



Bracknell Forest Council

Annual SACRE Report 2013-2014

The SACRE has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

To help with this endeavour the Bracknell Forest SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs) and The Diocese of Oxford.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the Bracknell Forest SACRE over the academic year 2012-2013. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at <http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=157>

The make up and terms of reference can be found at the same address.

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

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The SACRE in 2013-2014

Reflecting established practice three meetings were held during the year:

7 November

20 March

10 July

David Fawcett was once again elected as Chair of the SACRE with Madeline Diver as Vice Chair. Members were grateful to them for continuing in these roles as it provides continuity and consistency. In contrast, after some resignations during the previous year, membership was reduced and several groups remained unrepresented. The SACRE is still seeking Buddhist and Sikh representation and members from most of the teachers' associations. It is a concern to members that teachers were significantly under-represented on the SACRE during this year. In the autumn the SACRE received a presentation from Frank Reid, a member of the British Humanist Association who made a case for Humanist representation on the SACRE. Following a thoughtful consideration of Frank's case the SACRE decided to write to thank him and to say there was no current wish to co-opt a Humanist

Partnership working

Anne Andres, a newly appointed representative of the Church of England on the SACRE, attended the NASACRE AGM in May. The day provided a very up-beat perspective on RE with Stephen Lloyd MP speaking passionately about the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on RE of which he is the Chair and of the increasingly widespread recognition of the importance of the subject. Workshop discussions highlighted excellent practice in SACREs around the country and provided Bracknell Forest with a number of interesting ideas to consider.

Some members of the SACRE attended a conference with five other Pan Berkshire SACREs to debate the possibility of partnership working across the region in response to a new national initiative to create regional hubs in support of RE. The idea received a positive response and it was agreed that a meeting would be convened early in the 2014/15 academic year to draft a proposal which could be developed into a bid for funding to support whatever work was envisaged.

Courses for teachers

Reflecting established practice, there was a twilight meeting three times during the year for primary school teachers of RE. These were all led by subject specialists in agreement with the Diocese of Oxford. Teachers who attended were appreciative of the opportunities these sessions provided for sharing of ideas and concerns. Topics covered included locally focused studies of religion, assessment and the Bracknell Forest artefact collection and how it might be used in classrooms. It was surprising how many of those attending the session on artefacts had been unaware of the loan collection. Members of the SACRE decided to remind schools once again of its existence and where to find the catalogue (<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sacre-artefacts-catalogue.pdf>)

Initiatives

During the year the SACRE decided to review guidance on collective worship it had developed some years ago.

- A questionnaire was sent to all Bracknell Forest primary schools seeking information about how and by whom RE is taught as well as views on the 2012 locally agreed syllabus for RE. Disappointingly only eight schools responded. However, these revealed that teachers who attended the regular termly meetings for RE teachers found them very helpful. They were positive about the RE syllabus. Many were choosing to teach RE in blocked time rather than in short lessons each week. This was an idea recommended in Ofsted reports on RE.
- Very limited use of the artefact collection caused the SACRE to consider opening the loan facility to Wokingham schools for a fee. The idea was shared with the Wokingham SACRE.

- The annual review of GCSE and A level entries and results showed a steady picture as compared with the previous year. The SACRE was made aware that following the demise of the short GCSE course, all Bracknell secondary schools would change to providing the full course. In some cases students who did not opt to study the subject for examination would only have limited timetable time so were unlikely to have the opportunity to gain accreditation for their RE studies.
- In order to be better informed and build relationships with schools the SACRE decided to receive presentations from RE subject leaders. In the summer term members heard about RE at Edgebarrow Secondary School from the Head of RE, Lisa Baveystock. She reported that RE is a popular subject with students achieving well at GCSE and significant numbers choosing to continue their studies at A level. The subject is enriched with trips to places of worship such as St Paul's Cathedral and the Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden and for students in Years 12 and 13 to Rome and Auschwitz. Members were interested to hear about the impact of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate on RE.

Religious education in 2013/14

This was a year in which there were many developments in RE that the SACRE needed to consider.

In October Ofsted published a new long report on RE (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/surveys-and-good-practice/r/Religious%20education%20-%20realising%20the%20potential.pdf>). Members were disappointed to see how many issues were those already raised in the 2010 report. Although not necessarily reflecting the situation in Bracknell Forest schools, it nevertheless highlighted a number of issues the SACRE recognised as helpful in developing a plan for future action. The report from the (APPG) on RE (http://religiuseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/APPG_RE_one_page_summary.pdf) highlighted challenges relating to initial and on-going training of teachers in RE. Alert to this the SACRE was pleased that Local Authority had made it possible for primary teachers of RE to attend regular termly meetings led by a RE specialist adviser.

A significant outcome of the APPG report was the publication of two documents one for primary and one for secondary providing guidance for governors on their statutory responsibilities in relation to religious education. The SACRE considered these documents and advised the local authority that they should be made available to all Bracknell Forest schools. In response the Local Authority also provided a training session for governors led by Jo Fageant. The evening was very positively received and many governors acknowledged they had learned much of which they had been previously unaware.

The SACRE considered the curriculum review of RE report (<http://resubjectreview.recouncil.org.uk/re-review-report>) published by the RE Council of England and Wales (REC). Members accepted that they would need to understand the document and be aware of wider responses to it in the RE community in preparation for the next review of the local RE syllabus due in 2017. To support their planning of RE lessons a number of schools have chosen to purchase Jan Lever's *Discovery* resource (<http://www.discoveryschemeofwork.com/>) and have found it very helpful. In addition, in July, the Diocese of Oxford published a scheme of work, specifically designed to support the Pan Berkshire syllabus, for Years 1-6. It was made freely available to all Church of England schools in the Diocesan Service Agreement and at a cost of £200 to all other primary schools (www.oxford.anglican.org). A number of Bracknell Forest schools have purchased this and had associated training for staff led by Anne Andrews, an RE Adviser with the Diocese of Oxford.

Membership of Bracknell Forest Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

2013-2014

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Group A: Christian denominations and other religions		
Free Churches	John Baildam	3/3
	Ken Blanton	1/3
	Christopher Smith	2/3
Roman Catholic Church	Carol Nicholls	3/3
	Vacancy	
Buddhism	Vacancy	
Hinduism	Vacancy	
Islam	Arfan Rashid	2/3
Judaism	Rabbi Zvi Solomons	0/3
Sikhism	Vacancy	
Group B: The Church of England		
	David Fawcett (Chair)	3/3
	Mark Olney	2/3
	Anne Andrews	2/2
	Vacancy	
Group C: Associations representing teachers		
NASUWT	Vacancy	
NAHT	Vacancy	
ATL	Vacancy	
VOICE	Madeline Driver (Vice Chair)	3/3
NUT	Vacancy	
ASCL	Vacancy	
Group D: The Local Authority		
	Cllr Andy Blatchford	2/3
	Cllr Gareth Barnard	1/3
	Cllr Dorothy Hayes	2/3
	Cllr Will Davison	3/3
	Cllr Clifton Thompson	2/3
Local Authority Officer:	Mr Martin Surrell	2/3
Professional Adviser:	Ms Jo Fageant	2/3
Clerk:	Ron Schrieber	2/2?
	Priya Patel	1/1?
Also attending:	Frank Reid	1/1
	Lisa Baveystock	1/1