

**Standing Advisory Council  
For Religious Education  
Children, Families & Cultural Services**

Annual Report  
2010/2011

# **Nottinghamshire SACRE**

## **Chairman's introduction**

In my second year as chair of SACRE I have been pleased to meet teachers at some of the training events we have held and also to have experienced some of the work being undertaken in our schools with regard to RE. I have been pleased to see the way in which members of the different bodies represented on SACRE come together to ensure that our students gain understanding and knowledge of faiths and beliefs represented in our County.

Our training events for teachers have been welcomed and are looked forward to by teachers who wish to develop their expertise and understanding of the Agreed Syllabus. Our having meetings of SACRE in different venues connected with faiths has been enlightening and has allowed SACRE members to share something of their insights into the spiritual dimension.

As we move forward to engage young people in the spiritual dimension of life it has been pleasing to see how we are developing different ways of engaging young people through the Faith Experiences which have been visiting schools in the Authority and also visiting other authorities.

On behalf of the Children, Families & Cultural Services, I am indebted to the work of SACRE members who give of their time freely to this important aspect of education.

Cllr Allen Clarke

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# 1. What is SACRE

The 1988 Education Reform Act established the statutory requirement for all local authorities (LAs) to establish a permanent body called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The Nottinghamshire SACRE is an independent body which advises the LA on matters concerned with the provision of Religious Education and Collective Worship.

SACRE comprises four groups:

**Group A:** Elected County Council Representatives

**Group B:** Church of England Representatives

**Group C:** Teacher Representatives

**Group D:** Representatives of Christian denominations and other religions reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area.

Each group has equal status and voting rights.

## Functions of SACRE

### Executive functions

- To consider and determine (in accordance with Section 12 of the 1988 Education Act) applications from county schools to be disapplied from the requirements concerning Collective Worship being broadly Christian.
- To consider whether or not to require a review of the Agreed Syllabus adopted by the Cabinet.
- To publish an annual report.

### Advisory functions

- To give advice on methods of teaching the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
- To advise the LA on the provision of training for teachers.
- To monitor inspection reports and standards of achievement in Religious Education.
- To give advice on Collective Worship.

## Purpose

Within its statutory responsibilities SACRE is concerned to support and enhance the provision of Religious Education within Nottinghamshire schools where the Agreed Syllabus is in use. SACRE seeks to encourage the provision of high-quality in-service training for those whose responsibility it is to deliver this aspect of the basic curriculum.

## **Decision making**

This is determined by one block vote from each of the four groups listed in the membership above.

Co-opted members do not vote.

## **2. Meetings**

There were three meetings of SACRE in the academic year 2010-2011.

Main issues discussed at the meetings:

### **October 2010**

- The SACRE Effectiveness Plan for 2010-2011 was debated.
- The Nottinghamshire SACRE Annual Report was presented and it was agreed to distribute this electronically.
- Celebrating RE, March 2011 was discussed.
- Membership changes were looked at.

### **February 2011**

- SACRE met at the Nottingham Islamia School and had a presentation on universal values/moral values, championing interfaith working by Dr Hussain.
- Membership enquiries were considered from the Bahai's and there was a review of BHA membership.
- National Developments in RE were discussed including the proposals for the EBACC and a letter was sent to the Secretary of State by the Chair. The rise of Academies and the role of SACRE was discussed.
- The development of Faith Experiences in County Schools from the RS Resource Centre was discussed as a way to encourage a unique approach to RE teaching.

### **June 2011**

- SACRE met at Kneesall Primary School where children, staff and parents gave a presentation to SACRE on RE in their school.
- Members also received a presentation on Inclusion Training. This was a new programme of learning for students which was being offered to schools.
- An outline of the forthcoming RE conference was received involving new providers. Possible provision of training events for 2011-12 was given.
- A report from the NASACRE AGM was received.

### **3. Determinations**

There were no requests by schools in Nottinghamshire for a determination that the specific requirements regarding the character of collective worship, as set out in the Education Act 1996, should not apply to them.

### **4. Professional development opportunities**

#### **Courses offered for 2010-2011**

- Primary Focused Days - Two days in the autumn term were offered to support the Agreed Syllabus and 66 teachers attended these.
- There was a conference for teachers of RE across all key stages in the summer term.

#### **Proposed courses for 2011-2012**

1. February 2012     Assessing Pupil Progress in RE for secondary teachers
2. March 2012        Better RE with the Agreed Syllabus for primary teachers
3. 21 May 2012      RE Conference

### **5. SACRE RE Conference 2011**

“RE’s contribution to pupils’ learning” - was the theme of the Annual RE Conference at The Bestwood Lodge Hotel on July 4th which attracted 79 delegates from all phases.

At the conference we welcomed new providers from the Chester diocese and from Carlisle as well as from RE Today.

After a keynote speech “The heart of RE: mystery, enquiry, identity” in which Stephen Pett considered different approaches to teaching RE, the delegates attended various workshops.

The workshops on offer were:

- Developing pupils’ enquiry skills in RE (7-14)
- Teaching the Bible creatively (Key Stage 2-3)
- Creative challenge and progression in festival teaching (4-11)
- “Thinking through the Big Questions of RE” (4–11)
- Encounter in RE: using ICT to deepen understanding and respect (7-14)
- Debate and discussion in RE: Techniques for tackling controversial issues in RE (7-14)
- 'Spiritual Development - a whole school approach'

The conference ended with a plenary entitled:

“Getting pupils and teachers thinking in RE” which was a challenging way of concluding the day.

Overall evaluations of the conference were once again extremely positive as can be seen in the following comments:

- ~ Extremely well organised - friendly, relaxed clear instructions
- ~ Made me enthusiastic about teaching RE again - inspirational
- ~ Provided enough to rewrite Yr1 festival teaching in my school
- ~ Lots of very useful ideas/practical inspiration
- ~ Ideas that could be used across religions
- ~ Excellent practical session. Lots of ideas that could be implemented easily and without cost
- ~ Our school is trying to develop use of enquiry (big questions) and a more creative approach. Lots of ideas from today will help me to implement this from September onwards. Will share with other staff
- ~ Going to set up spiritual area in curriculum with the hope of encouraging others to do same. Got some good tips and ideas from other teachers
- ~ Good ideas to help develop RE, particularly spirituality
- ~ Got lots of ideas from presenters/other schools. Lots of resources to help other staff deliver curriculum
- ~ Festivals work was inspiring. In depth Bible teaching - more thinking. Fiona was inspiring and excellent - wished the staff could listen to her. Thanks
- ~ Sharing of ideas/resources gathered from the day. Confidence to make changes to RE planning to integrate ideas/activities from the day
- ~ Good to make new/refresh contacts and good chance to look/share resources. New vision for RE teaching in schools
- ~ Challenge to try new teaching styles
- ~ I enjoy the RE conference each year. It allows me to recharge my RE coordinator batteries! Lots of new ideas to pass onto other staff and new ways to make RE sessions interesting and relevant. It's a shame it's so late in the school year when there are so many other things happening.

## 6. Standards in RE in Nottinghamshire

As the nature of Ofsted inspection reports has altered it has become difficult to comment upon their findings with regard to RE and Collective Worship.

### Examination performances

**Entry level Certificate** in Religious Studies offers candidates who are not yet ready for GCSE, the opportunity to focus on religious and moral issues which relate to their own lives and to meet the statutory requirements for Religious Studies.

This was the second year we have entries for this examination.

5 schools entered 43 candidates compared to 120 candidates in the previous year for two bands

Band C	19 candidates	63.2%	achieved level 3
		15.8%	achieved level 2
		15.8%	achieved level 1
		5.3%	Ungraded
Band B	24 candidates	12.5%	achieved level 3
		75 %	achieved level 2
		12.5%	achieved level 1

### GCSE Full Course

SACRE noted that there was an increase in candidates to 2,147 this year, compared to 1654 pupils in the previous year. Nationally there was an increase in the numbers sitting at this level.

OCR continues to be the most popular examination board across the County's schools followed by Edexcel.

### Summary of GCSE Results 2007- 2011

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A\*-C and A\*-G grades in the full GCSE:

	<b>A* - C</b>	<b>A* - G</b>
<b>2007</b>	59.1	97.2
<b>2008</b>	63.8	98.3
<b>2009</b>	69.3	98.5
<b>2010</b>	64.8	98.1
<b>2011</b>	<b>61.2</b>	<b>97.4</b>

National results

<b>2007</b>	71.5	98.2
<b>2008</b>	72.5	98.5
<b>2009</b>	73.4	98.5
<b>2010</b>	73.1	98.6
<b>2011</b>	<b>73.3</b>	<b>98.4</b>

## GCSE Short Course

Our entries for the short course continued to decrease from 3795 entries in the previous year to 2683 last year in the county's schools. There was a decrease nationally in entries at the Short Course.

### Summary of GCSE Short Course Results 2007- 2011

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A\*-C and A\*-G grades for the last five years in the short GCSE:

	<b>A* - C</b>	<b>A* - G</b>
<b>2007</b>	46.1	95.7
<b>2008</b>	41.6	95.2
<b>2009</b>	42.8	94.9
<b>2010</b>	47.3	95.8
<b>2011</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>93.8</b>

National results

<b>2007</b>	53.4	95.5
<b>2008</b>	53.7	96.1
<b>2009</b>	54.3	96.5
<b>2010</b>	54.6	96.1
<b>2011</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>94.9</b>

## A/S

The number of entries was less than the previous year at 78. Nationally there was an increase in students taking this level.

### Summary of A/S Results 2007 - 2011

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A-C and A-E grades for the last five years at A/S level:

	<b>A - C</b>	<b>A - E</b>
<b>2007</b>	67.4	93.3
<b>2008</b>	56.2	98.3
<b>2009</b>	54.0	91.0
<b>2010</b>	62	90.7
<b>2011</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>88.5</b>

National results

<b>2007</b>	70.1	93.3
<b>2008</b>	69.1	93.3
<b>2009</b>	67.9	92.6
<b>2010</b>	67.6	92.5
<b>2011</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>92.0</b>

## A Level

The numbers entered at this level decreased from 217 to 206 whereas nationally there was an increase in entries.

### Summary of A Level Results 2007- 2011

Percentage of pupils in Nottinghamshire attaining A-C and A-E grades for the last five years at A level:

	<b>A - C</b>	<b>A - E</b>
<b>2007</b>	71.1	99.4
<b>2008</b>	71.7	100.0
<b>2009</b>	74.2	98.9
<b>2010</b>	74.1	99.0
<b>2011</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>97.6</b>

National results

<b>2007</b>	81.6	98.7
<b>2008</b>	80.9	98.6
<b>2009</b>	80.9	98.6
<b>2010</b>	79.3	100.0
<b>2011</b>	<b>81.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

SACRE is pleased to note that these results indicate that there have been some signs of improvement within the County schools at A-C.

## Faith Experiences in County Schools

SACRE is pleased to report that during the academic year 30 County Schools availed themselves of a new experience of having a Faith Experience within their schools provided from the RS Resource Centre based at the Nottingham Bluecoat School with the help of the Nottingham Inter Faith Council. 2,625 students participated in these experiences and learned from experiencing a world faith within their school. One local council was so pleased with the contribution of the experiences to community cohesion that they financed some of the visits for schools in their district.

## 7. Areas for further improvement

### Targets for further improvement:

1. Liaison with higher education institutions to consider ways of enhancing the examination performances of students in county schools.
2. Finding ways to monitor the provision of RE and Collective Worship in schools.

## **8. Support for schools in bringing about further improvement**

1. To promote and monitor effective training to support schools in improving the quality of RE and raising standards through courses and the RE conference.
2. To develop work to raise standards and outcomes initially at key stage 3 & 4.
3. To support the work of the “Faith Experiences” in schools in Nottinghamshire.

## **9. Conclusion**

SACRE continues to develop its role in supporting schools and advising the Children, Families & Cultural Services Cabinet on RE and Collective Worship and would welcome feedback and suggestions for its continuing work. If you have any comments on the work/role of SACRE or require any further information please contact:

Rev Ken Johnson  
Secretary of SACRE  
Children, Families & Cultural Services  
40 Station Road  
Lawn View House  
Sutton-in-Ashfield  
Nottinghamshire  
NG17 5GA

## **10. SACRE Members 2010-2011** ***Membership of Nottinghamshire SACRE***

Under the chair of Councillor Allen Clarke, SACRE membership comprises four groups:

### ***Six Elected County Council Representatives (Group A)***

Councillor Allen Clarke (Chair of SACRE)  
Councillor Rod Kempster  
Councillor Barrie Cooper  
Councillor Lynn Sykes  
Councillor John Allen  
Councillor Rev Tom Irvine

### ***Five representatives of the Church of England (Group B)***

Mrs A Lumb  
Mr D Maddison  
Mr J Heard  
Mr K Palmer  
Mrs C Bywater

*Eight representatives of teachers in Nottinghamshire (Group C)*

Mrs Lee Probert (NUT)  
Mr M Wilson (NASUWT)  
Mrs K Strachen (Secondary RE teacher)  
Ms S Smart (ATL)  
Mrs G Brockway (Secondary Teacher)  
3 vacancies

*Thirteen representatives of Christian (other than Church of England) and other religious faiths representing the principal religious traditions of Nottinghamshire (Group D)*

Mrs G Pettifor Assemblies of God  
Mrs H Wyton Baptist  
Mr S Gunpatrao Hindu  
Mrs Naomi Posner Jewish  
Rev Terry Nowell Methodist  
Safiz Muntazir (Muslim)  
Mr M Groves (Roman Catholic)  
Mr S Singh Nijran (Sikh)  
Dr G Jennings (United Reformed Church)  
Mr A Whitehouse (Salvation Army)  
Mrs Julia Kurcin (Buddhist)

Afro-Caribbean United Council of Churches (Awaiting nomination)  
Religious Society of Friends (Awaiting nomination)

Co-Options

Mr A Summerfield British Humanist Association