

SACRE REPORT



STANDING ADVISORY

COUNCIL on

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Annual Report

2019 - 2020

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FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I write this foreword for the 2019/20 Plymouth SACRE Annual Report. RE in schools across Plymouth has truly made huge strides forward this year, as teachers embed the new Agreed Syllabus and benefit from a new Ofsted framework that emphasizes the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum. The Plymouth LTLRE Hub has worked hard to support teachers through this transition into using a new Agreed Syllabus and SACRE would like to extend it's thanks for their work. However, when evaluating the success of the year it is impossible to overlook the difficulties caused by the Covid19 crisis, which has made a massive impact on our schools since the start of the lockdown in March.

You will note in this report that there is no data available for this year's exam year groups, secondary teachers have worked hard to assess their own classes and award grades to their pupils. This data will be available for our next annual report.

This year Plymouth SACRE worked closely with representatives from Devon and Torbay SACREs to review guidance on Collective Worship. This review has been long overdue, representatives from Plymouth SACRE have suggested that Collective Worship is renamed 'Time to Breathe' and have produced some excellent guidance for schools which we hope SACRE will agree to adopt in our next meeting.

You will also note in this report that SACRE worked with Plymouth City Council to run a schools event for Holocaust Memorial Day. Many SACRE members attended this event and it was a privilege to find out more about the children's learning in this area. SACRE hope to continue this work in January 2021.

I would like to extend my thanks to Plymouth SACRE for all they have done this year to support schools, teachers and pupils with RE and Collective Worship.

Miss Katie Freeman
Chair of Plymouth SACRE

INTRODUCTION

Plymouth SACRE is pleased to produce this report as a summary of its work in religious education and collective worship. It provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on its deliberations over the last year and to inform others of its work.

SACRE is a unique organisation and amidst the profound challenges and issues we face, concerning the place of religion in schools and society, equality and diversity, there has never been a more important time for the teaching and learning of good quality RE in schools.

I RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 The Agreed Syllabus

The syllabus, from REToday, is now in place, following a high quality day of training from Lat Blaycock, in all Plymouth maintained primary, secondary and special schools. A number of our academy chain schools have also adopted the agreed syllabus. Upon the reopening of school, following the Covid 19 pandemic, SACRE will survey schools to ascertain the wider use and feedback linked to usage.

There is an active Plymouth RE Hub with national connections that has hosted its own conference (via webinar because of Covid 19) to support teachers with implementing the new Agreed Syllabus including lesson ideas and assessment materials. The Hub also plans to make its own assessment documents for use in all schools.

2 STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2.1 Background to exemplification of standards.

- 2.1.1** Plymouth SACRE has worked hard in a range of ways to ensure that standards in RE are high across the city. We know that there are a lack of specific Ofsted comments during Inspection on Religious Education has meant that SACRE continues to be without this major “intelligence gathering” tool. The use of Ofsted ‘deep dives’ into Religious education are welcomed and we look forward to understanding the findings from these, as they develop.
- 2.1.2** Whilst Ofsted comment on the quality of RE in schools, there have been no comments within any Ofsted inspection reports for Plymouth schools, to date. Where schools undertake safeguarding reviews, RE and Collective Worship are included for scrutiny.
- 2.1.3** SACRE continues to encourage all schools to use the excellent resources now available, nationally, through websites such as RE Today; The Religious Education Council and NATRE. Links to these and other sites can be found on our local SACRE/RE website on Plymouth City Council’s School Room page.

2.2 Examination Results in Religious Studies

- 2.2.1** This year, examinations were cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Any teacher assessment data is not available, at the time of this report. It will be added when assessment outcomes are available.

3 COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

One complaint about Religious Education has been received by SACRE. This involves a secondary school allegedly being non-compliant due to timetabling pressures. SACRE has written to the Governing Body and, at the time of this report, awaits a satisfactory response. This issue has been placed on hold during the Covid 19 pandemic as the school has very few students attending, staffing challenges and a very limited curriculum in place. When schools return, in September, the school's adviser will address the issue with the school and refer to the relevant bodies, should this become necessary.

4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT

4.1 Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity (PCFCD)

SACRE continues to support the innovative work of the Centre that is seen as a unique and major resource for schools, to support and enhance the development of high quality RE at all levels.

The central aim of the Centre is to promote education and understanding of world religions and cultural diversity. Through the exploration of different beliefs and cultures, the common thread of human and spiritual values is explored. These are the values that may help to ensure the future security and well-being of our local and international community. These values are therefore at the heart of the centre's promotion and development of community cohesion and well-being in schools.

PCFCD to complete

4.2 Courses, Conferences, Meetings

Plymouth RE Hub was due to hold its annual conference in April 2020, many SACRE members were invited to attend and had booked to do so. However, due to Covid-19 the conference moved to an online webinar format which has been split over three sessions with the next two in the autumn term. This conference was designed to support teachers with implementing the new Agreed Syllabus and will be run by Fiona Moss from REToday.

It was unfortunate that no SACRE members were able to attend the Dillington House event, this year. SACRE will aim to make this a priority for 2021.

4.3 Plymouth RE Hub

Plymouth RE hub continues to be active within the city and has around 50 members. This year, teachers have benefitted from a range of CPD both online and in person. The hub is affiliated to LTLRE, PTSA and NATRE. In October 2019, many teachers from the hub attended the LTLRE RE conference at St Mellion, Cornwall, and received excellent training from national speakers. The hub has also put on its own online conference with Fiona Moss from REToday to help support the implementation of the new Agreed Syllabus.

5 Collective Worship

5.1 Monitoring and offering guidance on Collective Worship

SACRE are pleased to have worked on a joint project with Devon and Torbay SACREs this year. Although Ofsted rarely mention Collective Worship, as a SACRE we recognise that this is a vital and important part of the school day. For this reason, we have invested in this working party to develop fresh and inspiring guidance for schools to use and follow. We hope that at the time of publication of this report, SACRE will have agreed to endorse this draft guidance for all schools in the city.

5.2 Complaints

No complaints about collective worship have been received by SACRE this year.

6. LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

Plymouth SACRE links with a range of bodies, some noted in this report, including:

- REToday; Plymouth Hub; PCFCD; PCC Holocaust Memorial; PCC health, Wellbeing and Citizenship Team

6.1 Devon and Torbay SACREs

SACREs across the three Authorities liaise at an informal level. Liaison is also undertaken by the Plymouth SACRE facilitator, the Plymouth RE Hub lead and the SACRE lead for Devon and Torbay. Most recently, this has focused on the working party for Collective Worship, as noted above.

The syllabus is common to all three Authorities and in Plymouth we continue to encourage schools to develop a unique, local approach based around the key themes relevant within their unique communities.

The annual South West SACRE Conference also provides an opportunity for representatives to meet, share ideas and concerns in an atmosphere of mutual support.

The RE Adviser for Devon and Torbay is a serving member of Plymouth SACRE.

6.2 NASACRE

SACRE acknowledges the essential role of NASACRE in providing support, representation and guidance for local SACREs in the vital role they perform. The Annual Conference provides an opportunity for SACRE representatives to meet and consider best practice and ways forward.

7. SACRE ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIORITIES

SACRE meets once per term and is supported by staff from Plymouth City Council: a Senior Education Adviser and a Democratic Support Officer.

Priorities have continued to be guided by SACRE's responsibility to monitor and review standards within Religious Education and Collective Worship.

7.1 Developments across 2019 - 2020

Priorities during this period have taken account of the limited Education Adviser time and the follow up to ensure all school have had access to the syllabus. Work has been curtailed due to the Covid 19 pandemic, with meetings postponed and school closures for all but Educare students. The working party focused on Collective Worship has remained active.

APPENDICES

A Religious Studies Examination Statistics 2020

There are no statistics available, at the time of this report.

B LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH REPORT IS SENT

Our report will be published, in electronic form, on the Plymouth schoolroom website and sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) for publication on their website. It will be made available to teachers and parents on request.

C THE DUTIES OF SACRE

SACRE primarily gives advice to the Local Authority about religious education in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. It can give advice even if the Local Authority does not seek it, but the Local Authority is not obliged to act upon it. In two areas, however, SACRE's decision is binding.

Worship 'Determinations'

It has a duty to make a 'determination' if a community school applies for complete or partial exemption from the requirement that most acts of worship in a school term shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character reflecting the broad tradition of Christian belief in a manner appropriate to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. (For example, there may be a preponderance of pupils of a faith other than Christianity.) It is important to note that SACRE cannot exempt a school from the requirement to provide some form of worship (even if not Christian worship) for all pupils on every school day. The act of worship need not be in the morning or for the whole school at one time and it is open to individual parents to withdraw their children by arrangement.

There have been no applications of this kind to Plymouth SACRE this year.

Review of Agreed Syllabus

The new syllabus was launched in June 2019 and is not due for review until 2022.

Why a Report?

An Annual Report has been a legal requirement since the 1988 Education Act. The Education Act 1996, section 391.6 states:

'The Council shall in each year publish a report as to the exercise of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the Council under Sub-Section 3 above during the last preceding year.

(Sub-Section 3 refers to the procedure for requiring a review of the Agreed Syllabus). The Council's report shall in particular:

- a) specify any matters in respect of which the Council has given advice to the

Authority;

- b) broadly describe the nature of the advice given; and where any such matter was not referred to the Council by the Authority, give the Council's reason for offering advice on that matter'.

D SACRE MEMBERS 2019 – 2020

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations, not including Church of England.

Eight places

Malc Halliday	Baptist Church
Jayesh Bhagat	Buddhist Community
<i>Vacant</i>	Hindu Community
Bakari Arabi	Muslim Community
Dr Judith Beckman	Jewish community
Helena Mitchell	Methodist Church
Lesley Clark	Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
	United Reformed Church

Group B: The Church of England, appointed by the Exeter Diocesan Board of Education

Five places

Dr Catherine Bowness	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Ed Pawson	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Katie Freeman	Bickleigh Down Church of England Primary School
Emma Butler	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
<i>Vacant</i>	University of St. Mark & St. John

Group C: Teachers' Associations, who should nominate RE teachers

Nine places (three vacancies)

	NASUWT
Gwen Hughes	NEU
<i>vacant</i>	PASH
<i>Annemarie Allchurch</i>	NATRE
<i>Vacant</i>	VOICE
<i>Vacant</i>	UCU
Elizabeth Hill	PAPH (NAHT)
<i>Vacant</i>	ATL (this union doesn't exist)
Mirella Paganuzzi	Special Schools

Group D: The Local Authority

Six places

Councillor Aspinall	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Morris	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Drear	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Tuffin	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Mrs Johnson	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Tuohy	Plymouth City Council

Co-opted Representatives

Seven places

Sara Wells/Claire Linden	Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity
Margaret Thompson/Peter Warm	Quaker Community
Vacant	Greek Orthodox Community
Vacant	Plymouth Association of Governors
Ben Kerr	Humanist
Dr. Barbara Wintersgill	RE Consultant
Nic Gibson	Pagan Community

Officers

Heather Ogburn	Senior Education Adviser
Michael House	Education Associate
Helen Rickman	Democratic Adviser

E. NUMBER OF MEETINGS, RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MAIN ISSUES DISCUSSED AT EACH MEETING

Plymouth SACRE meets once per term and has met on two occasions in the academic year 2019 – 2020.

The first meeting was scheduled for 18 July 2019, and 14 members and three officers were present and the issues discussed included:

- Plymouth RE Hub and Learn, Teach, Lead
- Local and National Developments
- The RE Commission
- AREIAC and NASACRE Membership
- Collective Worship

The Autumn Term meeting was held on 11 November 2019 and 12 members and three officers were present and the issues discussed included: -

- Worldviews Perspective

- Plymouth RE Hub and Learn, Teach, Lead
- WIRE (Widening Inclusivity in Religious Education) Award
- Holocaust Memorial Day 2020

The Spring and Summer term meeting scheduled for 23 March 2020 was postponed. Due to Covid 19.

Clerk to SACRE – Helen Rickman – Democratic Adviser

Consultant Education Advisers to Plymouth SACRE – Heather Ogburn and Michael House