

Swindon Borough Council

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday, 18 March 2014

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m.

**Group A:
Christian Denominations
and Other Religions or
Religious Denominations**

Mr David Burbidge, Baptist Church
Mr Mark Cawte, Methodist Church, Chair
Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte, United Reformed Church
Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance
Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community
Mr Tony McAteer, Catholic Community
Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community
Vacancy, Buddhist Community
Vacancy, Jewish Community

**Group B:
The Church of England**

Miss Janet French
Reverend Norma McKemey
Ms Steph Mundin
Mrs Penny Summers
Reverend Beth Brown

**Group C:
Teacher Associations**

Mrs Tracy Mason, NUT
Miss Lottie Rowe, NASUWT, Vice-Chair
Mrs Mandy Sandleton, NASUWT
Ms Mel Shepherd, NASUWT
Ms Catherine Lomax, NASUWT - Deputy
Mr Paul Sunners, NAHT

**Group D:
The Local Authority**

Councillor Fay Howard
Councillor James Robbins
Councillor Alan Bishop
Councillor Fionuala Foley
Councillor John Haines

Co-Opted:

Freddy Pound, Swindon Humanists

Support Officers:

Katy Staples, SACRE Advisor
Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser

Committee Officer: Stuart Figini (Telephone 01793 463612)
email: sfigini@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.
3. Public Question Time
See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.
4. Chair's Announcements
 - Copies of Two recent NASACRE briefings are circulated.
 - Membership Update
5. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2013.
6. Draft Swindon SACRE Annual Report (Pages 7 - 16)
A copy of the draft Annual Report is circulated.
7. Religious Education Public Examination Data
A report by the Head of Commissioning Economy/Attainment will be circulated.
8. Progress Reports SACRE Working Parties (Pages 17 - 22)
To receive updates from the following Sub-Committees:
 - Sub-Committee to develop a strategy and actions to promote the role of Swindon SACRE in schools and academies for Headteachers. Two documents are circulated.
 - Sub-Committee to look at developing new distinctively local Swindon RE units of work for Swindon schools and academies. Minutes from the meeting held on 5 February 2014 are attached.
9. Feedback from RE Teachers' Network Meetings
10. Proposal for a Charitable Bid to Support RE in the Area: St Matthias (Pages 23 - 32)
The SACRE Advisor will be asking the SACRE to support an application being made by the Diocese of Bristol to the St Matthias Trust for Religious Education and RE Leaders of the future. A report by the SACRE Advisor and details of a successful project in Cornwall and Devon are attached.

11. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SACRE is on 17 June 2014 starting at 6:00pm.

Members of the SACRE are asked to suggest venues or indicate where this and future meetings of the Panel should be held.

Date of Despatch: 07 March 2014

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

Access Arrangements – The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Clerk above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

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STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2013

PRESENT:-

Group A: Christian Denominations and Other Religions or Religious Denominations	Mr David Burbidge (Baptist Church), Mr Mark Cawte (Methodist Church, Chair), Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte (United Reformed Church), Reverend David Howell (Swindon Evangelical Network) and Mr Dinesh Patel (Hindu Community)
Group B: Church of England	Miss Janet French, Reverend Norma McKemey, Ms Steph Mundin and Mrs Penny Summers
Group C: Teacher Organisations	Mrs Tracy Mason, Miss Lottie Rowe - Vice- Chair, Mrs Mandy Sandleton and Mr Paul Sunnars
Group D: Councillors	Councillors Fay Howard, James Robbins, Alan Bishop and Fionuala Foley
Also in attendance:	Katy Staples (SACRE Advisor)

Apologies for absence were received from Reverend Beth Brown, Ms Mel Shepherd, Ms Catherine Lomax, Mr M S Khan, Mr Tony McAteer, Sarah Foulkes and Councillor John Haines

22. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

23. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

24. Chair's Announcements

The Chair referred to two letters received from the Religious Education Council about the Provision and Training of Religious Education: Guidance for Governing Bodies of Primary Schools and Secondary Schools. The letters highlighted the findings and recommendations contained in the report 'Religious Education the Truth Unmasked' following a recent inquiry held by the All Party Parliamentary Group for RE.

The SACRE noted that separate letters for Primary and Secondary Schools had been prepared by the Religious Education Council and it was suggested that information about Swindon SACRE should be attached to the letters being sent to the Governing Bodies.

25. Membership Update

The SACRE considered a report of the SACRE Advisor and Director of Law and Democratic Services about proposed changes in the membership of SACRE.

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reminded SACRE that at their last meeting on 1 October 2013 they had asked officers to approach the British Humanist Association for a representative to serve as a co-opted member on SACRE. The SACRE also recommended to Council, which was agreed at the Council meeting held on 7 November 2013, that the representation for Group A be increased by an additional two representatives from the Buddhist faith and Jewish faith. The Chair suggested that the SACRE constitution should be updated to include the revised number of representatives for Group A.

The SACRE were informed that the British Humanist Association had been contacted and following consultation with Swindon Humanists appointed a co-opted representative. The Chairman reported that he had been on contact with the local Buddhist organisation and the Jewish Board of Deputies seeking a representative and was waiting for a response.

It was noted that there were still three teacher vacancies and SACRE were encouraged to fill the places.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted
2. That the decision by Council to increase the representation of Group A by 2 additional representatives from the Buddhist and Jewish faiths be noted.
3. That the Swindon SACRE constitution be amended to incorporate the changes at '2' above, as follows:
 - a. Page 3, Section 3, paragraph 3.2.2 (i), line one to read:

GROUP A Representatives from the (non-Christian) five other key world faiths and five further representatives of such Christian Denominations (other than.....

26. Minutes

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2013, be confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to minute 21 referring to SACRE in place of SCARE on the first line of the minute.

27. Example of Good Practice from RE in a Swindon School

The SACRE received a report from Steph Munding, St Francis C of E VA School and Church of England representative about how the school monitors the progress of pupils in RE, as an example of good practice.

Steph explained that the school followed the agreed RE syllabus for Swindon and that the subject was taught exclusively by teachers rather than a combination of teacher and teaching assistants. Assessments were undertaken in a variety of

ways including the use of floor books with work undertaken by the pupils, completion of assessments sheets, electronic tracker assessment undertaken three times a year to compare the attainment level for RE against, for example the levels attained for literacy to give a more comprehensive picture.

In considering the report, SACRE made a number of comments and raised issues, in particular:

- Attainment levels were shared with key stage two pupils but not those at key stage 1
- Outside resources are used and a number of representatives of the various faiths help to support lessons
- The tracking system was analysed and assessed in conjunction with a trained assessor. It was noted that children were achieving levels in line with the levels achieved for literacy
- It was felt that comparisons were needed between the standard of RE teaching in faith schools and non-faith schools
- Examples of good practice had been presented at Clusters meetings and attendees were encouraged to take the examples on board and apply them at their schools

The Chair thanked Steph for her report.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

28. RE Ofsted Report: Realising the Potential

The SACRE Advisor spoke about a recent report produced by Ofsted called Religious Education: Realising the Potential.

The report explained that the past 10 years had seen some improvements in RE in schools, that more pupils had recognised its value and that the range and quality of resources to support teaching the subject had improved. However, evidence from the majority of schools visited for the survey showed that the subject's potential was still not being fully realised.

The SACRE split into groups to respond to a number of questions about the report and any actions arising from the report for Swindon schools and for SACRE. The points raised and responses to questions are attached at appendix 1 to the minutes.

Resolved:

That the Ofsted report be noted.

29. Feedback from RE Best Practice Clusters

The SACRE received a report from the SACRE Advisor on the recent Best Practice Cluster meetings.

The SACRE Advisor explained that the Primary Cluster meeting was very positive with main topic for discussion being 'top tips for making RE a great subject in

school'. Fourteen different schools attended the Cluster meeting and the SACRE Advisor shared examples of best practice in relation to RE and lesson ideas to increase the questioning in schools.

Resolved:

That the comments of the SACRE Advisor be noted.

30. REC RE Review

The SACRE received a report from the SACRE Advisor about a review undertaken by the RE Council of England and Wales as part of its strategic plan to enable the RE Community to adjust to the major changes being made to education in England by the Coalition government.

The SACRE Advisor explained that the Review provided (i) a non-statutory national curriculum framework for RE to complement the new national curriculum programmes of study resulting from the DfE's review of the school curriculum, in which RE was not included and (ii) an analysis of the wider context in which RE found itself, including the opportunities and challenges that faced the implementation of the new curriculum framework.

The SACRE split into groups to respond to a number of questions about the report and any actions arising from the report for Swindon schools and for SACRE.

Resolved:

That the report from the SACRE Advisor be noted.

31. Progress Report from Sub-Committees

The SACRE Advisor reported on the recent activities of the SACRE Sub-Committees that were set up at the last meeting:

- a) 'How can we Promote SACRE More Effectively' Sub-Committee
This Sub-Committee met on 19 November 2013 and considered the reasons why SACRE should be promoted in Swindon, what information would be included in any communication and how would it be said.

The Chair reported that he had been looking at how the SACRE web site could be updated to make it more relevant and contain all the SACRE information in one place. He asked the SACRE to let him know of anyone who had experience of developing webpages.

A number of actions came out of the meeting that would be followed up before the next meeting on 28 January 2014.

- b) Developing New Distinctively Local Swindon Units of Work Sub-Committee
This Sub-Committee was due to meet on 27 November 2013 but due to unforeseen circumstances did not go ahead. A further meeting was being arranged to meet before the next SACRE meeting in March 2014.

32. Feedback from Members Representing SACRE on other Bodies

The SACRE received a report from Paul Sunners, who represented the SACRE on the Swindon Borough Council Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Paul explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee amongst other duties scrutinised education in Swindon. The last meeting of the Committee received a report from the Youth Forum commenting on the United Kingdom Youth Parliament national campaign around 'A curriculum to prepare us for life'. The campaign called for a review of the curriculum which would put the skills and knowledge young people needed for an increasingly competitive world at its heart.

The SACRE noted that seven and possibly nine secondary headteachers had signed up to this campaign, along with nearly 1,000 signatures from young people who supported it. It was suggested that the SACRE strongly support the Youth Parliament campaigns as an opportunity to enhance the role of RE further.

Resolved:

That the report from Paul Sunners be noted.

33. Date and Time of the Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of SACRE would be held on Tuesday 18 March 2014, commencing at 6:00pm at a venue to be agreed.

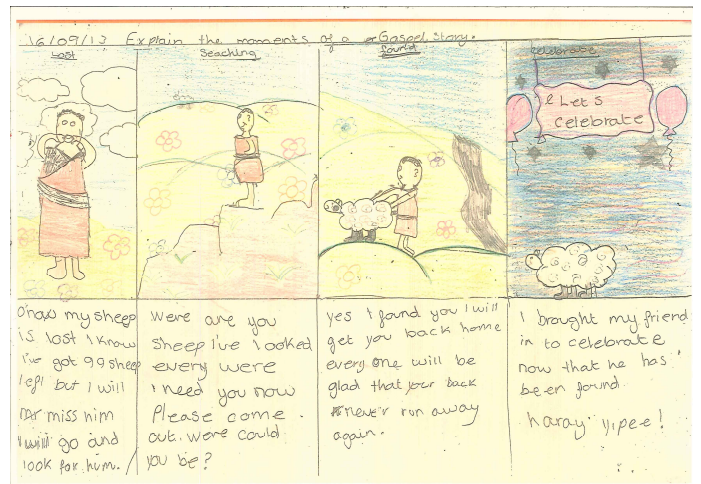
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Swindon SACRE Annual Report 2012 -13



Year 7 Students from Dorcan Academy explore the Symbolism used in Indian dance

Year 3 work from St Francis VA Church of England School
"Explain the meaning of a Gospel Story"



Year 3 Children from Bridlewood Primary School visit a church to find out how Christians worship God

Chair's Introduction

It has been an exhaustive year for Swindon SACRE in responding to some conflicting messages from the coalition Government about the place of Religious Education in English Schools.

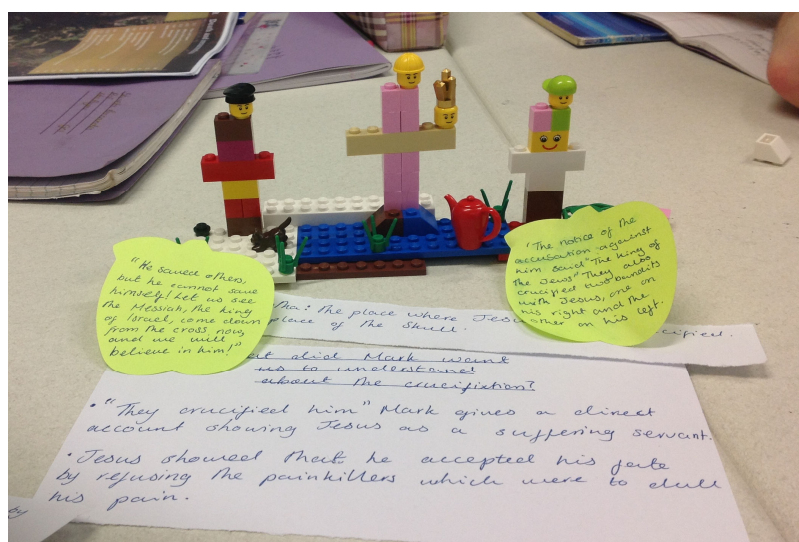
Some schools in Swindon have struggled to find the curriculum time to ensure full entitlement to Religious Education and in KS4 a few schools are prioritising other Humanities subjects over RE. Whereas in Primary schools, anecdotal evidence, reveals the pressure to deliver appropriate English and Maths progression has also been detrimental to the appropriate time to be offered to Religious Education.

Despite that some exciting and innovative RE is happening in Swindon Schools and we have been able to continue to support teachers through network meetings and access to an informed and committed adviser.

Swindon SACRE is a hard working group of people from all faiths and non committed to seeing children and young people in the area equipped to live in a religiously diverse world. They should be appreciated for the service they have offered by sitting on this council this year 2012- 13 .

Mark Cawte

Year 10 students explain the significance of the crucifixion for Christians by using Lego.



Executive Summary

The report meets the requirements of the 1988 Education Act, which states that:

- 'The council shall in each year publish a report of their functions and any action taken by representative groups on the council during the preceding year.'
- The report is required to specify any matters in respect of which the council has given advice to the authority, and the nature of that advice.

The key function of SACRE is to advise the Local Authority on RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus.¹

The composition of SACRE is set out in legislation.

The four groups or committees represent the following interests within the local community. These are the people that have served for the year September 2012 to - June 2013 or for a part of that period.

- **Committee A Christian Denominations, Other Religions or Religious Denominations**

Reverend David Howell, Swindon Evangelical Alliance
Mr M S Khan, Muslim Community
Mr Dinesh Patel, Hindu Community,
Mr Arun Bedi, Sikh Community – Deputy
Mr Mark Cawte, Methodist Church (Chair from December 2012)
Mr David Burbidge, Baptist Church
Mr Tony McAteer, Catholic Community
Mrs Sarah Lane Cawte, United Reformed Church

- **Committee B The Church of England**

Reverend Norma McKemey
Ms Steph Mordin
Miss Janet French
Mrs Penny Summers
Reverend Beth Brown

- **Committee C Teacher Association Representatives**

Mrs Tracy Mason
Mrs Mandy Sandleton
Miss Lottie Rowe
Mr Paul Sunners
Ms Mel Shepherd
Ms Catherine Lomax
Mrs Victoria Misselbrook

- **Committee D The Local Authority.**
Councillor Doreen Dart (Chair)

¹ Section 391(1)(a), Education Act 1996

Councillor Russell Holland
Councillor James Robbins
Councillor Fay Howard
Councillor Claire Ellis
Councillor Alan Bishop
Councillor Fionuala Foley

Support Officers:

Ms Katy Staples, SACRE Adviser, 0117 9175583, katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org
Ms Sarah Foulkes, School Improvement Adviser
Mr Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning
Miss Sarah Lawrence Committee Officer

Members are nominated by appropriate organisations and appointments confirmed by the Local Authority. Other members may be co-opted.

SACRE met on four occasions during the Academic year 2012 - 13

All meetings were quorate.

Tuesday 25th September 2012

At St Francis Church of England VA Primary School, Aitken Road, Taw Hill, SN25 1UH

Agenda items were:

- Religious Education at St Francis School and the role of the Community Link support worker in supporting RE
- National Updates on RE
- A SACRE self Assessment activity to make the next Development Plan
- Update on RE Network meetings

Tuesday 4th December 2012

Committee Room 3, Civic Offices

Agenda items were:

- A Tribute and memorial for Councillor Doreen Dart (Chair of SACRE)
- The election of a new Chair and Vice-Chair
- REC Draft Review
- National Developments
- Feedback from Network Meetings
- SACRE Development Plan

Tuesday 19th March 2013

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

Agenda items were

- SACRE Annual Report and Development Plan
- National Developments in RE
- Feedback from Network meetings

Tuesday 25th June 2013

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

- Membership Update
- Examples of the Activities that happen in RE Teacher Network meetings

- National Developments including the final comments on the Draft RE Review sent to the REC
- SACRE Development Plan - and setting up sub groups
- Feedback from network meetings
- A fond farewell was offered to Sarah Lawrence who had acted as Clerk to SACRE for 10 years

Challenges and opportunities that lie ahead

Challenges for SACRE include

- Offering continuing support for RE within a limited budget.
- Keeping alive a local community of shared best practice and enthusiasm amongst a changing landscape of school providers
- On going need to monitor achievements in RE effectively
- To ensure that the work of SACRE is understood by different stakeholders in Swindon.

Opportunities include

- The enthusiasm and professionalism of SACRE members. This is exemplified by members who have volunteered and worked hard on sub-committees.
- Continued commitment and dedication of teachers as shown by attendance at Network meetings and other CPD opportunities offered by SACRE

1. Standards and quality of Religious Education (RE) Provision

1a. Compliance and time allocation for RE

The Locally Agreed Syllabus sets out the required number of hours for each pupil in relation to the delivery of RE, which is 36 hours in Key Stage 1 and is 45 hours per year for Key Stage 2, 3 and 4.

With the lack of information available through Ofsted reporting, it is very difficult to determine whether community schools and academies are fully compliant with the statutory requirements for RE.

This next yellow highlighted section will need updating when the 2013 examination results are presented

It is recognised in the examination entry statistics at Key Stage 4, that there has been a decline of 79 students being entered for a public examination in RE in the last year.

Only 47.4 % of students in Swindon are entered for a public examination in RE

Within over half of Swindon Schools the majority of students are not following a public examination course.

Churchfields, and Dorcan School as well as Swindon Academy schools appear to have not entered any students for a public examination in RE at KS4 ,for 2 of those schools this is a new phenomenon in

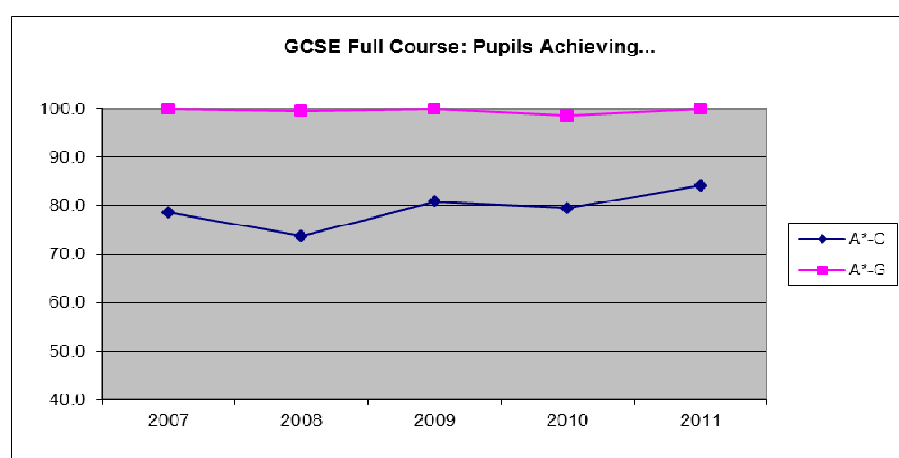
1b Public Examination entries in RE

Results for the **GCE and GCSE.**

323 students out of cohort of 2293 were entered for full course which is the highest number in three years. This represents a 1.5 % increase in the numbers of entrants since last year. The largest number of examination entries were from St Joseph's Catholic College. However Greendown, Kingsdown Ridgeway, and Warneford Schools, also had pupils taking full course RE examinations.

Results from the 2011 full GCSE were 84.2 % A* - C which was considerably above the national average of 71.1% and represents the best results for full course RE in Swindon in five years.

GCSE Full Course: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A*-C	78.6	73.8	80.9	79.5	84.2
A*-G	100.0	99.6	100.0	98.6	100.0

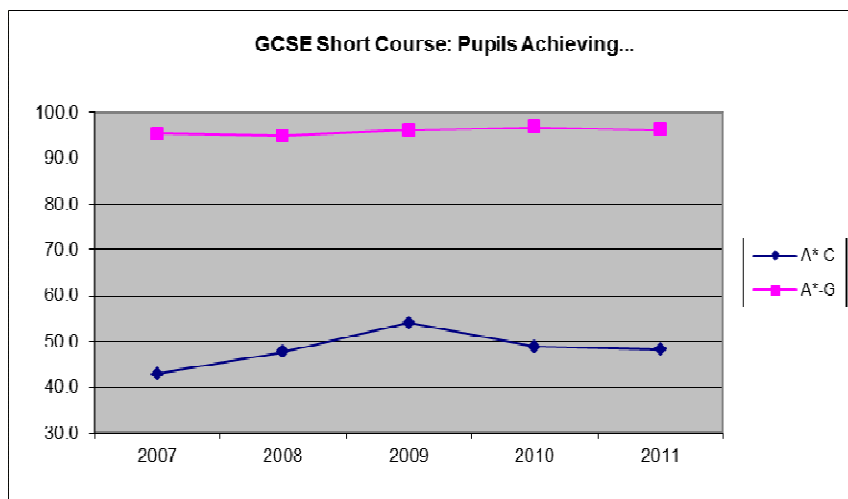


764 students from 7 schools (including 2 special schools) out of a cohort of 2293 were entered for short course RE which is the lowest number for 4 years. This represents a 5% decrease in entrants since last year.

Nova Hreod, Greendown, Commonweal Schools and Warneford School all entered the majority of their cohort for RE short course examination entries.

Results from the short course were 48.2 % A* - C which is below the national average of 50.4% and just below the Swindon 2010 results 48.9%

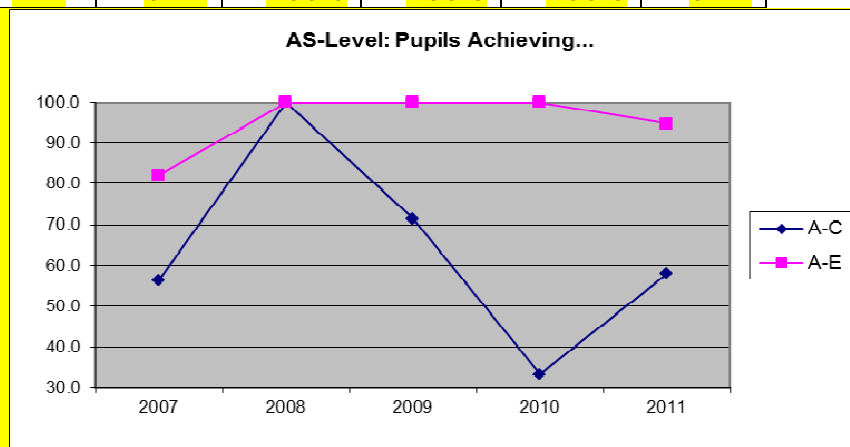
GCSE Short Course: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A*-C	42.9	47.7	54.0	48.9	48.2
A*-G	95.4	94.9	96.1	96.8	96.2



GCE A and AS Level Religious Studies

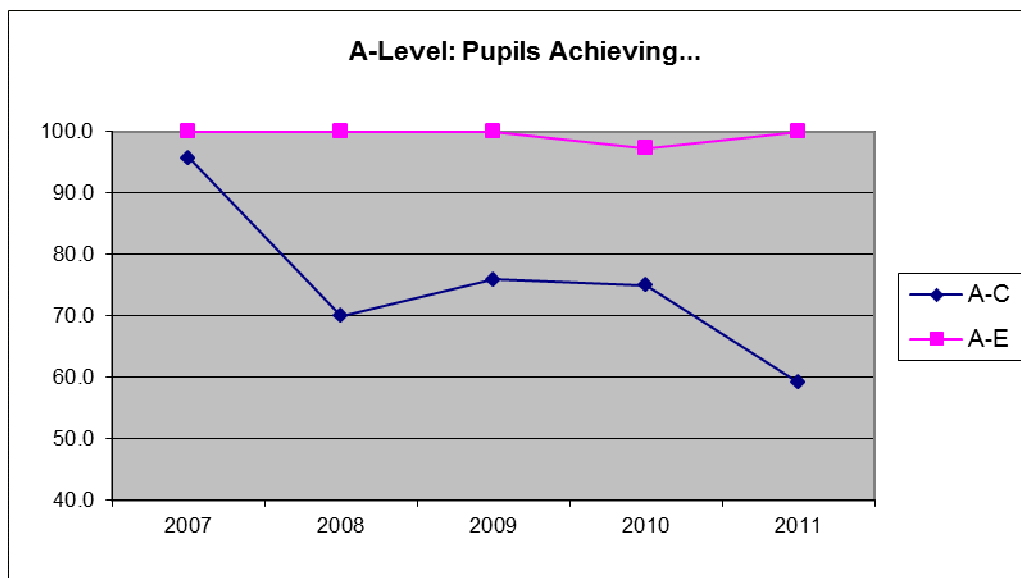
The numbers taking AS level increased to 19 from 14 in 2010. The largest number of examination entries came from New College. With Ridgeway School also entering students. There was an increase in standards from 33% A-C grades in 2010 to 57.9% A-C grades in 2011.

AS-Level: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A-C	56.4	100.0	71.4	33.3	57.9
A-E	82.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	94.7



49 pupils took A level in 2011 (13 more than in 2009). The highest number of examination entries came from St Joseph's Roman Catholic College and New College. The average percentage gaining A*-C was 59.2% which was the lowest for 5 years and quite considerably lower than last year's 75%. Those gaining A*-E was 94.7%.

A-Level: Pupils Achieving...					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
A-C	95.7	70.0	75.9	75.0	59.2
A-E	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.2	100.0



1c Standards and achievement quality of teaching and quality of leadership and management of RE

There are no methods for collecting verifiable evidence of levels of achievement in RE, other than through public examination results. There are no opportunities to access sufficient information to make a well-substantiated judgement on the quality of RE teaching or leadership and management of RE in Swindon schools.

Support has been offered to both Primary and Secondary RE teachers about the management of RE and key National documents have been shared, modelled and discussed during network meetings.

2. Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

SACRE members have been offered training at the SW SACRE conference in Dillington House but unfortunately no members except the adviser were able to attend.

The LA officers Sarah Foulkes and Paddy Bradley have attended SACRE meetings and have been kept informed of national and local developments in RE.

Local councillors play an informed and supportive role in all SACRE meetings.

The diverse constituents of SACRE ensure that the breadths of beliefs held in Swindon are represented and links to those key stakeholders are sustained.

2a SACRE development

CPD offered.

All Secondary Schools in Swindon are now Academies, network meetings are financially supported by SACRE and attendance at these meetings by RE colleagues has remained at a level constant to the time prior to these schools becoming academies.

Three of these meetings were held in the academic year 2011 – 12 .

Three network meetings were also held for primary colleagues.

Primary /Secondary/Venue	Date/Topic
Lydiard Park Academy	26/9/12 Sharing Good Practice - examples from colleagues best units of work
Lydiard Park Academy	16/1/13 Assessment and progression in RE : Providing the right challenge?
Lydiard Park Academy	17/4/13 Ethics and RE : using the Media – making lessons relevant and rigorous
Primary Goddard Park Primary School	4/10/12 How to be an effective RE Subject leader
Primary Orchid Vale Primary School	31/1/13 Assessment and Challenge in RE: Providing the right challenge?
Primary Liden Primary School	7/5/13 Compelling and Creative ideas in RE

Further Training signposted for teachers

3 Secondary Colleagues attended the Wiltshire Secondary RE Conference

5 Colleagues both Primary and Secondary accessed the Bristol and South Glos. Annual RE conference for RE teachers

3. The Effectiveness of the local Agreed Syllabus

3a

The update for the Locally Agreed Syllabus was launched in June 2011 and so this has been a year of further consolidation. With limited capacity to observe teaching and learning it is hard to effectively evaluate the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

4. Collective Worship

Last year a central focus for SACRE was Collective worship when the guidance document "A Time to Breathe" was written and circulated.

This continues to be an important inspirational resource for Swindon Schools.

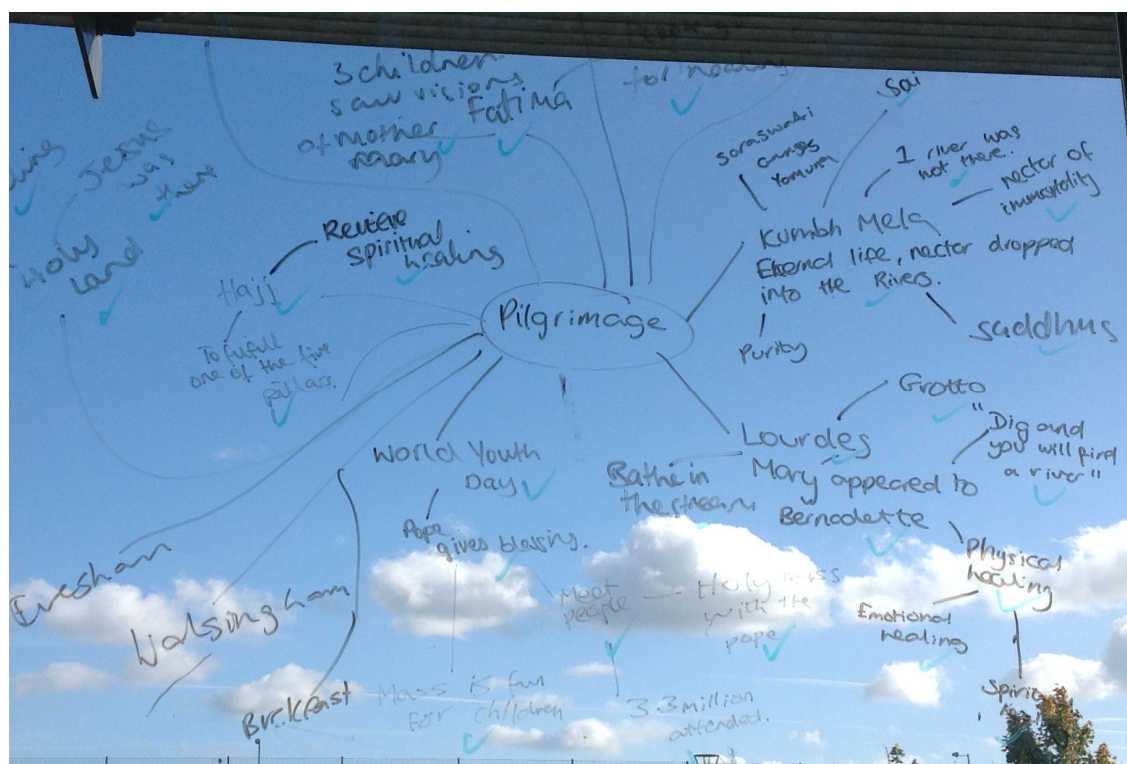
There were no determinations in force during the reporting year.

No formal complaints or other matters were referred to SACRE this year.

5. SACRE as a representative effective diverse community

There is an active and participatory ethos and sense of community within Swindon SACRE, the quality of debate, spiritual insight and meticulous attention to detail has been observed throughout full committee meetings and in working parties.

2012 -13 has been a sustained year of faithful commitment for Swindon SACRE in the face of movement and flux. The end of the year saw us lose an incredibly thorough diligent and informed clerk in the person of Sarah Lawrence. The academic year started with a time of huge sadness and at the loss of our well respected Chair. SACRE has with resilience continued to serve Swindon conscientiously, making reasoned decisions to support the children of Swindon in their understanding and appreciation of the place of belief in our world.



Year 9 students at St Joseph's make revision mind maps by writing on classroom windows with whiteboard pens

Promotion of SACRE Meeting

Tuesday 28th January 2014 4pm St Francis School

Those present : Steph Munding and Katy Staples

Minutes

Actions since the last meeting

Letter to Governors about their responsibility to RE (from RE Council) had been sent to Governors services

Through the petitioning and actions of Paul Sunners, Katy Staples is now offering training to all Governors about RE and SMSC through Governor training services.

Steph Munding has written an excellent brief article entitled "What is SACRE?" (attached in papers) which can be circulated to all faith leaders and community associations to be included in their newsletters to educate people as to What SACRE is.

Next meeting and further follow up to be arranged when other members of the group are available.

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What is SACRE?

Are you interested in how children and young people are taught RE in school? Do you believe excellent RE teaching and provision is important in every child and young person's education?

If you answered 'yes' to either or both of these questions then you will be interested to learn about the work of SACRE. SACRE is a body, required by law, set up to promote RE in schools in the UK. SACRE stands for Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education and is made up of faith representatives, members of the teaching profession and councillors. Swindon SACRE, which is part of NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education) meets four times a year to discuss a wide range of issues with the ultimate aim of promoting RE in Swindon schools.

At one Swindon school children were asked about RE and its importance;

Children commented that they enjoyed and valued the first hand experiences they were given in RE such as visits to the Sikh Temple and local churches. Children also recalled many creative activities which helped them to develop understanding such as art work, role play, diamond 9 activities, asking questions and creating powerpoints.

"I learn that we are all equal even though we have different beliefs."

"RE has helped to make me ready for the future."

RE is important to the children of Swindon. If you would like to support SACRE or are interested in finding out more please visit www.nasacre.org.uk or e-mail Katy Staples (Advisor to SACRE) katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org

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Swindon SACRE “Distinctively Local RE” working party

Committee Room 3, Civic Offices, Euclid Street

Wed 5th February 2014

10 am - 11.30

Minutes

Those present: Miss Janet French, Reverend Beth Brown, Mr M S Khan, Katy Staples

KS explained the idea of the Distinctively Local RE project - to ensure that children and young people in Swindon would be able to experience that belief is a something held and lived out by people in Swindon.

Some possible ideas were shared:

1.Swindon Food Banks - particularly looking at the work of the Gateway Church.

Year 2 “How do Christians care for others” or Yr3 “How do Christians show their commitment to Jesus’ teaching?” or Yr5 “How have Christians sought to follow the teachings of Jesus?”

Katy Staples and Janet French to develop - and report - next SACRE meeting June/July 2014

2. How to use your local Church as a resource for RE - using East Swindon (Liden and Nythe) as a case study for others to follow

Rec “What places are special to others?” Yr 1 “Why is a Church Special place for Christians” Yr3 How does a Church help Christians to worship?

Revd. Beth Brown to develop - and report next SACRE meeting June / July 2014

3. How do Muslims worship in Swindon?

Yr 2 Why is the Mosque a special place for Muslims? Yr 3 How is the Mosque the centre of the Islamic community ?

Mr Khan, Janet French and Katy Staples to develop - update at the summer SACRE meeting.

Other ideas for future development.

Swindon Town Football Club and Faith ? Simon Stevenette as Chaplain to the Football club - a profile.

Available stories/ profiles of other people of faith in Swindon.

Lydiard park Walled Garden of Remembrance - a site to remember - could be developed as part of a unit on Death and Dying.

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St Matthias Trust Bid for Religious Education

In Cornwall and Devon a very successful project has been undertaken funded by the St Luke's Charitable trust. (see paper)

The Diocese of Bristol proposes to make an application to the St Matthias Trust to undertake a similar project in this area.

This project will seek to build the RE leaders and advisers of the future by empowering teachers of religious education to become leaders of RE.

We are asking for Swindon SACREs support in making this bid.

We ask RE teachers to complete this survey in order to establish unmet needs.

<http://www.bristol.anglican.org/2014/re-survey/>

Katy Staples

05/03/14

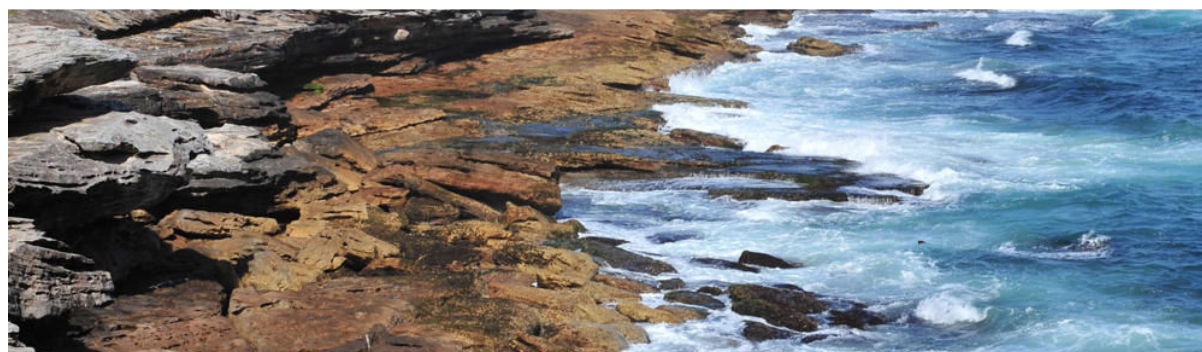
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LEARN/TEACH/LEAD: Enhancing RE in the South-West

Briefing paper 7 – for CStG RE Leadership weekend (28th/29th)

Linda Rudge – Project Director

September 2013



www.ltlRE.org is under development with Project Lead Teachers (PLREs) and Steering Group members. Please visit it for updates and forums.

Context

This paper is based on the most recent briefing papers in circulation around the south-west region's continuing professional development (CPD) providers and within the project's teams. The aim of the seminar at the RE Leadership weekend is to share this model of CPD nationally, and to promote an on-going (on-line) discussion about the project's findings to date. This is partly in order to test their validity on a wider scale.

This aim will be achieved through a report on the project's history, development and findingsⁱ and a question/answer session to start the discussions. By the end of the seminar participants should be able to i) understand the project's rationale and ii) be able to reflect on its relevance to their own needs and local area.

The 'Learn/Teach/Lead RE' (LTLRE) Project

The project was launched in October 2012 through funding in excess of £100,000ⁱⁱ, for a three year period, from the St Luke's College Foundation (often referred to as St Luke's Trust) <http://www.st-lukes-foundation.org.uk/>

The overall aim of the project is to identify and address unmet needs of RE (Religious Education) teachers in Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay and thereby to improve the quality of teaching & learning outcomes, and leadership. It intends to achieve this by the leadership of local teachers in clusters/hubs across the region, working closely with established advisory staff in local authorities, diocesan boards of education and universities. There is an emphasis in the project on the needs of

newly-qualified or early RE career teachers, and on the needs of teachers (and teaching assistants) with other specialisms and responsibilities.

The hypotheses underpinning the project's design were stated in the original funding bid.

1. *There is need for improvement in the quality of RE teaching, learning and leadership in schools.*
2. *There is a decline in support available to teachers of RE.*
3. *There is diminished capacity of LAs to provide effective training in RE.*
4. *There is a need to establish more effective partnerships between faith communities, SACREs and all education settings for the betterment of RE. (CCYP, Exeter, Nov 2011ⁱⁱⁱ)*

These ideas are not surprising given the historical context of the period of the bid, and the interests of the principal authors; like any hypothesis they are open to challenge, investigation, review, ratification, or even rejection^{iv}. However, the underlying principles of effective partnerships and the recognition of teachers' enthusiasm, hard work and professional quest for learning in RE, mean that the project has been welcomed across the region.

Through background research from three principal sources (Conroy, Jackson^v and OFSTED), through focus group discussions in the original steering group, and through a questionnaire to schools, the project proposal to St Luke's reported that the 'unmet' CPD needs of teachers were not remarkably different to national trends and perceptions, and they tended to be associated with uncertainties about the subject:

- *'the core purpose of the subject*
- *how attainment is defined*
- *the way pupils' progress is defined*
- *how key concepts and questions can be used in RE*
- *how to secure continuity and progression in the RE curriculum*
- *the way to structure and define a clear process of learning in RE*
- *the approach to teaching about Christianity*
- *ways of balancing the need to foster respect for pupils' religions and beliefs within open, critical, investigative learning in RE*
- *the place of teaching about humanism and non-religious beliefs*

(OFSTED, 2010^{vi})

The project's original and emerging data can be clustered around these headings, although the approach to teaching about Christianity is not explicitly identified as an 'unmet need' in the SW region; this might indicate a misconception about this area of the curriculum, not that 'all is well'. There are others, such as the ambiguous legal position of RE in different school settings and the impact of this ambiguity on continuity and progression. One unmet need identified by the steering group, and reiterated in the conference data and hub meetings, was the level of teachers' subject knowledge and understanding across such a wide-ranging and challenging curriculum:

As a group we feel strongly that there is a clear need to strengthen subject knowledge in the teaching of RE. This is a particularly important when cross-curricular approaches to teaching RE are employed as sometimes the religious element of this is diminished. A priority for this project is strengthening the links teachers have with faith traditions, especially in the south west, so that their own understanding of different faith traditions can be extended. (CCYP, 2011)

The perceived need to celebrate the diverse nature of religion, religions, spiritualities and worldviews represented in agreed syllabuses have all been mentioned in hub groups, with a plea for

more resources and opportunities to enable interfaith dialogue in (and beyond) schools. There have also been requests for more exemplification of units of work and examples of pupils' learning. Teachers are keen to observe outstanding practice in other schools.

During the first year, hub leaders have reported increasing anxiety in schools about RE's position in the curriculum and its status in schools. Other providers (e.g. RE-Online, the RE Quality Mark, RE Today and the National Association for Teachers of RE) are already working with us in our efforts to support teachers and other educators across the south-west during this difficult period of change. RE training to support teaching assistants in primary school has also been a recurring theme in hub discussions. Some meetings have a high percentage of attendance by people in these roles, though there is some uncertainty about how long this will continue under proposed government changes to employment conditions.

The project (2012-15) is being externally evaluated by Dr John Gay, Oxford. It is led by Tatiana Wilson (Exeter Diocesan Board of Education, which is also the administrative centre) and the director is Linda Rudge. A Steering Group, representing all the partners in the project, meets three times a year; it advises the project leader and director on the development of the programme, and on future bids for funds.^{vii} An additional bid to St Luke's for an enhancement grant of just over £15,000 to sustain growth in 2013-15 has been approved. We are also planning a bid for the continuation of the project beyond its current 'end date' of 2015, and this bid may include other funding agencies. St Luke's Foundation is keen to 'pump-prime' initiatives so that they can be demonstrated as viable to other potential partners.

Hub Leaders (PLREs)

The project's underlying rationale can be illustrated by the diagrams that use the words 'Teach' and 'Learn' as reflections of one another (you can find many on-line, but please note copyright material). The rationale is also encapsulated in the motto '*Docere est Discere*' – to teach is to learn. The teachers in lead roles in the project are simultaneously in the positions of learners and teachers. They learn from the training and from each other, they teach, and learn from, others in the hub meetings and contribute to the learning of the advisory team. Then they share their learning in their own schools both as teachers of children and young people and as leaders of RE amongst their peers and school leaders. A community of enquiry and learning (see for example Cassidy, Christie et al, 2008)^{viii} supported through a virtual environment and in face to face meetings is being created across a large and diverse region.

We have appointed ten out of fourteen project leaders for RE (PLREs) who are all teachers of RE in primary and secondary schools across the region. One reserve PLRE covers absences where feasible. PLREs have tenure on these roles (and an annual honorarium) until at least January 2015.

We are still looking for **four** colleagues to fill the PLRE roles in Cornwall as part of the enhancement bid created the opportunity for a third Cornwall hub. The deadline for applications is **30th September**. Supported by steering group members, and by the equivalent of two days training each year, PLREs are expected to lead the hub groups in developing quality RE which raises standards and improves teacher knowledge and confidence.

The project's lead teachers are chosen through an open and widely advertised regional selection process. Candidates are asked to make a five minute presentation within a peer focus group setting of their skills in subject leadership, specifically as these relate to leadership of other colleagues. Five out of the ten leaders so far are in the early stages of their RE careers.

PLRE	e-mail contact	Home/ school base	HUB/area
Nicola Bonell	Nicki@st-marys-ce-pz.cornwall.sch.uk	St Mary's (CE) Primary, Penzance	West Cornwall(PY)
Michael Heron	MHeron@helston.cornwall.sch.uk	Helston Community College	West Cornwall
Rachel Willcocks	Rachel.Hughes@exmouthcollege.devon.sch.uk	Exmouth Community College	Exeter and East Devon (SY)
Sarah Hopkins	shopkins@drakes.devon.sch.uk	Drake's (CE) Primary School East Budleigh	Exeter and East Devon (PY)
Joseph Matthews	jmatthews@ilfracombecollege.devon.sch.uk	Ilfracombe Community College	North Devon (SY)
Gill Tewkesbury	gtewkesbury@piltonbluecoat.devon.sch.uk	Pilton Bluecoat School, Barnstaple	North Devon - PY
Corrine Price	corrineprice@wolborough-primary.devon.sch.uk	Wolborough (CE) Primary, Newton Abbot	Newton Abbot/ Torbay Area
Charlotte Caluori	Charlotte.Caluori@stcm.torbay.sch.uk	St Cuthbert Mayne (RC/CE) Secondary	Newton Abbott/ Torbay Area
Ian Hartley	HartleyI@ridgeway.plymouth.sch.uk	The Ridgeway School, Plymouth	Plymouth (SY) and website lead
Katie Freeman	hyde.park.infants.school@plymouth.gov.uk	Hyde Park Infants, Plymouth	Plymouth - PY
			East Cornwall – PY and SY vacancies
			Mid/North Cornwall – PY and SY vacancies
Simon Knight	sknight@asap.org.uk	All Saints Academy Plymouth	SY – reserve Plymouth area

Hub Meetings

Details about dates of termly hub meetings and venues are posted on the website and they are sent round to schools through partnership networks. These are now underway in all areas and some have met twice. Steering group members and the project director are leading in areas where PLREs are yet to be appointed. Reports of the meetings are added to the website by PLREs through the website manager, Ian Hartley.

Attendance rates are promising – between ten and twenty attendees in most hubs across the region – and venues change to make sure meetings are accessible to more staff. This presents some questions about continuity in the training, but it takes account of the large geographical areas^{ix} and

travel times to twilight sessions. Meetings last about one hour and a half, and venues are offered a small fee for accommodation and refreshments. Topics for sessions are governed partly by the cycle of training for PLREs, but as meetings do not all happen at the same time in the cycle, agendas are usually agreed by PLREs with teachers who attend the session. There is a strong element of 'bring and share' – RE planning, curriculum materials and refreshments!

Training for PLREs

The first training day took place in Plymouth in January 2013, and explored assessment (especially AT2, Dilwyn Hunt) and subject knowledge (Judaism, David Hampshire). These topics emerged from the first conference. The second training date was 27th June (Exeter). Leaders included Jonathan Marshall MBE, Director of the Centre for Faiths and Diversity, Tatiana Wilson from Exeter DBE, and Linda Rudge (Project Director). Training sessions focused on planning RE, CPD for PLREs including accreditation, interfaith dialogue and RE, and managing hub meetings

2012 conference: 'The Teacher as the Key to Successful RE'

The project was launched at a conference in Plymouth. This was attended by 64 delegates and speakers, mainly teachers from primary and secondary schools (approximately - 10 from Cornwall, 24 from Devon, and 19 from Plymouth and Torbay.) The programme lived up to its promise to provide opportunities for teachers and other educators in the region to enjoy positive experiences of continuing professional development at another challenging time in the history of this subject. All the evaluations showed how much teachers and other guests appreciated this opportunity.

Our two nationally renowned keynote speakers (Mark Chater and Dilwyn Hunt) presented sessions that raised (and answered) questions about the meaning of 'learning from 'religion, and about assessment for learning in RE. Workshop and session leaders from the steering group, and the PLREs, added to the professional and academic challenges presented by the keynote speeches. These sessions also provided teachers with an excellent start to the CPD promised in this project, and suggestions for the two training days (above) were drawn from evaluations and requests from PLREs.

2013 conference – 'Sustaining RE: developing the Art of Subject Leadership'

This will take place at Dartington Hall near Totnes, Devon. Keynote speakers at this historic educational venue will include Alan Brine, HMI, National Adviser for RE who will focus on the forthcoming long report from OFSTED on RE. Other speakers are Kathryn Wright (CPD4RE) and Lat Blaylock (RE Today). It is a free event for all teachers of RE (state sector) in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Workshops will include *RE-Route*, *RE-Online* and presentations from Project Lead Teachers of RE, and local RE advisers from across the south-west region. At the moment we are holding a waiting list as all available residential places have been booked.

Bid to St Luke's Foundation to enhance the project between 2013 and 2015

An additional bid to St Luke's for an enhancement grant to sustain growth in 2013-15 has been awarded (June 2013) – see below. We are also planning a bid for the continuation of the project

beyond its current 'end date' of January 2015. During the first year of funding (April 2012-April 2013) several areas for development were identified. These were based on additional needs highlighted by the project lead, project director and steering group. They reflect the enthusiasm with which the PLREs have shown in their roles, their emerging success, and the practical issues and new opportunities that team members have encountered in the first year of the project. The project is currently funded to run until January 2015, and the funds for this extension are intended to take the activities through to the current end date.

AIMS of the programme extension in year 2/3:

1. to create opportunities for PLREs to enhance RE in local cluster groups through a) being enabled to observe good practice and b) being enabled to visit other schools in their immediate hub area to offer on-site CPD through modelling good practice in classrooms or staff meetings;
2. to create third Cornwall hub, with two PLREs, in Cornwall covering mid and northern areas;
3. to facilitate academic or vocational accreditation for the PLREs through project partner Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) – this will also boost the research base for the project as a whole;
4. to provide direct support from the project director to PLREs in their own schools through annual visits/on-site CPD;
5. to continue to develop the website (www.ltIRE.org) with a view to launching a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) section for project members in 2015;
6. to provide administrative support for the extended programme.

Beyond 'the end' - 2015

In a CPD project of this kind the principal intention is to leave a legacy for the future (CCYP, 2011) both in the participating schools and in the wider learning networks across the region. Any bid for funding beyond 2015 will need to take account of the external evaluation report as well as the programme evaluations taking place throughout the project. Detailed future planning is not appropriate at this stage.

However, early indications suggest some gaps in provision that were not anticipated. These have appeared because of the initial success of the project's provision i.e. we are finding it challenging to meet demand, and we need to find ways not to disappoint our colleagues when we have raised expectations. These reflections lead to four additional areas for consideration in relation to future funding:

1. The geographical limits on the programmes (peninsula of Devon and Cornwall, and the Isles) have presented some disappointment amongst schools engaged with the project's Higher Education partners beyond these limits. This might be an area for consideration in any continuation or expansion.
2. It has also been difficult so far to engage students on ITE courses directly, and we need to find a way either to encourage their participation or to recognise that the constraints of ITE programmes (in all settings) will usually prevent their attendance at hub meetings or the annual conference.

3. With limited (but generous) funding, the hub areas are very large, mostly rural with small populations, and often challenging in terms of transport links. While we are conscious of the potential benefits of the website as a means of communication, the central method of the LTLRE approach to CPD is face to face support and learning. It might be possible to engage in partnership with other schemes and funding streams to establish satellite hubs between 2014 and 2018. For example, NATRE has offered to link all the existing hubs to their resources and benefits; this is under discussion for 2013-14.

4. The eight original partners in the project currently represent traditional providers of RE ITE and CPD. This could be reviewed and others might offer support. As it is, the only direct funding comes from the Foundation and partners support some aspects of the work by offering venues and administrative support, workshops and professional time. Funding streams could be expanded. These prospects need to be researched and approached with some sensitivity and realism in the changing context for teacher education and learning.

In the meantime, we are looking forward to this second year, to further data from PLREs and their hubs to inform planning, and to feedback from others in similar CPD settings across the country.

(Briefing paper 7 ends – LR/16/09/13)

ⁱ Further details of these will be presented in power-point format at the seminar.

ⁱⁱ Similarly, there will be a slide with a budget outline.

ⁱⁱⁱ Bid to St Luke's College Foundation for a grant to support 'Unmet Needs in RE', (Council for Children and Young People, Diocese of Exeter, November 2011)

^{iv} The project Director (who was not part of the original steering group) has taken them as 'proven' for the first year of the project given the limited research resource within the project as a whole; we would all welcome the opportunity to explore them in more depth.

^v Conroy, J. C. (2011) *Does Religious Education Work? A three-year investigation into the practices and outcomes of religious education: A Briefing Paper* University of Glasgow

Jackson R, et al. (2010) *Materials used to teach about World Religions in schools in England* Institute of Education, University of Warwick, Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, Warwick: DCSF

^{vi} Office for Standards in Education (2010) *Transforming religious education: Religious Education in Schools 2006-2009*. London: OFSTED

^{vii} The steering group contributes actively to hub meetings, the conference, and to strategic developments. It represents partners across the region, and includes SACRE members. From 2014, nominated PLREs will take turns to attend steering group meetings; PLREs already make reports to local Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACREs). Current membership of the group is:

Exeter Diocesan Board of Education: Tatiana Wilson
Truro Diocesan Board of Education: Irene Pooley
Cornwall LA/SACRE: David Hampshire
Devon LA/SACRE and NATRE: Graham Langtree/Ed Pawson
Torbay LA/SACRE: David Hampshire
Plymouth LA/SACRE: Jonathan Marshall
University of Exeter: Karen Walshe
University of St Mark and St John: Karen Stockham
Teacher representative (St Luke's Foundation): Giles Freathy
St Luke's College Foundation (Trustees): Dick Powell
Project Director: Linda Rudge

Other individuals are consulted as appropriate, and at the request of the group. We are grateful to Teresa Griffiths for continuing to advise us after a change of employer, to Penny Burnside (Early Years Specialist in the Diocese of Exeter) who was in the original steering group, to Dave Francis (RE consultant) and Cathy Davie (National Society) who both supported the bid as referees, and to Barbara Wintersgill, former HMI for RE, for all her support.

^{viii} Cassidy, C, Christie, D, Coutts, N, Dunn, J, Sinclair, C, Skinner, D, Wilson, A, 'Building communities of educational enquiry', OXFORD REVIEW OF EDUCATION 34:2, 217-235 (Routledge)

Although there is a deliberate and valid link to educational research in the original proposal, this still to be formalised in the project's life; this paper is the first draft of a jointly written article for review and publication.

^{ix} A map demonstrating the hub areas will be included in the power-point presentation at the seminar.

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