

**SACRE**

Annual Report

2016- 2017



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## Foreword

It has been my privilege and honour to serve as Vice Chair of Walsall SACRE in a year when we see the new Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education provided to be used by all Walsall schools, irrespective of school type, begin to be taught from.

This Report highlights the present situation of Religious Education and Collective Worship in Walsall.

Religious Education is an essential part of a pupil's education and provides rich opportunities for children and young people to learn about things that matter in the lives of local people and the wider world. Pupils study beliefs, teachings and ways of living, and explore a range of responses to questions of identity, meaning, purpose, values and commitments. At a time when religious beliefs guide the lives of billions of people worldwide, understanding people's views can be a first step to recognising and appreciating diversity. This is particularly important at a time of global tensions.

We are aware there remains much to accomplish. We are pleased that we are still able to offer a half day Primary network meeting for schools each term. These are provided at no cost to schools and are well attended. However we have concerns about the reduction in the number of students taking an examination in Religious studies.

**Mr. David Lomas. Vice Chair of Walsall SACRE**

# 1. Introduction

Since 1988, it has been a requirement that every local authority establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

Though legislation sets out both the structure and the remit of a local SACRE - principally, overseeing religious education (RE) and collective worship - in practice every SACRE has developed its own particular style and character.

It is a legislative requirement that each SACRE produces an annual report of its work and that this is published, sent to the local authority, to local schools and to other interested parties. One important element of the report is performance data and an analysis of the extent to which schools are meeting their legal duties in relation to RE. More recently, other datasets have been made available by the DfE, most significantly the school workforce data that supports the monitoring of the level of provision in secondary schools.

## 2. Meetings

All meetings held at the Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall commencing at 6.00pm

The following SACRE meetings were held during the reporting period:

31st October 2016, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017, with respective, summarized minutes below:-

### **Summarised Minutes from 2016/17 academic year:-**

#### **31st October 2016:**

##### **Future plans and development for Walsall SACRE**

A report had been submitted for members consideration of what the future held for SACRE. A number of key websites and reports were referenced:-

- Walsall Children's Services Update – LINK
- Westminster Faith Debate report entitled 'A New Settlement: Religion and Beliefs in Schools'

Discussions around how SACRE could monitor how RE was taught in schools and how many schools provided an act of worship; faith schools examined by Ofsted but not in great depth, SACRE should focus on cohesion and learning about other religions to combat mass of misinformation, the good practices offered in some schools should be disseminated more widely.

SACRE resolved to produce a resource for schools containing information about each of the faith groups represented on SACRE.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

**Religions and places of worship in Walsall:** The first draft of the information booklet submitted to members for comments and amendments.

**Faith Based Organisations and Key Contacts:** List of faith organisations and key contacts together with telephone number was circulated to members. Organisations to be contacted and asked that they will fill the respective vacancies. Final list to be sent to schools as an appendix to the Religion and Places of Worship in Walsall document.

**Report from RE today:** SACRE agreed that the professional development programme to be referred to schools for consideration

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

**Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for the 2017/18 Municipal Year:** Mr. C. Hopkins to be appointed Chairman and Mr. D. Lomax to be appointed for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

**Leamore Park Storytelling and Discovery Garden:** SACRE was informed how a previously unused space within Leamore Park had been transformed into an existing and enclosed area for storytelling and discovery and that the space was available for use by local schools to assist them deliver RE.

**SIAMS:** Reports were shared and discussed. They provided a positive picture of RE and collective worship in the schools inspected.

**SACRE Focus for 2017/18**

- Good SACRE practice and possible improvement projects for Walsall
- SACRE budget
- SACRE best practice
- Review of 'Religion and Places of Worship in Walsall' information booklet
- RE exam results
- Potential for presentations from each faith group on their faith

### 3. Membership

The membership of Walsall SACRE at the end of the academic year 2016-17 was as follows:

<p><b>Committee A: Christian Denominations and Other Religions and Religious Denominations</b></p> <p>Mr Gerry Gomez Roman Catholic (Archdiocese of Birmingham)</p> <p>Mrs. P. Mullins Roman Catholic (Archdiocese of Birmingham)</p> <p>Mrs M. Gibbons Methodist</p> <p>Captain T. Stubbings Salvation Army</p> <p>Mr. David Lomax United Reformed Church</p> <p>Mrs. D. Letford New Testament Church of God</p> <p>Mr. Dhiren Thakker Walsall Evangelical Churches</p> <p>Mrs. Barbara Groombridge Walsall Quakers</p> <p>Mr. Mahmood Sacha Muslim Welfare Society</p> <p>Mr. M. Lad Shree Ram Mandir (Walsall)</p> <p>Mr. Sijaad Hussain Pakistan Muslim Welfare Association</p> <p>Mr. Ismail Dangor Anjuman-E-Isha'at-E-Islam</p> <p>Imam Saeed-Ur-Rahman Mosque and Islamic Centre</p> <p>Mrs. A. Sharma Hindu Faith</p> <p>Mohammed Ashik Ali Bangladesh Islamic Association</p> <p>Mohan Singh Guru Nanak Gurdwara</p> <p>Mr. K. Mavi Guru Nanak Sikh Temple</p> <p>Mr. Surjit Singh Rai Walsall Sikh Forum</p> <p>Father John Nankivell Black Country Orthodox Trust</p> <p><b>Vacancies</b></p> <p>Baptist churches</p>	<p><b>Committee B The Church of England</b></p> <p>Mrs. S. Blackmore</p> <p>Mr. P Prasadam</p> <p>Mr. C. Hopkins</p> <p>Ms. Karen Donnellan</p>
<p><b>Committee C Teachers' Associations</b></p> <p>Mrs Doreen Barrett National Union of Teachers</p> <p>Mrs. Rebecca Broughton-Mills, Association of Teachers and Lecturers</p> <p>Mrs. Ellen Taylor National Association of Head Teachers</p>	<p><b>Committee D Local Authority</b></p> <p>Councillor Craddock</p> <p>Councillor Phillips</p> <p>Councillor Robertson</p> <p>Councillor Rochelle</p> <p>Councillor Washbrook</p> <p>Councillor Gultasib</p> <p>Councillor Barker</p>



<p><b>Vacancies</b></p> <p>Association of School and College, National Association of School Masters and Union of Women Teachers or NEU, VOICE.</p>	
<p>Paul Wilde (Clerk)</p> <p>Sean Flynn (LA Representative)</p>	

## 4. Religious Education

### The locally agreed syllabus

- a. For historical reasons, Religious education (RE) is not part of the National Curriculum but is a local responsibility. It is for this reason that legislation requires that each local authority (LA) produces an Agreed Syllabus for RE. Legislation also requires that an Agreed Syllabus be reviewed every five years.
- b. During the reporting period, SACRE supported schools as they introduced the new syllabus into the curriculum. The Syllabus was launched with a half day professional development for heads and subject leaders of RE between 1- 4.30 on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016.
- c. The feedback received from schools, especially from primary schools, is that they appreciate the way that the new syllabus and support materials are a step on from previous practice but retain the best of the previous syllabus. They also appreciate the units of work supplied to Primary schools. They also say that there are still challenges for those with little experience or training in the teaching of RE. They note that there are pressures on the school timetable that means that RE is not always taught to all pupils in all schools in all year groups as it should be.
- d. A hard copy of the Agreed Syllabus was given or sent to all schools in Walsall at the syllabus launch on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016. An electronic copy of the syllabus was also given to all schools.
- e. The syllabus is accompanied by a full set of 27 support units of work for Primary schools. These units were placed onto a disc and shared with all Walsall Primary schools. Two sample units were also shared with secondary schools. Schools have found these extremely useful to support planning but are aware that these are not statutory units to be slavishly followed rather to use as a treasury to support planning for their own school and classes.
- f. Each term Fiona Moss from RE Today runs a NATRE affiliated RE network meeting in an afternoon between 1-3pm. She is also available before and after these meetings for 1:1 meetings with subject leaders and teachers. She also provides support by phone and email.

These Termly meetings provided a regular input of professional support and development for those who attend (usually subject leaders) and those in their own to school to whom they disseminate learning. Termly briefing and training sessions also continue to support non-specialist TAs, HLTAs and teachers in primary schools to increase their confidence leading, managing and teaching RE.

During the year 2016-17 sessions were provided on practical strategies to use when implementing the new syllabus, assessment strategies and planning with the new syllabus.

These sessions were well attended. They are held in the large hall at the EDC in Rushall.

- g. Delivery of RE by Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), with teachers taking this time as their Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time, continues in Primary schools. Several HLTAs still regularly attend the termly network meetings. We continue to hear that some primary schools are reporting that although RE had been taught by HLTAs this subject is now taught by class teachers. Where this decision has been made it is usually led by a confident subject leader and a supportive senior leadership team. There are early signs that training as a result of the syllabus is increasing the number of teachers delivering RE.
- h. There were no formal complaints to SACRE about RE during the year

**The Walsall Agreed Syllabus**  
**Religious Education**  
2016-2021



Aliza, 14: 'Open minds look at all religions'

## 5. Acts of Collective Worship

No school requested a determination during this period.

There were no complaints received about Collective Worship during this period.

SACRE offered no advice concerning Collective Worship during this period.

## 6. Standards in Religious Education

SACRE agreed that it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to fulfill their role to monitor provision for RE; especially in relation to primary school standards and levels of provision. The lack of any judgement about the quality of RE in Ofsted reports meant that SACRE has very few tools to support them to meet this statutory duty.

## GCSE Results 2017

School or college name	Number of students at the end of KS4	Qualification	Subject descriptor	Grade achieved	Number of entries at grade	% of Students Entered
Abu Bakr Boys School	39	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	39	100%
Abu Bakr Girls School	37	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	36	97%
Aldridge School - A Science College	253	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	74	29%
Barr Beacon School	261	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	72	28%
Blue Coat Church of England Academy	118	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	117	99%
Brownhills School	89	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	23	26%
Emmanuel School	8	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	7	88%
Grace Academy Darlaston	104	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	17	16%
Hydesville Tower School	13	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	3	23%
Joseph Leckie Academy	151	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	23	15%
Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy	219	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	12	5%
Palfrey Girls School	39	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	37	95%
Pool Hayes Academy	174	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	170	98%
Queen Mary's Grammar School	95	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	11	12%
Queen Mary's High School	97	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	55	57%
Shire Oak Academy	232	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	217	94%
St Francis of Assisi Catholic Technology College	175	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	170	97%
The Streetly Academy	235	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	20	9%
West Walsall E-ACT Academy	106	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	54	51%
Willenhall E-ACT Academy	237	GCSE Full Course	Religious Studies	Total number entered	2	1%
	2,682				1,159	43%
				<b>Grades A* - C</b>	822	71%

**National average A\*-C= 71.2%**

- It is important when looking at these statistics to note that some of the schools listed are independent fee paying schools over which SACRE has no sway. The independent schools in the list are Abu Bakr Girls, Abu Bakr Boys, Emmanuel school, Hydesville Tower School and Palfrey Girls School.
- There has been a very significant decrease in the number of students entered for examination RE. Only 43% of students were entered for an examination.
- Three Walsall schools entered less than 10% students for GCSE RS (Ormiston Shelfield, Willenhall E Act academy and Streetly academy). Also a further 6 schools enter less than 30% of their cohort (Queen Mary's Grammar School, Aldridge School, Barr Beacon School, Brownhills School, Grace Academy Darlaston and Joseph Leckie Academy). On a positive note five Walsall secondary schools entered more than 80% of their cohort for full course GCSE, with several entering 100% of the cohort, thereby providing external accreditation for most of their students of their studies in RE (Bluecoat Church of England Academy, Pool Hayes Academy, Shire Oak Academy, St Francis of Assisi Catholic Technology College and St Thomas More Catholic School).
- SACRE are becoming concerned about the number of pupils not following an accredited course as this is a clear sign that the standards of the Agreed Syllabus have not been met. SACRE intends to contact schools and academies to find out they are not following the law and/or their Funding agreement and providing RE for all pupils in all Key Stages.
- Results from the 2017 Full Course GCSE were 71% of pupils achieved a pass (grades A\*-C) compared to 71.2% nationally. It was pleasing to see students from Walsall mirroring national standards.
- 1159 students, 43% of all students at the end of KS4 in Walsall schools in 2017, were entered for the full GCSE religious studies course.
- 0 students took the religious studies short course GCSE. This reflects the national pattern but is still a concern as it means pupils are not accredited for their studies.
- Provision for RE in Walsall schools and nationally is being affected by the focus of accountability measures used by the Department for Education. This includes the proportion of children studying the subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate that do not include Religious Education. This must be reported by schools. Likewise, the elements of a schools' Progress 8 school also prioritises the EBacc subjects and does not always reward schools that offer Religious Studies for all.

## 7. School Workforce Data

The Table below shows the percentage of the week's teaching hours dedicated for Religious Education as part of the school workforce census in November 2016. This data was published in the summer of 2017. Schools and academies are required to report Religious Education provision even when schools choose to call the subject something else. **SACRE has asked that the local authority investigate those schools reporting insignificant hours for RE and to remind schools that provide lessons in the subject of the importance of reporting them in the census.**

School name:	School type:	% hours spent on RE Teaching 7	% hours spent on RE Teaching 8	% hours spent on RE Teaching 9	% hours spent on RE Teaching 10	% hours spent on RE Teaching 11	% hours spent on RE Teaching 12	% hours spent on RE Teaching 13	% hours spent on RE Teaching for years 7 to 13
Walsall Studio School	STUDIO SCHOOLS	.	.	.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Shelfield Community Academy	Academy Sponsor Led	2.2	2.3	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.9
The Mirus Academy	Academy Sponsor Led	3.4	4.3	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8
West Walsall E-ACT Academy	NULL	0.0	1.1	1.1	2.2	3.5	.	4.3	1.8
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College	Community School	1.9	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.8	2.5	3.4	1.8
Barr Beacon School	ACADEMY CONVERTER	3.8	3.3	3.4	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.9
Grace Academy Darlaston	Academy Sponsor Led	3.6	3.6	2.1	0.0	0.0	6.5	4.7	2.6
Shire Oak School (A Science College)	Foundation School	3.6	3.7	3.3	2.7	3.2	2.0	1.3	3.0
Aldridge School - A Science College	ACADEMY CONVERTER	4.1	4.2	4.1	2.1	2.8	0.0	3.2	3.1
Pool Hayes Academy	ACADEMY CONVERTER	4.6	4.6	4.4	1.3	0.0	4.9	4.8	3.2
Queen Mary's Grammar School	Voluntary Aided School	4.9	3.3	3.2	6.2	6.6	0.0	2.4	3.3
The Streetly School	Foundation School	4.5	5.0	5.0	2.5	1.2	3.1	4.3	3.5
Queen Mary's High School	ACADEMY CONVERTER	5.7	5.6	5.7	6.9	6.3	4.1	3.7	5.4
Blue Coat Church of England Academy, Walsall	Academy Sponsor Led	7.7	4.9	5.0	8.9	8.0	7.9	8.8	7.2
St Thomas More Catholic School, Willenhall	Voluntary Aided School	7.1	10.0	8.9	7.8	10.2	4.9	5.9	7.9
St Francis of Assisi Catholic Technology College	Voluntary Aided School	10.1	9.8	10.7	11.6	10.0	2.4	1.9	8.2

## 8. RE Support in Walsall Schools

Currently the SACRE provides support for Fiona Moss from RE today to run 3 primary network meetings per year.

## 9. 2016/17 Budget

The Local Authority reported that the budget was £5,000 per annum and that this would be spent primarily on paying for the Agreed Syllabus meeting costs and Primary network meetings.

### **Clerk to SACRE**

Bev Mycock (from 2018)

Democratic Services Officer

Walsall Council

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Walsall

WS1 1TW

[Bev.mycock@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Bev.mycock@walsall.gov.uk)

### **Religious Education Adviser**

There is no adviser to SACRE. Walsall contract RE Today Services to support them on an Ad Hoc basis.

The Primary Network meetings are facilitated by

Fiona Moss

RE Today Services

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