



South Gloucestershire SACRE Annual
Report 2021-2022



South Gloucestershire SACRE's Annual Report 2021-22

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1. Introduction

Words from the Chair

It is with great sadness that I write this introduction. Our long-standing and hard-working Chair, Jane Allinson, passed away recently and it is a huge loss not only to SACRE but to all of the individuals who benefitted from the varied work she did across South Glos in many fields. She was deeply committed to RE as a subject to enrich children's understanding of the world and the impact of differing worldviews on individuals and society. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family. SACRE will be taking time at our next meeting to share how she touched our lives and discuss the future with a new Chair and Vice Chair.

The SACRE members are acutely aware of the workload and strain that is still affecting pupils and teachers as a result of the pandemic and it was a logical move at our ASC to continue to work with REToday to provide a syllabus that the teachers are accustomed to and still developing in their own settings. As new ideas in the teaching of Religion and Worldviews are gradually filtering through, we will have time to review new resources and a committee will be working on how we can manage the shift to a new paradigm.

Support for teachers in the region to develop best practice has been successfully expanded so that we now have more localised RE hubs with the leaders receiving ongoing CPD to help them disseminate great teaching and learning ideas.

The annual SACRE conference in January was very successful and the team from the Diocese of Bristol did an outstanding job of making the blended format work well. It was very reassuring to see some of the great workshops from the teachers who have been engaging with The HIVE project sharing their ideas on how to develop things like GCSE RE so that it more closely resembles the CoRE recommendations. The pace of change is slow, but it is happening as people come to understand that the 'World Religions' model is inadequate in teaching about the lived landscape of religion and belief in the world today.

Other changes this year have included the reallocation of some of the places on the SACRE committee. Alex Howard, our Humanist representative, has been moved to Committee A and a place has been made for a community school governor on the teachers' committee. We are also looking forward to welcoming new reps for Sikhi and Buddhism.

We have the benefit of the expertise of Laura Harris as adviser. She has very good links with the wider RE leadership including NATRE, LTLRE and, of course, Bristol Diocese. The development of teacher training is a strength in our authority and I look forward to seeing some of the new ideas in RE / R&W being embraced across South Glos.

Chris Selway – Acting & Vice Chair of SACRE

Overview - SACRE

SACRE has met three times in the last academic year. Two meetings were held virtually, in November and March, and a final meeting in July brought SACRE members together at Unity Methodist Church face to face. Twelve members were present at all three meetings. The Summer (July) meeting was not quorate due to lack of Group C (councillors) being present.

In meetings these topics were discussed: SACRE Constitution and Code of Conduct, NASACRE training, Annual RE Conference, Secondary School DfE 'workforce' data, SACRE membership, local OFSTED reports, HIVE project, WIRE award, SACRE regional conference, Agreed Syllabus review and associated training, support for individual schools, Local Authority Equalities and Diversity project, the 2022 White Paper.

Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

In line with decisions made by the Agreed Syllabus working party, the new RE Today Syllabus was launched for schools in September 2022. In the academic year 2021-22, the RE adviser developed 'refresher' training for schools, which ran over various sessions in April, May, June and September. In total 61 delegates from South Glos schools attended this training. Teachers and leaders were overwhelmingly positive in their feedback from these sessions. They reported that they looked forward to incorporating the new units and other elements that were commented on positively included; the vocabulary progression grid, new assessment guidance, Humanism materials and guidance on cultural capital. Some comments from teachers:

"As a new RE co-ordinator this has been great for me to take away and consider."

"Thank you so much. This has really made things clearer and was so helpful."

"Thank you! I will be re-thinking our work in school regarding humanism and world faith teaching."

When asked to grade their confidence at the beginning of the session, and then again at the end, 58 delegates reported themselves as feeling a '1' for the usefulness of the session and their confidence to move forward with their RE. Several schools booked 1:1 visits with the RE adviser as a result of these syllabus sessions.

The new syllabus does not involve any changes to the statutory elements of the syllabus. As such, the training gave staff a recap of the key elements of the syllabus that remained the same, and a detailed breakdown of what non-statutory materials and resources had been provided in the new version. This includes four new potential enquiry units, a large number of new documents around long-term planning and progression, and new sections for Special schools and EYFS practitioners.

In the year ahead (2022-2023) the Agreed Syllabus Conference will reconvene to begin to consider the options for the next syllabus review which will be due in 2027.

1. Religious Education

Locally Agreed Syllabus – it continues to be the case that the majority of schools, including academies and Church of England schools, are using the Locally Agreed Syllabus for all or part of their RE curriculum. Many schools also use the resource Understanding Christianity to supplement teaching about Christianity.

In response to the DfE workforce data (which summarises the average hours taught for each curriculum area over a two week sample period), information was requested from secondary schools on their RE provision. In letters from SACRE, schools were thanked for their data reflecting good priority given to RE, and others were offered support in response to a concern with their hours for RE. responses from 14/18 schools were returned detailing the curriculum offer for KS3-5 and commenting on their RE provision. As a result of this contact, the RE adviser has met with RS staff in six of these schools to offer further support and encourage statutory requirements to be met. There is a clear reflection that in most secondary schools in the area, many KS4 and 5 students are not receiving the required teaching of RE. In those that are working to rectify this, different solutions are being trialled; such as students taking the GCSE as a compulsory exam in Year 10 (studied for during year 9/10), students receiving cross-curricular teaching of additional RE through links with other exam subjects (eg. science) and the linking of RS with PSHE, citizenship or additional timetabled spaces for personal development. None of these options is ideal, and the syllabus continues to recommend that all students take a GCSE in RS at KS4.

Monitoring and School support – As in the previous reporting period, Covid 19 has posed a considerable challenge to SACRE's usual monitoring processes. Exam data for the last academic year will not be available for analysis until Spring 2022. The main elements of RE monitoring that took place this year were through the above secondary school engagement, and through discussion with schools facilitated by the syllabus training sessions, LTLRE hubs, HIVE hubs and 1:1 sessions.

In addition to the six secondary schools mentioned above, the RE adviser has carried out ten 1:1 visits with RE subject leaders in Primary Schools across the county. These visits have included; support for an ECT about to take on subject leadership, several sessions looking at developing schemes of work to ensure progression in RE and some general sessions looking at intent, implementation and impact for RE across the school.

Four Primary schools have booked the adviser for staff CPD as a result of these contacts. Sessions have included worldviews subject knowledge, effective pedagogy, use of the syllabus and assessment.

The WIRE Award - the Widening Diversity in Religious Education (WIRE) award continues to be an important project for South Gloucestershire SACRE. To achieve the WIRE award a school must:

- Send a teacher to at least one continuing professional development (CPD) opportunity for RE. This could be the conference, or a local RE hub.
- Put on a 'faith day' or a celebration of RE to which a local SACRE member can be invited. Or a school might enter a national RE competition.
- Take pupils on a visit to a place of worship that is not the majority religion of their school. For many schools in South Gloucestershire, this will be mostly be from a faith other than Christianity.

The reward has been created to further SACRE's priority to encourage mutual understanding of different faiths, and to break down stereotypes and barriers.

A 50% travel grant of up to £200 is available to schools to enable them to lower the costs of the trip to parents, thanks to grant funding from the Westhill Award. This has been carried over for several years due to visits being difficult or impossible during the pandemic. Last year very few schools engaged in visits and many places of worship had not yet opened their doors to schools. Two schools did access funding. In the year ahead, there are already many schools who have enquired about accessing these funds.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, three schools completed the requirements for the WIRE award: Mangotsfield Primary, Marshfield Primary and St Mary's Primary. They will receive their awards in the Autumn term 2022.

In addition, some schools who have already received the WIRE award are working towards their WIRE Gold Award. To achieve the gold award schools will extend their already good practice in RE to complete tasks to do with extending their impact - working with parents, communities and other schools and teachers.

In 2021-2022, Longwell Green Primary, St Barnabas Primary, St John's Mead Primary and The Manor Primary have achieved their Gold Award. The first three schools have received their awards in a celebration with the whole school and a member of SACRE this year, whilst The Manor will receive the award in Autumn 2022.

South Gloucestershire Learn, Teach, Lead RE Hub - This project has been running for many years now and aims to develop leaders of RE in both primary and secondary schools, as well as providing networking and CPD for all local teachers of RE. Hub leaders get access to high quality training and facilitate three hubs per year aimed at both primary and secondary teachers, and teaching assistants.

South Gloucestershire SACRE has used some of its budget to support the development of the hubs. Rebekah Guy – subject lead for RE at St Barnabas CE Primary, Warmley - is the

Hub leader and convenor. The SACRE adviser worked alongside Rebekah to run the three meetings this year, online in October and March and face to face at Hillside House in June. The sessions focused on; creating a learning journey in RE, The Time to Wonder reflective storytelling method and Jewish worldviews in the local syllabus. All sessions were well attended and 22 schools attended the Spring and Summer sessions.

Annual conference – the annual RE conference, titled ‘How interesting are you?!’ was held at Engineers’ House in January 2022, with delegates both online and in person. 22 schools attended in person and 14 online, as well as 4 SACRE members. Keynote speaker Lat Blaylock spoke about the ‘fascinations of others’, sharing six ideas for the classroom in different key stages. Teachers attended workshops on subjects including identity and values, worldviews at GCSE and approaches for the EYFS classroom. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 98% of delegates commenting positively on the keynote, and 98% positive about the general organisation of the day. Next year’s event will take place once again at Engineers’ House, on February 2nd.

LTLRE conference – Twenty-eight delegates attended this conference on 1st July 2022, at Engineers’ House, ‘Creating a Connected Curriculum’. Sixteen of these individuals ‘strongly agreed’ that the day met their expectations, nine agreed and one neither agreed nor disagreed. Teachers reported that they enjoyed exploring ‘practical ideas to use in the classroom’, ideas for deepening curriculum, and valued the ‘passionate and knowledgeable speakers’. Next year’s event will be on Friday 30th June, with the venue to be confirmed.

The HIVE project – this project continues to be a hugely positive and impactful piece of work across South Gloucestershire SACRE. Through a successful bid for £9,525, from Culham St Gabriel’s Trust, a system has been established across the area, offering schools the chance to network in RE with a small group of schools in their hub, supported by one school leader in their area. In 2021-22, eleven hub leaders were appointed and received training for the SACRE RE adviser. Introduction sessions were run online for all schools in each hub, explaining the purpose and opportunities available through the project. As a result, to date, twelve schools have accessed 1:1 evaluations sessions for RE. The sessions have had considerable impact, with actions such as schools beginning to use the locally agreed syllabus, developing greater progression in their RE scheme of work, and several RE leaders running whole staff RE CPD after their sessions. All schools have created action plans for the subjects after their 1:1 meetings and will reconnect with their hub leaders to discuss progress. Several of these schools have also booked sessions with the RE adviser following their HIVE contacts. In the year ahead, the REQM accreditation scheme will be shared with schools and we hope to support several applications for the award with HIVE funding.

Communication - termly newsletters have continued, with all schools receiving a SACRE newsletter three times per year. The newsletter contains contact details for various

communities and resources, as well as ideas for the classroom and information on upcoming events and CPD. The adviser has spent considerable time developing a contact database for RE leaders across the area. This currently holds email contact details for one hundred and twenty-one RE leaders across the authority. There are a handful of schools SACRE continues to need details for.

2. Collective worship

Policies and guidance - SACRE developed the current collective worship guidance in 2018. In the year 2021-22, no collective worship monitoring has been undertaken, as schools gradually returned to normal processes for worship at various points in the year. In Autumn 2022, SACRE plans to discuss how monitoring will be undertaken, and support will be considered in response to this information. This may also involve the revision of current SACRE guidance.

Determinations - During this reporting period there were no determinations applied for.

3. Links with other organisations

NASACRE – South Gloucestershire SACRE continues to maintain its membership to the National Association of SACREs. This provides access to important updates on national issues and the use of recommended templates for policies and guidance documents.

The adviser attended the NASACRE annual conference ‘Ambitious SACREs’ on 23rd May 2022. REC Vice Chair Ed Pawson presented the current picture with worldviews in the UK, HMI Dr Richard Kueh spoke about developments in OFSTED and RE and David Hampshire gave an analysis of SACRE reports across the UK this year.

The adviser also attended NASACRE training events throughout the year on Worldviews, the new NASACRE annual report template, public perceptions and SACRE self-evaluation.

LTLRE – as outlined above, South Gloucestershire SACRE continues to have significant commitment and practical involvement with the Learn, Teach, Lead RE programme. The adviser to SACRE sits on the steering committee for this project and assists in the planning and running of meetings, and communicates with hub members regularly with RE updates and information via email.

CtSG – strong relationships with Culham St Gabriels Trust exist thanks to the link between the adviser and the organisation. As shared above, a funding agreement is currently in place from the trust for the HIVE project. Previous and existing adviser have both completed Stage 1 and Stage 2 respectively of the trust’s Teach:RE leadership programme.

Diocese – SACRE maintains strong working relationships with the Church of England Bristol and Gloucester diocese. Through contractual agreements, the adviser to SACRE is also a schools adviser for Bristol Diocese and as such a large amount of goodwill and RE development takes place in South Gloucestershire through this connection. Church schools are able to ensure continuity and consistency in their support and advice for RE, and community schools are able, through contractual arrangements to access two-hour sessions of support time as requested and arranged. Nine schools in the authority fall within Gloucester Diocese, and the adviser to SACRE maintains good channels of communication with the education team there to ensure consistency of support and opportunities for all schools.

Other local involvement

Governor training – the adviser to SACRE ran a training session for governors in June 2022; ‘an introduction to SACRE and RE in your school’. Ten governors attended. Six delegates reported feeling the highest rating in confidence in this area at the end of the session, the remaining three reporting they felt their confidence was fair. Actions to be taken after the event included adding RE to the agenda for curriculum committees, talking to schools about the WIRE award and taking some questions on RE back to foundation governors.

Regional SACRE conference – this year’s event, ‘working towards a high quality education in religion and worldviews’, was once again held online. The South Glos adviser led a workshop on how SACRE can support effective RE leadership, as well as attending workshops on diversity and BIG ideas for RE.

SWARE (South West Advisers of RE) – the adviser continues to be an active member of this cross-authority group. Meeting three times a year, advisers across the South West are able to share resources, policies and processes for effective and impactful advisory work. In the year 2021-22 advisers were able to discuss; responses to DfE workforce data, the Templeton national Worldviews project, the impact of the OFSTED research review and research papers on syllabus development.

4. SACRE arrangements 2021-22

Organisation -

Chair – Jane Allinson (jandrallinson@icloud.com)

Clerk - Hannah Wood (Hannah.Wood@southglos.gov.uk)

Local Authority link officer - Andrew Best (Andrew.Best@southglos.gov.uk)

Adviser – Laura Harris (laura.harris@bristoldiocese.org)

Membership – as reported in the introduction, one meeting in this period was inquorate due to in attendance of Group C – councillors. Previous meetings were quorate with twelve members in attendance at each meeting.

This year SACRE has recruited two new members to existing vacancies, one governor and one secondary school teacher, who will join the committee for 2022-23.

Members of SACRE April 2021 - April 2022:

Committee A: Christian and other religious denominations

Jane Allinson (Chair)

6 / 7 Members

Ramila Patel

April Begley

Mohammed-Nassir Miah

Iris Segall

Alex Howard

Vacancy – Sikh

Vacancy – Buddhist

Committee B – Church of England

Ruth Wallace

Up to 3 members

Malcolm Strange

Debbie Helme

Committee C – teachers nominated by the South Gloucestershire TCC

Up to 6 members:

Jo Hachani

Mike Riches

Kath English

Nik Baykaa-Murray

Vacancy

Vacancy

Committee D – Local Authority representatives Up to 3 members

Cllr Mike Drew

Cllr Ben Stokes

Vacancy

Committee E – non voting co-opted

Up to 6 members

Roger Allinson

Chris Selway

Vacancy

Vacancy

Vacancy

Vacancy

Local authority education officer

Liz Thomas

Adviser to SACRE

Laura Harris

