

Portsmouth SACRE

Annual Newsletter 2010-2011



'Living Difference Revised' - January 2011 launch

'Living Difference' was issued as the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education for Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth in 2004. Not only has it proved very successful in improving standards in RE teaching across each Local Authority, it has also gained a national reputation for its innovative conceptual enquiry approach, and is now used by LA's across the country (and internationally).

As required by law, an agreed syllabus has to be reviewed every five years. Representatives from Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton SACRE's began the process of reviewing Living Difference in 2009. The Hampshire inspectorate took the lead in this process with support from teachers, advisers and SACRE members. Two representatives from Portsmouth SACRE were members of the writing group for the syllabus review. Any changes that have been implemented are in response to developments within the curriculum over the past five years, government guidance and initiatives, and responses from local teachers and subject leaders through surveys and dialogue. Guidance has been simplified and clarified as a result, additional information has been provided to enable teachers to implement RE effectively within a changing curriculum. The new 'Living Difference Revised' was approved by SACRE at an Agreed Syllabus Conference in November 2010 and launched to Portsmouth Schools in January 2011. The launch was supported by Clive Erricker and Georgina Mulhall. Teachers from 42 primary schools and 6 secondary schools, including two special schools attended the launch. All schools have received copies of the revised syllabus on CD and the information can also be accessed via the Portsmouth Connected Learning Community website. [Link to Portsmouth clc.](#)

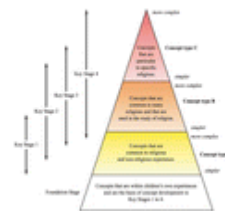
It is recommended that the following minimum hours should be devoted to religious education, and the programmes of study in Living Difference have been designed with these time recommendations in mind:

Reception classes: approximately 36 hours per year

- 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

Collective worship is not part of the taught day and cannot be considered as part of the recommended time for teaching the Agreed Syllabus

The re-launch was attended by Clive Erricker. Mike Johns commented that the Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth agreed syllabus was recognised nationally in relation to the pedagogy of RE.



The hierarchy of concepts

Votes of Thanks!

- Clive Erricker, the Hampshire County Council RE Inspector was contracted to be the RE adviser to the SACRE from March 2003 until March 2007.
- Mike Johns attended the meetings from March 2003 until June 2008 as the PCC officer in attendance, and was the LA representative on SACRE from June 2007 to June 2008.
- Georgina Mulhall served as LA representative from November 2008 until June 2010. Georgina was also teacher rep for many years.
- Roger Bentote has been the Teachers' Liaison Panel rep for a number of years.

A huge 'Thank You' to each of them for the excellent support they have provided SACRE over many years!



New appointments and Changes

- David Picton-Jones, appointed as an Associate Link Advisor for School Improvement Services, has been confirmed as LA representative on SACRE.
- Peter Davis has been elected new Chair and Ephrat Miller has been elected Vice-Chair
- Sion Reynolds serves as the new TLP, he is also a NASWUT representative.

Standards and Achievement

Key Stages 1-3

There is no requirement for schools to submit or report data on pupil attainment in RE at Key Stages 1-3 to the LA or DfE. No data is collected by the LA. It is however, a general requirement that schools report children's progress to parents / carers. The requirements for assessment and reporting pupil attainment in RE are detailed in the Assessment and Reporting Arrangements for each key stage published by QCDA each year.

Details of attainment and standards in RE must be collected by subject leaders. In many schools subject leaders are asked to submit a report on standards in RE to the Headteacher and this may also be included in an annual subject report to Governors. Most schools gather teacher assessment data and some schools test units of work summatively and record attainment data. Guidance on standards and assessment is contained within the Agreed Syllabus primary and secondary handbooks and through teacher support at RE Network Meetings.



Key Stage 4 - GCSE Examination results 2010

Of the 9 secondary schools and 3 special schools in Portsmouth, 9 schools entered candidates for a GCSE qualification in religious studies (8 secondary schools and 1 special school) in 2010. 5 schools offered the full course to pupils in 2010 in comparison to 7 in 2009. 7 schools offered the short course - an increase of 2 since 2009. 3 schools offered both.

The overall number of candidates entered for a qualification in religious studies increased slightly to 896 from 884 (2009). There was a significant increase in the number of candidates entered for the full course, this was largely a result of one school entering nearly all Year 11 pupils for the full course and none for the short course. Entries by gender indicate that 417 males were entered in comparison with 479 females.

Full Course GCSE in Religious Studies 2009

5 secondary schools entered candidates for the full course GCSE in religious studies in 2010. The full course in religious studies was offered as an option with a variable uptake. With the exception of two schools where 173 and 166 pupils were entered for the full course the numbers of pupils opting to study GCSE ranged from 32 to 60 across 3 schools. The number of candidates entered for full course religious studies showed a significant increase this year - 470 in 2010 in comparison with 300 in 2009.

Results consolidated with 68% of candidates entered attaining an A*-C grade in comparison with 68% in 2009 and 67% in 2008. The full course national average is 73% A*-C.

One school in the city entered their pupils for a new GCSE specification. The first award for this examination will take place in the summer 2011 after relevant paper work has been completed. However, the confirmed grades have been formulated into the above data for 2010.

The gender gap continues to widen for A*-C grades - 62% for males and 74% for females. Again, the differential between boys and girls in comparison with national gender averages indicates females are performing better than males.

***The main messages are;
a significant increase in the number of full course entries and consolidated attainment***

Short Course GCSE in Religious Studies 2010

7 secondary schools entered candidates for the short course in GCSE religious studies, the number of candidates entered for 2010 (426) showed a decline from 2009 (584). Results also show a dip in attainment - 37% of candidates attaining an A*-C grade in comparison 39% in 2009. These results remain well below the national average of 54%. The gender gap between boys and girls was 15%, with girls (44%) doing significantly better than boys (29%). One factor affecting these results is the number of pupils failing to turn up for the exam, the difference between entries and results indicates 30 candidates not sitting the exam.

The overall messages are; a decrease in attainment with girls achieving more A*-C grades than boys; attainment is below the national average for both.

Ofsted Reports

The two measures used by Ofsted that encompass RE provision in schools are:

- The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).
- The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion

Between 1st January 2010 and 1st June 2011 twenty-five schools received an Ofsted inspection - 2 secondary schools, 1 special school and 22 primary schools. Analysis of Ofsted judgements indicates that only one school was considered to be inadequate in terms of SMSC and two schools were judged inadequate in terms of effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion. Two schools were considered outstanding on both measures. The majority of schools were categorised as good in terms of SMSC and satisfactory or better in terms of community cohesion.



Leadership and Management in Schools

The number of qualified RE 'subject specialists' is low in primary schools but nearly all schools in the primary phase have a teacher with responsibility for managing the subject in school.

New and established RE Managers have been offered a course provided by the Local Authority in order to support their role as subject leaders. Guidance for RE subject leaders is contained within the primary and secondary handbooks.

RE subject leaders are generally well supported by senior management in schools in terms of professional development, attending courses and twilight meetings. In a number of schools RE subject leaders claim that insufficient funding is allocated to resource subject delivery. The launch of the revised syllabus has provided a fresh impetus for schools to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in RE. In particular how to approach using the methodology outlined in the agreed syllabus and an opportunity to revisit the teaching pedagogy promoted by Living difference. Hopefully this will lead to an improvement both in teachers understanding of the requirements of the syllabus and in the quality of teaching and learning in the subject.



Events, Celebrations, Exhibitions and Support for RE

Following the appointment of Georgina Mulhall to the post of Deputy Headteacher there is no longer any AST support available to schools for RE.

Many thanks to Beverley Milsom from Redwood Park who has agreed to facilitate the Primary network meetings that are held each term.

March 2011 was 'Celebrating RE month'. **RE Twilight and Meet and Greet on 2 March**

Beverley Millsom reported that the meet and greet session on 2 March had been very well attended and she had received very positive feedback. Fourteen SACRE members and 23 teachers had attended.

The session involved a succession of five minute meeting when teachers could meet SACRE members had enabled both parties to learn something about the others' roles. Clive Erricker had also attended and had given a short talk. Beverley expressed her thanks to SACRE members who had attended.



Portsmouth Museums and Records



The City Museum also staged an exhibition entitled 'No Child's Play' to coincide with Holocaust Memorial Day. The exhibition was open to the public but had been publicised to local schools. A total of 378 pupils attended the exhibition, 190 of whom attended the talks provided by Mr Joop Levy about his experiences in occupied Holland during the war and what it was like as a child living in hiding from the Holocaust.

SACRE has been responsible for organising network meetings with Hampshire, Southampton, Isle of Wight and Westminster, all of whom teach according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus, Living Difference.

The Portsmouth Connected Learning Community (Portsmouth clc) 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.

Portsmouth Connected Learning Community



SACRE promoted and supported the Jewish community with the 'Jewish Way of Life Exhibition' in 2010. The exhibition was hosted by Portsmouth City Museum for a three week period in July 2010. The AST for RE worked with Ruth Guyer from the Jewish community in setting up the exhibition.

SACRE members supported volunteers from the Jewish community in stewarding the event. A report presented to SACRE at the March 2011 meeting indicated that the exhibition was well supported and that a large number of pupils from Portsmouth schools had attended.



SACRE Directory

A SACRE faith directory is produced and updated biannually and is in the process of being updated for September 2011.

The directory facilitates contact between schools and faith communities in the local area. Many teachers use the directory to arrange visits to places of worship or to 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. Primary network meetings are held each term. Schools are encouraged to attend in order to share resources and schemes of work that support delivery of the Agreed Syllabus.

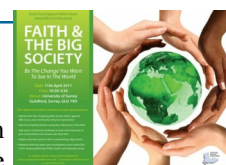
School visits and more

Marilyn Leggett reported on her visit to **Solent Junior School** on 15 March. Marilyn had observed a Year 3 RE lesson introducing the Hindu festival of Holi. Marilyn reported that she had received a very warm welcome at the school by the teacher and the pupils. The lesson included various exercises involving distinguishing between good and evil. Marilyn commented that the children appeared to enjoy the lesson and demonstrated an excellent grasp of the concepts of good and evil.

Ruth Guyer reported that she visited **Court Lane Infant School** in April at a time very close to Passover. The children had been very well behaved and had completed a lot of work on freedom and slavery in connection with the Israelites escape from Egypt. Ruth had been very impressed as the children were only 6 years old and as part of the lesson were learning some Hebrew lettering. The teacher was very enthusiastic and the children asked some very pertinent questions.

Peter Davies reported that he had met Beverley Millsom at **Redwood Park School**. He had received a warm welcome and the children were very happy to talk. The RE lesson was based on a Judaeo-Christian explanation of the creation. The children enjoyed their work and explained to him what they were doing. Peter added that he had enjoyed a sandwich lunch with the group and the children had been very polite and well behaved. He then went to the choir session and had also enjoyed his experience. He expressed his thanks to Beverley Millsom.

'FAITH IN THE BIG SOCIETY' CONFERENCE – 28 MARCH 2011 by Brian Hay



The Conference was held in the Portsmouth Jami Mosque and was attended by over 50 men and women from many different faiths in Portsmouth and the surrounding area. The audience was welcomed by the Mosque representative, Foyzour Rahman.

Canon Nick Ralph, the Chairman of Portsmouth Inter Faith Forum spoke about the 'Rapid Parish Development Programme' and the opportunities offered for making Church buildings available for community use.

Nicky Mirza, a sixth form and adult education lecturer, described her work as a community volunteer and included equality work being undertaken in Basingstoke and North Hampshire.

The main speaker was Francis Davis, well known for his government work on social and community matters and recently the development of 'The Big Society'. He is currently interfaith adviser to the Lord Mayor of London.

His address on 'Faith in the Big Society' included thoughts on raising funds from religious communities to create a bond to be used by community groups helping disadvantaged groups. Francis Davis encouraged the audience to counter government cost savings not with pessimism, but with optimism and discussion took place covering several successful local initiatives. One such initiative concerned the Hindu Temple in Havant, which is opening its doors on a regular basis to other faith groups.

During the refreshment break, delegates were able to view displays illustrating the work of many of the faith groups in Portsmouth and the local area. This was followed by workshops being offered to faith groups, which enabled everyone to interact with ideas from their own faith perspective.

In summary the Conference was not only enjoyable, but also an interesting experience to share views with those of other faiths.

RE Artefacts Loan Service



All primary schools in Portsmouth can subscribe to the RE Artefacts Loan Service. Uptake has increased this year. SACRE funded the resources and many faith communities donated resources. The museum arrange for artefacts to be delivered to schools in return for a minimal subscription cost which covers administration.

SACRE have organised a sub-committee to work alongside Portsmouth Museum to ensure that the service is operating efficiently and that the quality of resources are maintained.

