



3/1/08 via bfbe

To: SACRE Chairs

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 31<sup>st</sup> 2008. We will aim to announce the names of the successful SACREs at our AGM on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2008

Yours sincerely,

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 28<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 26<sup>th</sup> 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.