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**STANDING ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

*Annual Report
2007-2008*

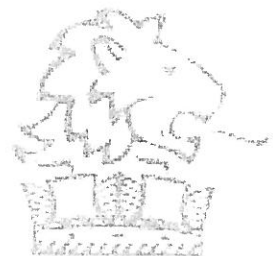


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SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2007 – 2008

FOREWORD

I am pleased and privileged to be reporting on yet another busy year in the life of Plymouth SACRE.

Our new Agreed Syllabus is in the throes of being embedded. Our two ASTs, Caroline McVicker and Donna Briggs supported by Jonathan Marshall, our RE Adviser, have continued to run termly workshops to support and encourage teachers to deliver stimulating RE.

As a SACRE we have been very concerned that RE nationally has only been granted one million pounds over 3 years for subject development. Some of this money is 'ring fenced' and some is money that the subject has already been allocated. As RE is seen as playing a pivotal role in Community Cohesion and SACREs are finding their remits broadened, the news that only *one sixtieth* of the bid submitted was awarded has left us indignant and insulted. This is a message we wish to be strongly conveyed to government.

As a SACRE we also remain concerned about the Key Stage 3 integrated curriculum roll out. We are concerned that some schools may use this as an excuse to squeeze RE out of the curriculum. Ed Pawson, our Regional Subject Adviser (RSA) addressed SACRE and explained the seven conceptual skills on which the integrated curriculum is based. Where RE has played a key part in the planning process its place in the curriculum is assured. However, this is not the case in all schools. This SACRE is committed to monitoring and supporting good RE teaching in our schools.

Solly Irving once again visited several schools in conjunction with Holocaust Memorial Day. Our students benefit a great deal from hearing his first hand testimony.

Our SACRE Development Plan for 2008-11 is challenging and wide ranging. Our thanks go to Jonathan Marshall for all of his work on this. Unfortunately the Conference planned on Community Cohesion had to be postponed because of lack of take up. However, this conference will take place in the Autumn of 2008.

As always, our thanks go to Jonathan Marshall without whose support we would falter and our clerk Robert Walker.

Tricia Martin
Chair of 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 of the last year and to inform others of its work.

1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1.1 The Agreed Syllabus

The New Agreed Syllabus - "Every Child Matters in RE" was launched at a combined SACRE Members and Teachers Conference at the College of St Mark and St John in July 2007. This was the combined work of representatives from Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Local Authorities and SACREs under the direction of the RE Adviser for Devon. This was a wonderful achievement which now supports, guides and directs the teaching and learning of RE. The non-statutory schemes or units of work to accompany the syllabus have been posted on the Devon website at www.deseducation.org.

2 STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2.1 Exemplification of standards.

2.1.1 In September 2005 OfSTED embarked upon a new approach to inspections. One of the implications is that there is no specific requirement to report on Religious Education and Collective Worship. However, comments and grades are still required under "personal development and well being" and the sub-section under this heading of the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural development" (SMSC). From September 2007 schools have the added duty to promote community cohesion and this will be inspected and reported on by Ofsted Inspectors from September 2008.

The absence of specific Ofsted reports on Religious Education has meant that SACRE has lost a major "intelligence gathering" tool.

2.1.2 SACRE encourages all schools to use the excellent resource, *Self-Evaluation in RE – a toolkit for subject leaders* (Endorsed by Plymouth SACRE at the June meeting 2006). This provides exemplary support and guidance for teachers in schools and also enables them to contribute significantly to the school Self Evaluation Form (SEF).

2.2 Examination Results in Religious Studies (Provisional)

2.2.1 This year 13 Plymouth Secondary Schools entered a total of 570 candidates for the full GCSE examination in Religious Studies. This represents 25% of the year groups in these schools. 67% of students achieved grades A*-C (nationally ????) and just over 99% achieved A*-G grades.

SACRE is pleased to note an increase of 11% this year in students achieving grades A*-C.

2.2.2 8 Secondary Schools entered a total of 950 candidates for the GCSE short course in 2008. This represents 56% of the year group. Just over 42% achieved A*-C grades (nationally ???) and just under 92% achieved A*-G grades.

SACRE is very pleased to note the achievement gained by many candidates in the summer examinations.

2.2.3 Two schools entered a total of 3 candidates for Entry Level Qualifications. This provides opportunities for students, working below GCSE levels, to access accreditation in Religious Studies. Plymouth SACRE encourages all secondary schools, including special schools, to consider making such opportunities available.

2.2.4 12 Secondary Schools entered a total of 126 students, the highest number of schools and students yet, at Advanced Level in 2008. 100% achieved grades A-E. SACRE is very pleased to note the positive development of Religious Studies at A Level

2.2.5 9 Secondary schools entered a total of 32 students for AS level and 94% achieved grades A-E.

NB: This figure represents the aggregated results for Year 13 students only. The results for Year 12 students entered for AS level are NOT included.

2.2.6 SACRE congratulates all the successful candidates on their achievement and will continue to monitor standards.

3 COMPLAINTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

No complaints about religious education have been received by SACRE.

4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT

4.1 Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity

SACRE continues to support the work of the Centre which is seen as a major resource for schools in delivering the new Syllabus.

The Centre, which operates as a Charitable Trust – supported by Plymouth City Council, is now in its seventh year of work – promoting education and understanding of world religion and cultural diversity. Through the exploration of different beliefs and cultures, the common thread of human/spiritual values is revealed. These are the values that ensure the future security and well-being of our local and international community. These values are also central to the new duty to promote community cohesion in schools.

One of the main planks of the Centre's work is providing Faith Speakers – representatives from the main world faiths, to go into schools to support the teaching and learning of RE. Over 120 such visits took place over the past year. School visits to the Synagogue, Islamic Centre and Greek Orthodox Church have also been organised by the Centre.

As part of the Centre's services, Mr Solly Irving, a Jewish Holocaust survivor from London, again visited secondary schools in February. In all, twelve schools heard Solly speak over the four days he spent in Plymouth. The impact of these visits on the hearts and minds of the two thousand or so students and teachers who listened to Solly's personal testimony was powerful and deeply moving.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Cllr David James and Mrs Diane James, made two visits to the Centre over the year. In December they met with Bishops and Faith representatives at the informal annual lunch and in January they were the special guests at the Holocaust Memorial Day - Evening of Reflection on the theme, "Imagine:- remember – reflect – react".

4.2 Courses, Conferences and Meetings

These have taken place throughout the year at the Professional Development Centre and at the Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity. See Appendix B.

5. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

5.1 Monitoring Collective Worship

Previously, SACRE has been aided in its work to monitor collective worship through Ofsted reports. Over the past year very few have

specifically commented on this important aspect of school life. SACRE continues to identify collective worship as part of its Development Plan in collaboration with Devon and Torbay SACREs.

5.2 Advice on Collective Worship

Advice given in the publication *Encouraging Spiritual Development* (Devon SACRE 2000) remains the latest advice offered by SACRE on collective worship, which is seen as one of the ways in which a school contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and students. Revision of this advice, together with further guidelines, is also part of the Development Plan.

5.3. Complaints

There have been no formal complaints about collective worship in schools.

6. LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

6.1 Devon and Torbay SACREs

Over the past year we have enjoyed excellent links with our neighbours in Devon and Torbay SACREs and, as the Development Plan shows, collaborative work is planned around a number of important developments.

6.2 Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

SACRE values the opportunity to attend QCA conferences as they provide a good opportunity for members to hear national speakers, to keep up to date with national developments and to network with colleagues from other SACREs. Mrs Martin and Mrs Mitchell provided a report to SACRE in March on this year's conference.

6.3 NASACRE

SACRE received a report from Mrs Martin who attended the National Association of SACREs Annual General Meeting held in May.

7. SACRE ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIORITIES

SACRE meets once per term and is supported by the following staff from Plymouth City Council: The Senior Education Adviser - Equalities and Inclusion and the RE Adviser.

Priorities have been guided by the responsibility to monitor standards within Religious Education, SACRE's own Self Evaluation process and

the formation of the Development Plan as outlined at the SACRE meeting in July.

7.1 Development Plan for 2008 – 2011

- To implement the new Agreed Syllabus “Every Child Matters in RE” and the new units of work across secondary, primary and special schools.
Led by: RE Adviser and ASTs through meetings and INSET programme
Timescale: Autumn 2008 – Summer 2009
- Monitor the impact and integration of the new Agreed Syllabus.
Led by: RE Adviser/ASTs and SACRE members - through visits to schools
Timescale: 2009 – 2010
- To work in collaboration with Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity and other partners to foster good relationships with faith communities and promote faith literacy across the City.
Led by: RE Adviser, SACRE members and others
Timescale: 2008 – 2011
- In collaboration with Plymouth Centre For Faiths and Cultural Diversity and partners, review current teaching/learning around Christianity in all key stages.
Establish a small working group to produce guidelines on the challenges and opportunities of teaching Christianity in RE.
Led by: RE Adviser, SACRE members and others
Timescale: 2008 – 2009
- Enhance role of SACRE in promoting the contribution of RE to community cohesion through effective guidance to schools (in collaboration with Devon and Torbay SACREs).
Led by: RE Adviser and SACRE members
Timescale: 2008 – 2010
- Establish a small group to review current guidance on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimension and collective worship. (In collaboration with Devon and Torbay SACREs produce additional guidance)
Led by: RE Adviser and SACRE members
Timescale: Autumn 2008 – Spring 2010
- To collaborate with SACRE colleagues from Devon and Torbay on projects, as required, to further the quality and development of RE in schools.
Led by: RE Adviser and SACRE members
Timescale: 2008 – 2011

Review something about old Dev Dev

APPENDICES

A. EXAMINATION STATISTICS 2001-2008

Previous years data has been rounded to 1 decimal point (2008 results are provisional).

Examination -GCSE Full Course	Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% A*-C	% A*-G
2008 (Prov)	13	570	25.0	239	331	67.0	99.1
2007	14	606	24.8	237	369	55.9	97.7
2006	12	620	28.7	269	351	59.2	95.2
2005	12	646	32.8	270	376	59.0	95.5
2004	13	622	27.1	262	360	69.3	97.6
2003	12	599	28.8	232	367	49.9	91.0
2002	10	506	33.7	197	309	61.5	93.1
2001	11	481	30.0	186	295	55.7	95.4

Examination -GCSE Short Course	Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% A*-C	% A*-G
2008 (Prov)	8	950	55.8	432	518	42.0	92.0
2007	8	958	56.3	425	533	46.8	95.2
2006	9	1055	56.8	487	568	48.6	90.1
2005	6	865	65.5	444	421	56.4	96.0
2004	7	907	56.9	433	474	59.2	95.5
2003	7	527	52.2	228	299	56.2	96.0
2002	9	979	58.2	508	471	42.0	92.8
2001	8	914	63.5	459	455	50.0	94.0

Examination - ELQ(C)	Number of schools (Total = 17 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% Level 3	% Level 2	% Level 1
2008 (Prov)	2	3	1.1		3	33.3	33.3	0
2007	1	3	2.3		3	-	33.3	33.3

Examination - Advanced Extension Award	Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	% D	% M
2008 (Prov)	2	9	1.8	8	1	11.1	55.6

Examination - A Level	Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	%A-E
2008 (Prov)	12	126	5.4	61	65	100
2007	11	108	5.0	48	60	100
2006	9	77	8.8	23	54	98.7
2005	8	89	11.9	35	48	100
2004	10	75	4.3	23	52	100
2003	10	69	8.3	22	47	100
2002	8	64	9.4	15	49	98.4
2001	6	31	5.9	10	21	96.8

Examination -AS Level	Number of schools (Total = 15 secondary schools)	Number of candidates	% of year group entered in these schools	Boys	Girls	%A-E
2008 (Prov)	9	32	1.8	16	16	93.9
2007	9	29	1.7	16	16	93.1
2006	7	27	4.1	9	18	77.8
2005	10	20	2.4	4	18	81.8
2004	10	46	2.7	10	36	91.3
2003	6	27	5.3	9	18	92.6
2002	6	22	3.6	7	15	95.5

B DETAILS OF COURSES, CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Over the past year, teachers from Primary, Secondary and Special Schools have had opportunities to meet on a regular basis, usually each term, at either the Plymouth Professional Development Centre or the Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity.

The main focus for all has been around the implementation of the new agreed syllabus.

Secondary school colleagues have also discussed issues arising from the new key stage 3 curriculum and the challenge and opportunities for RE. In addition SACRE members and teachers received a presentation from the Regional Subject Adviser on this important development.

A new Post 16 RE group met in the summer term, with funding support, and under the guidance of Caroline McVicker, AST – this group is developing an action plan to improve the quality of RE at this level.

C LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH REPORT IS SENT

The report will be sent to the Headteachers, Principals and Chairs of Governors of schools including voluntary schools, the Local Authority and QCA. It will be made available to teachers and parents on request.

The report will also be sent to the Directors for Education and members of SACRE in Devon and Torbay.

D 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 in Plymouth.

Review of Agreed Syllabus

The second matter which SACRE can insist upon is that the Local Authority should set up a conference to adopt (or write) a new or revised Agreed Syllabus. The Local Authority sub-group on SACRE does not vote on this issue.

In March 2006 SACRE appointed representatives from all four houses to serve on the Agreed Syllabus Conference convened by the Devon RE Adviser. This work took place over the following year and the launch of the new Agreed Syllabus, "Every Child Matters in RE", took place in July 2007.

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'.

E SACRE MEMBERS 2007 – 2008

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

Eight places (one vacancy)

Mrs Pam Shelmerdine	Baptist Church
Kelsang Dragden	Buddhist Community
Dr Jatindra Saha	Hindu Community
Mrs Zainab Abubakar	Muslim Community
Dr Peter Lee	Jewish Community
Ms Helena Mitchell	Methodist Church
<i>Vacant</i>	Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth
The Reverend Peter Chave	United Reformed Church

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

Five places

Mrs Patricia Martin	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Mrs Catherine Bowness	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Mrs Val Armitage	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Mr Tim Lyddon	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter
Mr Jim Knight	Diocesan Board of Education, Exeter

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

Nine places (four vacancies)

Vacant	NASUWT
Ms Gwen Hughes	NUT
Mr Pete Grainger	PASH (NAHT)
Ms Teresa Griffiths	NATRE
Mrs Jean Hendley	PAT
Dr Gaynor Pollard	UCL
<i>Vacant</i>	PAPH (NAHT)
<i>Vacant</i>	ATL
<i>Vacant</i>	Special Schools

Group D: The Local Authority

Six places

Councillor Mary Aspinall	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Jonathan Drean	Plymouth City Council
Councillor David Stark	Plymouth City Council
Councillor David James	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Susan McDonald	Plymouth City Council
Councillor Wendy Foster	Plymouth City Council

Co-opted Representatives

Six places (two vacancies)

Mrs Donna Briggs	AST (Primary)
Miss Caroline McVicker	AST (Secondary)
Dr Clare Hamon	Quaker Community
Father Gregory Carpenter	Greek Orthodox Community
<i>Vacant</i>	Plymouth Association of Governors
<i>Vacant</i>	

Officers

Mr Arnet Donkin	Senior Education Adviser – Equalities and Inclusion
Mr Jonathan Marshall	Religious Education Adviser
Mrs Rachel Watson(Mr Robert Walker)	Democratic Support Officers

F. 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 three occasions in the academic year 2007-2008

The Autumn Term meeting was held on 3 December 2007. Eighteen members and three officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- NASACRE Update
- Review of Membership
- SACRE Annual Report (Draft)
- Examination Results
- Making Sense of Religion – Ofsted Report
- South West Regional SACRE Conference
- Updates
- SACRE and Collaborative Work

The Spring Term meeting was held on 10 March 2008. Thirteen members and three officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- QCA Conference Report
- Religious Education and Community Cohesion
- Presentation on Religious Education Work
- SACRE Development Plan 2005-08
- Update from the Religious Education Adviser
- Religious Education and the New Key Stage 3 Secondary Curriculum

The Summer Term meeting was held on 14 July 2008. Twenty members and three officers were present and the issues discussed included:-

- Membership Issues
- Development Plan
- National Updates
- Local Development and Issues in RE
- The Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust Plan
- Religious Education and Community Cohesion

Clerk to SACRE – Rachel Watson and Robert Walker
Plymouth City Council Senior Education Adviser - Equalities and Inclusion – Arnet Donkin.
Plymouth City Council RE Adviser – Jonathan Marshall