plan	SACRE Members and Advisers	Response from schools and quality of entries
To develop further understanding of major faiths and contribute to Community Cohesion	All	Life of Plan	Faith representatives, Advisers and external sources	

Objective 4:

To develop an assessment system from available sources in order to monitor and report on the quality of teaching and learning, including the use of resources, in Religious Education in Bracknell Forest schools and, where necessary, to make recommendations to the LA.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria
Consider reports from school advisers	All	Termly as available	Clerk and Advisers Appropriate meeting facilities	Points and conclusions recorded in SACRE minutes
Consider reports and feedback from RE Coordinators' meetings	All	At least annually	Clerk and Advisers	Points and conclusions recorded in SACRE minutes
Review and analyse examination entries and results	All	Annually	Advisers for preparation Clerk for distribution	Observations recorded in Minutes
Seek reaction and feedback to specific advice and guidance provided for schools through the LA	All	As appropriate	Clerk and Advisers	Satisfactory reports received and conclusions recorded in SACRE minutes

Objective 5:

To monitor, evaluate and review the work of SACRE and the implementation of the SACRE development plan.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Resources	Success Criteria
Prepare Annual SACRE Report	Chairman and Advisers	For approval at the Autumn Term meeting	Advisers and Clerk	Approval by SACRE and submission to BFC and QCA by specified deadline
Assess the effectiveness of Bracknell Forest SACRE	All	At least once every three years	Self assessment guidance from Ofsted, QCA, NASACRE and others	Satisfactory outcomes

Total Costs over 4 years = approximately £13,000
(£3,250 average per year).

Includes estimated cost of Agreed Syllabus Review £4,500
to be spread over two years' budgets.

APPENDIX D

Joint SACREs Conference 2011 Reviewing our RE syllabus

We set out to answer 4 questions:

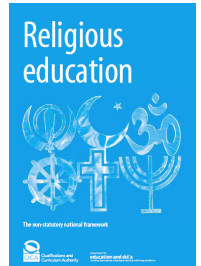
- Are we properly familiar with the syllabus we have and will be reviewing?
- What are some of the factors influencing our syllabus review?
- Do we fully understand our responsibility?
- How are we going to undertake this review?

The syllabus:

It is based tightly on the 2004 Non-statutory National Framework for RE (NSNFRE).

A full version of this document can be downloaded as a pdf from:

http://betterre.reonline.org.uk/good_re/Non-Statutory_National_Framework_for_RE_0410.pdf



A copy of the 2006 Pan-Berkshire syllabus can be found at:

<http://www.westberks.org/GroupWorkspaces.asp?GroupId=610&WorkspaceId=90142>

The introduction section of the syllabus contains:

- Legal requirements
- Aims and attainment targets ('learning about' and 'learning from' religion)
- Contribution of RE to the wider curriculum
- Attitudes to be developed in RE
- Links with SMSC, Citizenship, PSHE, Key skills, language, ICT and inclusion
- Planning and assessment and level descriptions
- Key questions, which form the heart of the syllabus, across the key stages (KSs)

Guidance on RE programmes:

- The allocation of religions to KSs is as it has been in the previous two local syllabuses in line with teachers' requests not to change this (largely because of the resourcing implications)
- The themes set out in the NSNFRE for each KS were turned into key questions which form the backbone of the syllabus

Foundation Stage:

RE is seen here as working towards Early Learning Goals ie RE in the service of the FS aims and learning. There is a discrete section which outlines requirements:

- p20 RE statutory for all preKS1 pupils registered on school roll
- p21 Christianity + at least one other religion
- p22 Explored through religious: figures, stories, times, places, objects

KS1-3

Each of these key stages is summarised in a diagram which sets out the religions required at each stage and the themes (key questions) to be addressed ie:

KS1: At least Christianity and Judaism through

- What do people believe about God, people and the natural world?
- How and why are some stories and books sacred and important in religion?
- Why am I special?
- What does it mean to belong?
- What can people learn from religious leaders and teachers?
- How and why are religious celebrations important to people?
- How and why do symbols express religious meaning?

KS2: At least Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism through

- How do people's beliefs about God, the world and others impact on their lives?
- How do sacred texts and other sources help people to understand God, the world and human life?
- Why and how are people influenced and inspired by others?
- What is expected of a person in following a religion or belief?
- How do religious families and communities practise their faith, and what contributions do they make to local life?
- How do religions and beliefs respond to global issues of human rights, fairness, social justice and the importance of the environment?
- Why, where and how do people worship?
- Why are some occasions sacred to believers?
- How do people's beliefs about life after death influence the way they live?
- How and why are religious and spiritual ideas expressed and in the ways they are?

KS3: At least Christianity, Buddhism and Islam through

- How do religions and, where appropriate, secular philosophies understand God, the world and the purpose/nature of human life?
- How do religions help believers decide what is right and wrong?
- Why do concepts and developments in science often present challenges to people with different religious and secular beliefs?
- How do religions understand one another?
- How do people live as believers in the modern world applying their beliefs to everyday life and relationships?
- How do religions and, where appropriate, secular philosophies promote a balance between rights and responsibilities?
- Why and how might believers accept they have responsibilities to care for the world in which they live?
- How and why do people of different faiths engage together in activities to help the wider community and sometimes come into conflict?
- How and why is spirituality expressed in different ways by people who hold a variety of religious and secular beliefs?

In each KS the key questions are grouped and colour coded into three bigger areas of focus:

- Key beliefs and teachings
- How key beliefs and teachings are applied in everyday life
- How key beliefs and teachings are expressed in worship, symbolism and art

Schools are required to address each of the key questions in a key stage in relation to Christianity and at least some questions from each colour coded section for the other compulsory religions. Other religions may be explored without insistence on this balance.

No guidance is provided about the relative amounts of time or attention to be given to different faith traditions in any of the key stages. Choices can be made in response to the nature of school communities.

14-19:

- Examinable courses compulsory at KS4
- Examinable courses encouraged for Post 16
- Minimum time stipulation for Post 16

Appendix

There is an appendix outlining an approach to the Baha'i faith. During this review and subsequently other faiths could be added in the same format later eg Humanism.

Developments we need to consider:

- NSNFRE – is this still what we want to use as the basis for our syllabus
- RE in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010 – do we need to consider any advice found in this document?
- Assessment in RE – there is a national working party currently reviewing the level descriptions and the nature of assessment in RE. We will need to keep this in our sights as the review progresses
- Review of the NC – to what extent do we aspire to develop a syllabus that will sit comfortably alongside the National Curriculum. At present we don't know what a review of the NC will result in so this is something else to try to be informed about as the two reviews go forward
- EBacc – will RE's omission or inclusion influence what we require in KS4

Teachers responses and suggestions – summarised below and found in full, by LA, at: <http://www.westberks.org/GroupWorkspaces.asp?GroupId=610&Workspaceld=90142>

What teachers say:

Responses were received from: 21 secondary schools, 2 middle schools, 54 primary schools, 2 special schools

Of those responding, 6/54 primary schools and 1/21 secondary school said they were not confident with the syllabus. All others were either reasonably or very confident with it.

Few had made use of the supplementary guidance on planning published to schools in some LAs but those who had used it found it helpful.

Most schools use the syllabus creatively and flexibly to create their own questions based on those in the syllabus

Schools identified the following as strengths of the current syllabus:

- Questions
- Breadth
- Flexibility
- Detail
- Exemplar expectations
- Colour coding
- Clearly set out, good clear structure

Schools/teachers included amongst the things they want:

- More flexibility
- Less content, more explanation of content
- Less repetition
- More skills based
- More concise
- More for EYFS
- More guidance eg what, when, how etc
- More thematic approach
- Separate out for each year group
- More guidance on Christianity
- More cross curricular links
- Links with PLTS
- More ideas and suggested activities
- Levelled assessment tasks
- More on assessment
- Exemplification of levels
- Pupil friendly level descriptions
- Exemplar plans
- Resource suggestions including websites and contact details for places of worship
- Resources – eg DVD
- More training including in questioning skills
- Make it more child friendly
- Recognise many children don't have a religious faith
- DON'T MAKE MUCH CHANGE

The statutory responsibilities involved in a syllabus review:

Each LA must establish an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) which comprises 4 groups exactly as a SACRE. There is no facility for co-options on an ASC but it can seek and take advice as needed. Members of each group have particular areas of expertise and influence to bring to the review process:

- Groups A and B- valued advice on presentation of each religion
- Group C – valued advice on what will work in schools
- Group D – ensure no hiccups at the final stage when the syllabus has to be approved and published by the council in each LA
- Each group has one vote and all groups must approve the revised syllabus

The process:

- Joint SACREs Conference 2011 – 28th June @ Easthampstead Park Conference Centre
- September (date to be confirmed) a meeting for Chairs and LA officers, together with other SACRE members who would like to be involved. This meeting will consider the big key principles on which the shared syllabus will be based
- KS working groups meet during October
- First ideas to ASCs in November
- Faith groups meet to ensure representation of their religions are acceptable in early spring
- Refinement and first draft for ASCs in Feb
- Support material and final draft by late May
- Council approvals by end of June
- Publication July 2012
- (website sharing throughout the process)

This timetable is very tight and is dependent on no major disagreements. With more debate, timings might need to be amended. A review can take as long as is needed.

This timetable is proposed just so a new syllabus might be in place for September 2012 and also takes account of when money has been scheduled to be available.

Key issues:

- Dates of ASC meetings – these need to be co-ordinated into the first two weeks of November and February
- Selection of teachers from each KS by early September ready for working group meetings in October
- Teachers' responses and requests – what could each SACRE do? Could SACREs share out work on the development of support material so that cost and effort might be spread realistically reflecting budgets and capacity
- Publication – each SACRE/ASC needs to consider how it wants the syllabus published eg hard copy, CD, web. Funding requests need to be made in plenty of time for a July 2012 publication date
- Dissemination/launch – how will the syllabus get to schools? Will there be a launch? In each LA? Will it be combined with some training for teachers?
- Training – initial and on-going. What commitments might/can be made?

Suggestions/questions arising from discussion groups:

- Cross-SACRE co-operation to share resources, expertise, the development of support materials and the provision of training is to be welcomed.
- It would be good to raise awareness of what each SACRE identifies it can best offer any shared initiatives.
- Chairs and LA officers with responsibility for the six SACREs should consider meeting maybe twice a year to facilitate such sharing.
- Training in relation to a revised syllabus is important especially for those who are nervous about change or new to the syllabus altogether.
- There should be a brief sheet which sets out the differences between the 2006 syllabus and the new one when it is available.
- Delegates were in favour of a launch for the syllabus to raise the profile and status of RE. Perhaps Headteachers as well as RE subject leaders should be invited. Governors?
- NQTs should have access to good RE CPD.

APPENDIX E

AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RE REVIEW 2011 – BRACKNELL FOREST

Responses were received from 2 secondary schools and 11 primary schools

1) How confidently do you know the current syllabus?

Both secondary schools are reasonably confident with the syllabus

2 of the primary schools are very confident, 7 reasonably confident, and 2 not confident with the syllabus

2) Have you used the supplementary guidance paper on planning using the syllabus?

Neither of the secondary schools and only 4 of the primary schools claim to have used the supplementary guidance. Those which did, found it helpful. One school commented that face to face training with Jo Fageant on planning had been even more helpful.

3) Do you use questions as they are set out in the syllabus? Yes No
OR do you create your own by chunking and combining questions? Yes No

Both of the secondary schools and 7 of the primary schools use the syllabus creatively and flexibly to devise their own questions based on those in the syllabus. 1 of the primary schools uses the questions as set out in the syllabus and another claims not to be using the syllabus but alternative resources whilst ensuring coverage of topics in the syllabus.

4) Current curriculum developments suggest that a revised syllabus might be a slimmed down version. Is this a development of which you would approve?

Both of the secondary schools favour a slimmed down version of the syllabus one commenting that there is too much to cover when so little time is allocated to the subject.

9 of the primary schools are also in favour. Their explanatory comments include:

- *A new syllabus and advice would be very welcome. We need to make RE more exciting for the children and the syllabus easy to use for staff*
- *Our teachers are now delivering a 'relevant' curriculum with subjects planned into a topic with an outcome. The format of the current syllabus, with so many questions, is not flexible enough to include RE and it has to be delivered separately*
- *More flexibility to fit in with our creative curriculum*
- *The content/breadth of learning is excellent but a lot to cover*
- *I co-wrote a scheme of work in line with the Agreed Syllabus, however as a large primary school we have taken themes from the syllabus to host 'RE Weeks' throughout the academic year, which has proved to be successful to ensure that the syllabus is being covered.*
- *There is a lot to cover, however having the optional units allows you to add more in if you want to.*
- *There seems to be too much content in the curriculum across the primary school system and there is a degree of repetition, but not enough time to cover all the content (there is no mandatory content in the syllabus)*

However 2 of the primary schools are not in favour. Their comments were::

- *This could indicate less time/value for RE and celebration*
- *It depends in what way it would be slimmed down. Most of the material in the syllabus is very relevant. There are, however, a lot of questions to be covered and it has taken a lot of work to ensure that we cover each questions across the school.*

5) What do you consider to be the strengths of the current syllabus?

Secondary responses:

- The ability to adapt the topics to the individual needs of the students and school
- Variety of subjects/topics; interesting areas of study

Primary responses:

- key questions, prompts for activities/focus
- The key themes match the experiences of the age group and progression can be tracked. It is manageable and can be adapted to embrace the school calendar over two years (KS1 teachers); Each year group has a specific focus that ensures continuity, development and no repetition. Comparisons between the three religions can easily be made through the revisiting of key questions (KS2 teachers commenting on the way RE has been planned from the syllabus)
- Core questions, segregated into defined areas, half term units
- Modern day issues addressed; linked with other subjects, active part in a blended curriculum eg PSHE/history; opportunity to explore new religions and cultures
- Questioning is useful also the assessment/level indicators are valuable
- Making the AT1 and AT2 statements more explicit for non-RE-specialists to understand has proven to be helpful. Within the scheme of work that I helped to create, we created a colour coded system to make the syllabus easy to interpret for our staff. The syllabus is broken down into 'learning from' and 'learning about'. My colleagues and I wrote a list of key questions that needed to be covered for each year group (Yrs 1-6), that needed to be covered for each term. We then highlighted each question with a colour, so the class teacher would be able to identify which statements they are covering. For example: 'Learning from Ways of Living is coloured in red. As statement that we wrote for Y1 ('How do they help you decide what is right and what is wrong?') in the KS1 framework table that we created, was then highlighted in red as well as in the Yr2 medium term plan. (It would be interesting to see how this reflects the colour coding of the syllabus itself where blue, yellow and mauve have been used for the different sections)
- The content to cover. The assessment guidelines. It's very useful when planning RE lessons. The way it was blocked made dividing it up easier
- Having two core religions to focus on and being able to dip into others as and when relevant allows for flexibility and make use of the schools community.
- It allows a degree of flexibility, while allowing for a large concentration on Christianity. It deals with topics that are largely relevant and covers an interesting range of religions. I like the fact that the approach is to consider questions and phrase the 'I can' statements as the answers to questions
- It is well set out and I like the split between 'learning about' and 'learning from'. The exemplar expectations are very useful for planning, writing success criteria and assessing/levelling children
- Clear planning for core and optional units; distinction between 'learning about' and 'learning from' RE; exemplar expectations useful for assessment and reporting progress/attainment.

6) In what ways would you like to see the current syllabus changed, developed or otherwise revised?

Secondary responses:

- To allow more flexibility so that we can cover topics at KS3 that would help build a foundation of knowledge for the various exam boards; it would be helpful for planning to have a list of recommended videos or other media sources that are good for various topics (this is outside the scope of a syllabus itself); I would like to see the Holocaust and other religious genocides on the topic

- Make it more skills based with an emphasis on AT2; less content to get through or more links between areas to choose from when planning schemes of work.

Primary responses:

- Increased links to Collective Worship and liturgical year; more explicit links to Christian values for schools (I think this and the previous point would need to be jobs for diocesan advisers); additional ideas for cross-curricular and community learning (this is more appropriately found in support material); Theology/philosophy – incarnation, doctrine of man, stewardship etc (Veritas and Here I Am)
- Although as RE co-ordinator I am reasonably confident using the syllabus and ensuring we cover all the questions and have tried to help staff with their planning, the syllabus is rather daunting for a teacher coming in 'cold' when trying to do their planning. The colour coded pages can be a little confusing at first. It took me quite a while to get my head round it. We now work with a creative curriculum and a lot of work has been required to fit the syllabus in with our themes. Sometimes with some of our themes the link is not immediately obvious and not all the questions are completely relevant (logically it is unlikely that everything in the NC and the RE syllabus can be woven coherently into a series of all encompassing topics. It is highly likely that elements of most subjects will need to be addressed discretely. How often in the selection of topics is RE seen as the lead subject?)
- For most CE schools I feel it would be helpful to spend more time on stories from the Bible, particularly the Old Testament which does not seem to feature very largely – it may be that that is due to our school scheme, which as I have only just taken over as RE co-ordinator I am still trying to get my head around. The circularity of the curriculum is sometimes confusing and it may be an idea to show more differentiation in levels of achievement in terms of the style of questions as this might make assessment easier to manage (This raises the question of how prescriptive the syllabus should be. Should questions specifically designed for use with particular year groups be set out for everyone to cover OR, as is the case at present, should the questions be big over-arching ones that all schools and teachers can adapt in a differentiated programme best suited to their pupils?)
- A little more guidance on Christianity. Teachers feel under-confident teaching some aspects and further advice/guidance would help. Slimming down a little at KS1. There is a lot of core learning that they need to do on Judaism and Christianity.
- The reason why we as a school chose the avenue of having 'RE weeks' in our school's curriculum was to ensure that the syllabus was being taught. This was because we work within a creative curriculum and our topics are not always suited with the RE topics that each year group are required to deliver. Perhaps the SACRE could look into a more creative curriculum approach within the RE syllabus, thus enabling teacher to find it more user friendly when they are planning (This teacher may be able to advise on this. It is not easy to see how a syllabus specifically about RE can extend into links with other curriculum areas. Even if this were possible, what is the likelihood of making links that would suit all schools using the syllabus? Does the history or geography NC statutory requirements provide this kind of advice?)
- It would be extremely helpful to be given: suggestions re planning medium term ie what to do and when; some ideas re ways of teaching to keep teaching fresh (training and resourcing implications)
- More ideas for the less confident; more festival work/ideas of religions other than Christianity
- To include all religions and reduce the breadth of learning elements (KS1 teachers); to include all religions and present learning themes in a child friendly format that can be incorporated into cross-curricular learning (KS2 teachers) (A syllabus is not meant for children but as the basis of teachers' planning for the specific contexts in which

they are working; the syllabus allows for the inclusion of as many religions as a school chooses to include)

7) Please use the space below to make any additional comments you would like to bring to our attention as we embark on the review of our RE syllabus.

Primary responses:

- In our school there have been a lot of staff changes. I am new to the role of RE coordinator. We need a fresh start with RE in our school
- I was RE subject leader when the current syllabus was launched in July 2006. My first thought was 'how are we going to manage this in school?' Our teachers were used to planning from NC subjects that had been prepared in year group units. To enable the syllabus to be used the following September I made a scheme of work from the questions. I had to be quick so I made it simple. It has stood for five years and we have kept to the syllabus. The time taken to cover all the key questions has not allowed for 'other' religions to be explored. However at twilight sessions I have learnt about Islam in great detail and Judaism at KS2. I now have doubts about the suitability of the scheme I devised. Please could the next syllabus be closely matched to the different ages of the children or the level expectations and ready to deliver? In the current financial climate taking children off-site has become very limited and faith experiences are best explored through multi media. A new syllabus with accompanying DVDs etc would be most welcome (increased guidance of this kind would mean increased prescription and less flexibility. The cost of providing DVDs suggests this an impossible aspiration)
- We are very grateful to Jo Fageant for her guidance at our planning sessions. After this help we were able to proceed much more confidently with our planning. As leaders we feel we created a very workable scheme but some staff felt they needed more flexibility.
- I like the syllabus very much and have had positive comments from staff re content although they do worry about 'fitting in' all the content to a high standard given RE timetable restrictions.
- Perhaps exemplification of the levels to help teachers know what they are expecting of the children
- We need to continue to pressure for RE to be accepted as a humanity subject at secondary level and ensure that it is included in the EBacc
- There would need to be good support for new RE coordinators and teachers. This could take place at RE coordinator meetings held within the LA
- Sam Hunt has done a fantastic job leading the primary RE co-ordinators at our cluster meetings. She has been very helpful and supportive, providing practical ways of delivering RE. Her subject knowledge is profound. One area in particular that really helped me was a session on assessment, ensuring that as a school we were levelling the children's work as accurately as possible. I would recommend two suggestions for the future of cluster meetings: 1) There would be a session/meeting for an opportunity for all RE co-ordinators to get together to share best practice, practical issues, looking at each other's levelled work, share concerns over the syllabus etc; 2) Perhaps, with Sam Hunt SACRE/Bracknell Forest could appoint an EXPERIENCED based primary practitioner to help lead INSETS? While Sam is fantastic within her role, she is aware that she is not experienced with the primary curriculum. Having someone work alongside her who does know the curriculum may support the primary RE co-ordinators more in understanding and using the syllabus, especially if they are new to the role.

