

Annual SACRE Report 2018-2019

What is a SACRE?

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education has several aspects to its role. It:

- advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus.

To help with this endeavour the Slough SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs). It has also joined with five other neighbouring SACREs to form a hub in order to undertake more significant projects than it could manage alone.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the Slough SACRE over the academic year 2016-2017. [The minutes of the meetings are available online.](#)

The make-up and terms of reference can be found at the same address.

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

The Clerk - Nadia Williams: nadia.williams@slough.gov.uk

Adviser – David Rees: david@reesuk.onmicrosoft.com

Chair's Comments

Dear colleagues

It has been a pleasure to once again Chair the Slough SACRE for this past year.

We continue to have a really good mix of people on our SACRE and that generates useful discussions when it comes to work with schools regarding RE. The faiths are well represented and we are proud to have a diverse mix of members including our local Councillors. We have many places of worship and faith schools in Slough and we will continue to work with them and see how we can make links to them in all our school communities.

We like to hold our SACRE meetings outside of just Council meeting rooms, to use places of worship and schools which keeps us rooted and aware of what is on our doorstep.

I am very much looking forward to Slough SACRE working with David, our new Advisor. He brings a fresh perspective and new ideas which I think will be helpful to us all going forward.

It has also been really helpful and productive to work with the Berkshire Hub of 6 SACRE's because we can pool resources and ideas, coming together for shared learning and training.

As we see the polarisation between people and some nasty politics in the world, we all need to remember that our young people are not immune from this and indeed are often very aware and keen to discuss. While we can't expect RE lessons to solve all the problems of the world I do believe those sessions can play an important role in helping develop well-rounded respectful young people who can leave school valuing diversity in all aspects around them and feeling proud of who they are, whether they belong to a faith group themselves or not.

If our SACRE members can help and play a role in some of that then I will feel that it has been a worthwhile group to be a part of.

Julie Siddiqi

Chair - Slough SACRE



2018-19: The Context

At the end of the previous academic year the new Pan Berkshire RE syllabus was launched. The Autumn Term 2018 marked the beginning of its use in schools. The previous syllabus had been popular as it encouraged an enquiry model whilst allowing schools to teach a reduced content which allowed a deeper study. Consultation with teachers stated that few changes should be made to the existing syllabus; however certain changes had occurred in the previous 5 years which needed to be factored into the composition of the syllabus. The new syllabus built on the old with enquiry embedded throughout and also offered a greater choice for schools to decide which religions to teach across the primary phase.

With national developments in RE pointing out the need for students to learn less in more detail, the flexible nature of the syllabus is well suited to enable extra time being spent on some issues in order to explore in the necessary depth. SACRE continues to try to look for resources locally, nationally and online which will help further improve the teaching of high-quality RE.

The guidance materials for the old syllabus are still available to be used but are in the process of being updated to be in line with the new syllabus and the shift in the RE landscape over the last 5 years. Out of date materials have been removed and updated materials are available on the Oxford diocese website. Hopefully they will be available on the Slough SACRE website at some stage.

The launch of the new syllabus coincided with a time of renewed focus in the academic world about Religious Education, how it is delivered, how content is decided, how it is assessed and indeed the very purpose of it. The Commission on RE final report gave 11 recommendations for consideration, one of which suggested the devising of a 9-point national entitlement. This naturally has stimulated debate which is healthy and continues to raise the profile of RE. Over the next few years it is important that Slough SACRE is fully aware of any developments and takes opportunities to be heard and to encourage and facilitate high quality RE in the current and future educational landscape.

The SACRE attempts to keep in touch with schools and to support them to fulfil their students' entitlement to high quality RE, mindful of the pressures upon teachers and school timetables. The SACRE listens to teachers through the feedback from teacher representatives on the SACRE, and the support it offers is informed by these conversations.

The SACRE has met once each term as required in November 2018, March 2019 and June 2019.

The Slough SACRE elected the following leadership team for this year.

Julie Siddiqi was unanimously elected as Chair. Ashpreet Singh Nainu was unanimously elected Vice-Chair. The SACRE was kept informed by professional adviser Brain Crisell. Mr Crisell stepped down from the role in April of 2019 and will be replaced in the Autumn term by David Rees.

An initial meeting between David Rees and some members of Slough SACRE in July 2019 was very positive. This resulted in a proposed draft action plan which will be circulated for the Autumn term SACRE 2019.

The composition of the various groups within SACRE and attendance figures are included in this report as Appendix A.

The work of the SACRE in 2018

Three meetings were held during the year: November 14th, 2018, March 20th, 2019 and 26th June 2019.

A Summary of issues raised over the year includes

- SACRE membership
- SACRE finances
- The Annual SACRE report
- Exam results
- The appointment of a new SACRE Adviser
- Resources for schools

Items concerning the running of SACRE are in ongoing discussion especially maintaining and refreshing the membership of SACRE and considering the action plan in the light of the available budget.

SACRE Members provided updates during the year including:

- Several schools had arranged to visit Mosques
- Churchmead School had requested some resources and were provided with
 - some copies of the Quran in English;
 - a £100 donation from the Church of England to purchase more study bibles;
 - some Islamic prayer mats and beads
- News of a successful concert held in October at St Joseph's Catholic School.
- The Al-Madani Boys School had recently received a 'good' rating by Ofsted at its first inspection. It was suggested that a future SACRE meeting be held at the school (this occurred in June 2019)
- Julie Siddiqi noted that she had become a Governor of Eden Girls School and had delivered some talks to the pupils focusing on positive action.

SACRE Members were informed of and invited to events including:

- The launch of the new agreed syllabus in Slough, at Eden Girls School.
- A meeting entitled 'Women of Hope' at Windsor Theatre in March
- A procession through the High Street celebrating the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi in April.

RE Resources

During the year the existing RE resources were discussed, an action being to locate them and catalogue them. This would enable them to be made available for schools to use. In the March meeting members were advised that the RE resources were stored at St Mary's CE Primary School. It was agreed that these would be photographed and sent to Lynda Bussley to be catalogued. Once complete, the catalogue would be sent to SACRE members and placed on the Slough SACRE website ready to be loaned out to schools on request.

The Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub

Slough SACRE is fully committed to the Pan Berkshire hub. The Hub came into being in December 2014 and soon developed into an excellent way for the Pan Berkshire SACREs to communicate and plan events together. It was the natural vehicle for the Agreed Syllabus Conference meetings when reviewing and writing the new RE syllabus. The hub, now co-chaired by Anne Andrews (Oxford diocesan officer) and David Rees (RE SACRE Adviser) continues to pursue ways of supporting teachers in the Pan Berkshire region. The focus of the previous year has been to facilitate the updating of existing agreed syllabus materials to bring them in line with the new agreed syllabus. This has resulted in Key Stage 1-3 materials being produced for the following religions and worldviews, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Humanism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. These materials were produced utilising adviser time, teacher writing groups and teacher network meetings. All schools and teachers were invited to be part of this process.

Slough SACRE is represented by Christine Isles and Sue Elbrow. The SACRE wishes to record thanks to them for their dedication and contribution to the hub.

GCSE Examination Results – the importance

The pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE 2018 requires that “All pupils must receive Religious Education and should follow an externally accredited course for Religious Studies e.g. GCSE, or an alternative, well-structured and challenging programme of Religious Education. Schools are encouraged to facilitate examination entry for as many students as possible.”

And post 16

‘All students MUST receive Religious Education. Students should have the opportunity to follow a course, or modules, which lead to external accreditation e.g. A level Religious Studies.’

RE Examination results: Summer 2019

The validated results for Summer 2019 are included below and will be discussed at subsequent meetings. This will help SACRE decide what support could be offered to schools to allow them to offer the provision required.



David Rees - RE Adviser to Slough SACRE

9th April 2020

David Rees wishes to record thanks to Nadia Williams Democratic Services Officer at Slough Borough Council for phone conversations and emails concerning the composition of this report.

Appendix A – Slough SACRE membership and attendance details

- Membership of Slough Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2018-2019
- **Meetings:** 14 November 2018, 20 March and 26 June 2019

Group A - Christian denominations and other religions

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Free churches	Sue Elbrow	3/3
Black Free Churches	Vacancy	
The Roman Catholic Church	Vacancy	
Baha'i	Vacancy	
Hinduism	Gulzari Lal Babber	2/3
Islam	Julie Siddiqi	1/3
Islam	Zubayr Abbas Bowkan	2/3
Islam	Waqar Bhatti	3/3
Islam	Shujah Hamid	2/3
Judaism	Vacancy	
Sikhism	Hardip Singh Sohal	2/3
Sikhism	Ashpreet Singh Nainu	3/3

Group B - The Church of England

Member	Meetings attended
Rev Andrew Allen	2/3
Christine Isles	2/3
Andrea Sparrow	3/3
Vacancy	

Group C - Associations representing teachers

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
ASCL	Vacancy	
NAHT	Vacancy	
NAS/UWT	Vacancy	
National Education Union (NEU)	Lynda Bussley	3/3
VOCE	Vacancy	3/3

Group D - Representing the Local Authority

Member	Meetings attended
Cllr Bains	2/2
Cllr Bedi	2/2
Cllr Brooker	3/3
Cllr Sharif	0/2

Member	Meetings attended
Cllr Smith	2/2

Professional Advisors

Member	Meetings attended
Brian Crisell	1/1
David Rees from Autumn 2019	1/1