

**THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE STANDING ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

2016 – 2017

September 2016 – August 31st 2017

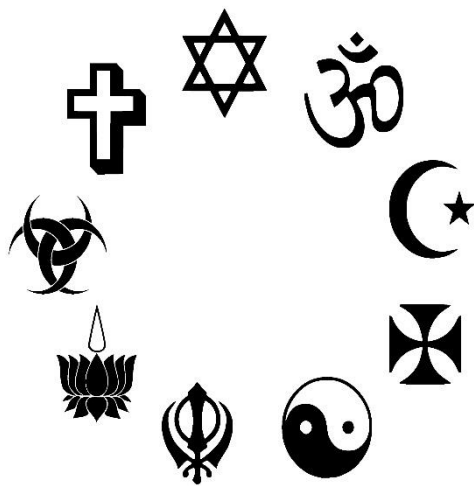


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FOREWORD BY JUSTINE DAVIES

CHAIR OF THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SACRE 2016-17

The Annual report of the Northamptonshire Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE) covering the time from September 2016 to 2017

Over the last year we have faced some very busy and hectic times promoting the high standards in RE and advising The Local Authority on the Locally Agreed Syllabus for collective worship and religious education. The Northamptonshire SACRE is made up of a group of dedicated members of faith representatives, teachers and councillors and I must thank and applaud our members for their hard work and conduct over the last year.

This year has seen significant changes to our structure and personnel. Amanda Fitton, in her part-time role of SACRE Adviser, has introduced new policies and much needed changes. Her secondment to Northamptonshire, Rutland and Peterborough County Councils from Cambridgeshire has enabled the sharing of good practice and ideas within our counties and has assisted schools in their delivery of RE.

Finally, we have begun work on the new Agreed Syllabus for Northamptonshire. While still in its early stages we have created working parties to ensure the syllabus is relevant and up to date and I thank all the members who have added more time to their schedule to assist in this. The meetings of the Northamptonshire SACRE are open public meetings and agendas are published on the County Council's website in advance of the meetings. We are pleased to welcome members of the public who would like to attend our meetings.

Justine Davies
Chair of Northamptonshire SACRE

THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report is the first to be written for SACRE under the new terms of reference of September 2015. Religious Education is an important curriculum subject. It is important in its own right and also makes a unique contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils and supports wider community cohesion. The Government is keen to ensure all pupils receive high-quality Religious Education.

The Education Act 1996, Section 391 (6) and (7) requires that each year the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) from each Local Authority will publish a report as to the exercise of its functions and any action taken by the representative groups on the Council during the last preceding year.

This entails:

- advising the Local Authority on Religious Education given in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus;
- monitoring the provision and quality of Religious Education taught according to its Agreed Syllabus, together with the overall effectiveness of the syllabus;
- providing advice and support on the effective teaching of Religious Education in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus;
- providing advice to the Local Authority and its schools on methods of teaching, the choice of teaching material and the provision of teacher training;
- in partnership with its Local Authority, considering whether any changes need to be made in the Agreed Syllabus or in the support offered to schools in the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus, to improve the quality of teaching and learning of RE;
- offering advice to the Local Authority, and through the Local Authority to schools, concerning how an existing Agreed Syllabus can be interpreted so as to fit in with a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum.

MANAGEMENT OF SACRE

The Local Authority has continued to support the work of SACRE through funding that provides a clerk for the meetings, services of an RE Adviser to support SACRE, its work and teacher training for the teaching of Religious Education, and advice about Collective Worship.

During the past year SACRE started the process of reviewing the Agreed Syllabus and agreed to work jointly with Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland SACRE's. The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) convened in December 2016. SACRE continues its work to encourage schools and share practices at the network meetings and through CPD training.

Every Local Authority has to convene a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). Northamptonshire SACRE, which has met four times this year, comprises four statutory groups. Attendance at meetings has been good. SACRE continues to ensure the membership reflects the demographic.

The four groups that make up SACRE are as follows:

- Committee A - representatives of non-Anglican Christian denominations, other religions, and world-view communities;
- Committee B - representatives of the Church of England;
- Committee C - representatives of the teachers' associations;
- Committee D – representatives of the Local Authority.

SACRE welcomed to; committee A, Morcea Walker representing the United Reform Church, Farnush Tanhai representing the Bahai Faith. Fr Timothy Curtis representing the Christian Orthodox Church. Bhupesh Parekh representing Hinduism. To committee B - Val Griffiths and Nicholas Edwards.

SACRE said farewell to Philip Davies, Andrew Dutton, Derrick Whitehouse, Timothy Curtis and many thanks is extended to them for their contributions to SACRE and RE in Northamptonshire.

There continues to be a vacancy for a Muslim representative.

Details of the agenda items, attendance at the meetings and minutes of the meetings can be found on the Northamptonshire County Council SACRE website at <http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/curriculum-and-resources/Pages/religious-education.aspx>

Support for Improving the Teaching of the Local Agreed Syllabus

Agreed Syllabus Conference

SACRE began the process of reviewing the Agreed Syllabus for Northamptonshire in conjunction with Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland SACREs. Four joint Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) meetings were held from December 2016 to July 2017, with subcommittees looking initially at the Framework, Assessment and Progression with the aim of a number of schools by September 2017 piloting the syllabus. Expert advice was also sought from different schools, different faiths and teachers and thanks is extended to all these persons.

NASACRE Conference

The RE adviser attended the NASACRE Conference and AGM on behalf of Northamptonshire SACRE on 17th May 2016 in York. The two key note speakers at the conference were Dr Joyce Miller and Aaqil Ahmed who both talked about 'Preparing for Life in Britain today' and RE's role in this pertinent topic.

Network Meetings

Network meetings for all primary schools in Northamptonshire have been re-established with three meetings being held over the last year. Each meeting had a different focus; New to RE, Assessment and Philosophy for children. SACRE and the RE Adviser would like to thank Olympic Academy Wellingborough, Croyland Primary School Wellingborough and Lumbertubs Primary School Northampton for hosting the meetings. Going forward meetings needs to include more schools and cover a wider area of Northamptonshire. Greater efforts need to be made in engaging with secondary schools across the county to help share good practice and support schools in the GCSE and A level exams. These will continue into the next academic year.

Working Parties

Over the past year there have been two working parties. One of the parties has been working on putting together a list of internet based resources and websites for both Primary and Secondary schools for the six major world religions, none religions and resources and websites that have a connection to RE. The other party has been updating the list of visits and visitors that could be used by all schools in the region.

PREVENT

Nicola Scott attended the meeting in June to update the members of SACRE on the prevent strategy for Northamptonshire and how important the role of RE was in helping to support the PREVENT strategy.

Formal Complaints

There have been no formal complaints made to the Local Authority.

Complaints Concerning Collective Worship

The SACRE has not received any complaints about Collective Worship.

Determinations

There have been no determination requests in regard to Collective worship made to SACRE.

Secondary Schools Data

- **A-Level Entries:**
Since the last data was evaluated in 2014 there has been a slight increase in A level entries across the county up from 174 in 2014 to 199 in 2016. The percentage of students reaching the top grades of A* to B are below the national average but the number achieving C grades as on par with the national average of 25.5%. The number of students achieving a D or E grade is double the national average.
- **AS-Level Entries:**

There is no data available for AS 2016 entries.

Areas of development

- Schools need to be made aware of the benefits to students in studying RE to A level and the correlation with entries to Oxford and Cambridge universities and the Russell group of Universities to encourage more to take the subject as an option.
- To support schools and teachers through network meetings and passing on CPD opportunities.
- **GCSE Full-Course Entries:**
The results for 2016 in Northamptonshire disappointingly show the number of students reaching A* is significantly lower than the national average for the same year. There is also a drop in the percentage of students reaching an A grade. Those gaining a B and C grade are in line with the national average for 2016 which is encouraging. There is also a higher than average number of students gaining grades D to G.

Areas of development

- To continue to support schools with RE in KS3 and to make schools aware of the benefits of RE.
- To continue to make schools aware of their statutory requirements of RE to be part of the school curriculum until the end of year 11.

A level Data

	Entries	% A*	% A	% B	% C	% D	% E
National 2016	21900	5.6	18.7	30.3	25.5	13.5	4.9
Northants 2016	199	2.0	13.6	22.1	25.6	23.1	11.6

GCSE Data

	Entries	% A*	% A	% B	% C	% D	% E	% F	% G
National 2016	539803	9.5	18.2	23.6	20.8	12.3	7.5	4.7	2.9
Northants 2016	7650	3.7	13.5	22.8	21.7	12.9	10.3	6.6	5.1

APPENDIX

Membership 31 August 2016 – 31 August 2017

Group A – Representative of other Christian denominations and other

Name	Organisation
Mrs Farnush Tanhai	Bahai Faith
Mr Chris Paddock	Humanist
Mr Anthony Twigger	Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints
Mr Daniel Tabor	Judaism
Sister Aidan Richards	Catholic Diocese
Mr Harkirat Singh	Sikh Faith
Mrs Morcea Walker	United Reform Church
Derrick Whitehouse	Religious Society of Friends
Vacancy	Christian Orthodox
Vacancy	Islam

Group B – Representative of the Church of England

Name	Organisation
Mrs Val Griffiths	Church of England
Rev'd Doug Spenceley	Church of England
Mr Nicholas Edwards	Church of England
Vacancy	Church of England

Group C – Representatives of the Teacher Associations

Name	Organisation
Mrs Jenny Dixon	Primary Teacher Representative(NUT)
Miss Justine Davies	Secondary School Representative (NASUWT)
Mrs Yvette Timms	Primary School Representative (ATL)
Mrs Julie Barke	Head Teacher Representative (NAHT)
Joy Ward	Special School Representative

Group D – Representatives of the Local Authority

Name	Organisation
Cllr Dudley Hughes	LA
Cllr Wendy Brackenbury	LA

Co-opted

Elaine Coe	Secondary School Representative (NUT)
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Independent Learning Adviser to SACRE

Amanda Fitton

Clerk to SACRE

Mrs Jane Hall