

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL
Standing Advisory Council
for
Religious Education

Annual Report for 2008

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All enquiries should be addressed to:
The Clerk to SACRE
Bath and North East Somerset Council
School Improvement
PO Box 25
Riverside
Keynsham
Bristol
BS18 1DN
Tel: 01225 477000

1. Overview
 - 1.1 Requirements as under the Education Act 1996
 In accordance with requirements of section 391 (7) of the above act, the SACRE has had no reason during the year to give the Bath and North East Somerset Council any advice with regard to religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus. There have been no applications from Head Teachers in county schools to waive the requirements that collective worship shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

2. Religious Education
 - 2.1 Locally agreed syllabus
 As agreed in October 2007, close contact has been maintained with North Somerset and Somerset SACREs as to when it will be appropriate to carry out a review of the current Locally Agreed Syllabus. In the light of national advice, such a collaborative review will not start until new guidance is issued.

 - 2.2 Monitoring
 For reasons of finance and time, it has not been possible to implement the pilot monitoring programme to help schools celebrate and report on pupils' achievements in religious education and collective worship. This initiative is seen as a development priority for next year (2009).

3. Standards in religious education
 - 3.1 Primary and special schools
 There is no data available by which to make valid judgements about standards. SACRE has not been informed by the Local Authority of any concerns about standards of religious education in primary and special schools.
 - 3.2 Secondary Schools Public examination results
 See Appendix 1 for Summer 2008
 (Data provided by DCFS may not be accurate)

4. Methods of teaching, materials and training
 - 4.1 Teaching
 Teachers attending the courses organised by SACRE in 2008, confirmed that further areas requiring support included:
 Primary: Teaching religions other than Christianity; Support for non-specialists;
 Secondary: Developing effective assessment; Support for non-specialists; Using new technologies; Developing vocational qualifications.
 Special: Developing appropriate study units; Support for non-specialists; Assessment.
 - 4.2 Teaching materials
 SACRE has recognised that more publicity is needed to promote the recently established resource centre at a primary school in Salford. SACRE continues to fund a teacher to support this service.
 - 4.3 Teacher training
 The grant from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, enabled SACRE, jointly with the Bath Interfaith Group, to run a project putting RE teachers in touch with representatives of faith communities. Resources were produced to be used in our schools, as well as guidance pamphlets for visiting different places of worship. Only two religions could be covered within the time allocation provided by the grant. In 2009, SACRE will consider funding the development of further units to cover other faiths.
 In addition, two one-day courses led by Lat Blaylock on 'Cohesion, engagement and sensitivity' for primary and secondary teachers were held in October 2008.

5. Complaints concerning religious education
 There were no complaints received.

6. Collective worship
 - 6.1 Advice
 No advice was asked for and none was given.

6.2 Monitoring

The Local Authority advisers undertake this role as part of their link role with schools. It is intended to circulate the SACRE monitoring reports to the advisers to inform them further of the quality of Acts of Collective Worship in the schools visited.

6.3 Training

No training on collective worship was organised but information from other local providers was circulated to schools.

7. Determinations

No determinations were sought.

8. Complaints about collective worship

No complaints were received.

9. Links with other agencies

9.1 National

SACRE members attended the following conference:

NASCRE AGM – April 2008

In addition, a co-opted SACRE member serves on the National Religious Education Council and regularly feeds back on developments.

9.2 Local

Contact is maintained and found helpful with North Somerset SACRE, the Secondary Heads of Religious Education and the Bath Interfaith Group.

10. Other issues

10.1 Governor training

Governor training is given, as part of an LEA induction programme, to explain the position of and requirements for religious education and collective worship.

10.2 SACRE Website

SACRE continues to fund a post for managing and updating the website. Recent developments have improved the news pages and information on the new resource centre service.

10.3 SACRE self-evaluation

A working group put together a development plan based on the findings of the teachers' questionnaire and national developments that has been used effectively to plan activities and implement initiatives.

10.4 Annual Public Lecture

In May 2008, a very successful and well attended public lecture was held in Bath Guild Hall on the subject 'Is Religion Dangerous' given by Prof Keith Ward. A similar event will be held this year.

11. SACRE arrangements

11.1 Professional, administrative support and finance

(See Appendix 2)

