

Portsmouth

SACRE Annual Report to QCA

and other Stakeholders

DRAFT

Revised Pilot Reporting Format

2007/8

1. Standards and quality of provision of RE

- The number of pupils entered for GCSE exams in RE has increased. Attainment in full course RE has significantly improved.
- The LA is able to provide Advanced Skills Teacher support for RE and all schools can access specialist advisory support for RE.
- Recruitment of specialist RE teachers remains a problem at both primary and secondary levels.

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

- SACRE meets each term and there is representation from a range of faith groups and other organisations.
- Faith groups and other organisations are able to offer a range of support to local schools.
- Representation on SACRE includes young people – Interfusion.

3. The effectiveness of the local agreed syllabus

- All schools follow the Agreed Syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton – ‘Living Difference’.
- Planning for a review of the Agreed Syllabus will begin in 2008.

4. Collective Worship

- Most schools in the LA seek to deliver an act of collective worship.

5. Contribution of the SACRE to the community cohesion agenda

- SACRE membership is representative of local faith communities and organisations.
- SACRE will need to consider how it might support schools in meeting the community cohesion agenda.

Summary

1. Standards and quality of provision of RE

Overview

Introduction
Please give a brief overview of RE in your local authority, highlighting strengths and achievements and noting any perceived weaknesses and development needs.
The Portsmouth Agreed Syllabus, 'Living Difference', was produced in collaboration with Hampshire and Southampton LA's. It became statutory guidance LA maintained on Portsmouth from September 2004. The Agreed Syllabus is supported by a primary and secondary handbook. These contain comprehensive advice on curriculum planning, delivery, assessment and self-evaluation as well as examples of units of work and useful resources.

Key area 1a: Compliance and time allocation for RE

Question
To what extent is RE provision in schools compliant with the Agreed Syllabus requirements and its recommendations in terms of time allocation?
The Agreed Syllabus
The recommended minimum hours allocated to religious education are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key Stage 1: 36 hours per year• Key Stage 2: 45 hours per year• Key Stage 3: 45 hours per year• Key Stage 4: 45 hours per year• Key Stage 5: there is no recommended minimum time allocation. <p>At primary level, link advisers include compliance with statutory curriculum requirements as part of the quality assurance visits – no reports have been received regarding failure to comply with these requirements. Governor services also provide guidance on statutory requirements. QA visits will be replaced SEF's from April 2008. Schools will not be required to provide details of their SEF to the LA.</p> <p>Secondary schools may include details of compliance with statutory requirements for religious education within in the SEF. These SEF reports are not required to be shared with the LA. Governor services also provide guidance on statutory requirements – no reports have been received that indicate schools are failing to meet statutory requirements for religious education.</p>
Question
Where applicable, please itemise any formal complaints about RE in the past year, with a very brief description of the nature of the complaint and the SACRE's decision.
Information
No formal complaints have been received.

Key area 1b: Public examination entries in RE

Question

Please give a brief prose analysis of all public examination entries in RE for your Local Authority (full and short course GCSE, AS Level and A Level), if possible analysed by gender. Please add tables in appendix.

Analysis

GCSE Examination results 2007

Of the 10 secondary schools and three special schools in Portsmouth, 9 schools entered candidates for a GCSE qualification in religious studies. 8 schools offered the full course to pupils in 2007, 6 schools offered the short course and 5 schools offered both. One special school offered the short course as an option to a small number of candidates. The overall numbers entered for a qualification in religious education increased slightly from 769 (2006) to 797 (2007). A higher proportion of girls (444) were entered than boys (353).

Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies 2007

Eight secondary schools entered candidates for the full course GCSE in religious studies in 2007. The largest entry was from a church school, which accounted for 46% of the full course entry for the city. All pupils at the church school are expected to take a GCSE in religious studies in Year 11 - 91% of the cohort were entered in 2007. In the seven LA maintained secondary schools, the full course in religious studies was offered as an option with a variable uptake ranging from 4.6 % to 24.5% of the Year 11 cohort. The number of candidates entered for full course religious studies showed an increase this year from 313 in 2006 to 341 in 2007; this also represented the highest number of entries since 2003.

Results also showed an upward trend in standards with 61% of candidates entered attaining an A*-C grade in comparison with 50.2% in 2006, - a 10.8% improvement. Overall however, results remain below the national average (69.2%).

A gender gap remains with 52.9% of boys attaining an A*-C grade in comparison with 64.1% of girls. However the differential between boys and girls in comparison with national gender averages indicates boys are performing slightly better than girls. The overall message is one of significant improvement in 2007.

Short Course GCSE in Religious Studies 2007

5 secondary schools and one special school entered candidates for the short course in GCSE religious studies, the number of candidates entered for 2007 (456) shows a slight decline from 2006 (477). Results also showed a slight decline in standards with 30% of candidates attaining and A*-C grade in comparison with 31% in 2006. The gender gap between boys and girls was 3.9%, with girls performing slightly better than boys.

The overall message is of a slight decline in attainment but with boys and girls performing at similar levels.

Key area 1c: Standards and achievement

Question
Please give a brief prose analysis of standards in RE in each of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.
Comments
There is no requirement for schools to submit or report data on pupil attainment in religious studies at key stages 1-3. No data is collected by the LA. Details of attainment and standards in RE may be collected by subject leaders. The requirements for assessment and reporting pupil attainment in RE are detailed in the Assessment and Reporting Arrangements for each Key stage published by QCA each year. In many schools subject leaders are asked to submit a report on standards in RE to the Head teacher and this may also be included in the annual report to Governors. Guidance on standards and assessment is contained within the Agreed Syllabus handbooks and through teacher support at RE network meetings. The AST for RE has worked extensively across key stages 1-3 in developing teacher assessment.
Question
Please give a brief prose analysis of standards achieved in public examinations in RE. Please add tables in appendix.
Comments
Please refer to section 1b

Key area 1d: Quality of teaching

Question
Please give a prose analysis of any significant teaching quality issues relating to RE within the range of statutory provision (Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1-4, post-16, Special Schools).
Comments
Primary and Secondary Development of teaching and learning is supported in a variety of ways, schools can access support through the AST for RE, or 'buy in' support from other LA's. Courses are available for teachers and subject leaders new to RE. An AST supports the Portsmouth School Centred Initial Teacher Training programme for PGCE students training in the primary phase. All schools have a clear focus on improvement in teaching and learning in both core and foundation subjects with the aim to ensure that all teaching is good or better. There has been no feedback from OFSTED Inspections or reports to indicate that standards of teaching and learning are less than satisfactory in RE.
Post 16 Education Support for teaching and learning is available from a number of sources, but the main emphasis is on teachers developing their own tailor-made resources to meet the learning needs of students. Examination boards provide essential and effective training. Some textbooks are available, but are generally lacking in the detail needed for AS/A Level. Learning is supported through paper-based and e-learning resources, as well as off site visits. Examination results and value-added have been consistently excellent or outstanding at A Level.

Question
Please summarise any available material that gives an insight into the quality of RE teaching as experienced and evaluated by pupils.
Information - Student Voice
Interfusion is an independent group directed by young people of all faiths, belief systems or none, working together to seek understanding and dialogue between communities. It was initiated by SACRE in June 2005; 2 members and the co-ordinator sit on SACRE. Activities in the last year have included attending local and national conferences and events, running workshops at the Portsmouth GCSE RE Conference and One World Week. The group and its activities aim to support community cohesion and offer SACRE an input from young people on their experience of being taught RE.

Key area 1e: Quality of leadership and management

Question
Please describe and evaluate the main RE leadership and management issues in schools, post 16 institutions and Special Schools, highlighting strengths and noting any recurrent weaknesses.
Comments
<p>Primary and Secondary Guidance for RE subject leaders is contained within the primary and secondary handbooks. Professional development courses are available for new RE subject leaders and schools are able to access AST and other LA advisor support by arrangement. The number of qualified RE 'subject specialists' is however low, especially at primary level.</p> <p>Post 16 Education RE teachers are encouraged to develop their teaching and subject skills through a range of professional development opportunities such as national conferences, examination board meetings and post-16 Religious Studies Forums. Schemes of Work provide detailed guidance for teachers. Quality reviews indicate that Religious Studies is well managed and that there are no recurrent weaknesses.</p>

Key area 1f: Teacher recruitment and retention, level of specialist provision

Question
Please describe and evaluate the level of specialist RE provision in primary schools, secondary schools, post 16 institutions and Special Schools.
Comments
Please see 1e

Key area 1g: Resources

Question
Please describe and evaluate the level of budgeting and ICT access for RE in primary schools, secondary schools, post 16 institutions and Special Schools.
Comments
All schools and colleges have free access to the Hampshire RE centre in Winchester and can also access the Hampshire RE website. Portsmouth provides support through portsmouth-learning.net and the RE 'Community' website. The LA has also hosted a resources session in cooperation with Starbeck in order to promote greater use of religious objects and artefacts in the teaching of RE. There are no reports from schools of inadequate resourcing of the subject.

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

Key area 2a: SACRE meetings

Question
On what dates has the SACRE met in the last year, and at what venue(s)?
Information Details of SACRE meetings in 2007: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Thursday, 8 March at Somers Park Primary School, Portsmouth▪ Wednesday, 20 June at United Reformed Church, Milton, Portsmouth▪ Wednesday, 14 November at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth City Council.
Question
Please comment on patterns of attendance of SACRE members in committees 1, 2, 3 and 4, indicating any problems that may have arisen concerning adequate representation.
Information <p>With regard to group A, (representatives of Christian denominations and other religions and their denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions of the area), a Sikh representative has not attended any meeting since June 2005 when the former Sikh representative had to resign due to work commitments. The local Sikh community was contacted and a new representative was nominated, but he has failed to attend any meetings. The Buddhist representative has been a somewhat sporadic attendee, but she was present at the March 2007 meeting. Other faith groups generally attend on a regular basis and for this reason 'quoracy' has not been an issue in relation to this group.</p> <p>This year the Group B (Church of England representatives) failed to send a representative to either the March or the November meeting. The group consists of four representatives and currently there are only three appointees. There was a particular problem at the November meeting when there were two important decisions, which could not be made and had to be deferred, as the meeting was not quorate. One of the deferred decisions was the appointment of the Vice Chair.</p> <p>In previous years we have at times failed to be quorate due to the absence of a group C (teacher representative); but this has not been the case this year. Furthermore, we have recently recruited additional teacher representatives to bring us up to the full complement of six. So it is hoped that quoracy will no longer be an issue in relation to this group.</p> <p>Our Group D (City Council representatives) representatives usually attend meetings. The chair is always a group D representative and has always attended up to now. Therefore, attendance by group D members has not up to now resulted in a 'quoracy' problem.</p> <p>Co-opted members are regular attendees at our meetings and play a significant part in discussion.</p>

Key area 2b: Membership and training

Question

What range of faith groups and world views is represented on the SACRE as a whole, including co-optees?

Information

The following faith groups and world views are represented:

GROUP A

- Christian Denominations

The Roman Catholic Church
The Baptist Union
The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
The Salvation Army - Vacancy
The Methodist Church
The United Reformed Church
The Assemblies of God

- Other Religions

Judaism
Hinduism
Buddhism
Islam
Sikhism
Baha'i Faith

GROUP B

Four Representatives of the Church of England

Group C

Six teachers representing associations recognised by the Authority for the purposes of consultation and negotiation

Group D

Four representatives of the Authority, at least two of whom shall be elected members of the Authority

Co-opted representatives

There are currently five co-opted representatives who include the following: one Humanist (members present at the November meeting were in favour of including this representative in Group A, but as the meeting was not quorate, they were unable to vote on the matter), one former headteacher, one former RE teacher and two representatives of the Portsmouth Youth Interfaith Forum (Interfusion).

Question
What training/induction is offered both to new members and to SACRE as a whole?
Comments
<p>By way of induction, the clerk to SACRE contacts the new member by telephone to explain the functions of the SACRE and would also deal with questions about the SACRE and the role of the new member. Information in the form of agendas, minutes and reports of recent meetings together with a copy of the SACRE handbook for members is sent out to all new members.</p> <p>The new member is introduced to the SACRE at the next meeting and welcomed by the chair and members. New members are given a 'buddy' to help them with any queries or questions about the meetings.</p> <p>No external training is currently offered to existing members of SACRE but members do receive copies of SACRE News and are circulated details of events and courses that may be of interest.</p>

Key area 2c: SACRE development

Question
What initiatives has your SACRE undertaken in the last year? (e.g. any publications, festival calendars, contact databases, online forums/support, website activity, student events) If so, please describe and evaluate briefly. (You may wish to include copies of publications, by email or posted as an appendix)
Comments:
<p>Communications regarding festival calendars were circulated electronically to all schools; a SACRE directory is produced and updated biannually and is due to be updated for 2008/09. The directory has been produced to enable teachers to arrange visits or invite visitors into school from faith communities and other organisations. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Service also issues information to schools regarding Ramadan and festivals such as Diwali.</p> <p>The 'portsmouth learning.net' has a dedicated RE curriculum section that can be accessed by subject leaders and teachers; this contains advice, information and resource links to support teaching and learning in RE. The Hampshire RE centre is also available to Portsmouth teachers as is access to the Hampshire RE website. There is also a dedicated online community for RE teachers that enables/facilitates communication between schools and teachers in the city.</p> <p>A Virtual Learning Environment is currently under development; this will enable young people to access information and resources that will support their learning from 5-16+</p> <p>Interfusion organises events and provides regular updates of other events and activities that may be of interest to young people.</p> <p>An annual RE conference is staged for Year 10 pupils – SACRE supports the organisation of this conference and representatives from SACRE groups are invited to present workshops at the conference.</p>

Question
Does your SACRE have a development action plan? If so, please attach it as an appendix.
Comments
The SACRE does not have a current action plan but it has identified 5 areas that will form the basis of an action plan for 2007/08. These include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving resources to support teaching and learning; 2. Visiting schools and colleges to observe teaching and learning; 3. Consulting with adults and young people; 4. Investigating ways of obtaining funding from faith groups and organisations that support teaching about different religious traditions and perspectives on different beliefs. 5. Ensuring schools and teachers have access to professional support.
Question
Has your SACRE issued any other advice on teaching approaches, resources, speakers or other relevant matters?
Comment
Please see section 2c
Question
Does your SACRE have any ongoing relationship with local providers of initial teacher education and CPD, including training for NQTs? If so, what does this relationship consist of?
Comments
The AST for RE supports the Portsmouth Primary SCITT and PGCE students are provided with advice and guidance on teaching and resources that can be used to support delivery of the locally agreed syllabus 'Living Difference' in Primary Schools. The LA offers CPD courses to support primary RE teachers; there are termly primary RE network meetings and full day CPD courses have been delivered in, and for schools.

Key area 2d: Financial support

Question
Please describe and comment on the level and nature of finance offered to the SACRE by the LA, for the training of its members, for supporting RE and collective worship and for implementation of its action plan.
Comments
The LA allocates a budget of approximately £3,000 to support the work of SACRE in offering advice and support to schools and colleges. Areas of expenditure include: attendance at Annual NASCRE meeting, expenses incurred in supporting delivery of the locally agreed syllabus, membership of organisations such as AREIAC and NASCRE.

Key area 2e: Information and advice

Question
Does your SACRE receive helpful and timely information and advice from the LA and from schools on the quality of RE and collective worship? Please describe the main methods by which this information and advice reaches your SACRE.
Information
An LA officer and teacher representatives from primary and secondary schools attend each SACRE meeting and offer advice/support and information to SACRE members. SACRE members have the opportunity to visit schools and places of worship in order to gain a better understanding of issues relating to teaching and learning in RE.
Question
What professional advice on RE and collective worship is available to your SACRE? (E.g. Adviser, AST, Consultant, mailings, online access). If possible, please give approximate number of days.
Information
The LA allocates 15 days of General Adviser time to support RE/Collective worship within the LA; this includes joint planning of school support with the AST for RE, supporting SACRE meetings, attending national events/conferences and responding to enquiries regarding the locally agreed syllabus. All schools and colleges can access support from the Hampshire RE primary and secondary RE advisers at agreed rates with Hampshire LA.
Question
Are there any issues that your SACRE has referred to its LA for consideration and/or action (e.g. grade data, resourcing)? If so, please specify and describe the response/ outcome.
Comments
Increasing budgetary support for SACRE – the LA currently has to make substantial cuts in funding. The elected member for Children, Families and Learning has responded indicating that no additional funding will be made available beyond that currently allocated for 2007/08.
Question
Are there any matters on which your SACRE has given advice to LAs? If so, please broadly describe the advice and specify the SACRE's reason for offering advice.
Response
None
Question
Are there any issues that your SACRE has referred to school leadership teams for consideration/action? If so, please specify and describe the response/outcome?
Response
None

Question
Are there any aspects of your SACRE's work that need external help, support, advice or resourcing?
Response
Not at present. A review of the Agreed Syllabus will be completed in co-operation with Hampshire and Southampton in 2008/09.

Key area 2f: Partnerships with other key stakeholders

Question
Has your SACRE undertaken, commissioned or sponsored any training activities for teachers, TAs, Governors or the public, such as annual lectures, conferences, workshops, inset, student days, visits to places of worship or visits to HE? If so, please describe and evaluate briefly.
Comments
Please refer to 1e, 1f and 2c.

3. The effectiveness of the local agreed syllabus

Key area 3a: Review of the agreed syllabus

Question
Please specify, with a year, your SACRE's present stage in the cycle of implementing, monitoring, reviewing, writing/revising, launching or training in the agreed syllabus.
Comments
The locally agreed syllabus for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton; 'Living Difference' was introduced in 2004 and will be due for review in 2009. An action plan for the review process will be drawn up in 2008 for implementation in 2009.

Key area 3b: Using the non-statutory National Framework

Question
To what extent, and in what ways, is account being taken of the non-statutory National Framework for Religious Education and also of the RE section of the New Secondary Curriculum? What impact is this having on RE locally?
Comments
The Agreed Syllabus 'Living Difference' was published at the same time as the non – statutory National Framework for RE in 2004. All schools in Portsmouth are aware that the locally agreed syllabus is a legal requirement. The Agreed Syllabus places emphasis upon the process of learning and teaching based on conceptual enquiry and the importance of students developing their own beliefs and values, it differs significantly from the non-statutory framework in that there is a single assessment objective.

Key area 3c: Developing the revised agreed syllabus

Question
Please describe how your SACRE normally reviews its agreed syllabus and in what respects it aspires to improve on the present version.
Comments
Please refer to 3a.

Key area 3d: Consultation/launch/implementation of the agreed syllabus

Question
Please describe how your SACRE publicises, supports and exemplifies the Agreed Syllabus for RE.
Information
The Agreed Syllabus is available in a variety of forms; a hardback copy available in an A4 folder, a CD rom and as an online publication that can be downloaded from portsmouth-learning.net .

Key area 3e: Additional guidance/monitoring and evaluation of the agreed syllabus

Question
How has your SACRE worked with schools to monitor the quality of RE and to monitor the use of the Agreed Syllabus and/or Framework? (You may wish to include data on the number and scope of primary and secondary schools contacted.)
Information
An online questionnaire was made available to all schools by the Hampshire inspectorate in 2007. All schools were asked to offer comments on their implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and to highlight any issues relating to teaching and learning. Few schools however, responded. Further consultation – possibly using a web-based questionnaire will take place in 08/09 as part of the Agreed Syllabus review.

4. Collective Worship

Key area 4a: Practice and provision for collective worship

Question
How has your SACRE worked with schools to support the provision of high quality collective worship? (You may wish to include data on the number and scope of schools contacted.)
Comments
Please refer to sections 1e, 1g, 2c and 2e.

Key area 4b: Monitoring the provision of collective worship

Question
Please offer a brief prose analysis of the main recurrent strengths and weaknesses of collective worship in primary, secondary and special schools.
Comments
In primary schools, meeting the requirements of the act of collective worship presents fewer problems; a daily assembly involving all pupils is possible in schools where there are small numbers of pupils. At secondary level this provides a major logistical problem.
Question
Please give an overview, where applicable, of applications for Determinations in collective worship in the past year. Please specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of applications;• How many were new applications, and how many were renewals;• Approximately how many pupils were affected in each case;• The SACRE's decision in each case and a brief reason.
Information
None
Question
Please itemise, where applicable, any complaints about collective worship in the past year, with a very brief description of the nature of the complaint and the SACRE's decision.
Information
None

5. Contribution of the SACRE to the community cohesion agenda

Key area 5a: representative nature of the SACRE

Question
Please offer a brief prose comment on the extent to which your SACRE reflects the religious and ethnic diversity of the local/regional community.
Comments
SACRE membership largely reflects the religious and ethnic diversity of the local community in Portsmouth. Please refer to section 2b.
Question
Please outline what steps your SACRE takes to be pro-active in ensuring that its membership reflects this diversity.
Comments
SACRE actively seeks to ensure its membership is reflective of the local community and actively seeks to recruit representation by religious and ethnic groups. Please refer to section 2b.

Key area 5b: Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic minority

Question
Please offer a brief prose comment on the channels of communication between your SACRE and constituent faith, cultural and other groups (e.g. faith forums, committees, interest groups, campaigns, charities)
Suggested data source(s)
<p>SACRE has direct links either through membership of, or representation from many of the following organisations; Iraqi Welfare Association, Chinese Women and Youth Society, African Women's Forum, Zanzibar Organisation, Portsmouth Filipino Association, Bangladeshi Welfare Association Portsmouth, Baha'l Faith Group Portsmouth Vietnamese Association, Kurdish Community Association in Portsmouth, Portsmouth Chinese Association, Portsmouth Bangladeshi Cultural Association, Sylhet District Association, Anglo Arab Society, Anglo-Hellenic Society, South Hants Jewish Reform Community, Portsmouth Chinese Christian Church, Caribbean Islands Association, Portsmouth Sikh Community, Rock of Ages Interdenominational Ministries, Wessex Jamaat.</p> <p>SACRE also has links with PRENO (Portsmouth Race Equality Network Organisation) and the local authority Equalities Service – which has produced a Publication entitled ' One city... many cultures which aims to provide information, advice and guidance about the cultural and religious diversity of Portsmouth's community. In addition SACRE also has links with both adult and youth based interfaith organisations.</p>

Key area 5c: Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social, racial and religious harmony and to community cohesion

Question
Please describe the ways in which your SACRE is engaging with and monitoring the contribution of RE to social, racial and religious harmony and to community cohesion in your area.
Information
SACRE will shortly be circulated with the guidance to schools on community cohesion; the guidance will be an agenda item at a future SACRE meeting.

Key area 5d: Links to local authority initiatives promoting diversity

Question
In what ways is your SACRE taking account of and engaging with local authority initiatives promoting diversity?
Information
Members of SACRE attend events and activities that promote diversity and other issues either as members of their faith communities or in supporting activities such as 'Thursday's Child', One World Week etc.

Summary: General

Question
What good practice and distinctive features in your SACRE could be shared with the RE community locally, regionally, nationally or internationally?
Comments
The work of the Portsmouth Youth Diversity Forum (Interfusion) will be showcased at the next NASACRE meeting in January. The Portsmouth RE GCSE conference will be widened to allow participation by schools in the SE Hants area.
Question
How would you describe the sense of community that exists in the ethos of your SACRE? What events, celebrations or forms of communication best exemplify this?
Comments
A strong commitment to enable schools to access places of worship and to access information about faith communities and other organisations.

Question
If the DCSF were to consider changing its advice on RE and Collective Worship, what comments would your SACRE have concerning the future of RE and the future of Collective Worship?
Comments
SACRE would welcome a thorough review of the 'ability' of all schools to meet the current legal requirements regarding the act of collective worship. The feasibility of a 'daily requirement' is open to question.
Question
Are there any other points about RE, collective worship or SMSCD (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development) that your SACRE would like to express to the QCA? (e.g. national innovations)
Comments
None