



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MEETING

**PORTSMOUTH STANDING ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE 2006

TIME: 4:30PM

VENUE: SOUTHSEA SYNAGOGUE

Telephone enquiries to Teresa Deasy, Democratic Support Officer
Tel: 023 9283 4056
Email: teresa.deasy@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the Minutes of this meeting.)

AGENDA

1 Election of SACRE Chair

As the current chair's term of office expires, in accordance with the SACRE constitution, members from Group D are invited to nominate and appoint a representative to position of chair for a period of four years.

2 Election of SACRE Vice Chair

As a result of the resignation of Oriel Alby from the Portsmouth SACRE, there is now a vacancy for the position of Vice Chair. Nominations are requested and voting will follow in accordance with the voting procedure as follows:

each representative group A, B, C and D shall be entitled to one vote. No other persons shall be entitled to vote.

3 Apologies for Absence

4 Minutes – 2 March 2006

... attached

5 Matters Arising

6 NASACRE Annual General Meeting (Appendix 1 and 2)

... To receive a report from the supporting officer.

7 Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus (Appendix 3)

.. To receive a report from the supporting officer.

8 Portsmouth Youth inter-Faith Forum (PYiFF) (Appendix 4)

... To receive a report from the supporting officer

9 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 15 November 2006 at 4:30pm
in Conference Room B, Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

SACRE

21 June 2006

Report on the NASACRE Annual General Meeting

Report of the General Inspector for RE

Contact: Judith Lowndes – General Inspector – RE (02392 441518)
Judith.lowndes@hants.gov.uk

A. Summary

1.1 The NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education) held their annual general meeting on 4 May 2006 at Hamilton House in London. This was attended by the Hampshire County Inspector and General Inspectors for RE

1.2 Chair's report: Salient points

- The Chair of NASACRE announced that a member of the NASACRE executive is available to visit SACREs to talk about its work.
- A NASACRE website has been established (www.nasacre.org.uk) contributions are welcome.
- NASACRE held a national forum in December which focused on the self evaluation toolkit available on line for schools to use. The NASACRE executive would be pleased to offer the forum for self evaluation in other areas.

1.3 Schools' self evaluation

Schools are now requested to complete SEFs (self evaluation forms) in order to monitor their own provision. At the last NASACRE meeting there was a proposal from Culham Institute that a database is

established to enable SACREs to send information gathered from schools' SEFs to a national database. Findings would be analysed and the results returned to SACREs. The cost would be £15,000 overall and has been offered to NASACRE rather than individual SACREs.

- A national RE strategy is to be established by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in consultation with the RE Council to support the establishment of the non statutory framework for RE. £60,000 will be provided for the RE Council to produce a business plan for implementing the National Strategy for RE. This should include suggestions about how SACRE could monitor RE performance in schools.

1.4

Young People's Faith Forum Project

SACRE representatives from Bristol and Hull who received funding from the Westhill Trustees in 2005, presented ways in which the project has developed in their local authorities.

- **Bristol**
 - Aim: To improve racial and cultural harmony.
 - Held an interfaith convention involving all year 10 students and RE staff from four schools.

Day of music, discussion groups, tree planting ceremony and drum workshop.
- **Hull**
 - Students produced a video of music and images to express their ideas and questions. They are planning a conference in November.

The winning bids for 2006/2007 were announced. They are

Blackburn
Kirklees
Newham
Surrey
Thameside

1.5 Mark Chater is newly appointed to lead RE for QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority). His address included the following:-

- **The national curriculum** is under revision and will take into account issues about RE and spirituality.
- The **national non statutory framework for RE** will have some additions made to engage pupils with "big ideas" (eg What is RE about?)

- **14-19 curriculum** will be re-evaluated in relation to A level provision.
- **Communication.** QCA will focus on pedagogy and aims to dialogue more with other agencies and teachers.

1.6 **HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectors) subject inspections**

A paper was provided by Barbara Wintersgill (HMI for RE). Appendix 1

- 1.7 A report was received from a Head of Department for RE who shared his experiences of completing a SEF (self evaluation form) and of a subject inspector for RE followed by a general Ofsted inspection of the whole school.
- 1.8 There were discussion groups which focused on the questions provided. (Appendix 2)

Responses to the questions would be welcomed. Please send them to the secretary to NASACRE (secretary@nasacre.org.uk).

- 1.9 Mick Waters, the Director of Curriculum at QCA gave an inspiring presentation about his plans for the curriculum.

Salient points:

- Fundamentals in life should be the focus of pupils' experiences. He spoke about seeing the sun rise at dawn, watching a flower opening, the power of the weather.

Therefore, art, drama, music, RE and ICT were fundamental in the curriculum.

- The curriculum should be supported by "contagious professionalism" whereby teachers see their role as developmental.
- SACREs' responsibilities are:
 - monitoring and improving standards
 - partnership with local authority and other agencies
 - effectiveness of the local syllabus
 - quality of collective worship
 - contribution to social and racial harmony.
- In order to raise the profile of SACREs and their work they could:
 - go to headteacher conferences
 - talk to governor conferences
 - talk to local community leaders
 - talk to parent conferences
 - talk to employers' organisations

- encourage involvement in other subject communities
- send the annual report to SACRE
- grapple with the 'big issues'.

B. Recommendation

That SACRE note the report and consider how initiatives reported on from the conference could contribute to its development plan in relation to self-evaluation of SACRE, a SACRE development plan and the monitoring of self-evaluation of RE provision in schools.

C. Background Papers

The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.

NB The list excludes:

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

NASACRE BRIEFING PAPER

HMI SUBJECT INSPECTIONS

As well as conducting full school inspections, Ofsted carries out subject and thematic inspections.

HMI and, where needed, Additional Inspectors (AIs) inspect each subject in 30 primary and 30 secondary schools every year. These inspections are followed up with a letter to the head teacher copied to the LA. Letters to the LA following RE inspections recommend that they be copied to SACRE.

Each year the subject inspection has a focus. In the last two years we have focused on the achievement of boys in RE and more recently the effective use of discussion to promote learning.

The outcomes of the inspection of boys' achievement in brief, were that:

- Boys generally enjoy RE as a subject but do not achieve as well as girls
- Boys underachieve particularly when teaching is didactic, resources are unvaried and tasks invariably involve writing for the sake of recording. They particularly dislike copying, note-taking and filling in work-sheets.
- Boys achieve well where teaching methods are varied, resources include a strong emphasis on the visual and where tasks involve discussion and creativity.
- Girls have similar dislikes and preferences but are more ready to tolerate unpopular teaching and learning methods.

The outcomes of the inspection of the effective use of discussion are currently being analysed.

Later this year Ofsted will publish a series of long subject reports, including one on RE with the working title 'RE for the 21st Century'. This report will consider priorities for the development of the subject in the light of evidence

from Ofsted and other sources over the past decade. In preparation for this paper we will be focusing our inspection this term on the impact of the Non-statutory National Framework on agreed syllabuses and indirectly on schools.

To this end we will be inspecting RE in a few schools in:

- Lancashire
- North East Lincolnshire
- Bournemouth
- Dorset
- Southwark
- Cornwall

HMI will be contacting chairs of national RE associations, including NASACRE, to discuss what in their view has had the most positive and negative impact on RE in recent years and what could best be done to take the subject forward. We look forward to hearing your views on this.

**NASACRE AGM
04.05.06**

Prompt questions for discussion groups:

1. **Analysis of data from local schools for purposes of SACRE self evaluation:**
 - a. What are SACRE's responses to the proposed service for analysing data from Culham? Is it viable (at?

2. **Organisation of NASACRE:**
 - a. Would it be helpful for NASACRE to work towards a regional structure for representation on the national executive / training opportunities and networking meetings?

3. **Training and development for SACRE members:**
 - a. Would it be helpful to offer the forum on self evaluation for SACREs in, eg:
 - i. London and the SE?
 - ii. the North?
 - iii.. anywhere else?

4. Eight level scale of attainment:

- a. Which agreed syllabus use an eight level scale in any form? Are they:
 - i. based on the old QCA 8-level scale of attainment (QCA Non-statutory Guidance 2000)?

- ii. based on the 8-level scale in the NFRE?

- b. What use is made, if any, of levels different from those in the NFRE?

5. Use of the non-statutory National Framework for RE:

- a. What use is being made of the NFRE by ASCs?

Group..... Chair.....

SACRE**21 June 2006****Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus****Report of the County Inspector for RE**

Contact: Clive Erricker, Hampshire County Inspector for Religious Education
(02392 441459)

A.	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>1.1 This report item relates to item A in the SACRE Development Plan</p> <p>1.2 Phase 1 Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus: September 2004 – April 2006.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus has been completed. This has involved setting up four county development groups: 2 secondary and 2 primary to produce the first collection of units of work for inclusion in the Handbooks. One Portsmouth school was involved in this. The Secondary and Primary Handbooks were published in April/ May 2006. Their publication was delayed by difficulties encountered during the final editing process undertaken with the Hampshire County Council Publications Unit.</p> <p>During this period Portsmouth secondary and primary schools attended an Implementing the Agreed Syllabus course. Evaluations of this course were positive. The Portsmouth secondary consortium met for one full day and 5 twilight sessions to develop the implementation further in units of work. Attendance of the twilight sessions has been varied.</p>
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The Advanced Skills Teacher for Primary RE has worked in 21 Portsmouth schools and has conducted 3 courses on further aspects of the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus attended by a total of 28 schools. She has also run twilight sessions with RE managers. All these have been well-received. The RE Network has played a major role in supporting the effective implementation of the Agreed Syllabus. 2 schools have made particularly good progress and are supporting the AST for Primary RE by assisting her in producing resources for other colleagues in Portsmouth.

Two videos of places of worship have been produced with accompanying booklets for primary schools relating their use to the methodology for teaching and learning in Living Difference. These can be purchased through the RE Centre. 4 videos of good practice in secondary schools have been produced and have been used for training purposes. These videos are being edited to make them generally available for teachers.

Further support has been provided in terms of advice, planning documents and sharing good practice between schools in the Primary and Secondary RE News publications. Planned units of work according to the requirements of Living Difference have also been provided on the Hampshire RE website and Portsmouth Learning.net.

- 1.3 Phase 2 Further development of RE based on the Agreed Syllabus: April 2006 – 7
- A Hampshire regional development group programme has been established for the financial year 2006 – 7. Documentation on this has been sent to Portsmouth Secondary Schools.

	<p>A questionnaire will be sent to all schools to evaluate the impact of the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus on quality and standards in RE. Findings from this will be presented to SACRE.</p> <p>The RE Newsletters from April 2007 onwards, as with newsletters in other subjects, have been restricted to 2 per phase per year, with a maximum length of 40 pages. This will reduce the support in this format available to schools.</p> <p>1.4 National interest in the Agreed Syllabus, <i>Living Difference</i> An affirmative review of Living Difference was published in the British Journal of Religious Education (Appendix 3). RE-Net, a website established by Canterbury Christchurch University to present and promote good practice nationally for ITT providers, now has a section devoted to Living Difference. This includes a video of the Hampshire County Inspector for RE explaining the methodology for teaching and learning based on conceptual enquiry.</p> <p>Westminster City Council has adopted <i>Living Difference</i> as its Agreed Syllabus.</p>
B.	<p>RECOMMENDATION(S)</p> <p>That SACRE consider and note the report.</p>
C.	<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS</p> <p>The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>NB The list excludes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Published works. 2. Documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

British Journal of Religious Education 28(2)

Living Difference: the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton

Hampshire County Council/Portsmouth City Council/Southampton City Council,
2004

£30 (A4 Spiral Bound), 176 pp. and CD-ROM

ISBN 1-85975-614-X (Copies may be purchased from
linda.elliott@hants.gov.uk)

It is unusual for this journal to review an agreed syllabus. The reason this particular syllabus is being reviewed is because, in the words of the reviews editor, it 'puts learning in RE to the fore'.

This is indeed true and the whole document makes fascinating reading and is a testimony to the vision and energy of Clive Erricker, Judith Lowndes and their team, who have masterminded such a significant document in a remarkably short time. But to begin with, let us ask the question, 'What is so remarkable about a syllabus placing emphasis on pedagogy and why does this appear to be novel?' My answer to these rhetorical questions is that it is not so much having a pedagogical approach to a syllabus that is new, but that the type of approach recommended in this syllabus is a break with the previous barren decade so well summed up by Michael Grimmitt when he accuses the educational climate of the 1990s of 'deflecting teachers' attention away from the innovatory and creative pedagogies available to them and encouraging them to adopt narrow and limited styles of teaching which are politically safe but educationally regressive' (Grimmitt, 2000, p. 7).

In this syllabus there are two immediately apparent shifts away from recent syllabus orthodoxy. Firstly, instead of regurgitating the so-called 'current' aims for religious education, or the more contemporary 'importance of religious education' statement from the non-statutory national framework, this syllabus

defines what it sees as the purpose of religious education. This is significant because stating what the purpose of a subject is, is different from stating what the perceived aims are. The identity of religious education as a curriculum subject is still a contested issue and this syllabus states clearly that the purpose of religious education is 'to support students in developing their own coherent patterns of values and principles, and to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development'. Furthermore, 'this entails encouragement of each student to interpret and respond to a variety of concepts, beliefs and practices within religions and to their own and others' cultural and life experiences' (p. 7).

The second break with the recent past, and this is even more radical, is to dispense with the two attainment targets of learning about religion and learning from religion. Instead there is one attainment target called 'Interpreting religion in relation to human experience'. It is the unpacking of this attainment target that gives the syllabus its coherence. This is remarkably well achieved. 'Interpretation' is understood and explained for teachers in a gradually more sophisticated way according to the age and ability of the students. It is closely linked to the development of skills applied to the understanding of concepts, which are classified as three types; type A concepts common to religious and non-religious experience, type B concepts that are common to many religions and that are used in the study of religion, and type C concepts that are particular to specific religions. These categories of concepts are presented as a hierarchy in the form of a triangle, with type C concepts at the highest point and type A concepts providing the foundational base. This conceptual development is to be achieved through a methodology that requires the student to enquire, contextualise, evaluate, communicate their own response and apply it to their own and others' lives to test critically their own beliefs and values against issues encountered in life.

Elsewhere Erricker (2005, p. 30) has likened this process to cycling round a mountain (the triangle of conceptual development) on a mountain bike (the methodology as outlined above), with the point of the exercise encapsulated in the one attainment target.

This is a very helpful metaphor and I'm sure it will resonate with teachers. My one hesitation is that the message from this hierarchy of concepts seems to be the suggestion that concepts particular to specific religions are more complex and sophisticated than concepts in the other two categories. The diagrams in the syllabus also suggest that Key Stage 1 children enquire only amongst type A and type B concepts. I'm not sure about this. For example, I have seen early years children enjoy using the word *ahimsa*. Their understanding may be limited, that it means being kind to animals for example, but a more sophisticated understanding including Gandhi's use of the term can be developed later.

This method of enquiry and the skills required to achieve it are then expertly integrated in to the presentation of knowledge and understanding, understood in conceptual terms in the programme of study. Further guidance is given on constructing units of work in the six principal religious traditions. Again the methodology with its stages from enquiry to application is superbly related to examples of possible content that can be studied.

It is interesting to read of the possibility that in Key Stage 3 students might study religion from a number of different perspectives (Erricker, 2005 p. 31). The point is made that such different perspectives as sociological/socio-anthropological, theological and philosophical are reflected in various ways in the work of leading religious educators such as Jackson, Cooling, Grimmitt and Erricker. A question then arises as to whether the pedagogical approaches of, say, Grimmitt, Jackson and the postmodern Erricker can be seen as tools in the RE kit bag, so to speak, or are their pedagogical principles, which must reflect certain assumptions about nature of religion and education, incompatible? And, of course there is the issue of time for religious education. Nevertheless a handbook is already being written and there are two advanced skills teachers producing two units of work, one based on sociological enquiry and one on Christian theological enquiry.

The Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton was developing contemporaneously with the QCA national framework. How much does this syllabus represent the framework or how far is it based upon it?

Erricker claims (2005, p. 32) that it is complementary to the national framework because it provides a methodology for teaching and learning. That may be so but the attainment level and performance descriptions bear little resemblance to the national framework levels, being as they are extremely clearly linked to the conceptual structure outlined in the programme of study, and provide the clearest example yet of a developmental assessment scale.

What this syllabus most reminds me of is much of the material found in the Westhill Project's *How do I Teach RE?* (Read *et al.*, 1992). For example, the syllabus's purpose of RE statement is remarkably similar to that found on page 2 of the Westhill book, and the three categories of concepts mirror those found on pages 27–29 (see also Rudge, 1991, p. 25; Teece, 1996, pp. 15–18). When the Westhill Project was first published in 1986, Trevor Cooling noted in a complimentary review that his 'main reservations that the new ground broken by the Project, in its emphasis on the importance of religious concepts as the key to understanding a belief system will be lost in the classroom' (Cooling, 1988, p. 182). Having been closely involved in the Westhill Project, I would say that Cooling's point here is extremely prescient. It is true that the pedagogical principles of the Project were seldom realised in the materials and hence the influence of the Project's principles was less than it deserved. This point could also be made about other significant religious education projects. Of course Cooling has attempted to address that concern with his 'concept cracking' as an approach to understanding the Christian tradition. What this syllabus does, however, is to take a wider vision of religious education, essentially that of human development, and provide a detailed and comprehensive syllabus based on sound pedagogical principles. To my knowledge this is the first time that this has been achieved in a syllabus and it achieves this extremely well.

The excellence of this piece of work is also ample evidence, if evidence is needed, that there is no substitute for having people who know what they are doing involved in developing syllabuses and schemes for religious education. You can have as many official documents from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority or the DfES as you like but there is no substitute for

excellent personnel. Teachers in Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton are lucky. It appears that they have excellent personnel in abundance.

SACRE

21 June 2006

Portsmouth Youth Interfaith Forum

Report of the Hampshire County Inspector for RE

Contact: Clive Erricker, County Inspector for Religious Education (02392 441459)

A. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The PYiFF was successful in its bid for funding from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund.
- 1.2 The co-ordinator's role was advertised and interviews were conducted. Sue Ganter was appointed to the post.
- 1.3 The project has now been linked with the Anglican Diocese's social responsibility unit.
- 1.4 The project is currently seeking some new representatives and SACRE members are asked to assist with recruitment (see Appendix 4)

B. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That SACRE approve the report.

C. Background Papers

The following documents disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.

NB This list excludes:

1. Published works.
2. Documents which disclosed exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.



Portsmouth Youth Inter Faith Forum

Report for SACRE meeting 21st June 2006

Portsmouth City Council approached the Church of England Diocese to give administrative support to PYiFF and the recruitment of a Co-ordinator in the light of the new funding from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund, as links had been established and they have also gained funding from FCCBF, for a full time Co-ordinator. In the interval Sue Ganter kept things 'ticking over' on a voluntary basis.

PYiFF meeting 19th April: Our invited guest was unavoidably absent, so discussion of the current situation took place. Members expressed concerns that they had not been consulted about the involvement of the C of E Diocese, that FCCBF funding may be affected, the C of E association might mean PYiFF was perceived as not truly multi (and no) faith, and that it might lead to PYiFF being a copy of the adult inter faith Forum. [As a result of this Sarah spoke to Nick Ralph of the Diocese (Social Responsibility Adviser) and was able to offer reassurance.]

PYiFF meeting 25th April: Lolene Elkington of the Racial Harassment Team asked Members for their advice and support as she has six months to pilot a project for the youth of Portsmouth. She is concerned that young people are marginalised on this issue, despite the fact that across the country the 13 – 25 age group is the most likely to be the perpetrator or victim of racism. Several ideas were discussed and Lo is to investigate setting up a 'Love Music Hate Racism' themed youth club at BYAC.

A decision was made to participate in the Lions Club Walk around Langstone Harbour (21st May) to raise funds for PYiFF. At the time of writing six young people and two 'more than over 18 year olds' are signed up!

Membership: Three Members have resigned due to pressure of academic work and exams. PYiFF has thanked them for their support and asked for their help in recruiting replacements. At the time of writing we are seeking representation from the following communities in particular: Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, and Jewish. PYiFF would also welcome members from other groups and of course those of no allegiance. SACRE members are asked to help in this recruitment process.

PYiFF Co-ordinator: The post was advertised twice in The News as a part time role under the auspices of the Portsmouth Diocese. Two candidates were called to interview on May 8th. Two PYiFF Members were fully involved in the process and took part in the interviewing. Sue Ganter was appointed.

Sue Ganter

Co-ordinator, Portsmouth Youth Inter Faith Forum