

All Members of the Reading Standing  
Advisory Council on Religious Education

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21 February 2014

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NOTICE OF MEETING - READING STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION -  
3 MARCH 2014

A meeting of the Reading SACRE will be held on **Monday 3 March 2013 at 6.30 pm in  
Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, Reading.**

The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA

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9. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS: - TBC

**READING STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINUTES -  
27 NOVEMBER 2013**

**Present:**

Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Chair)	Jewish Faith (Group A)
Leanne Campbell	Islam (Group A)
Anne Cheeseman	Church of England (Group B)
Jo Fageant	Church of England (Group B)
Vera Bodman	NUT (Group C)
Councillor Ennis	Reading Borough Council (Group D)
Councillor Hopper	Reading Borough Council (Group D)
Councillor O'Connell	Reading Borough Council (Group D)

**Also in Attendance:**

Teresa Jones	RC Diocese of Portsmouth (Group A) - Nominee
David McKnight	Berkshire Humanists
Jan Lever	RE Consultant
Richard Woodford	Reading Borough Council

**Apologies:**

Mustafa Chaudhary	Islam (Group A)
Margaret Elcock	Church of England (Group B)
Robin Sharples	Church of England (Group B)
Michael Freeman	ATL (Group C)
Councillor McElligott	Reading Borough Council (Group D)
Jamie Howell	Berkshire Humanist (Co-opted member)

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

Further to Minute 12 of the last meeting, Other Business - Future Meetings, Jan Lever confirmed that schools would be happy to host future meetings of the SACRE but meetings would need to start earlier as primary schools in particular were not open in the evenings.

**3. PRESENTATION BY LEANNE CAMPBELL, MUSLIM REPRESENTATIVE**

Leanne Campbell, Muslim representative on the SACRE, gave a presentation on her faith and beliefs.

Leanne told the SACRE that she had become a Muslim sixteen years ago when she was 18 years old and that Islam had a dual meaning, 'peace' and 'submission'. The essence of Islam was that acknowledging the Creator and submitting to His guidance would lead to peace and fulfilment in this world and the next. The Qur'an, the principle source of Muslim faith and practice, was a guidebook dealing with all subjects that concerned human beings and stated that the purpose of life, from an Islamic perspective, was to worship God and to be constantly conscious

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that God was watching you. The Qur'an provided an answer for everything in life and gave structure to life.

The practical foundation of Islam, which a Muslim must put into practice in order to make his faith complete, were known as the 'Five Pillars'. These were the shahada, or declaration of faith; the salat, or daily prayers; the zakat, or giving in charity to the needy; sawm, or the purifying fast of Ramadan, and Hajj, or Pilgrimage to Makkah for those who were able.

Leanne explained that the spread of Islam had been based mainly on the early Muslim traders who were known for their honesty and justice and therefore attracted others to the faith. She stated that Islam should not be judged by the individual Muslim and that one of the key principles of Islam was to abide by the laws of the land in which you lived.

**AGREED:** That Leanne be thanked for her presentation.

**4. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: REALISING THE POTENTIAL - REPORT BY OFSTED**

Jan Lever submitted a copy of a report by the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) entitled Religious Education: Realising the Potential.

The report had been based on evidence drawn from 185 schools that had been visited and inspected by Ofsted specifically on their RE provision, between September 2009 and July 2012. It had also drawn on evidence from a telephone survey of a further 30 schools, examination results, other reports that had been published by Ofsted, extended discussions with teachers, members of SACREs and other RE professionals, and wider surveys that had been carried out by professional associations for RE.

The report stated that the previous ten years had seen some improvements in Religious Education (RE) in schools and that more pupils recognised its value and nearly two thirds of them had left school with an accredited qualification in the subject in 2012. The range and quality of resources to support teaching in the subject was also much better than they had been. However, evidence from the majority of schools that had been visited in the survey had shown that the subject's potential was still not being realised fully. Many pupils left school with scant subject knowledge and understanding and RE teaching often failed to challenge and extend pupils' ability to explore fundamental questions about human life, religion and belief. Ofsted's previous report on RE in 2010, Transforming Religious Education, had highlighted key barriers to better RE and had made recommendations about how these should be overcome. The current survey had found that not enough had been done since 2010.

The report stated that the structures that underpinned the local determination of the RE curriculum had failed to keep pace with changes in the wider educational world and as a result many local authorities were struggling to fulfil their responsibility to promote high quality RE. In addition, other changes to education policy, such as the introduction in 2010 of the English Baccalaureate, had led to a decline in RE provision in some schools.

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The report detailed eight major areas of concern and provided examples of effective practice in using enquiry as a basis for improving pupil's learning, high quality leadership and management in primary and secondary schools, and effective approaches in special schools. Overall, such good practice was not sufficiently widespread.

The report set out the key findings from the survey and the recommendations that included the following specifically for local authorities, in partnership with SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences:

- Ensure that sufficient resources were available for SACREs and agreed syllabus conferences to carry out their statutory functions with regard to RE and provide schools with high quality guidance and support;
- Review their expectations about arrangements for RE, particularly at Key Stage 4, to ensure that schools had sufficient flexibility to match their provision more effectively to pupils' needs;
- Work in partnership with local schools and academies to build supportive networks to share best practice.

The report stated that there was not just a lack of subject knowledge around RE but also a lack of clarity about what the aims of RE were. Teachers were not confident in teaching the subject and there was fragmented curriculum planning which was seen as difficult and time consuming process. It was acknowledged that monitoring had to take place but that there was not enough time to do it.

One of the key findings had been that "most of the GCSE teaching had failed to secure the core aim of the examination specifications: that was, to enable pupils 'to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to study and religion'". This was not due to teachers not wanting to support children adopting an enquiring approach but simply that time was so limited that they had to concentrate just on the exam syllabus.

Jan told the SACRE that the report was a good reflection of the real climate of RE and the situation that people were in and provided positive enforcement of what was in the SACRE's Action/Development Plan. It also confirmed that the main vehicle for supporting schools in respect of RE was the SACRE.

The SACRE discussed the report and a number of points were made including the importance of training and the possibility of teachers who were specialists in RE teaching at a number of schools.

**AGREED:** That the report and position be noted.

**5. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL REPORTS: A REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENGLAND / A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ENGLAND**

Jan Lever submitted two reports by the Religious Education Council (REC) for England and Wales: A Review of Religious Education in England and A Curriculum Framework for Religious Education in England.

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The review of RE in England had been carried out by the REC of England and Wales as part of its strategic plan to enable the RE community to adjust to the major changes being made to education in England by the Coalition government. The review had begun with a scoping report in early 2012, followed by a report from an expert panel, mirroring the Department for Education's (DfE) National Curriculum Review, in December 2012. In 2013 task groups had taken forward the panel's recommendations and consultations had been held at some points with the whole REC membership and at others with a Steering Group which represented the diversity of the REC. The final text of the Review had been agreed by the REC Board on 2 October 2013 and had been launched in Westminster on 23 October 2013.

The report made six recommendations for structuring and sustaining RE in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which were to:

- Support improvements by developing more effective and coherent mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of RE;
- Pursue with policy makers the challenges around the existing 'settlement' for RE;
- Promote coherence and progression between 4 to 14 programmes of study and 14 to 19 public examinations;
- Ensure that there were more robust arrangements for training and supporting teachers of RE;
- Develop new structures and networks within and across the RE Community so that its expertise was coordinated and utilised more effectively in the interests of improving the subject;
- Develop new assessment arrangements for RE.

The REC had begun the Review of the Curriculum Framework for RE in England in early 2012 as part of its wider strategic plan for developing the subject. The main catalyst for the Review had been the extensive review of the national curriculum for schools in England that had been carried out by the DfE from January 2011 to July 2013. RE had not been part of the DfE review as it was not one of the national curriculum subjects and the REC was clear that a review of RE in England was needed for reasons of equity with other subjects. From September 2014 teachers with responsibility for RE in schools in England would be expected to plan lessons, assess pupil progress and have their performance held to account as other teachers did. For this reason a new RE curriculum document was needed to support those teachers and schools that would be laid out in the same style as the documents for the national curriculum.

The Review had been carried out in the same way as the review of RE in England and had also been launched at Westminster on 23 October 2013.

The Review had resulted in a non-statutory national curriculum framework for RE (NCFRE) which would complement the new national curriculum programmes of study that had resulted from the DfE's review of the school curriculum, in which RE had not been included. An analysis of the wider context in which RE found itself had also been produced and included the opportunities and challenges that faced the implementation of the new curriculum framework.

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Jan told the SACRE that the reports would be instrumental in the building of the next RE Agreed Syllabus and a decision would need to be made whether or not the Syllabus should be restructured in order to be in line with the programmes of study for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 set out in the reports. The report on the review of the curriculum framework included a progression grid that set out the expectations for pupils at the end of each Key Stage, these replaced the eight level assessment scale and a national panel would be set up to continue the work in this area. The report also recommended the retention of learning being about and from religion, although it had taken away these specific labels.

**AGREED:** That the report and position be noted.

**6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW/NEW DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 2014**

Jan Lever submitted a copy of the SACRE Development Plan for April 2013 to March 2014 and reported that progress against the actions was on target.

Jan told the SACRE that with regard to the RE Network Meetings the number of teachers attending was still small despite trying many different ways of encouraging them to attend.

Jan informed the SACRE that a new action had been added to the Plan about the supporting and delivery of a secondary school RE conference with a national speaker and workshops. The conference would take place at Waingels College on 28 February 2014 and would be open to Reading schools. Wokingham SACRE had contributed £500 towards the conference and it was suggested that the Reading SACRE also contribute £500. Teachers from outside Reading and Wokingham would also be able to attend the conference but would be charged £20 each to cover their costs.

The SACRE discussed the updated Development Plan and a number of points were made including the following:

- It was suggested that in order to increase attendance at Network Meetings school governors could be approached and the benefits to the school, if teachers attended the meetings, explained;
- Jo Fageant told the SACRE that part of the outcome of the All Party Parliamentary Group report on RE had been a briefing paper for school governors on their responsibility with regards to RE and it was suggested that this could be sent to the Chairs of governing bodies with a covering letter from the Chair of the SACRE with the aim of encouraging attendance by teachers at Network meetings;
- It was agreed that the SACRE should contribute £500 from its budget towards secondary school RE conference on 28 February 2014.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the position be noted;

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- (2) That the Chair send a letter to the Chairs of school governing bodies, attaching a copy of the All Party Parliamentary Group briefing note on the responsibility of schools with regard to RE, with the aim of increasing attendance by teachers at RE Network Meetings;
- (3) That £500 be allocated from the SACRE budget to support and subsidise the secondary schools RE conference on 28 February 2014.

**7. MEMBERSHIP**

Further to Minute 5 of the last meeting, Richard Woodford submitted a table detailing the Membership of the SACRE for the 2013/14 Municipal Year and a copy of the Constitution of the SACRE.

The SACRE discussed the current membership and in particular the membership of Group C, Associations representing teachers.

Currently Group C specified the unions from which members had to be sought as follows:

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers	1
The National Association of Headteachers	1
The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers	1
The National Union of Teachers	1
The Secondary Headteachers Association	1

It was suggested that the membership of Group C in the Constitution should be amended so that five teacher representatives from schools in the Borough were required and that rather than specifying that they had to be representatives from specific unions possibly only two should be nominated by unions or teachers' professional associations.

It was agreed that suggested wording in respect of the membership of Group C in the SACRE Constitution should be submitted to the next meeting.

**AGREED:** That suggested wording in respect of the membership of Group C in the SACRE Constitution be submitted to the next meeting.

**8. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: DAY AT PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Jan Lever tabled a copy of a report on the teacher's Continuing Professional Development: Day Trip to Places of Worship in Reading that had taken place on 12 November 2013.

Jan informed the SACRE that a group of 20 teachers from Reading and Wokingham had visited places of worship around Reading starting at the Sikh Gurdwara followed by the Jewish Synagogue, Abu Bakr Islamic Centre and the Shantideva Kadampa Buddhist Centre. Feedback from the day had been positive and those who had taken part were keen to repeat the experience but to go to different



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places of worship; this would be included in an action plan for the SACRE that would be submitted to the next meeting.

A photographer had accompanied the group on the day and had produced two PowerPoint presentations, for each of the three religions (Hinduism, Islam and Judaism) one simply showing a sequence of photographs from the day and the other with labels and captions added to the images. The presentations were being put onto a DVD and a copy would be sent to every primary school in the Borough with a covering letter about how it could be used. The covering letter would also include details of how to contact each of the places of worship.

**AGREED:** That Jan Lever and her team be thanked for their work in arranging the day trip to places of worship and for producing the PowerPoint presentation.

**9. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTORY - UPDATE**

Further to Minute 7 of the meeting held on 4 February 2013, Jan Lever informed the SACRE that work of the directory of speakers from faith/belief communities who could go into schools for RE lessons and enter into a dialogue with the children about their faith was nearing completion and would be launched before the end of the current term.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) That Jan Lever be thanked for her work on the RE Directory.

**10. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT**

Further to Minute 4 of the meeting held on 4 February 2013, Jan Lever submitted a draft copy of the text for the Annual Report 2013 and tabled a copy of the report which had been produced in a newsletter format.

The SACRE discussed the report and agreed that the new format made the report much more interesting and more likely to be read especially by the most important audience which had always been schools.

The Annual Report would be completed by an introduction written by the Chair.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) That the introduction to the Annual Report 2013 be written by the Chair.

**11. OTHER BUSINESS**

- (a) Chanukah Lighting

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The Chair informed the SACRE that the annual Civic Chanukah Lighting would take place on 3 December 2013 at 5.00pm in the Mayor's Parlour, everyone was welcome to attend and food would also be available.

**(b) Farewell Statement**

David McKnight tabled a copy of a farewell statement that included information about his current local Humanist development work and thanked past and present members of the SACRE for their friendship and discourse.

**AGREED:**

- (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) That David McKnight be thanked for his contribution to the SACRE.

**12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 3 March 2014

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.55 pm).

**DRAFT Reading SACRE development plan April 2013-March 2014**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>People Responsible</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Summer 2013</b>	<b>Autumn 2013</b>	<b>Spring 2014</b>
A. To be a supportive and proactive SACRE enjoying full and well-informed membership.	1. Fill membership vacancies	End July 2013	SACRE Chair Committee Services		Some vacancies filled		Discuss new constitution
	2. SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and, when possible, teacher termly network meetings and training events	Termly SACRE meetings: Summer: 19 June 2013 Autumn : 20 November 2013 Spring 2014: 3rd March  Termly teacher network meetings Occasional training events	SACRE Chair/SACRE Adviser SACRE members SACRE Clerk	SACRE Adviser to prepare and attend x3 SACRE meetings a year @ £500 per term =£1500 SACRE Clerk to administer each meeting  Oxford Diocese updates £50 x3 =£150 (shared with other SACREs)	All meeting obligations fulfilled 2012-13	Network meeting: only 6 teachers attended	Network mtg 3 Feb: 7 teachers attended
	3. Produce annual SACRE Report	Autumn Term 2013	SACRE Adviser and clerk	SACRE Adviser x1 day @£500		Draft brought to November meeting	Finalised after last mtg and disseminated
	4. Review the development plan at each meeting and update for next year	At each SACRE meeting	SACRE Adviser and SACRE	SACRE Adviser time included in A2 above			
	5. ~Subscribe to NASACRE ~ Representation at annual NASACRE conference, NASACRE AGM and local SACRE events including the annual pan-	Ongoing	SACRE members SACRE Adviser to organise Jo Fageant re pan-Berks event/s	Subscription £90 Conference/s and AGM budget £500 SACRE Adviser time if needs to be the SACRE representative x1 day shared with Wokingham £250	Jo attended AGM 23/5/13 (Alan Brine presentation attached to papers for 19 June meeting) Jan attended Wessex joint SACRE meeting		Jan to attend with other SACRE members ?? May 22 <sup>nd</sup> , London Jan to attend 13 March Wessex SACRE mtg

	Berkshire SACRE conference				11/3/13 (notes attached 19/6/13)		
	6. Members to present aspects of their faith/beliefs to SACRE to inform members	At selected SACRE meetings	SACRE members. Decide plan at SACRE meetings: Chair		? Does SACRE wish to activate this item?	Leanne Campbell, Muslim representative gave presentation	
B. To support teachers of RE to continually improve RE learning in their schools	1. Provide a termly Primary RE network meeting, 4-5.30, hosted by a school RE teachers and SACRE members to be invited	Once a term (3 per year) Summer 2013: 16 May Autumn 2013: 1 Oct Spring 2014: 3 February Summer 2014: 14 May ( Venues tba) Hosted by schools/places of worship	SACRE Adviser to plan, invite schools, administer, deliver and follow up x 3 networks a year.	SACRE Adviser x1.5 days @ £500 = £750	16/5/13 Primary network held.8 attended. Thanks to LDS Church  Volunteer hosts: places of worship? Bridge-building.		3 Feb network hosted by Caversham Park Primary, 7 teachers attended. Focus: questions
	2. Provide, jointly with Wokingham SACRE, a termly secondary RE network meeting, 4-5.30, hosted by a school. RE teachers and SACRE members to be invited	Once a term (3 per year) Summer 2013: 21 May, venue Forest School Autumn 2013: 22 October Spring 2014: 11 February ,venue tba Hosted by schools	SACRE to plan etc in liaison with Secondary Federation manager/LA	SACRE Adviser x1.5 days @ £500 = £750. Cost shared with Wokingham so Reading contributes £375	21/5/13 Only 3 attendees, Kendrick. Continue in Autumn, then review		Feb 11 <sup>th</sup> mtg postponed to 28 Feb to be held at end of Secondary Conference at Waingels College

C. To support the implementation of the revised Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE							
	3. Provide a termly RE e-newsletter	Publish in the half-term when the network meetings don't happen	Jo Fageant to produce	£250 for JEF's time (shared with other SACREs)			
	1. Provide schools with a list of speakers from faith/belief communities for RE lessons	Summer Term 2013	SACRE Chair and SACRE members SACRE Adviser	SACRE Adviser x7 days @ £500, but cost shared with Wokingham so Reading contributes £1750	Work has started. Training/induction day for speakers: July 18 <sup>th</sup> 9.30-12.30 Venue: tba Launch through networks etc Autumn Term 2013		Almost there
	2. Organise trip/s for teachers to places of worship to support planning and teaching (CPD)	Autumn term 2013		£1500 additional funding requested from Reading to enable this to happen + 2 days adviser time to organise, attend and lead (2@£500 =£1000)			12 november trip and resources CD disseminated to every Reading Primary school
	3. Liaise with local places of worship re children's visits, appropriate to agreed syllabus	Summer term 2013		As part of the RE Directory	Work started		

## **Reading SACRE budget request April 2013-March 2014**

### **SACRE Adviser**

17 days ( 9.5 of those days shared with Wokingham, 7.5 Reading only) making x 7.5 days (Reading only) at £500 (£ 3750) and x 9.5 shared days @ £250 (£ 2375)

Total £6125

### **CPD/Trip subsidy for teachers**

£1500

### **Oxford Diocese**

£400

### **Other costs**

NASACRE etc £590

**Total budget request: £8615**



## THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The purpose of this paper is to make school governors aware of the findings and recommendations of *Religious Education the Truth Unmasked*, which reports the outcomes of the recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE (APPG). The full text of the report can be found on the RE Council website:

<http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/appg/news/2013-03-18/appg-re-final-report-the-truth-unmasked>

### **Governors' legal responsibility for religious education (RE)**

Governing bodies and head-teachers in all state schools must ensure that provision is made for RE for all pupils, unless they are withdrawn by their parents. Further details, in particular guidance on the RE curriculum to be taught in different types of school, may be found in two documents on the Department for Education (DfE) website:

1 *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010.*

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0064886/religiouseducation-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>

2 *Religious Education (RE) in academies and free schools.*

[http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re\\_and\\_collective\\_worship\\_in\\_acads\\_a.pdf](http://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/media/file/re_and_collective_worship_in_acads_a.pdf)

### **The importance of RE**

The APPG concluded that:

*Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.*

### **The staffing of primary RE**

Ofsted has found that pupils' achievement in RE is very inconsistent. At the time of Ofsted's most recent report on RE (Ofsted 2010)<sup>1</sup> primary school pupils' achievement in RE was good or outstanding in only 4 out of 10 schools. The APPG inquiry identified four key concerns related to the deployment of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in RE.

a) **The excessive use of teaching assistants to teach RE.** Ofsted has found that class teachers use their RE lesson time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) more than they use other subject time. In over half of the 300 primary schools participating in the APPG inquiry, some or all pupils were taught RE by someone other than the class teacher. In 24% of schools in the inquiry RE was taught to some children by higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs), a practice almost unknown in foundation subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. The outcome is not always negative and Ofsted has reported that in the few occasions 'where the teaching assistants were very carefully supported, managed and monitored, their enthusiasm and interest in the subject could have a very positive impact on pupils' learning' (Ofsted 2010:36). BUT generally the practice is not good and reflects the low status of RE in many schools (2.2-2.5).

b) **Teachers' lack of confidence.** About a half of primary teachers and trainee teachers lack confidence in teaching RE (2.6-2.10). Evidence presented to the APPG shows that the following reasons account for trainees' caution/lack of confidence with RE:

- Fear of bias (especially in those of faith)
- Feeling of unpreparedness/ lack of experience

- Fear about pronunciations
- Fear of offending
- Unsure about the RE curriculum
- Fear of teaching controversial topics
- Uncertainty about the place of RE in the curriculum

c) **RE subject leaders' lack of expertise.** About a half of subject leaders who replied to the inquiry said that they lacked the expertise or experience to undertake their role effectively (2.11-2.13) Over a third of primary RE subject leaders in responding schools had no qualifications in RE above GCSE/O Level.

d) **Insufficient teacher training in RE.** There is a wide variation in the extent of initial teacher training in RE and too many trainee teachers had little or no effective preparation for teaching the subject.(2.14-2.16)

### **Support for primary teachers of RE**

The APPG inquiry found that in spite of many teachers' weak subject knowledge and confidence, too little in-service training in RE is available (6.1-6.3). In particular:

a) RE subject leaders responding to the APPG identified three particular CPD needs above all others:

- improving their knowledge of world religions
- help with implementing a new agreed syllabus
- how to assess pupils' learning

b) The ability of SACREs to provide support for teachers of RE at a local level has been dramatically reduced by local authority funding decisions. (6.31-6.36)

c) Primary teachers and subject leaders in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to RE CPD (6.13-6.21)

d) Teachers' access to RE CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools.

e) CPD is sometimes provided by other organisations, if teachers know where to look. In particular the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. In addition several websites (e.g. NATRE) and journals (e.g. RE Today) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:**

~ require a review of RE in the school to find out

- the extent of teachers' confidence in teaching RE, and the reasons for any lack of confidence

- how many teachers, if any, are not teaching RE to their class and the reasons why

- the training, expertise and enthusiasm of staff covering other teachers' RE classes

~ require the school leadership to:

- make proper provision for continuing professional development for RE subject leaders and

others with responsibility for teaching RE in order to improve its quality

- ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from

national organisations

- provide regular opportunities for RE subject leaders to train their colleagues in subject knowledge and planning and assessing RE.



## THE PROVISION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### Why does RE matter?

The APPG concluded that:

*Religious Education has a vital and powerful contribution to make in equipping young people, whatever their backgrounds and personal beliefs with the skills to understand and thrive in a diverse and shifting world. The ... subject is now under threat as never before, just at the moment when it is needed most.*

### To what extent are standards and the teaching of secondary RE a problem?

The most recent Ofsted report on RE found that pupils' achievement in RE in secondary schools shows a very mixed picture. It was good or outstanding in 40 of the 89 schools visited, requiring improvement in 45 schools and inadequate in 14 schools. The APPG inquiry identified five key concerns related to the management of teachers that contributed to these disappointing standards in over half of all secondary schools.

a) **The excessive use of non-specialists.** The DfE has argued that pupils' attainments are affected "above all other factors" by the quality of their teachers. Ofsted has found that the lack of teachers' subject qualifications is a key factor affecting pupils' examination success. Nevertheless, nearly half of those teaching RE in secondary schools have no qualification or appropriate expertise in the subject and are unlikely to have the subject knowledge to meet the DfE's national teaching standards.

b) **The inappropriate use of non specialists.** Non specialists can be effective when they receive training and are well supported by subject specialists. The APPG identified particular weaknesses in teaching where:

- non specialists are deployed to teach RE because they have gaps in their timetables, rather than from any interest in the subject
- several non specialists are used to teach a few RE lessons each week, rather than one non specialist who can develop subject expertise and experience
- different non specialists are used every year, inhibiting continuity and the development of subject expertise.

The APPG found that in such cases non specialists often lacked the confidence to move beyond the predictability of a text book or work sheet and found that other commitments made attendance at departmental meetings difficult.

c) **Schools misunderstanding the legal position of RE.** Some secondary school leadership teams understood the omission of RE from the EBacc as a statement that it no

longer has to be taught at Key Stage 4. This is not the case and Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education has said, 'The Government is committed to maintaining the status of RE as a compulsory subject that all pupils must study throughout their schooling'.

d) **Insufficient continuing professional development (CPD) in RE.** In nearly 40% of schools RE teachers have inadequate access to continuing professional development. RE teachers in schools without a religious character have particularly limited access to CPD. RE Teachers' access to CPD is a postcode lottery; it depends on the resources of their local SACRE or diocese, proximity to training and the priority given to RE in schools

### **What are the most urgent needs of RE heads of department and teachers of RE?**

The APPG identified the following needs as priorities for heads of RE:

- a) Training in the accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of RE in the school; in particular answering the questions 'Are standards in RE high enough?' and 'Is RE teaching good enough?'
- b) Training in planning for the development of RE in the school with a focus on raising standards and improving teaching.
- c) A balance of internal and external training. External training gives RE specialists access to information about such priorities as curriculum change, new resources and local faith community contacts. Courses also provide invaluable opportunities to meet and exchange experiences with subject specialists from other schools.
- d) Subject training for **all** non specialist teachers of RE, focusing on the development of subject knowledge.

### **In response to the APPG recommendations governors should:**

- a) initiate a review of RE in the school to find out
  - to what extent the school is meeting legal requirements to teach RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents
  - the subject qualifications and training of all teachers of RE (including non specialists)
  - the number of non-specialists teaching RE, the number of weekly lessons taught by each and the number of years each has been teaching RE
  - where teachers of RE find support for their teaching
  - how much subject-specific CPD RE teachers have had in the last three years
  - the proportion of Key Stage 4 and post-16 pupils entered for public examinations in RE
- b) work with the school leadership to:
  - use non-specialists to teach RE only when all other possibilities have been explored
  - identify only one or two non specialist teachers who are willing to teach RE, where the use of non-specialists is necessary
  - provide training for all non-specialists teaching RE. High quality, inexpensive subject knowledge booster courses are available on line, for example see Culham St Gabriel's ([www.cstg.org.uk](http://www.cstg.org.uk))
  - provide high quality RE throughout the school, assessed where possible through public examinations
  - make proper provision for continuing professional development for the RE head of department and others who teach RE in order to improve its quality
  - ensure that the RE subject leader knows where to find training and support locally and from national organisations. In addition to the local SACRE, the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) provides after-school RE support groups in some areas. Several websites (e.g. the RE Council, NATRE and REOnline) and journals (e.g. RE Today, REsource) offer subject knowledge and ideas for teaching. Charitable trusts such as Culham St Gabriel's and the Farmington Institute also offer CPD opportunities and bursaries for higher degrees.

**DRAFT Reading SACRE development plan April 2014-March 2015**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>People Responsible</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Summer 2014</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>	<b>Spring 2015</b>
A. To be a supportive and proactive SACRE enjoying full and well-informed membership.	1. Fill membership vacancies	End July 2014	SACRE Chair Committee Services				
	2. SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and, when possible, teacher termly network meetings and training events	Termly SACRE meetings: Summer 2014 Autumn 2014 Spring 2015  Termly teacher network meetings Occasional training events	SACRE Chair/SACRE Adviser SACRE members SACRE Clerk	SACRE Adviser to prepare and attend x3 SACRE meetings a year @ £500 per term =£1500 SACRE Clerk to administer each meeting			
	3. Produce annual SACRE Report	Autumn Term 2014	SACRE Adviser and clerk	SACRE Adviser x1 day @£500		Bring draft to November meeting	
	4. Review the development plan at each meeting and update for next year	At each SACRE meeting	SACRE Adviser and SACRE	SACRE Adviser time included in A2 above			
	5. ~Subscribe to NASACRE ~ Representation at annual NASACRE conference, NASACRE AGM and local SACRE events including the annual pan-Berkshire SACRE conference	Ongoing	SACRE members SACRE Adviser to organise Jo Fageant re pan-Berks event/s	Subscription £95 Conference/s and AGM budget £500 SACRE Adviser time if needs to be the SACRE representative x1 day shared with Wokingham £250			
	6. Members to present aspects of their faith/beliefs to SACRE to inform members	At selected SACRE meetings	SACRE members. Decide plan at SACRE meetings: Chair				

<p>B. To support teachers of RE to continually improve RE learning in their schools and</p> <p>C. To support the implementation of the revised Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE</p>	1. Provide a termly Primary RE network meeting, 4-5.30, hosted by a school RE teachers and SACRE members to be invited	Once a term (3 per year) Summer 2014: 14 May. Manor Primary Autumn 2014: 8 October Spring 2015: Feb ( Venues tba) Hosted by schools/places of worship	SACRE Adviser to plan, invite schools, administer, deliver and follow up x 3 networks a year.	SACRE Adviser x1.5 days @ £500 = £750			
	2. Provide, jointly with Wokingham SACRE, a termly secondary RE network meeting, 4-5.30, hosted by a school. RE teachers and SACRE members to be invited	Once a term (3 per year) Summer 2014:8 July Forest School Autumn 2014 Spring 2015 venues tba Hosted by schools	SACRE to plan etc in liaison with Secondary Federation manager/LA	SACRE Adviser x1.5 days @ £500 = £750. Cost shared with Wokingham so Reading contributes £375			
	3. Provide, jointly with Wokingham, a 2 <sup>nd</sup> 'on location' training day for teachers at Places of Worship in Reading	Autumn 2014		£1000 ( 4 days adviser time to organise, attend, lead and collate resources after event (4@£500 =£2000 shared with Wokingham so £1000 for Reading SACRE)			
	4. Subject Leader Training x2 half-day sessions	Autumn term 2014		2 days adviser time @ £500 a day..shared with Wokingham £500 for Reading			
	5. Annual Secondary RE conference	Spring 2015		£500 to support school organisation and attendance			


**Reading SACRE budget request April 2014-March 2015**

**SACRE Adviser**

£4875

**Secondary RE Conference £500**

**Other costs**

NASACRE etc £595

Total: £5970

**Total budget request: £6000**

DRAFT

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR ENNIS		
DATE:			
TITLE:	CONSTITUTION OF THE READING STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)		
SERVICE:	EDUCATION	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
AUTHOR:	RICHARD WOODFORD	TEL:	0118 937 2332
JOB TITLE:	PRINCIPAL COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATOR	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:richard.woodford@reading.gov.uk">richard.woodford@reading.gov.uk</a>

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the decision to amend the constitution of the Reading Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

2. DECISION

- 2.1 It is the decision of the Director of Education, Adult and Children's Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Education, that the constitution of the Reading SACRE be amended as detailed in paragraph 4.1 below.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The SACRE was established in accordance with Section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1988 and advises the Authority on such matters connected with collective worship in Borough schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the Authority may refer to it or as it sees fit. In particular the SACRE advises on methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers.
- 3.2 The members of the SACRE are appointed by the authority so that they represent the following groups:

#### **Group A: Christian denominations and other religions**

- Free churches - one representative
- Roman Catholic Church - one representative
- Buddhism- one representative
- Hinduism- one representative
- Islam- two representative
- Judaism- one representative
- Sikhism- one representative

#### **Group B: The Church of England - four representatives**

#### **Group C: Teacher Representatives**

- The Professional Association of Teachers- one representative
- National Association of head Teachers- one representative
- NAS / UWT- one representative
- National Union of Teachers- one representative
- Secondary Head Teachers association- one representative

#### **Group D: The Local Authority - five representatives**

Members are nominated by the faith or representative group concerned.

#### **4. THE PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Following the meeting of SACRE that took place on 3 March 2014 (Minute X refers) it was agreed to amend that the membership criteria of Group C, Associations representing teachers, should be changed, as set out below, to encourage more teachers of RE to take part in SACRE meetings:

**Five teachers representing schools in the Borough of whom at least two shall be nominated by teaching unions/associations.**

#### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The SACRE has a local responsibility to oversee religious education and collective worship in schools. It is designed to represent the interests of the local community and will promote equality and social inclusion through the representation of local faith communities and members of the education community.

#### **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 The Reading SACRE meets in public and its meetings are publicised through the production of hard copy agendas and publication of its agendas on the Council's web site.

**7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 To fulfil its statutory requirements, Reading Borough Council agreed the membership formation of the SACRE in 1998, in order to fulfil the Education Acts of 1988 and 1993.

**8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 Proposed SACRE Constitution.



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National Association of  
Standing Advisory Councils  
on Religious Education

## **AGM 2014**

**Location:** London

**Venue:** Methodist Central Hall, Westminster

**Date:** May 22nd 2014

**Time:** 10:00-3:30

**Theme:** *RISING TO THE CHALLENGE*

**Keynote speaker:** Mr Stephen Lloyd, MP. Chair of the All Party  
Parliamentary Group on RE

Many were impressed and stirred by Mark Chater's erudite challenges to SACREs at last year's AGM. This year's AGM will be looking at the state of play in RE and education more generally from the perspective of Stephen Lloyd, Chair of the APPG and John Keast, who will then be the retired Chair of the REC and will provide his frank and perceptive overview to end proceedings.

Sandwiched between these two keynotes, we want to showcase the work of SACREs in rising to some of the challenges raised. We would like to have about 4-6 brief presentations by SACREs on work they are doing in any of the following areas, that show innovation, engagement and challenge:

1. Work to support teachers to provide meaningful and challenging RE
2. Involving wider representation  
(faith/belief/universities/academies)
3. Pupil/student involvement
4. Meeting the challenges of the new curriculum settlement

We know there is really good work going on and this needs to be shared, so please volunteer to do so at the AGM by emailing Bill Moore ([bmoore@learningtrust.net](mailto:bmoore@learningtrust.net)) by **March 31<sup>st</sup> 2014**. Simply send in your SACRE name, a contact, which of the above areas you are addressing and a brief outline of what you are doing.

Further information and details about how to book will follow in the next issue.