



Harrow SACRE Meeting

Tuesday 13th March 2012 at 7.30p.m.

To be held in Committee Rooms 1 & 2
Harrow Civic Centre

Enquiries & apologies to:

Vivian Wright

Clerk to SACRE

vmwright@waitrose.com

or

Rachel Bowerman

SSIA, HSIP Lead Officer to SACRE

020 8736 6507

HARROW STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
3. **MEMBERSHIP**
 - a) **Welcome to new members**
 - b) **Update on membership**
4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29TH NOVEMBER 2011** (Pages 1 - 6)
5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
 - a) Item 7, page 4: SACRE logo – sharing examples of new SACRE publications designed and bearing new logo

Business items: Improving standards in religious education and collective worship

6. **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP: APPLICATIONS FOR DETERMINATION**

To receive two applications to Harrow SACRE to lift or modify the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1988 and Education Act 1993 that collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”

 - a) **Norbury School**

Ms Louise Browning, headteacher of Norbury School, will present the school's application and illustrate the school's approach to collective worship (pages 25 - 29)
 - b) **Stanburn First School**

Documentation has been submitted by Anne Drakeford, headteacher (pages 7 - 24)
 - c) SACRE processes for a school application for a determination (pages 30 - 34)

7. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

To update SACRE on issues relating to standards and provision in religious education

a) Ofsted 2011–12 religious education subject survey inspection: Canons High School
(pages 35 – 39)

To receive HMI Alan Brine's letter to the school summarising his findings from the subject survey inspection visit on 11th and 12th October 2011. Canons High School became an academy in 2011 and therefore SACRE no longer has a mandate to oversee compliance with RE or collective worship.

b) Academies Act 2010 and the implication for SACRE

RE Council guidance on RE and Collective Worship in academies. (pages 40 – 43)

c) HMI subject survey visits

To receive Ofsted's supplementary RE-specific guidance for inspectors on making judgements during subject survey visits to schools. Sharing these expectations with schools during CPD will contribute to the role of RE subject leaders in raising standards in RE. (pages 44 – 50)

Information items: improving SACRE's effectiveness

8. REPORTS FROM NATIONAL RE ASSOCIATIONS

- a) NASACRE winter/spring 2011/2012 Newsletter
- b) RE Council March 2012 Newsletter

9. DATES OF FUTURE SACRE MEETINGS

Summer term 2012: Tuesday 26th June 2012, 7.30p.m. at Harrow Civic Centre

Autumn term 2012: 10th October 2012 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber and
4th December 2012 - Committee Rooms 1&2

HARROW SACRE
(STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 29 NOVEMBER 2011

Attendance:

Group A: (Religious traditions and Christian Churches)

~ Mr Zia Baig	A Councillor Asad Omar
A Mrs Sanaz Ajala	~ Miss Fatema Rahemani
* Mr Mike Bishop	A Mr Neville Ransley
* Dr Julie Crow	* Mrs Gill Ross
A Mrs Niru Desai	A Mrs Doreen Samuels
A Mrs Phiroza Gan-Kotwal	* Mr Paramjit Singh-Kohli
* Mr Vijay Hirani	* Ven Sumana Sramaner
~ Dr Vinod Kapashi	~ Ms Beverley Wilson

Group B: (Church of England)

* Mrs Mary Abbott	* Rev'd. Matthew Stone
* Rev'd Philip Barnes	

Group C: (Teachers' Associations)

A Ms Bhavita Pandya	~ Mrs Manju Radia
	* Mrs Alison Stowe (Chair)

Group D: (Local Authority)

Councillors:

* Nana Asante	* Camilla Bath
~ Bill Philips (Reserve)	* Nizam Ismail

Officer

*Rachel Bowerman (Senior School Improvement Professional & Adviser to SACRE, nominated by the Director of Education)

Observer

*Cllr Brian Gate (Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges)

Clerk

*Vivian Wright (Clerk to SACRE)

* denotes presence

A denotes absence with apologies

~ denotes absence without apologies

1. Welcome and Introductions

As members assembled, slides were projected of the presentation given by Rachel Bowerman at the CPD meeting for RE subject leaders held at the Church of St Panteleimon on November 22nd. This is a PowerPoint resource for teachers to use as an introduction for a visit to an Orthodox Church. Alison Stowe, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED: To note apologies for absence from Asad Omar, Doreen Samuels, Phiroza Gan-Kotwal, Sanaz Ajala, Bhavita Pandya, Niru Desai and Neville Ransley (retrospectively). Cllr Camilla Bath would be late.

The following members were absent without apologies: Fatema Rahemani, Vinod Kapashi, Zia Baig, Manju Radia and Beverley Wilson.

3. Membership

There were no reserve members. Cllr Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges, joined the meeting later as an Observer.

New members

Group A:

Bah'ai representative: Mrs Sanaz Ajala has replaced Mrs Martha Besser as the Bah'ai representative.

Hindu Representative: Rachel Bowerman is aware that there is a vacancy for a Hindu representative on Group A and that, because of poor health, another Hindu representative has been a non-attende for the past academic year. In recruiting a new member to fill the vacancy, she will take into account the need to reflect on SACRE the diversity of the local Hindu communities. She suggested that, in Harrow, the Swaminarayan communities, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and south Indian Hindu communities should be represented. Vijay Hirani, who represents the Shree Kutch Satsang Swaminarayan community, agreed that it would be appropriate to have a representative from another denomination of the Hindu faith tradition. It was agreed that Rachel Bowerman should approach ISKCON to nominate a representative.

Jain representative: Rachel Bowerman is following up a new Jain representative to replace Vinod Kapashi who has not attended meetings or given apologies for over a year.

Action: Rachel Bowerman

Muslim representative: Cllr Nizam Ismail raised the question of Muslim representation on Group A. The Harrow Muslim Council had requested representation on SACRE. The Harrow Muslim Council is seen to be representative of the ummah across Harrow, including both Sunni and Shia communities. At this point there was a discussion about how representatives of faith communities should be appointed. Rachel Bowerman explained that they must be nominated by and seen to be representative of their faith community. Cllr Nizam Ismail pointed out that representatives from a vibrant organization could be an asset to the committee. Mike Bishop added that there is a nomination form to complete. Rachel Bowerman proposed that one representative on group A would in future be nominated by a member of the Muslim Council and a second by another Muslim community. **This was agreed.**

Action: Chair and Rachel Bowerman

Group B: Church of England representatives: the Diocesan Board has sent notice of two new appointments for Church of England Representatives:

Liz Felsing, Head Teacher of St Johns C of E School and Daniel Norris, Head Teacher of Holy Trinity School in Northwood.

The following points were noted:

The constitution of SACRE states that Group B shall comprise of three representatives from the Church of England, to be nominated by the Harrow Deanery Synod. SACRE already has three representatives from the Church of England who attend meetings regularly and actively participate in its work. It was additionally noted that Holy Trinity School is not in Harrow.

The Chair and Rachel Bowerman will write to the Diocesan Board explaining the position and asking for advice.

Action: Chair and Rachel Bowerman

Group C: Teachers' Associations Representatives:

Nancy Parsons has resigned. The Chair will write to thank her for her work on SACRE.

Action: Chair

Another representative from this group has not attended meetings or given apologies for three consecutive meetings. Rachel Bowerman is approaching teachers' unions to discuss nominations to Group C.

Action: Rachel Bowerman

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th September 2011 (pages 1-6)

There were two amendments:

Attendance: Asad Omar had given apologies.

9.a. second bullet point: Inter Faith Council *should read* Harrow Muslim Council

With these amendments the minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes:

Item 7b. Letter to Michael Gove: the Chair has received a reply to her letter to Michael Gove. This was circulated with the papers for the meeting. The response was disappointing but as expected. However, it was felt that SACRE's voice had been heard and SACRE will continue to seek to strengthen the profile of RE and of SACRE nationally. No response has been received from NASACRE or the other organisations to which copies of the letter were sent.

Item 11. Dates of future SACRE meetings: RE CPD

Rachel Bowerman thanked Cllr Brian Gate for attending the meeting that had taken place at the Greek Orthodox Church of St Panteleimon in Kenton. Phiroza Gan-Kotwal had intended to give a report on this event. As she was unable to attend, Mary Abbott and Cllr Brian Gate gave feedback. Cllr Brian Gate explained that he had always wanted to visit St Panteleimon, as he had watched it being built on his way to work. He had another connection with the Greek Orthodox community because when they arrived in Harrow in 1975, they worshipped first of all at his own church, St Peter's, in West Harrow. His visit had confirmed his view that the Greek Orthodox community is a significant minority community in Harrow, representing a rich strand in the religious diversity of the borough. The craftsmanship visible in the interior of the church is superb and links the church to other beautiful religious buildings such as the Hindu Temple in Neasden. Such workmanship is, in itself an expression of faith.

As guests of the Orthodox community at the church of St Panteleimon (the patron saint of medicine and healing) the group of RE subject-leaders and SACRE members had been warmly welcomed with delicious and copious refreshments. Father Anastasios had informed them of the growing congregation at the church which now included members from different parts of the Orthodox diaspora including a number of Romanians, many of whom were having their children baptised at the church. Rachel Bowerman has prepared a PowerPoint presentation on visiting an Orthodox Church (shown as members were arriving at the meeting) and another on the baptism in the Orthodox tradition. Mary Abbott and Mike Bishop expressed interest in borrowing these resources. If other members want a chance to visit the church, the Jubilate Choir will be performing there on 10th December, taking advantage of its wonderful acoustics.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes

Business Items: Improving standards in RE and collective worship

6. SACRE Annual Report

a) Analysis of public examination results for Harrow High Schools in RS 2011

Rachel Bowerman explained that she has not yet received the 2011 RS GCSE and A/AS Level results. Rachel Bowerman will ensure that these results are circulated in time for members to comment before they are included in the Annual Report. She alerted members to the fact that the majority of High Schools have now become academies and that there would be no requirement upon them to share their RS examination data with SACRE from 2012 onwards. However, the new Education Strategy and School Organisation (ESSO) and the new Harrow School Improvement Partnership (HSIP), in which team Rachel Bowerman is now located, are building constructive relationships with the academies.

Rachel Bowerman explained DfE guidance regarding RE and academies. Academies must provide religious education in accordance with their Funding Agreements. Academies with a religious designation must provide religious education in accordance with the tenets of their faith. Academies that do not have

Harrow SACRE Minutes 29/11/11

3

a religious designation must arrange for religious education to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses. In other words, a curriculum which reflects that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Academies have no obligation to follow their *local* Agreed Syllabus. The RE Council of England and Wales reports concerns that academies are interpreting this guidance on provision for RE loosely.

b) Consideration of the draft Annual Report 2010-2011 pages 7-18

p.10. Stag Lane Junior School: Yr 5 should be Yr 6.

p.11. Whitmore high School: Yr 12 should be Yr 11 and "A-level should be GCSE

p.14 2.2. Membership and training: add "Humanist" to the membership paragraph

It was agreed to add a glossary of common acronyms and terms such as HLTA, SEN, NATRE and KS.

p.15. 2.5. Information and advice. First bullet point: School hot meals. The Sikh representative raised the question of the labelling of the different meal options. Rachel Bowerman explained that the report detailed the work done by Harrow SACRE over the year. It did not contain recommendations. Cllr Brian Gate corroborated the fact that the press coverage of this issue had indeed caused some distress and he recorded his thanks to Harrow SACRE who had issued such helpful guidelines and advice in this difficult situation. It is to be hoped that schools would label their meal options clearly.

Cllr Nizam Ismail raised the question of new Muslim representatives. This has been minuted in the membership section above.

Matthew Stone agreed to write a report on the event at the Zoroastrian centre to celebrate RE month. The Chair volunteered to send Matthew Stone her copy of the running order of the event.

Action: Chair and Matthew Stone

There are two appendices to the report: the development plan and the membership list. The clerk volunteered to update the membership list and send it to Rachel Bowerman.

Action: Clerk

The report is sent to the Department of Education and this used to be done via QCDA which is now defunct. The report is now sent via NASACRE but there is no specific deadline. Members felt that it was useful to have a deadline and agreed that December 31st would be appropriate.

Cllr Asante commented that it was a very readable and accessible report. The Chair thanked Rachel Bowerman for her work on the Annual Report.

7. SACRE Logo pages 19-20

Rachel Bowerman had consulted the Chairs' group about producing a logo and the group had given her the go ahead. The design circulated to members has been produced by the same team which designed the HSIP logo. Rachel Bowerman explained that the Chairs' group did not favour a design that incorporated religious symbols so she had specified a design that showed partnership (i.e. the links between schools and faith communities) and growth (i.e. helping RE to flourish). The resulting design, which showed a tree stretching out branches shaped like hands, was considered to be a very fitting visual emblem for the concept of SACRE.

It was intended that the logo could be used as a 'branding' for SACRE headed writing paper and SACRE publications.

The Clerk passed on comments received from Phiroza Gan-Kotwal that this logo was very similar to the logo of a charity.

Certain amendments to the detail of the design were agreed but overall the committee approved the logo. The Chair thanked Rachel Bowerman for her work on this. She felt it would be beneficial to Harrow SACRE.

8. **Determinations** pages 21-32

Rachel Bowerman introduced this item. She reminded members that three applications had been received for determinations in 2009 – 2010, at which time members had expressed some concerns about the accuracy and quality of some of the information submitted by schools. An example from the application form showing Christian, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox as separate religions was an indication that the form needed revision. This has been done and the updated form has been circulated with the papers (pp31-32).

In addition, Rachel Bowerman has circulated relevant passages from the Education Reform Act (pp21-22) and Circular number1/94 (pp 23-30)

In considering the revised form members discussed how best to represent the school's profile of belief/faith communities: the Humanist representative felt that Humanist/Atheist/Agnostic members of the community could be represented as a single entity but other members of the committee felt that people might wish to be distinguished as either humanist or atheist. It was agreed that these different beliefs could be specified within one option on the form.

A member of Group A, who had also been a Deputy headteacher at a local school, reported that the proportion of parents describing themselves as Humanist/Atheist/Agnostic was about 17% and those parents had appreciated being given the opportunity to provide this information.

It was felt that the Christianity section should include examples of Christian denominations but that parents need not be required to specify.

With these amendments, the committee approved the Application for a Determination form.

In response to a question from Councillor Brian Gate as to how many schools actually sought determinations, Rachel Bowerman replied that three applications were received last year and all were granted. There had been no applications in 2010 – 2011. There were a further two schools with unexpired determinations who may apply in the future. Norbury school had expressed an interest in applying for a determination. **SACRE does not operate a policy of promoting determinations, but SACRE has a duty to formally consider and make decisions about those applications for determinations which are submitted by schools.**

Rachel Bowerman explained that since the 1988 Education Reform Act, collective worship was required to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character". Determinations lifted this requirement.

This prompted a discussion on the nature of Harrow faith communities and also the nature of an act of worship that was "broadly Christian" in "character". The following points were made:

- The demographics of Harrow have changed enormously, but it is worth noting that there is a strong Christian presence, including that amongst the African-Caribbean, Asian and the Polish and Romanian communities.
- A "broadly Christian" act of worship must not replicate a church service. It should have regard to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of pupils.
- Schools wishing to be inclusive will wish to keep the number of children withdrawn from collective worship as small as possible.

9. **Representation on Harrow SACRE for new academies**

Rachel Bowerman reported that the Chairs' Group would be prepared to write to the academies inviting them collectively to nominate a representative to SACRE.

This was agreed

Information Items: Improving SACRE's effectiveness

10. **Reports from SACRE Partners**

a) Faith Communities:

CID (Christians in Discussion): This group meets at the Civic Centre. Cllr Nana Asante reported that there would be a carol service at the Civic Centre on 19th December. Everyone was welcome.

Refreshments will be served in the members' lounge.

b) Harrow Inter Faith Council: it was agreed that rather than have a specific representative from the Harrow Inter Faith Council on SACRE, the members of the faith communities who were members of the Interfaith Council should act as conduits of information between the two councils.

11. Any other Business

a) The Vice-Chair, who is a member of a governing body of an academy, observed that schools are anxious about absences caused by religious observance. Rachel Bowerman explained that SACRE had sent out guidance to schools earlier this term recommending that schools might authorise up to three days absence during the school year for religious observance. She added some communities might require more days absence in a particular religious year, for example the Jewish community. The guidance also reminded schools about the importance of including a reference to religious absences in the school's termly analysis of attendance data.

b) Rachel Bowerman recorded her thanks to the Chairs' group who facilitate the business of the main meeting.

c) Martha Besser joined the meeting to make her goodbyes. The Chair thanked her for the work she had done for SACRE on behalf of the Bah'ai community.

12. Dates of Future SACRE Meetings:

The following dates were agreed:

Spring Term 2012: This has now been changed to Tuesday 13th March 2012. 7.30pm at Harrow Civic Centre.

Summer term 2012: the Clerk reported that the Cabinet are setting their meeting dates next month; when this is done, Mark Doherty at Democratic Services will provide SACRE with some possible dates.

Teachers' RE CPD:

Spring term: visits to Hindu Temples in and around Harrow. Date to be confirmed

Summer term: visit to the New Harrow Central Mosque: 29th May. Rachel Bowerman will be preparing educational materials linked to these visits. These will include generic guidelines and well as more specific information as to appropriate etiquette and dress code. Cllr Nizam Ismail affirmed his willingness to arrange visits to the Mosque for members of SACRE and other interested groups.

The Meeting closed at 9. 17pm

Signed:

(Chair)

(Date)

An analysis of how collective worship contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Our daily collective worship allows for opportunities for the whole school to unit together in one thought, one purpose and share together which is a unique experience in a large and busy school. On days we are not together in the hall, knowing that at a time suitable to that class there will be a reflection allows us to further feel united.

We have recently looked at our collective worship practices and there are now more examples of the collective worship happening beyond the classroom e.g. in our gazebo, storytelling area, on the playground after all the other classes have gone in after break. Pupils have said that they much prefer being someone different to their normal learning environment to have the reflection and to make special.

Our Thursday assemblies are a celebration of all the achievements that week and always end with pupils leading in the reflection. Pupils have taken on the task of writing and leading the reflection for the whole school, which has given many pupils the chance to speak in front of others, and share their own thoughts for that day and week.

"I quite like assemblies. I want to know more about my religion and others too, and important people like Martin Luther King." Yr 6 Boy

"I feel happy because I am praying to my god." Reception Girl

Application to Harrow SACRE to lift or modify the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1988 and Education Act 1993 that collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.” This is known in law as a “determination.”

1. Name and address of school Norbury School Welldon Crescent, Harrow HA1 1QQ	
2. Name of Headteacher Ms Louise Ann Browning	
3. Name of Chair of Governors Mrs Jane Galbraith	
4. What is the reason for this application for a determination? Renewal of a previous determination, which was in place because the school has a very large majority of pupils who are not Christian	
5. Which faith groups are represented in your school? Please give approximate percentages:	
Bah'ai: 0	Sikh: 0.98%
Buddhist: 1.17%	Zoroastrian: 0%
Christian (Christian denominations include Baptist, Catholic, Church of England, Methodist, Orthodox, Pentecostal) 22.5%	Other: 1.76%
Hindu: 20.94%	Humanist/Atheist/Agnostic: 11.74%
Jain: 0	Not known/Refused: 0.39%
Jewish: 0	
Muslim: 40.5%	
6. How have the discussions of the Governing Body been involved in this application? The Governors discussed in our Feb 2012 full governors, previously it was raised in June 2011 in Achievement and Standards committee. Determination for Collective Worship Application: the Chair explained that the government requires schools to have an act of worship that is “broadly Christian” in character. A determination grants exemption from this and enables a school to hold acts of worship that must relate to a deity but are not specifically Christian. The application for a determination requires a consultation with parents and the school would like governors to assist with this at two parents’ evenings on 28 th February and 1 st March. The Head Teacher added that she envisaged that part of the questionnaire would include asking what parents would like to see done better. She hoped that parents who are leaders in their own religious communities might come and visit the school. The Head Teacher will also write to parents and non-parent governors will receive copies of this letter. The Head Teacher will also send governors copies of the draft questionnaire. Governors can make an input into this if they wish. Governors supported the application for a determination and were willing to assist with the consultation.” (Feb.2012) Action: Head Teacher/Chair and Governors	
7. How has the Governing Body consulted staff, parents and pupils? - Questionnaire: parents evening led by the governors: 28th Feb & 1st March	

- Letter to parents from the Headteacher: Friday 24th Feb
- Pupils asked in class: show of hands voting: 20th – 24th Feb
- Staff asked in Briefing and then a signature form: 21st Feb

Please include, with this application, samples of questionnaires and explanatory letters used in your consultation process.

8. Please summarise the responses of the groups which were consulted.
Pupils: 90% of pupils wished assemblies to remain as they are now with no specifically broadly Christian ethos.
Staff: 87% of staff voted for the assemblies to be of a spiritual nature and not broadly Christian in ethos.
Parents: 98.7% of parents who replied voted for assemblies to be not be of a broadly Christian in ethos.

What proportion of the following groups have:

<i>Have expressed a view</i>	<i>Support the application</i>
School staff	87%
Governors	100%
Parents	98.7%
Pupils	90%

9. a) Numbers of pupils currently withdrawn from collective worship: 0
- b) Analysis of the faith backgrounds of these pupils/families.N/A
- c) Summary of reasons provided by parents for these withdrawals N/A

10. For which groups are you making this application?

*please delete as appropriate and provide the requested information

a) This application is for a determination to include all the pupils of the school*
***Our parents historically support all what we do, however we have 10 families who withdrew from all Christmas activities, with the reasons being that they do not want to confuse their children with celebrating something which is not of their religion and did not agree to the singing of songs about Jesus.**

11. Please submit the following information with your application:

- a) Collective Worship policy: **attached**
- b) A term's overview of planning for collective worship (eg the themes and events) – **attached Spring 2012**
- c) 3 examples of planned acts of collective worship: **attached are 2 ppt which we use in our assemblies & one example of a class collective worship**
- d) An analysis of how collective worship contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development: **attached**

12. Signed

LA Browning

Headteacher

Jane Galbraith

Chair of Governors

Date: 1/3/12

Assembly Timetable Spring Term 2012

Week	Monday Junior Assembly 9:15-9:30	Monday Infant Singing/ B'Day 14:30-14:50	Tuesday Junior Singing 9:10-9:30	Wednesday Collective Worship with Classes	Thursday Whole School Assembly 9:10-9:30	Friday Class or Year Assembly 9:30-9:50
2nd January <i>New Year and New aims</i>				Classes & pupils Leading	No assembly	Lou
9th January <i>I have a Dream-linked to Martin Luther King Day 15.1.</i>	Lou	Jill/ Lou	Jill & Rosa	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	Rosa
16th January <i>Building Learning Power</i>	Rosa	Jill/Rosa	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Rosa	Lou
23rd January <i>Freedom of association(joining groups) - Convention of the Child</i>	Lou	Jill/ Lou	Jill & Rosa	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	Lou (TEAM Norbury)
30th January <i>Education in other countries: linking to Uganda & Afghanistan</i>	INSET	INSET	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	Year 4
6th February <i>National Writing Week: ths & legends</i>	Rosa	Jill/ Rosa	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Rosa	Year 3
12th if Term						
20th February <i>World thinking Day</i>	Lou	Lou & Jill	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	Lou
27th February <i>Giving up something to show your commitment - RRSA Link to Lent.</i>	Rosa	Jill/ Rosa	Jill & Rosa	Classes & pupils Leading	Rosa	1J
5th March <i>Celebrations: Holi</i>	Lou	Jill/ Lou	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	1V
12th March <i>Leisure, play & culture - links to conventions of the child</i>	Julie Fitz World Commonwealth Day	Jill/ Rosa	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	1M
19th March <i>Environment & our Earth (Earth Day 21.3</i>	Rosa	Jill/ Lou	Jill & ROSa	Classes & pupils Leading	Rosa	Y5
26th March <i>Easter New Beginnings</i>	Lou	Jill/ Rosa	Jill & Lou	Classes & pupils Leading	Lou	Lou 9.30am assembly Wards & Celebrations

**Collective Worship with classes when you are not having an assembly that day. Remember you can have your collective worship anywhere in the school where reflection & silence is possible.*

Application to Harrow SACRE to lift or modify the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1988 and Education Act 1993 that collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.” This is known in law as a “determination.”

1. Name and address of school Stanburn First School	
2. Name of headteacher Mrs A Drakeford	
3. Name of Chair of Governors Mrs L Martin	
4. What is the reason for this application for a determination? We are a multi-faith school, with pupils of all faiths and beliefs, including humanist and secularists. Our collective worship is planned to take account of the family background of all our children.	
5. Which faith groups are represented in your school? Please give approximate percentages.	
Bah'ai	Sikh 0.3%
Buddhist 1%	Zoroastrian
Christian (Christian denominations include Baptist, Catholic, Church of England, Methodist, Orthodox, Pentecostal) 15.3%	Other Jehovah's Witness - 1.0% Other religion - 1.7%
Hindu 46.2%	Humanist/Atheist/Agnostic 3%
Jain 6%	Not known 0.3%
Jewish 0.7%	
Muslim 24.3%	
6. How have the discussions of the Governing Body been involved in this application? This is a continuation of our existing policy. This information is discussed at our main Governing Body meetings and Curriculum Committee meeting. Please include with this application extracts from GB minutes and other documentation which relate to their decision to apply to SACRE for a determination.	
7. How has the Governing Body consulted staff, parents and pupils? All groups know that the school has a determination. All remain supportive of the policy. This is a continuation of our existing policy. Parents are kept informed by newsletters. Please include, with this application, samples of questionnaires and explanatory letters used in your consultation process.	

8. Please summarise the responses of the groups which were consulted.

The school community know that the school continues to have determination.

What proportion of the following groups have:

<i>Have expressed a view</i>	<i>Support the application</i>
School staff	x
Governors	x
Parents	x
Pupils	x

9. a) Numbers of pupils currently withdrawn from collective worship

None

b) Analysis of the faith backgrounds of these pupils/families.

Not applicable

c) Summary of reasons provided by parents for these withdrawals

Not applicable

10. For which groups are you making this application?

*please delete as appropriate and provide the requested information

a) This application is for a determination to include all the pupils of the school*

b) This application is for a determination to provide collective worship in religious groups*

Please identify the religious groups for which this application is made.
(It cannot be distinctive of a particular denomination)

Within our school community there is a broad spectrum of faiths. The ethnic origin of our families is wide and diverse. Our act of Collective Worship takes into account the belief and values of all families represented at Stanburn First School.

11. Please submit the following information with your application:

a) Collective Worship policy

b) A term's overview of planning for collective worship (eg the themes and events)

c) 3 examples of planned acts of collective worship

d) An analysis of how collective worship contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

12. Signed

..... Headteacher

..... Chair of Governors

..... Date

STANBURN FIRST SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

The children and staff at Stanburn First School reflect the many religious faiths and cultures within the community.

Collective Worship at Stanburn takes account of the 1988 and 1993 Education Act, circular 1/94 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 70 and Schedule 20. It also takes into account guidelines issued by Harrow's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The school has a determination from SACRE to vary the requirements for all pupils that Collective Worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. We organise Collective Worship to reflect the nature of the community and the ethos of the school.

We recognise our different backgrounds and we celebrate our shared values.

Stanburn's Aims for Collective Worship are to:

- Value Collective Worship as a unifier, gathering everyone together.
- Foster a sense of community.
- Include the whole school community and not be divisive.
- Respect the identity and dignity of children and staff.
- Be appropriate to the children's needs and interests and encourage participation.
- Inspire: a sense of wonder, pattern, change and worth.
- Promote an awareness of:

Achievement – celebration and worth.

Feelings – sadness and happiness

Relationships – with other people and the natural world

Organisation

The Head and staff will organise and lead Collective Worship. Planning takes account of continuity, variety and educational context. Collective worship will be developed on a termly basis.

Once a year, each class prepares a presentation for Collective Worship linked to their topic. Parents are invited to share in this. There may be occasions when speakers are invited to contribute to Collective Worship.

Parents may write to request the withdrawal of their child/ren from Collective Worship. Staff retain the right of withdrawal on religious grounds.

AUTUMN TERM

Half-termly Themes

Weekly Assembly Themes

Myself

- Feelings; senses, choices, awareness of self. Happiness, selfishness.
- Beginnings: starting school.
- Seed in fruit.
- Caring: in school and at home.
- Memories.
- Names: first names.
- Children – in school, in the world.

Change

- Harvest: Fruit/crops/leaves
- Autumn: The season.
- Day/night: long nights
- Time: Time changes
- Colour: Leaves, berries, fields, chestnut, Autumn moon, red, gold.
- Decay in nature: mists, bonfires, darkness, Remembrance.
- Migration.

Light

- Candles: The Power of Light
- Diwali
- Hannukah
- Advent

SPRING TERM

Half-termly Themes

Weekly Assembly Themes

Families

- Love, hate
- Precious things
- Sharing, e.g. toys
- Responsibility/relationships
- Growing old
- Special times
- Family ties
- Pets

New Life

- A new baby
- New Year
- The Earth/planets
- Beauty
- Patterns
- Transformation: Cycle of seeds
Butterfly
- Growth
- Spring
- Colours
- Passover
- Easter

SUMMER TERM

Half-termly Themes

Weekly Assembly Themes

People

- Friends/neighbours
- Lifestyles
- Communication/diaries
- Achievement
- People who help us
- People in our school
- Courage/heroes/heroines
- Strangers
- In other's shoes
- Awareness of others.
- Forgiving/bullying/poverty

Water

- Value and worth
- Journeys
- Water/life
- Rain
- Sea
- Pollution

Concerns

- Awareness of values – love freedom, peace.
- Awareness of the relationships with the natural world – earth, air, wind, fire.
- Awareness of limitation and failure – sad times and suffering, death of a pet, 'It's not fair'.

MONTHS OF THE YEAR

EVENTS AND FAMOUS PEOPLE

AUTUMN TERM

SEPTEMBER

1. Origins of the name of the month

2. Festivals and events

Rosh Hashanah J.
Yom Kippur J
Sukkott J
Dusshera (Dasshara) H
Harvest/Shared with October.

3. Famous People/Names

Pudding Lane Bakers	2/9/1666 started Great Fire
	6/9/1666 ended
Mayflower set sail	6/9/1620
Grace Darling's rescue	7/9/1838
Mickey Mouse created	19/9/1928

OCTOBER

1. Origin of name of the month

2. Festivals and Events

Feast of St Francis of Assisi
Trafalgar Day
Halloween
Clocks fall back one hour
Harvest Festival
Diwali
Ramadan

3. Famous People and Names

Christopher Wren b. 20/10/1632
Nelson won Battle of Trafalgar 21/10/1805
Thomas Edison invented light bulb 21/10/1879

NOVEMBER

1. Origins of Name of Month

2. Festivals and Event

All Saints' Day
All Souls' Day
Bonfire Night
St Andrew's Day
State Opening of Parliament
Lord Mayor's Show
Remembrance Sunday
Thanksgiving Day U.S.A.
Birthday of Guru Nanak S.
Eid-al-Fitr

3. Famous People/Names

W.H. Smith – First shop Euston Station 1/11/1848
Samaritans founded 2/11/1953
Lord Sandwich b. 3/11/1718
Marie Curie b. 7/11/1867
St Celia's Day 22/11. Patron Saint of Music.

DECEMBER

1. Origin of the Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

Advent
Feast of St. Nicholas
St Lucia's Day
Winter Solstice
Hanukah
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve

3. Famous People/Names

Edith Cavell b 4/12/1865
Walt Disney b 5/12/1901

MONTHS OF THE YEAR

EVENTS AND FAMOUS PEOPLE

SPRING TERM

JANUARY

1. Origin of the Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

Eid-al-Adha
New Year Celebrations
Epiphany
Burns Night
International Boat Show
TUB Shevit Jewish New Year for tree planting

3. Famous People and Names

Louis Braille b. 4/1/1809: Theme: Seeing/Sight
Dr Albert Schweitzer b. 14/1/1887. Theme: Helping
Elvis Presley b. 8/1/1935)
Mozart b. 27/1/1756) Theme: Music
Schubert b. 31/1/1747)
Debussi b. 29/1/1862)
Gandhi d 30/1/1948
Birthday of the Prophet Mohammed

FEBRUARY

1. Origins of the Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

Candlemass – Light
St Valentine’s Day – Love
Crufts Dog Show – Our Pets
Shrove Tuesday – Pancake/fasting/feasting
Purim – Jewish Festival – Goodness
Holi – Spring Festival – Celebration
Chinese New Year – Year of the Animal
Leap Year

3. Famous People and Names

Robert Peel b. 5/2/1788: Uniforms/people who help us.
Charles Dickens b. 7/2/1812: stories
Samuel Pepys b.22/2/1633: Diaries – Anne Frank

MARCH

1. Origin of Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

St David's Day - Wales: The story of St David.
St Patrick's Day - Ireland: The story of St Patrick
Mother's Day - Theme: Families
1st Day of Spring/Equinox
Passover - Jewish Festival
Easter – Christian Festival

3. Famous People and Names

Alexander Graham Bell b. 3/3/1847: telephone
RNLi founded 4/3/1824
Wilhelm Roentgen b. 27/3/1884: x-rays

APRIL

1. Origin of the Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

April Fool's Day
St George's Day

3. Famous People and Names

Sir Francis Drake knighted 4/4/1581)
Christopher Columbus set sail to discover) Explorers
America 17/4/1492)
Captain Cook discovered Botany Bay 28/4/1770)
Samuel Morse b. 27/4/1791 – Communication

MONTHS OF THE YEAR

EVENTS AND FAMOUS PEOPLE

SUMMER TERM

MAY

1. Origins of the Name of the Month
2. Festivals and Events

May Day
Red Cross Day
Oak Apple Day
Spring Bank Holiday
Chelsea Flower Show

3. Famous People and Names

Rowland Hill b. 6/5/1840 – introduced Penny Black stamp
Roger Bannister b. 6/5/1954 – ran first 4 minute mile
Henri Dunant b. 8/5/1828 – founder Red Cross
Florence Nightingale b. 12/5/1820
Mary Seacole
Edmund Hilary: Sherpa Tensing climbed Mount Everest 29/5/1953

JUNE

1. Origin of the Name of the Month
2. Festivals and Events

Father's Day
Midsummer's Eve
Midsummer's Day
The Queen's Official Birthday
World Children's Day – 15th June

3. Famous People

Helen Keller b. 27/6/1880

JULY

1. Origins of the Name of the Month

2. Festivals and Events

Independence Day in U.S.A.
St Swithin's Day
Royal Tournament

3. Famous People

Thomas Barnado b. 4/7/1845
Armstrong and Aldrin landed on Moon 20/7/1969
Henry Ford b.30/7/1863

Stanburn First School (4-7 YEARS)



Collective Worship Policy

Spring 2012

EXAMPLES OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Example 1

- Ethos:** Creative use of space
Special hall time: sitting together on the floor.
Use of lighting
e.g. candle for special times, darkness.
Timing
At the end of the morning
- Music:** Focused listening for 2-3 minutes.
Solveig's song, Classical Harp - Spero
- Theme:** Darkness - Autumn Term.
- Story:** "Can't you sleep little bear" – Waddell
- Reflection:** To reflect on the negative/worrying aspects of darkness:
Fear, shadows, worry, imagination
To reflect on the positive aspects of darkness:
Beauty, the night sky, sleep, rest, comforting
- Thank you:** For being part of our school community, to share feelings.

Music to depart hall.

Example 2

Ethos: Creative use of space

Special hall time: sitting together on the floor.

Use of lighting

Not applicable

Timing

At the end of the morning

Music: Focused listening for 2-3 minutes
"No Matter What" - Webber, Boy Zone.

Theme: Concerns/Sadness - Summer Term

Story: "Dogger" - Hughes

Reflection: 'Precious and special' - Dave and Dogger's relationship
'Sadness' - the loss of Dogger, the sense of emptiness
'Relief' - when Dave finds Dogger
'Kindness' - Bella's kindness to her brother

Thank you: For kindness of others

Music to depart hall

Example 3

- Ethos:** Creative use of space
Special hall time: sitting together on the floor
Use of lighting
Not applicable
Timing
At the end of the morning
- Music:** Focused listening for 2-3 minutes
'The Closest Thing' - Katie Melua, 'Call off the search'
- Theme:** Water - Summer Term
- Story:** "When Jessie came across the sea" - Hest
- Reflection:** Beauty of water:
Dewdrops, glacier, stream, sea
Danger:
Storm, drought
Moods:
Gentle, peace, refreshing, violent
- Thank you:** For the water of life

Music to depart hall

'THANK YOU'

'Thank you' is a time of quiet and a time to reflect

Example 1

Autumn Term - Darkness

Dear God
Thank you for the darkness and for the light
We thank you for the cosy evenings in winter and the bright days of summer
We thank you for our friends to help us at all times

Example 2

Spring Term - Concerns/Sadness

Dear God
Our family and friends help us through all our difficult times
They care about us and share our problems
Please help us to remember to say thank you to them

Example 3

Summer Term - Water

Dear God
Thank you for your gift of water
Thank you for the beautiful rivers
Thank you for the gentle rain
Thank you for the sea
And for the lovely cool water to drink



Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Application for determinations



School
Address

Dear

In non-denominational community schools the Governing Body is required to ensure the provision of a daily act of collective worship in which all pupils take part (unless withdrawn at the request of parents) and which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”
Education Reform Act 1988, Section 7, Sub Section 1.

Many schools make provision for collective worship, which meets this statutory requirement, through an approach which is educational, inclusive of children’s family backgrounds and contributes positively to pupils’ spiritual development. Alternatively schools may decide to apply to SACRE to ‘determine’ whether it is appropriate to lift the requirement for collective worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”

Harrow SACRE has recently reviewed its procedures for scrutinising an application for a determination. We enclose the new proforma, which requires the headteacher and Governing Body to:

- provide information about the faith backgrounds of pupils;
- indicate the extent of withdrawals from collective worship as it is currently provided;
- consult and provide summaries of the responses of pupils and parents;
- provide examples of policy and planning for collective worship.

If, after a review of current provision and of the voice of the school community, the Governing Body decides to apply for a determination, the completed form, accompanied by the documentation SACRE has requested, should be returned to Rachel Bowerman, the senior lead officer to SACRE. Please contact Rachel on 020 8736 6516 or by email at rachel.bowerman@harrow.gov.uk if you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

Alison Stowe
Chair, Harrow SACRE



Application to Harrow SACRE to lift or modify the requirement of the Education Reform Act 1988 and Education Act 1993 that collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.” This is known in law as a “determination.”

1. Name and address of school	
2. Name of headteacher	
3. Name of Chair of Governors	
4. What is the reason for this application for a determination?	
5. Which faith groups are represented in your school? Please give approximate percentages.	
Bah'ai	Sikh
Buddhist	Zoroastrian
Christian (Christian denominations include Baptist, Catholic, Church of England, Methodist, Orthodox, Pentecostal)	Other
Hindu	Humanist/Atheist/Agnostic
Jain	Not known
Jewish	
Muslim	



6. How have the discussions of the Governing Body been involved in this application?

Please include with this application extracts from GB minutes and other documentation which relate to their decision to apply to SACRE for a determination.

7. How has the Governing Body consulted staff, parents and pupils?

Please include, with this application, samples of questionnaires and explanatory letters used in your consultation process.

8. Please summarise the responses of the groups which were consulted.

What proportion of the following groups have:

<i>Have expressed a view</i>	<i>Support the application</i>
School staff	
Governors	
Parents	
Pupils	

9. a) Numbers of pupils currently withdrawn from collective worship

b) Analysis of the faith backgrounds of these pupils/families.

c) Summary of reasons provided by parents for these withdrawals



10. For which groups are you making this application?

*please delete as appropriate and provide the requested information

- a) This application is for a determination to include all the pupils of the school*

- b) This application is for a determination to provide collective worship in religious groups*

Please identify the religious groups for which this application is made.
(It cannot be distinctive of a particular denomination)

11. Please submit the following information with your application:

- a) Collective Worship policy
- b) A term's overview of planning for collective worship (eg the themes and events)
- c) 3 examples of planned acts of collective worship
- d) An analysis of how collective worship contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

12. Signed

..... Headteacher

..... Chair of Governors

..... Date



Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



3 November 2011

Mrs K Miller
Acting Headteacher
Canons High School
Shaldon Road
Edgware
HA8 6AN

Dear Mrs Miller

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: religious education (RE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 11 and 12 October 2011 to look at work in RE.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of six lessons including one joint observation with the subject line manager.

The overall effectiveness of RE is satisfactory with good features.

Achievement in RE

Achievement in RE is satisfactory with good features.

- Results in the last two years in the GCSE short course have been well below the national average and a significant proportion of students did not meet their minimum target grade. This contrasts sharply with students' performance in the option group full GCSE course up to 2010 when results were broadly in line with the national average and achievement was good. The short course has now been dropped and full course GCSE reinstated.
- Students currently taking GCSE courses often demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of different religions. They are confident in expressing views and discussing issues related to the study of religion and belief. Their abilities to use their knowledge and to build the skills of

structured argument when addressing the evaluation element of GCSE questions are less well developed.

- Standards at Key Stage 3 are broadly in line with expectations representing satisfactory achievement. The pattern of attainment is varied. Many students can talk about religions with confidence drawing on their personal experience and learning. Their ability to use higher level skills of enquiry when investigating religions is less well-developed. Attainment is stronger in relation to 'learning about' rather than 'learning from' religion.
- The department does not make systematic use of data about the achievement of different groups of learners in RE. Evidence from lessons indicates that the more able are not always challenged sufficiently while the less able are sometimes not supported effectively to reach their potential.
- A very significant strength of RE is the very positive attitudes of the students towards the subject. They enjoy RE and can see its value. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities to discuss issues and share ideas. Behaviour in lessons is excellent. The values of toleration and respect for diversity are very strongly reinforced within the work of the department.

Quality of teaching in RE

The quality of teaching in RE is satisfactory with good features.

- Lessons in RE vary in quality. All teachers demonstrate some significant strengths in their classroom practice. They have good subject knowledge which they use well. Relationships in lessons are very positive and this fosters confidence in the students and a willingness to engage in discussion of challenging issues. Teachers communicate enthusiasm and use questioning well to encourage students to reflect on their own religious beliefs and practices in a safe and secure context. Some good use is made of humour to help create a positive ethos for learning.
- A less effective feature of teaching is the management and structuring of learning. Sometimes the planning of lessons lacks coherence and clear progression. As a result, students are unsure how different aspects of their learning connect together. Occasionally, the objectives of a lesson are unclear and activities do not build sequentially on each other. In many of the lessons, little attention is paid to matching the learning to the wide range of abilities within each mixed-ability class.
- Students' work is marked regularly with helpful feedback given. A series of assessment tasks are identified with level or grade criteria. However, some of the assessments are not well structured making it very difficult for average and lower ability students to demonstrate what they can do.

Quality of the curriculum in RE

The quality of the curriculum in RE is satisfactory with good features.

- The provision for RE meets statutory requirements. While there is no RE-related examination provision in the academy's sixth form, opportunities to

engage with matters of belief and value are monitored across the curriculum and there are plans to include off-timetable days in both the sixth form and at Key Stage 4 focused on relevant topics. The academy has chosen to continue to use the locally agreed syllabus as a basis for RE.

- The popularity of RE has been reflected in the high numbers opting for GCSE full course when this has been made available. The academy hopes the new Key Stage 4 option arrangements will secure even higher take-up in the future.
- The GCSE examination specifications chosen by the department focus heavily on the study of religions. This is a sensible decision matching well to the students' interests and capabilities.
- In Years 7 and 8, the curriculum is being carefully aligned with the wider pastoral-based learning goals programme. This is providing a good context to develop some potentially challenging units of work exploring a range of issues related to the study of religion and belief. Currently this is followed by a Year 9 programme focused on a more systematic study of three world religions.
- Provision at Key Stages 3 and 4 has undergone a number of changes in recent years in response to wider curriculum and other academy developments and further significant change is planned. The academy has recognised the need to monitor the impact of these changes on RE carefully.
- While the overall pattern of RE provision is good there are shortcomings in the medium-term planning and assessment arrangements. The pattern of progression and continuity within and between units of work is often unclear. The sequence of learning and the identified learning outcomes of specific units sometimes lack coherence. Some assessment tasks are inappropriately positioned within units of work limiting their effectiveness.
- A strong pattern of enrichment activities is linked to RE. As part of the RE celebration in March 2011, some students had the opportunity to work closely with the local Zoroastrian community. The department also contributes to the marking of Holocaust Memorial Day. It has been recognised that there is scope to extend links with other religious communities in the local area.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in RE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in RE is good.

- RE benefits from a strong team of well-qualified subject specialists which includes an advanced skills teacher (AST) who works more widely across the borough and is on the local SACRE. RE makes a very positive contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As such it is strongly aligned with the wider aspirations of the academy as it serves its very diverse local community.
- The process of monitoring and self-evaluation of RE is good and has generated a well-defined improvement plan which focuses on the right priorities and is carefully linked to the wider whole-school plan. While the

department has access to a wide range of data, it has yet to use these fully in, for example, analysing the performance of different groups of students. There is also a need to monitor the quality of the curriculum planning more closely. The capacity for the improvement of RE is good.

- The opportunities for professional development within the school are good and members of the department have taken advantage of a number of whole-school initiatives. The AST has been involved in local networks sharing practice with other schools. While the head of department has been involved in examination board training, opportunities for wider subject development have been limited in recent years.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- securing greater consistency in the quality of teaching by:
 - making sure that learning objectives are expressed appropriately and match the content of the lessons
 - improving the way in which learning is structured both in curriculum and lesson planning to ensure greater coherence and progression
 - reviewing the pattern of assessments to ensure that they are appropriately placed and provide a structure which enables all students to achieve their potential
 - incorporating more differentiation to ensure that work is better matched to the wide range of abilities in lessons.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop RE in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection.

Yours sincerely

Alan Brine
Her Majesty's Inspector

Can/should the SACRE monitor the work of Academies in RE and collective worship or must they be allowed to 'go their own way'?

Part 1

Academies are independently funded state schools, outside the remit of the LA and therefore of the SACRE.

There are two types of academies: those set up by the present Coalition administration and those established by the previous government. All academies are required to teach RE.

The new academies have to do so according to their funding agreements, which can be amended; without recourse to the law, by the Secretary of State. For that reason, the statutory requirement for RE has been lifted for the first time since 1870.

Guidance produced by the previous government stipulated that all academies (at that time) should follow their locally agreed syllabus. This strengthened the wording of the existing funding agreements of the earliest academies, that academies should 'take account of their local agreed syllabus'. However the status of this advice in respect of these academies is now uncertain because of the post-election change of administration.

Current advice from the DfE says new academies must provide RE according to the requirements for new local agreed syllabuses [as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act]. NASACRE interprets this as meaning the agreed syllabus for the local authority area in which the Academy is based.

SACREs are increasingly opening up their previous contacts, or establishing new relationships with the academies in their area, in a variety of ways.

Some are inviting representatives of Academies in their LAs to be co-opted onto the SACRE. Increasingly SACREs are also approaching their main Academy sponsors to offer support for their provision for RE and to try to establish what their position is on RE and collective worship. Such sponsors (Ark, Harris, and Ormiston for example) have 'families' of Academies which cover a number of LA areas and/or form a cluster within a given LA.

The recently published RETool for SACRE self evaluation looks at relations with the Academies sector and helps SACREs assess how effectively they encourage Academies to see themselves also as stakeholders in their local area, specifically by devising ways in which an academies presence is incorporated into the SACRE itself.

Such cooperation not only supports good working practice with advice and builds positive relationships within a locality but also affirms the value of RE and demonstrates the mutual benefit to partners of working together for pupils and communities.

Part 2

The Academies Act 2010 paved the way for the 'new style' Academies announced by the Coalition Government. The Act removed from Academies and free schools the statutory requirement, in force since 1870, for all maintained schools to provide RE in the curriculum and a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The model funding agreements for such schools does require such provision but does not require a school to use a locally agreed syllabus. It is not clear whether these provisions of the Act also apply to the 'old style' Academies.

The Education Bill currently passing through Parliament may bring in further changes.

In response to issues raised by NATRE in February 2011, the DfE has stated:

'Academies must provide religious education in accordance with their Funding Agreements. The policy intention is for the model Funding Agreements to broadly reflect the provisions that apply to local authorities and schools in the maintained sector. The Funding Agreement requires that Academies with a religious designation provide religious education in accordance with the tenets of their faith and Academies that do not have a religious designation must arrange for religious education to be given to all pupils in accordance with the requirements for Agreed Syllabuses. In other words, a curriculum which reflects that the religious traditions in Great Britain are, in the main Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain. For foundation or voluntary controlled schools with a religious designation that convert to Academies, the intention is that they will arrange for religious education in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses, as set out above, unless any parents request that their children receive religious education in accordance with any provisions of the school's trust deed or in accordance with the tenets of the school's faith. If any parents do request this, the Academy must make arrangements for those children to receive such religious education unless, because of special circumstances, it would be unreasonable to do so. The Funding Agreement sets this out.'

With regard to **compliance** the DfE has also stated:

'The YPLA monitors compliance with Funding Agreements and also deals with complaints about Academies on behalf of the Secretary of State. If you or any of your members would like to raise a concern about an Academy with regard to RE provision then please send details to academiesenquiries@ypla.gov.uk and the YPLA will investigate.'

Furthermore, the YPLA itself has since indicated that if a person or body wished to raise a concern about a specific Academy they could send the query stating the name of the Academy to academiesenquiries@ypla.gov.uk and it will be forwarded to the YPLA Academies Lead Officer (ALO) responsible for dealing with issues relating to that specific Academy: the ALO will then liaise with either the person or body concerned. It was been stressed that individuals (who may be teachers) can

choose to remain anonymous during any discussions between the ALO and the Academy but considering the specific nature of the query, this may be problematic. However, the ALO could approach the Academy simply stating that the query is from a concerned member of the community who wishes to remain anonymous.

Following enactment of the Education Act 2011, the functions described above transfer to the Education Funding Agency from the YPLA in April 2012.

BG/12/11

Religious Education (RE) Survey Visits

Generic grade descriptors and supplementary subject-specific guidance for inspectors on making judgements during visits to schools

Subject feedback letters, following survey visits, normally contain separate judgements on:

- the achievement of pupils in the subject
- the quality of teaching in the subject
- the quality of the curriculum in the subject
- the quality of leadership and management of the subject
- the overall effectiveness of the subject.

In coming to these judgements, inspectors will use the relevant criteria and grade descriptors from the 2012 Section 5 evaluation schedule as they can be applied to individual subjects. Key elements of these descriptors are set out in the left-hand columns in the following pages though inspectors may refer to the whole section 5 evaluation schedule where appropriate. Alongside them (for achievement, teaching, the curriculum and leadership and management) are supplementary, subject-specific descriptors which provide additional guidance for RE. These descriptors should be applied in a way which is appropriate to the age of pupils involved. Except where otherwise indicated, descriptors are intended to be used on a 'best fit' basis.

It is important to note that this guidance is intended only to inform the judgements made by specialist inspectors carrying out subject survey visits. It is not for use on Section 5 whole-school inspections.

Grade descriptors:¹ achievement of pupils in RE²

	Generic	Supplementary subject-specific
1	<p>Outstanding</p> <p>Almost all pupils, including, where applicable, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making rapid and sustained progress in the subject over time given their starting points. They learn exceptionally well and as a result acquire knowledge quickly and in depth, including in the sixth form and areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect, including reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills that will ensure they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. The standards of attainment of almost all groups of pupils are likely to be at least in line with national averages for all pupils with many above average. In exceptional circumstances, where standards of attainment of any group of pupils are below those of all pupils nationally, the gap is closing dramatically over a period of time.</p>	<p>Pupils show exceptional independence; they are able to think for themselves and take the initiative in, for example, asking questions, carrying out their own investigations and in working constructively with others. They show significant levels of originality, imagination or creativity in their understanding and skills within RE. They apply a wide range of higher level skills to their studies including analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection as appropriate to their age and ability. They develop a sense of passion and commitment to RE. Pupils show impressive achievement in linking their study of religion and belief to their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Their progress is outstanding or good across an appropriate breadth of religions, beliefs and investigations.</p>
2	<p>Good</p> <p>Pupils are making better progress than all pupils nationally in the subject given their starting points. Groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are also making better progress than similar groups of pupils nationally. Pupils acquire knowledge quickly and are secure in their understanding of the subject. They develop and apply a range of skills well, including reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills that will ensure they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. The standards of attainment of the large majority of groups of pupils are likely to be at least in line with national averages for all pupils. Where standards of any group of pupils are below those of all pupils nationally, the gaps are closing. In exceptional circumstances, where attainment is low overall, it is improving at a faster rate than nationally over a sustained period.</p>	<p>Pupils are able to work independently when given the opportunity, taking the initiative in their work and when working with others. They demonstrate some originality, imagination or creativity in their RE work. They apply a range of higher level skills to their studies such as analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection as appropriate to their age and ability. They enjoy RE and can explain its value. Pupils routinely link their study of religion and belief to their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Progress is good across an appropriate breadth of religions, beliefs and investigations.</p>
3	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Pupils are progressing at least as well in the subject as all pupils nationally given their starting points. Groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are also making progress in line with similar groups of pupils nationally. Pupils generally learn well in the subject, with no major weaknesses. They acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills, including those in reading, writing, communication and mathematics that will ensure they are prepared adequately for the next stage in their education, training or employment. The standards of attainment of the majority of groups of pupils are likely to be in line with national averages for all pupils. Where standards of groups of pupils are below those of all pupils nationally, the gaps are closing overall. In exceptional circumstances, where attainment is low overall, it is improving over a sustained period.</p>	<p>Pupils are generally dependent on their teachers but can occasionally work independently and take the initiative in developing their work. Occasionally pupils show creative or original responses in their RE work. They sometimes apply some higher level skills to their studies such as analysis, interpretation, investigation, evaluation and reflection as appropriate to their age and ability. They are generally interested in RE. Pupils can, when given the opportunity, link their study of religion and belief to their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Progress is sound across a range of religions, beliefs and investigations.</p>

¹ Grade descriptors are not to be used as a checklist but should be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach.

² Judgements should be made in relation to the relevant locally agreed syllabus or, in the case of academies, the equivalent requirements which are applied to RE in their funding agreed

<p>4 Inadequate</p> <p>Achievement in the subject is likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pupils' learning and progress, or the learning and progress of particular groups, is consistently below those of all pupils nationally given their starting point. ■ Learning and progress in any key stage, including the sixth form, lead to underachievement. ■ The learning, quality of work and progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs show that this group is underachieving. ■ Pupils' communication skills, including in reading and writing and proficiency in mathematics overall, or those of particular groups, are not sufficient for the next stage of education or training. ■ Attainment is consistently low showing little, fragile or inconsistent improvement, or is in decline. ■ There are wide gaps in attainment and in learning and progress between different groups of pupils and of all pupils nationally that are showing little sign of closing or are widening. 	<p>Pupils rarely show the ability to work independently or take the initiative in their work. They rarely demonstrate creativity or originality in their RE work. They rarely apply any higher level skills as appropriate to their age and ability. They lack interest and enthusiasm for RE. Pupils do not link their study of religion and belief to their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Progress is made only across a narrow range of religions, beliefs and investigations.</p>
---	--

Grade descriptors:³ the quality of teaching in RE⁴

	Generic	Supplementary subject-specific
1	<p>Outstanding</p> <p>Much of the teaching in the subject is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils are making rapid and sustained progress. All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. Drawing on excellent subject knowledge, teachers plan astutely and set challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding. They use well judged and often imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well. Teaching promotes pupils' high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning. Time is used very well and every opportunity is taken to successfully develop crucial skills, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills. Appropriate and regular homework contributes very well to pupils' learning. Marking and constructive feedback from teachers and pupils are frequent and of a consistently high quality, leading to high levels of engagement and interest.</p>	<p>Teachers communicate high expectations, enthusiasm and passion about RE to pupils. They have a high level of confidence and expertise both in terms of their specialist knowledge and their understanding of effective learning in RE. As a result, they use a very wide range of innovative and imaginative resources and teaching strategies to stimulate pupils' active participation in their learning and secure outstanding progress across all aspects of RE. Teachers consistently plan and deliver RE very effectively to enable pupils to forge strong links between their study of religion and belief and their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. They ensure that pupils are very actively involved in a clear process of learning which secures a progressive, structured development of high level skills of enquiry and reflection.</p>
2	<p>Good</p> <p>As a result of teaching that is mainly good, with examples of outstanding teaching, most pupils and groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are achieving well in the subject over time. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Teachers use their well developed subject knowledge and their accurate assessment of pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding to plan effectively and set challenging</p>	<p>Teachers have a clear understanding of the value of RE which they communicate effectively to pupils. They have a confident level of specialist expertise which they use well in planning and teaching RE. As a result, they use an appropriate range of resources and teaching strategies to promote good learning across all aspects of RE. Teachers usually plan and deliver RE to enable pupils to forge links between their study of religion and belief and their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Teachers ensure that pupils are</p>

³ Grade descriptors are not to be used as a checklist but should be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach.

⁴ These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the subject taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

	<p>tasks. They use effective teaching strategies that, together with appropriately targeted support and intervention, match most pupils' individual needs so that pupils learn well. Teaching generally promotes pupils' resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities. Teachers regularly listen astutely to, carefully observe and skilfully question groups of pupils and individuals during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning. Teaching consistently deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding and teaches them a range of skills including literacy and numeracy skills. Appropriate and regular homework contributes well to pupils' learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and accurately and discuss assessments with them so that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.</p>	<p>usually involved in a process of learning which incorporates development of high level skills of enquiry and reflection.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Teaching results in most pupils, and groups of pupils, currently in the school making progress in the subject broadly in line with that made by pupils nationally with similar starting points. There is likely to be some good teaching and there are no endemic inadequacies across year groups or for particular groups of pupils. Teachers' expectations enable most pupils to work hard and achieve satisfactorily and encourage them to make progress. Due attention is often given to the careful assessment of pupils' learning but this is not always conducted rigorously enough and may result in some unnecessary repetition of work for pupils and tasks being planned and set that do not fully challenge. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, picking up any general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning. These adaptations are usually successful but occasionally are not timely or relevant and this slows learning for some pupils. Teaching strategies ensure that the individual needs of pupils are usually met. Teachers carefully deploy any available additional support and set appropriate homework and these contribute reasonably well to the quality of learning for pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils are informed about the progress they are making and how to improve further through marking and dialogue with adults that is usually timely and encouraging. This approach ensures that most pupils want to work hard and improve.</p>	<p>Teachers understand how to maintain pupils' interest RE. They have a sound level of RE expertise which they use in their planning and teaching. As a result they use a range of resources and teaching strategies to promote a satisfactory level of learning across most aspects of RE. Teachers sometimes plan and deliver RE to enable pupils to identify some connections between their study of religion and belief and their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Teachers sometimes, though not always, ensure that lessons are structured around the development of some skills of enquiry and reflection.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Inadequate</p> <p>Teaching in the subject is likely to be inadequate where any of the following apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ As a result of weak teaching, pupils or groups of pupils currently in the school are making inadequate progress. ■ Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to excite, enthuse, engage or motivate particular groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. ■ Pupils cannot communicate, read, write or use mathematics as well as they should, as appropriate, in the subject. ■ Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils so that they make inadequate progress. 	<p>Teachers are not able to engage pupils' interest in RE. Their RE expertise is limited and, as a result, they do not provide the resources or teaching strategies to promote effective learning. Teachers do not plan and deliver RE to enable pupils to identify any connections between their study of religion and belief and their exploration of more personal reflections on issues of meaning and purpose. Teachers do not ensure that lessons are structured around the development of skills of enquiry and reflection.</p>

Grade descriptors: the curriculum⁵ in RE⁶

	Generic⁷	Supplementary subject-specific
1	<p>Outstanding</p> <p>The curriculum in the subject provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning, has a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and, where appropriate, their safety, and contributes very well to pupils' achievement and, where appropriate, to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</p>	<p>The imaginative and stimulating RE curriculum is skilfully designed to match to the full range of pupils' needs and to ensure highly effective continuity and progression in their learning. Excellent links are forged with other agencies and the wider community to provide a good range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and engagement with the subject. The curriculum enables pupils to gain first hand experiences of a wide diversity of religious and belief communities. The overall curriculum for RE secures a highly effective balance and breadth of study in relation to the agreed syllabus or equivalent expectations. Secondary schools provide a diversity of RE programmes to accredit pupils' learning across all ability groups. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the context of RE are at least good, and most are outstanding.</p>
2	<p>Good</p> <p>The curriculum in the subject provides well organised, imaginative and effective opportunities for learning for all groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, promotes positive behaviour and, where appropriate, their safety, and provides a broad range of experiences that contribute well to the pupils' achievement and, where appropriate, to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</p>	<p>The curriculum is broad, balanced and well informed by current initiatives in RE. It is designed to match to a range of pupils' needs and ensure effective continuity and progression in their learning in RE. Good links are forged with other agencies and the wider community to provide a range of enrichment activities to promote pupils' learning and their engagement with RE. The curriculum enables pupils to gain first hand experiences of local religious and belief communities. The overall curriculum for RE secures a good balance and breadth of study in relation to the agreed syllabus or equivalent expectations. Secondary schools provide good opportunities to accredit pupils' learning. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the context of RE are at least good.</p>
3	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>The curriculum in the subject is generally matched to pupils' needs, interests and aspirations and provides adequate preparation for the next stage of their lives, whatever their starting points.</p>	<p>The curriculum secures the pupils' broad and balanced entitlement in RE and meets any statutory requirements which apply. It provides for a range of pupils' needs and ensures they make satisfactory progress in their learning. Some links are forged with other agencies and the wider community, although the range of activity provided to enrich pupils' interest and learning may be quite limited. The curriculum enables pupils to gain some first hand experiences of local religious and belief communities. The overall curriculum for RE secures a reasonable balance and breadth of study in relation to the agreed syllabus or equivalent expectations. Secondary schools make some provision to accredit pupils' learning. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the context of RE are at least satisfactory.</p>
4	<p>Inadequate</p> <p>The curriculum in the subject fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils.</p>	<p>The curriculum does not ensure pupils' entitlement to RE and does not secure continuity in their learning. There is little by way of enrichment activity in the subject. The overall curriculum for RE does not provide a reasonable balance and breadth of study in relation to the agreed syllabus or equivalent expectations. In secondary schools little provision is made to accredit pupils' learning. Some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the context of RE are inadequate.</p>

⁵ The generic grade descriptors are drawn from the leadership and management section of *The evaluation schedule for the inspection of schools and academies, January 2012*

⁶ Judgements should be made in relation to the relevant locally agreed syllabus or, in the case of academies, the equivalent requirements which are applied to RE in their funding agreed

Grade descriptors:⁸ quality of leadership and management of RE

	Generic	Supplementary subject-specific
1	<p>Outstanding</p> <p>The pursuit of excellence in all activities relating to the subject is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to strongly improve achievement, or maintain the highest levels of achievement, for all pupils including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, over a sustained period of time. Actions are based on a deep and accurate understanding of performance in the subject. Key leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning, resulting in teaching that is likely to be outstanding and at least consistently good.</p>	<p>Leadership is informed by a high level of RE expertise and vision. There is a strong track record of innovation. Subject reviews, self-evaluation and improvement planning are well-informed by current best practice in RE and in education generally. Subject leadership inspires confidence and whole-hearted commitment from pupils and colleagues. There are effective strategies to delegate subject responsibilities where appropriate and to share good practice and secure high quality professional development in the subject. RE has a very high profile in the life of the school and is actively involved in initiatives within the school. Provision meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus or equivalent in full (including in the 6th form where appropriate).</p>
2	<p>Good</p> <p>Key leaders and managers consistently communicate high expectations and ambition in the subject. They model good practice and demonstrably work to monitor, improve and support teaching, encouraging the enthusiasm of staff and channelling their efforts and skills to good effect. As a result, teaching is improving and is at least satisfactory, with much that is good. Planned actions based on accurate self-evaluation to overcome weaknesses have been concerted and effective. As a result, achievement has improved or consolidated previous good performance.</p>	<p>Leadership is well-informed by current developments in RE. Subject reviews, self-evaluation and improvement planning are clearly focused on raising standards and improving the provision for RE. There is a shared common purpose amongst those involved in teaching RE with good opportunities to share practice and access subject training. RE reflects wider whole school priorities and has a prominent profile in the school. Provision meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus or equivalent (including some 6th form provision where appropriate).</p>
3	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Key leaders and managers provide a concerted approach to improvement in the subject. Planned actions by leaders and managers have improved the quality of teaching so that very little is inadequate. Capacity to secure improvements in the subject is demonstrated by a trend of sustained improvement in achievement although a few significant weaknesses remain.</p>	<p>Leadership is aware of current developments in RE and incorporates these within its practice. Provision for RE is monitored and reviewed regularly and there is a sound understanding of the strengths and priorities for improvement. There is some sharing of good practice, with modest access to subject-specific professional development. Provision meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus or equivalent in full (although there may be limited 6th form provision).</p>
4	<p>Inadequate</p> <p>Leadership and management of the subject are likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capacity for further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements. ■ Leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to secure satisfactory and better teaching for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. ■ Despite remedying a few small areas of weakness, perhaps recently, improvements are fragile, too slow or depend on external support. 	<p>Leadership is not well-informed about current initiatives in RE. Key statutory requirements for RE are not met. Self-evaluation is weak and not informed by good practice in the subject. Opportunities for professional development in the subject are limited and, as a result, some staff lack the confidence and expertise to deliver it effectively. The subject has a low profile in the life of the school. Provision does not meet some of the key requirements of the locally agreed syllabus or equivalent. RE makes very limited or no significant contribution to the promotion of community cohesion.</p>

⁸ Grade descriptors are not to be used as a checklist but should be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach.

Grade descriptors:⁹ the overall effectiveness of RE

<p>Outstanding (1)</p>	<p>Practice in the subject consistently reflects the highest aspirations for pupils and expectations of staff. Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement. Teaching in the subject is likely to be outstanding and together with a rich curriculum, which is highly relevant to pupils' needs, it contributes to outstanding learning and achievement or, in exceptional circumstances, achievement that is good and rapidly improving. Thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the subject enables them to thrive. Consequently, pupils and groups of pupils have excellent experiences in the subject, ensuring they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.</p>
<p>Good (2)</p>	<p>Effective action is taken in the subject to enable most pupils to reach their potential. Pupils benefit from teaching that is at least good. This promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that achievement in the subject is at least good. Leadership and management of the subject play a significant role in this and are good overall. Deliberate and effective action is taken to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A positive climate for learning exists and pupils and groups of pupils have highly positive experiences in the subject so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.</p>
<p>Satisfactory (3)</p>	<p>Achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management of the subject are all likely to be at least satisfactory with some significant good practice. Reasonable steps are taken to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils and groups of pupils have a generally positive experience in the subject and are not disadvantaged as they move to the next stage of their education, training or employment.</p>
<p>Inadequate (4)</p>	<p>Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Achievement is inadequate. ■ The quality of teaching is inadequate. ■ The curriculum is inadequate. ■ Leadership and management are inadequate. ■ There are important weaknesses in the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development resulting in a poor climate for learning in the subject where pupils or groups of pupils are unable to thrive.

⁹ Grade descriptors are not to be used as a checklist but should be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach.

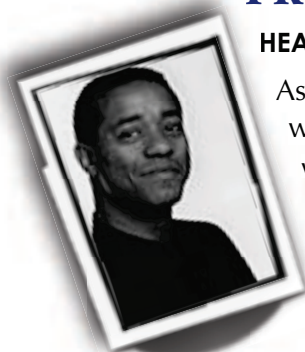
SACRE NEWS



Issue 32

FROM THE CHAIR...

HEAT and LIGHT



As the autumnal evenings give way to winter nights, the warmth of summer seems but a distant memory. The same can be said of political heat.

The intense public debate over the News of the World phone hacking scandal was quickly overshadowed by even more heated discussion of the unprecedented riots in Britain of last August. That discussion took place against the background of many graphic images of the disturbances, perhaps none more haunting and shocking than that of the flame engulfed Reeves Corner furniture store in Croydon – a local family business for over 100 years - which was burnt to the ground in one night.

The ensuing debate about criminality, community, responsibility and materialism that it generated was certainly not cool! Three months on, however, talk of mending 'broken Britain' and questions about



the real nature of the 'Big Society' are being informed by more measured assessments about what could and should be done to avoid a



repetition of the riots.

Indeed, with Diwali and Chanukah, some faith communities are celebrating festivals of light at this time of year and in the Christian calendar, Advent is a reminder of the approach of Christmas.

In the darkness it is perhaps better to have a little more light and little less heat

At the beginning of October, the first RE Community Weekend took place at Wokefield Park, near Reading. It was a rare opportunity for a range of stakeholders in RE to meet and consider the huge challenges facing RE at present and ways in which the community might respond to the crisis circumstances.

Unsurprisingly, as with any family gathering, the occasion was not without some heat of its

In this Issue

From the Chair p1	p1	Developing encounter in RE	p8
Faith in the future	p3	Researching parental involvement in education from faith families	p10
London and SE SACRE conference	p6	Book Reviews	p11
AGM details	p7	To brighten your day	p14
Spirited Arts 2012	p7	Back Page	p15

own but more importantly it managed to cast a brilliant spotlight on at least one key message:

The RE community has to take control of its own interests.

The detail of the various challenges facing RE has been well rehearsed elsewhere. The slow demise of local education authorities, the exit of schools from local authority control, the exclusion of the RE from the EBacc, the climate of economic austerity, changes in the law in relation to RE in academies have been the



headline grabbers. They serve to indicate areas in which we, as members of the RE Community, can and must become more proactive.

What is clear is that the various stakeholders in RE need to work together in a smarter, more coordinated fashion and that the Religious Education Council is the obvious catalyst or facilitator for achieving this. Prudently, the REC is structuring itself to undertake this task more effectively. NASACRE together with organisations representing RE teachers, lecturers, inspectors, advisers and consultants will be working ever more closely on the REC curriculum, assessment and qualifications committee. That committee is to review the RE curriculum, its most appropriate forms of assessment, and advise on suitable public qualifications for RE in England. It will also seek funding for that enterprise and advise on the management of such a project, drawing on and working with REC member organisations and other partners in conducting the review.

Close collaboration outside of the formal committee meetings will be essential if the RE community is to take charge of its own destiny. This is a mighty challenge in itself given that the RE community covers diverse interest groups with their own networks, not least the various communities of faith and belief themselves.

Within this broad remit, NASACRE is seeking to lend particular weight to work on what good RE and good collective worship should look like.

It is clear that the Coalition administration does not see advice and guidance as a primary function of government departments. NASACRE has therefore put in place arrangements to enable it to lead in producing guidance on collective worship in order to support SACREs and schools. We intend to seek partners from other interested organisations to help produce this and to adopt a similar approach in making the case for RE in the curriculum and in exploring how best to assess RE

A NASACRE priority for 2012 is, in partnership with REC member organisations, to engage with headteacher and governor organisations to promote the case for RE in the curriculum and to



articulate how we see it falling within the 2012 School Inspection Framework - especially in relation to how SMSC* will be treated in arriving at inspection judgements.

Many individual SACREs are facing acute difficulties at this time as LA structures on which we all rely start to buckle under the strain of their new financial realities. New problems are on the horizon even as we address the immediate challenges. For example, there is the semblance of a worrying trend toward children's social care starting to dominate Children's Services departments to the detriment of educational support. At the same time,

academies and free schools are increasing in numbers.

In these circumstances it is vital that both the RE Community and government continue to remind LAs of their statutory functions in relation to RE and that SACREs and NASACRE continue to remind LAs of exactly what resource is needed to deliver those functions effectively. Such information, set out on the NASACRE website, has proved helpful to SACREs in the past 12 months and should be revisited periodically.

Our recently published RETool for SACRE self evaluation looks at relations with the academies sector and helps SACREs assess how effectively they encourage academies to see themselves also as stakeholders in their local area, specifically by devising ways in which an academies presence is incorporated into the SACRE itself.

Such cooperation not only supports good working practice with advice and builds positive relationships within a locality but also affirms the value of RE and demonstrates the mutual benefit to partners of working together for pupils and communities.

Cooperation and partnership are the watchwords as we move forward into the New Year and the brighter days of spring.

With real hope for and faith in the future, may I wish you all a happy New Year.

Bruce Gill

*SMSC - Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development

Faith in the Future

Following the shocking devastation and lawlessness of the August riots, the pronouncements and responses made in the heat of the immediate aftermath of those events have given way to more measured assessments in light of the emerging information.

At the end of October the BBC reported Ministry of Justice figures on the people arrested in connection with the riots which included:

- 90% were male though only 5% were over the age of 40
- Of those defendants whose ethnicity is known: 46% were black, 42% were white, 7% were Asian and 5% were classified as "other".
- 35% of adults were claiming out-of-work benefits (national average of 12%)
- Of the young people involved, 42% were in receipt of free school meals compared to an average of 16%
- 13% of those arrested overall were gang members but in London the figure was 19%
- More than 2,500 shops and businesses were victims of looters and vandals, and more than 230 homes were hit by burglars or vandals



The information on the educational background of the young people so far brought to justice was particularly instructive with large proportions of them with either SEN or having been excluded from school or both.

- Two-thirds of the young people in court were classed as having some form of special educational need, compared to 21% for the national average
- More than a third of young people who were involved in the riots had been excluded from school during 2009/10. (DfE records show 6% exclusions for all Year 11 pupils).
- More than one in 10 of the young people appearing before courts had been permanently excluded (The figure drops to 0.1% among all those aged 15).

The Communities and Victims Panel announced at the end of August and chaired by Darra Singh, CEO Jobcentre Plus, is due to publish interim findings at the end of November.

The panel is exploring:

- why people took part in riots
- why the riots happened in some areas and not others
- how key public services engaged with communities before, during and after the riots
- what motivated local people to come together to take civic action to resist riots in their area or to clean up after riots had taken place
- how communities can be made more socially and economically resilient in the future, in order to prevent future problems
- what they think could have been done differently to prevent or manage the riots

Darra Singh had also been the chair of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion which reported in 2006 under the title **Our Shared Future**. His involvement in the Communities and Victims Panel, coincidentally mirrors two strands of thinking that are of particular relevance and interest to SACRES. **Our Shared Future** noted tensions linked to ethnicity and faith but did not wish to overstate these. It stated that cohesion is not just about race and faith and integration is not just about assimilation. It defined an integrated and cohesive community as one where:

- there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country
- there is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment
- there is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny
- there is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common
- there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods

Schools are increasingly recognising the very positive contribution that good RE and good collective worship make toward fostering community cohesion and the RETool for SACRE self evaluation helps SACREs to assess their own effectiveness in supporting schools with this work.

Interestingly, of the six issues that are the focus of the report of the Victims' Panel at least three converge on territory we associate with the benefits of good collective worship. As stated in the joint NASACRE and AREIAC position statement on collective worship:

“Collective worship can be shaped and planned to meet the needs of each school, its pupils and communities. Inclusive collective worship enables the school community, in a range of settings, to reflect on different values, beliefs and expressions of humanity found within and beyond the school, thus ensuring that all pupils, of any faith and of none, contribute to the spirit of the school and to each others’ growth as human beings. Collective worship can be a combination of the whole school together, year groups, Key Stage groups, class groups and house groups and at any time of the day. It can follow a concept, theme, teaching, belief, text for a week, exploring it from different faith and non-faith perspectives and exploring what it means for each person and the school and society as a whole. Unlike congregational worship, it does not necessitate prayer, but does require reflection. Unlike a purely secular assembly, it does include religious views and expression. Taken seriously it helps inspire pupils to live for higher principles, contributes to higher aspirations and enables the school to conspire to work, grow, live and flourish together as a community.”

This is not to mention the fact that young people in receipt of good RE:

“...value the opportunities they have to explore the beliefs and ideas of others, and to engage in dialogue with those from whom they differ. They feel that their learning in RE helps them to become more confident in their own beliefs and background and in expressing their own values. They also recognise that their experience of diversity helps them to be more aware of others and to support strongly the school’s promotion of community coherence.”

Ofsted inspection report of RE in London secondary school adjudged as outstanding

The examples of good practice within our schools are real grounds for cautious optimism and point to the solid foundations upon which we can have faith in our capacity to build a more positive future.

Bruce Gill
NASACRE Chair



London and SE SACRE (and Guernsey!) conference

We met at the London Sivan Kovil Temple in Lewisham on 13th October 2011 and were made welcome throughout the day with excellent catering. The aim of the conference was to consider how SACREs can fulfil their responsibilities for RE and collective worship in uncertain times.

Our first session considered the increasing diversity within society, with a wide range of both faith and culture. The meeting agreed that SACREs have a distinctive role in this and should 'reach out' into this diverse society. We also considered the fact that there are many inequalities in the composition of some SACREs, discussing the process of co-opting 'minority' groups.

The second session was led by Helen Harrison and Jo Malone from 'Face to Faith', an innovative schools programme (part of the Tony Blair Foundation) for 12-17 year olds across 17 countries and growing. It aims to connect students worldwide via emerging technologies, such as facilitated video-conferences and a secure website.

In the afternoon, we had the excellent guidance of John Keast as he explored the key issue of what RE looks like with all the uncertainties that abound at this time. John outlined in his talk how, in 2011, the situation with RE is critical but not fatal. He made comments about the relationship between established RE practice and academies and free schools, linking in the current role of Ofsted, LAs and SACREs.

He shared his concerns over changes to Initial Teacher Training and the current review of the National Curriculum and the disappointing outcome to the debate about RE within the new English Baccalaureate.

He encouraged us to remember that RE has an essential and unique contribution and is still a legal requirement. He suggested that there has been a significant response from the RE community with an overt swell of support for RE. He explained how he saw the role of the RE Council developing a national forum with a clear national voice that would be able to influence policy and promote a positive image and public understanding of RE.

He concluded by adding that now was the time for leadership, change and an opportunity for the RE community to work together



Martin Sweet
Croydon SACRE

NASACRE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

Date: Wednesday 23rd May 2012

Venue: Small Meeting House, Friends Meeting House, 173-177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ

Time: (provisional) 9.30 for 10.00 start, finish 4.00.

Keynote address: Prof. Robert Jackson

Attendance Fee: £70 per person.

Further notice will be given in due course.

NATRE Spirited Arts competition 2012

Following the success and impact of previous Spirited Arts competitions, information can now be found on the NATRE website about this year's 'Art in Heaven' competition. There are five themes:

- The Turning Point of the Story
- Where is God Today?
- Hope for the World
- Beginning / Ending
- The Poisoned Pool

Responses to these inspirational themes can be as a drawing, painting, art, video, sculpture or other medium. They each provide opportunities for thought provoking RE.

All information on such things as how entries should be sent, what should be included and closing date can be found on the downloadable entry form.

Please advertise this competition to your schools.

<http://www.natre.org.uk/spiritedarts/2012.php>



Developing Encounter in RE

WESTHILL/NASACRE Awards 2011/12 Herefordshire SACRE

Research has demonstrated that encountering people of different faiths is one of the most effective ways of breaking down barriers and overcoming prejudices and misconceptions. The Westhill/NASACRE project run by Herefordshire SACRE bears this out in the experiences of pupils, teachers and faith community representatives.

Part 1: The Training Day

Holmer Primary School was the venue for a gathering of representatives from Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities, to receive training in developing workshops that would draw the most out of pupils in their encounters with people of different faiths and beliefs.

Those present tried out five activities which modelled an interactive approach to engaging pupils in workshops, including materials and strategies such as:

- encountering stories and stimuli that make pupils stop and think;
- activities enabling pupils to handle texts and explore different interpretations;
- exploring a range of viewpoints from believers within and beyond the faith communities;
- enabling pupils to articulate responses through a variety of means of expression;
- helping pupils to apply the lessons from their encounters into their everyday lives;
- reflecting on the impact of their encounter for their school and local communities.

Part 2: The KS4 conference

A bright Tuesday morning in October, Muslim and Roman Catholic pupils from the Al-Hijrah High School, Birmingham, and St Mary's RC High School, Hereford, converged on Wigmore High School, a rural comprehensive set in the beautiful countryside of North Herefordshire. Head of RE, Kate Mayglothling, outlined the day, introducing the theme of "Where's the meaning in my life?" and challenged the pupils to make the most of the opportunity ahead of them.

The programme for the day enabled mixed groups to attend four workshops. Each speaker had used their experience at the training day and had developed an interactive workshop to explore where the meaning is in their own lives. These included sessions on:

- music as a means of communicating devotion to God for one Christian;
- the use of food at the heart of community celebrations in Judaism and beyond;
- how the Qur'an and her faith brings peace and happiness to one Muslim;
- and how God, science and art form the frame of reference for the way another Muslim views the world and makes sense of life.



In their final group session, pupils presented some of their responses to the day:

- one group’s rap presentation included the line, “Now we know about different religions we make different decisions”;
- another group said that they recognised that there were many more things linking them than separating them;
- another used the term “harmony” to sum up the message of the day.

The vast majority of pupils said that they had enjoyed the day, that they valued talking with people of different faiths, and that they understood more about what matters to other people as a result.

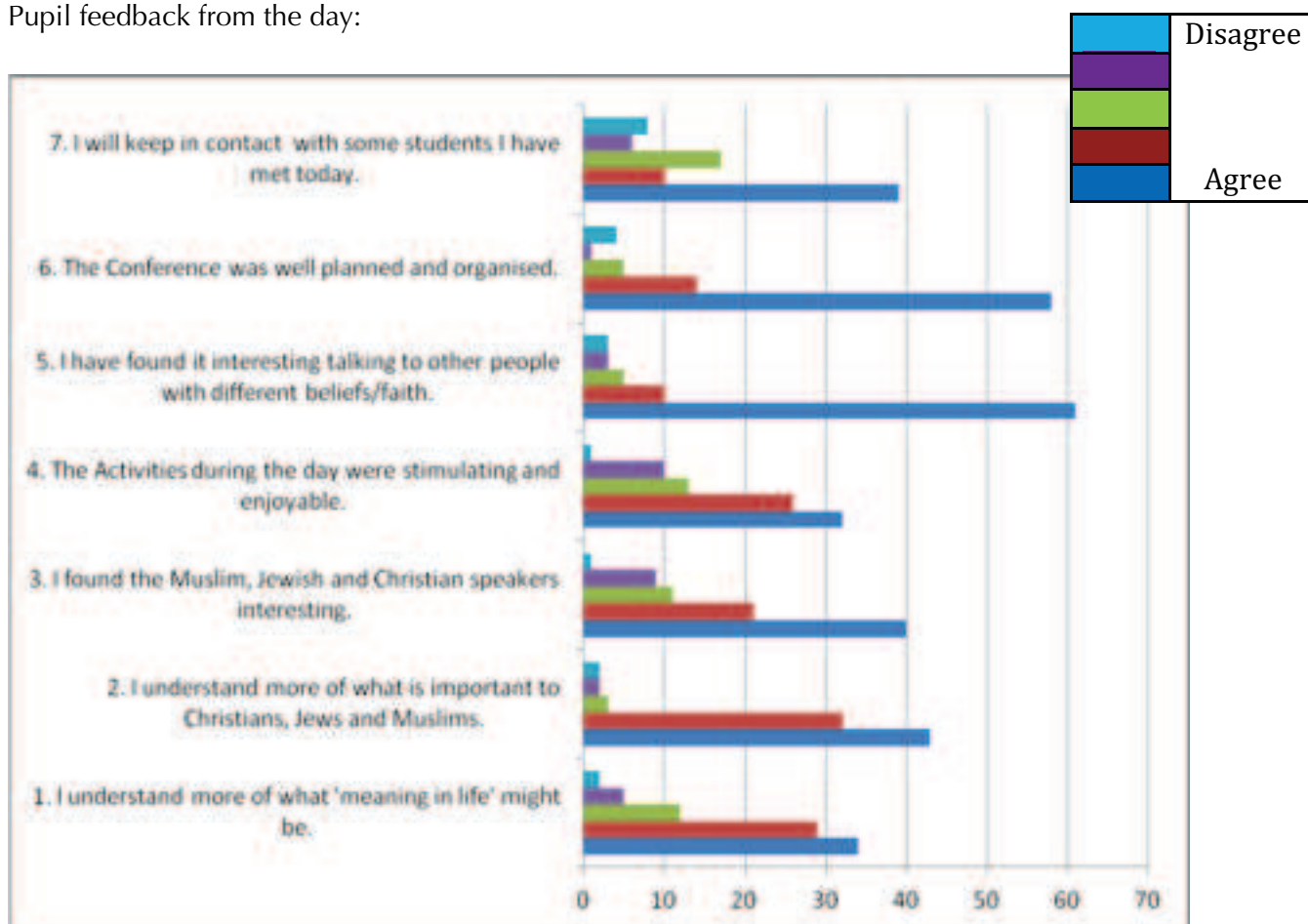
Part 3: The case study

All the details of the project, including the principles for planning engaging workshops, some model workshop structures, the programme and full description of the KS4 encounter day with pupil evaluations, can be found on the NASACRE website www.nasacre.org.uk

Epilogue

As the pupils from St Mary’s and Wigmore dispersed, the pupils and staff from Al-Hijrah High School joined together with the visiting Muslim workshop leaders in their midday and afternoon prayers in the school hall. This moment of calm was a reminder of how some of the ideas and practices spoken about throughout the day wove like a thread through the lives of many of those present.

Pupil feedback from the day:



Stephen Pett

Research on Parental Religion and Parental Engagement

This research consisted of an online questionnaire, which centred around the impact of parental religious belief on the way parents interact with their children's learning.

Summary: The headline results from the research are that parents who responded are already doing those things which the literature shows to be the most beneficial for children's achievement: showing moral support, modelling an interest in learning, and learning together with their children.

Parents from Christian backgrounds were clear that their faith had a positive influence on their engagement with their children's learning, and were able to find support and guidance from within their faith communities. Agnostic parents were more likely to mention providing support for learning and fostering independent thought, and parents who were atheists were more likely to mention having conversations with their children.

We hope to continue this research in the future, on a much wider scale. Future research would include working directly with groups to support parental engagement in children's learning, in ways that are sensitive to, and supportive of, faith beliefs. If you would like more information about the current research or future developments, please contact me through the following email address:

janet.goodall@warwick.ac.uk

Janet **Goodall** and Kathryn **Ghent**

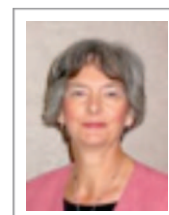
Change of Editors

Geoff Teece has stepped down as editor of **SACRE News**. He incorporated this responsibility into his role as secretary of NASACRE for many years and, when I took over from him as secretary in 2004, he agreed to continue to produce the newsletter which he has done ever since. He always got the job done, even when it meant cajoling reluctant contributors to produce promised pieces. He always met deadlines; he was meticulous in the detail; he was thoroughly dependable and it was a pleasure to work with him.

So, after many years of service to NASACRE, we will no longer have Geoff's wise counsel at executive discussions or his direct support for all things SACRE-related. We wish him well in his continued service of religious education and thank him for what he has given to NASACRE.

The Executive is pleased to announce that **Sharon Artley** is now editing our newsletter. Sharon is an independent consultant working in RE; she is consultant to Middlesbrough SACRE and, as a former RE teacher, a very valuable member of the NASACRE Executive. She is also a whizz at ICT and, having worked closely with her on producing the training CD, I can vouch for her skill and imaginative expertise in this field. Sharon is involved in some national projects - REsilience, Celebrating RE and the RE CPD Handbook. We are very fortunate to have her on this job! Welcome Sharon... and thank you from us all for taking it on.

Julie **Grove**



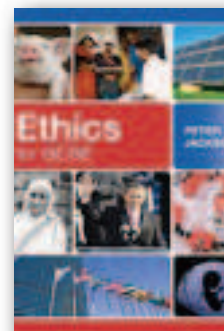
BOOK REVIEWS

ETHICS FOR GCSE

Peter Jackson (2011)

ISBN: 9780281055647

SPCK Publishing



This book focuses on ethics from a Christian perspective, and has been designed for pupils taking OCR Syllabus B (ethics), AQA RS A option 2A, or Edexcel GCSE 2R501 Unit 2.2-2.4. The material is divided into 12 familiar topics, each following a sequence of introductory stories, initial discussion questions, glossary, expository introduction to the topic, “going deeper”, summary of main points, and revision questions.

In broad terms, the book does “what it says on the tin”, in an attractive and accessible way. I enjoyed reading through it. Pupils will find it stimulating and helpful, though at £15 a copy one wonders how many schools would be able to afford a full set for a large and enthusiastic GCSE group. Moreover, independent of any exam course context, the book is robust enough to stand on its own, and to offer a brisk and bracing trot through a wide range of topical issues that might be engaged with, not only in RE/RS but also in General Studies, Citizenship, etc – and in KS5 as well as KS4.

Topic One deals with attitudes towards animals. No doubt this will appeal to many pupils, and is certainly a valid ethical issue. However, I struggled to find any evidence that this topic is central to, or even mentioned in, the exam course specifications of the three named ethics courses. Perhaps the author wished to avoid being seen to favour any one of the three specification formats, but the sequence and arrangement of topics does seem nevertheless rather idiosyncratic.

A major concern for me is that the book uses the well-worn device of opening up each topic in a pupil-centred and subjective way, and then moves on to an objective exposition of the ethical debate around that topic. The book is of course seeking to enable pupils to give a competent overview of the debates and stances on a range of ethical topics, but the teacher will need to be aware that these provocative opening up activities will not bring the pupils themselves to a place of internal rest and equilibrium; rather, that time may need to be given to assist pupils to come to terms at a personal level with what they have been handling and their reactions to it.

The book necessarily contains a great deal of factual information – scientific and technical, legal and institutional, historical and social – in addition to its specific material on Christian ethical teachings. Though the presentation is lucid and orderly, some pupils will struggle to keep up to speed with it all, and in places there is a feeling that the sheer weight of background material overshadows the ethical issues and debates themselves. Some of the language is quite heavy, again perhaps necessarily, though I wonder how many pupils will grasp the nuances of “casuistical” (p. 55).

A few minor quibbles may be noted. A Latin phrase is mentioned **in vitro**, (p. 20) several pages before it is explained (p. 29), while the chosen font means that some pupils will read “ius” as “lus” in places. The timescale in Lesley’s story (p. 31) does not add up. The text box “Learn to pray” (p. 130) is intended to be an example (a rather odd example, surely) of what can be found out from looking up a church website, but the link with the accompanying exposition is not spelt out. In a passing reference, the “pornography industry” is given a simplistic gloss (p. 85).

On the specifically Christian material, the author is at pains to cover the different denominational positions, and divergencies within denominations, but the result is rather bitty, and it is difficult to gain a sense of Christianity as a whole having a coherent ethical tradition. Similarly, the author takes pains to differentiate between Old and New Testament teachings, and between conservative and liberal approaches to the Bible. It would have been helpful here to make the point that the Catholic Church also regards the Bible as authoritative; its **magisterium** is essentially concerned with explaining, applying and building on the biblical foundations. At the end of the book, the author offers a few paragraphs on the deontological understanding of ethics without mentioning God or the concept of God's will. In a book on ethics from a Christian perspective, this is surely a rather significant omission.



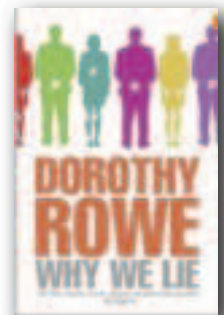
Michael Metcalf

WHY WE LIE

Dorothy Rowe (2011)

ISBN: 9780007357970

Fourth Estate Harper Collins



Dorothy Rowe presents an expansive and breathtaking investigation of the lies we tell ourselves and the reasons we tell them. Encompassing the latest findings from neuropsychology about how the brain functions and how the mind constructs reality; exploring the relationship between this and fantasies, beliefs, myths, theories and hypotheses; she proceeds to set out an analysis of the powerful influence of parenting in early childhood in shaping an individual's sense of self and identity for better or worse. Drawing on her years of experience of working with people suffering from clinical depression she notes;

"People change their ideas when they voluntarily examine their own ideas and the consequences of their ideas and decide to change".

Fundamental to this is the need to confront the fantasies, beliefs, or views we have formed of ourselves and the deep seated fears of uncertainty and aloneness that seem integral to such a challenge to our prevailing world or self view. Denial and repression, for example are two means whereby we lie to ourselves.

The lies she explores are both epic and banal in scope but all in their way are significant - not least because of the manner in which they interconnect. Politicians, bankers, news and media tycoons are all people, so issues such as genocide, the Iraq War, Afghanistan, the machinations of International News Corporation, banking and the financial crisis all fall with her analysis as do observations on the personality traits of individuals such as Heinrich Himmler, Adolf Hitler, Tony Blair, George Bush, Gordon Brown and David Cameron.

She acknowledges the importance of fantasy but rails against delusion which she sees as:

"a theory that has no connection to the real world, but only to the fantasies, memories, needs and desires of the person who holds it and who insists that the delusion is the truth."

Rowe therefore has little time for most organised religion and her discourse only just manages to escape becoming a rant, albeit an elegant and academic one, against it.

She gives prominence to the Golden Rule and does, eventually, distinguish between the ideals to which many faiths aspire but the various interpretations of those faiths that fall far short from their ideals.

Her messages reach a crescendo in the closing chapter of the book which delivers a number of hard truths. These include, that everything is connected to everything else and that ideas do not circulate around the world but a multitude of interpretations of ideas do.

Why We Lie is invaluable reading for all with an interest in the place of religion and belief in the school curriculum and how the conversation between religion and belief might best be developed.



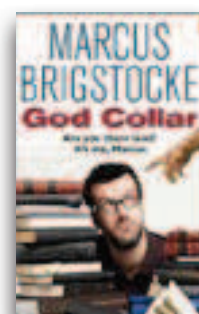
Bruce **Gill**, NASACRE chair

GOD COLLAR

Marcus Brigstocke (2011)

ISBN: 0593067363

Fourth Estate Harper Collins



I fell over this book in a charity bookshop and, since it was originally £11.99, the £2.00 outlay seemed like a bargain, especially since it was 2011 vintage and in very good condition. I had no real expectations except that, in declaring the author was 'on a journey in the hope of filling his God-shaped hole', the blurb on the back was intriguing. The book did not disappoint.

Brigstocke establishes his relationship with his reader immediately and cleverly, acknowledging that, if 'you're inclined to explore the feeling of precarious uncertainty with me, I'd be glad of your company'. He is on a search. He is fairly certain it's probably fruitless, but he can't let go. He admits to being lost, confessing he is 'to theological exploration as Eddy 'The Eagle' Edwards was to ski jumping'.

The reasons for his search come from a profound sense of loss at the death of his closest friend. He wishes desperately that he had a faith in God because he recognises the beauty of religion and he finds no answers to life's questions in atheism. He is open to people of all faiths, finding in them a certainty he admires and, in all humility, wishes to find.

In declaring his genuine curiosity about the possibility of God, and working his way through fifteen chapters of angst, liberally seasoned with humour, he reveals a great deal about himself, his joys and his prejudices. And all with a fluency and style that belies his dyslexia; it engages and delights... as long as you can cope with the occasional expletive!

What emerges through these pages is a man who loves people, who is forensically observant, painfully sensitive, consistently eloquent without being precious and deeply spiritual. He returns in his conclusion to the hurt that prompted his search, giving his reader the most outrageous but moving testimony to real friendship.

In his postscript he acknowledges his reason for giving God a capital G throughout; it's not out of respect but just in case he's wrong in doubting God's existence... but then he'd rather be happy than right. It's intelligent polemic, a well informed, vicious and funny rant but, above all, it makes you think.



Julie **Grove**

TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

During Celebrating RE month, people from all walks of life provided statements about the value and importance of RE. They can all be found on the Celebrating RE website <http://www.celebratingre.org/>, but here are one or two to brighten your day:

Religious Education is perhaps a misunderstood subject. It is not just about religion and who believes in what God or the different religious practices that exist today and throughout history. True, it gives us a context through which to view the history of the world and to see how it has shaped our lives and cultures today. But it is also an invaluable tool to aid in the teaching to our children of a profound lesson that we continue to learn for the rest of our lives: what it is to be human. Intolerance continues to be one of the greatest dangers we face today. Without an understanding and acceptance of one another's journey through life, there can be no progress. No matter what we believe in or subscribe to, we each of us have a right to be understood and accepted for who we are. Religious education broadens our awareness of one another and encourages tolerance, understanding, inquisitiveness and consciousness. We are all spiritual beings on a human journey, and religious education can be the catalyst for our understanding and acceptance of how each of us chooses to manifest and express this journey in our lives. If we can teach children from an early age tolerance of one another's differences, from specific personal differences to religious and cultural differences on a global scale, there is great hope for a world with less conflict and pain and instead a world of open-mindedness, awareness and love; a world in which we can all be who we are without fear; a world in which "different" is celebrated.

Samuel Barnett, Actor

RE is a vital subject for our schools if we are to produce a tolerant and caring society. It is significantly through their RE lessons in schools that children become aware of the diverse nature of multi faith Britain. Without RE, far too many negative stereotypes and unthinking prejudices would exist as a result of ignorance. RE enables children to understand why communities and individuals may dress, practise and believe differently to themselves. Without RE being taught in schools, social harmony and community cohesion would be virtually unachievable.

Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, Department of Religious Studies, University of Wolverhampton

I taught RE for 15 years and it is the most demanding of all curriculum subjects, but also the most exciting because you're using pupils' own views and opinions for learning about what really matters in life.

Of course RE lessons – the same as all religions - are about the power of story. Storytelling goes across the religions. The importance of narrative in all religions is vital. The very point of education is growth, says Plato - it's 'to make good men and good women act nobly.' Teachers carry a massive responsibility shared with rabbis, imams and religious teachers from all faiths because you can change a child's life, heal or hurt, inspire or disparage. You all want for your own children, if you have them, the best teachers. In RE lessons, the power of story to move you to compassion and care sits alongside powerful arguments about euthanasia, abortion or life after death. The point is that RE is a subject where relationships are a bit different because you're not just imparting knowledge but talking about the nature of God.

Gervase Phinn, Teacher, author and speaker

BACKPAGE - SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ...

January			February		
1st	<i>Secular</i>	New Year's Day	1st	<i>Pagan</i>	Imbolc/Candlemas
	<i>Christian</i>	Circumcision / Naming of Jesus	2nd	<i>Christian</i>	Presentation of the Lord
	<i>Japanese</i>	Ganjitsu	3rd	<i>Japanese</i>	Satsubun / Bean Scattering
5th	<i>Sikh</i>	Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh	5th	<i>Muslim (Sunni)</i>	Birthday of the Prophet Muhammed
6th	<i>Christian</i>	Epiphany	6th	<i>Chinese</i>	Teng Chieh
	<i>Orthodox Ch.</i>	Christmas Eve	8th	<i>Buddhist</i>	Parinirvana (or 15th)
7th	<i>Orthodox Ch.</i>	Christmas Day		<i>Jewish</i>	Tu B'Shevat
	<i>Rastafarian</i>	Ethiopian Christmas Day	10th	<i>Muslim (Shi'a)</i>	Birthday of the Prophet Muhammed
14th	<i>Hindu</i>	Lori / Makar Sankrant	20th	<i>Hindu</i>	Mahashivratri
16th	<i>Buddhist</i>	Shinran Memorial Day	21st	<i>Christian</i>	Shrove Tuesday
18th	<i>Christian</i>	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	22nd	<i>Christian</i>	Ash Wednesday
23rd	<i>Chinese</i>	Yuan Tan (New Year - Dragon)	27th	<i>Orthodox Ch.</i>	Great Lent / Orthodox Fast
25th	<i>Buddhist</i>	Honan Memorial Day			
27th		Holocaust Memorial Day			
28th	<i>Hindu</i>	Sarasota Puja			
	<i>Sikh</i>	Basant / Vasant			
30th	<i>Zoroastrian</i>	Jashn-e-Sadeh			

Dates courtesy of the Shap Working Party calendar - for more details see www.shap.org

ON THE WEBSITE ...

Do keep an eye on the website where you will find:

- 🕒 News updates
- 🕒 Information about NASACRE
- 🕒 News about events
- 🕒 News on projects
- 🕒 The Newsletter Archive
- 🕒 The FAQ archive
- 🕒 Agenda items for your next SACRE meetings
- 🕒 A membership list
- 🕒 Exemplar documentation



Contributors

BRUCE GILL
 MARTIN SWEET
 STEPHEN PETT
 JANET GOODALL
 KATHRYN GHENT
 JULIE GROVE
 MICHAEL METCALF
 SHARON ARTLEY

Please also check your details and if necessary update the membership section and add to the exemplar documentation. Contact us at web@nasacre.org.uk

SACRE News: the newsletter of the National Association of SACREs, published termly. The opinions expressed in articles are those of their authors and not necessarily of the NASACRE Executive. For details see the website. Copies of this e-newsletter may be distributed to SACRE members but content may not be altered or adapted unless specifically stated. This issue is edited by Sharon **Artley** and Paul **Hopkins**. Newsletter design by MMI web - www.mmiweb.org.uk



Welcome to the March 2012 REC newsletter

Whilst these continue to be challenging times for all of us in the RE community, there are numerous signs that interest in the subject continues to be strong across many different sections of society. The recent Religion and Society Debate on Faith in Schools, for instance, encapsulated some important questions about the future of RE and demonstrated the determination of a wide variety of people to keep it on the public and political agenda; student teachers, in particular, seemed to be in no mood to let their subject disappear from the radar.

This edition of the newsletter, too, offers evidence that there is a great deal happening in the way of discussion and constructive thinking about the future. People from across different faiths, beliefs and disciplines are coming together to share their views and ideas about the way forward for RE and there is a real sense of urgency and common purpose. Last Friday and Saturday, REC officers met with a representative each from RE professional associations - NATRE, AULRE, NASACRE, AREIAC and the Shap Working Party, to share ideas, concerns and approaches to the future of RE. Some areas were easier to agree on than others, but overall it was a very positive, interesting and fruitful weekend.

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR RE

The imminent establishment of an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to support RE has received widespread coverage in the national media. The APPG will meet regularly to provide a medium through which MPs and peers can discuss the current provision of religious education and to advocate for the highest standards of RE teaching for all children and young people; its inaugural meeting is expected to take place within the next couple of months. The REC will provide the secretariat for the group, and it will be chaired by Stephen Lloyd MP who recently said: "In today's globalised, multi-cultural world, where our children can be open to an enormous amount of misleading information, I believe it is absolutely essential they are taught about different cultures and religions by trained, experienced RE teachers, allowing children to make *informed* choices."

CURRICULUM REVIEW: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The REC is very pleased that Nick Gibb, Minister for Schools, has offered support to help shape a review of the RE curriculum that retains its academic rigour and is in step with the design and style of a National Curriculum, as well as asking the REC to produce a report on excellent teaching in RE. The REC's Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications Committee has already commissioned a scoping report on how such a review can be carried out. Please visit www.religiouseducationcouncil.org for further details and regular updates.

RE COUNCIL AGM

We'd like to remind all member organisations of the RE Council that the 2012 Annual General Meeting will take place at 11.00am on Thursday, 3rd May, at the Al-Khoei Foundation in Brent. The AGM offers members the opportunity to discuss the ongoing work of the Council, to share ideas and get to know each other's organisations more fully. Papers for the meeting will be sent out in April. If you have any questions, please email info@religiouseducationcouncil.org This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it

EMERGENCY SUMMIT MEETING FOR PGCE RE PROVIDERS

The Culham Institute and AULRE have jointly organised a meeting for PGCE Religious Education providers to be held on Tuesday 27th March at King's College, London. This one-day summit invites tutors in RE from universities in England and Wales, and some other

providers of CPD, to share their expertise and develop responses to the crisis facing recruitment to RE, and other issues. The summit will aim to develop a strategic response that lays the foundations for the next generation of RE teachers; it is invitation-only and free, and travel expenses can also be paid up to a maximum of £100. A few places are still available - please contact Jessie Sim at Jessie@culham.ac.uk This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it if you are interested in attending.

FOLLOW THE REC ON TWITTER

You can now follow the REC on Twitter @RECouncil and we're encouraging young people to interact with us @REC_Youth. It's early days but we have over 200 followers so far, with numbers increasing daily.

RE TEACHERS' PRACTICE CODE

The REC's Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE aims to complement the GTCE's general code for teachers. It is designed, in particular, to help reassure teachers, pupils and parents that a professional approach can and will be observed in relation to a teachers' sense of integrity about their own beliefs, and in "demonstrating respect for diversity and promoting equality". Following the announcement from the Department of Education that all teachers will be expected to meet new standards of competence and conduct from September 2012, the REC Board has decided to relaunch the Code of Practice at the same time.

RESILIENCE

At its meeting in February the REC Board accepted the recommendations contained in a report prepared by the REsilience pilot manager, Alastair Ross. It was agreed that REsilience would remain as a 'brand' and that management of it will pass to the REC's Professional Development committee. All materials on the REsilience website will now be made available to our member organisations; new materials will be added in due course, including case studies and templates - for example, on planning a REsilience pupil/teacher conference - and the original model, of mentors working with individual teachers, will remain on offer until at least the summer of 2013.

NASACRE AGM

The Annual General Meeting of NASACRE will take place on Wednesday 23rd May at Friends' House in London. The keynote speaker is Prof Bob Jackson. Please visit www.nasacre.org.uk for further details.

CHURCH IN WALES PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Province has developed an assessment tool identifying the core skills of RE to support the teaching and learning of the whole child in the context of a church school. To find out more about this innovative work please visit www.churchschools.cymru.org/llandaff or contact Kathie Mayer by email: kath@mayer.uk.net This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it

HINDU ACADEMY UPDATE

The Academy recently held a session for PGCE students at Oxford University, as part of its continued work with students and teachers of Hinduism across the UK. The Hinduism for Schools website continues to attract high numbers of students, and many also benefit from the Academy's presence on Youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/hinduacademy> and its regular media presentations on faith channels in the

UK and India.

HINDU COUNCIL UK

The Hindu Council UK is expanding its web presence and has relaunched its website at <http://www.hinducounciluk.net>. The Council continues to encourage temples and communities to set up classes in the structured study of Hinduism at various venues. Membership numbers are growing and the Council is also approaching various Hindu youth bodies to play a more active role in its work.

THREE FAITHS FORUM LECTURE: IDENTITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Author and playwright Bonnie Greer OBE is this year's speaker for the Three Faiths Forum Undergraduate Parliamentors Annual Lecture at the Human Rights Action Centre, Amnesty International, 17-25 New Inn Yard London, EC2A 3EA on Tuesday, 6th March at 6.30pm. The lecture is free of charge and open to the public. For further information, please visit: <http://www.3ff.org.uk/latest-news/bonnie-greer-to-speak-at-undergraduate-parliamentors-annual-lecture.php>

NEW RESOURCE FROM RE TODAY

Classroom Activities is a new free online resource from RE Today which is proving extremely popular. The resource provides a vast collection of websites organised by topics typically taught in KS3 and KS4. Each entry has a brief description of the website and suggestions for its use in the classroom. There is a facility for users to submit their own suggestions of websites and activities they have found useful. *Classroom Activities* is accessed from the home page of RE Today's website, and from <http://www.retoday.org.uk/resources>.

RE TODAY COURSES FOR TEACHERS

Active, enquiring, challenging RE: raising achievement and increasing motivation is a new course for Secondary teachers of RE being run on 21 March in Manchester.

Help! I'm the RE Co-ordinator is a popular training course for Primary RE Co-ordinators which is next available on 13 March 2012 and 10 October 2012, both in London.

For further information, please visit <http://retoday.org.uk/courses>

WESTHILL SEMINAR

The Primary Curriculum and RE: Current Directions is the third in NATRE's current Westhill Seminar series. It takes place from 16th - 18th March 2012 in Bristol at a subsidised price of £100. Please follow this link for details and a booking form: <http://www.retoday.org.uk/news/westhill-trust-seminars>. Concessions (e.g. for students) are available - please email exec@natre.org.uk. This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it to enquire.

JAMES HEMMING ESSAY PRIZE

The British Humanist Association has announced the 2012 The James Hemming Essay Prize administered with New Humanist and the

Conway Hall. Entries of no more than 1,500 words will be accepted from any student at a UK school or college studying for AS or A2 levels or qualifications at the same level (eg intermediate 1, intermediate 2, higher, advanced higher etc) who is 19 or under on 1st April 2012. The question for 2012 is: *No moral system can rest solely on authority. It can never be sufficient justification for performing any action that someone commands it. (A J Ayer, 1910-1989) Discuss.*

FASCINATING AND FRAGILE: JAIN STUDY DAY

The Institute of Jainology (IOJ) is holding a special Jain Study Day on Saturday 24th of March at London's Victoria and Albert Museum, to share the story of JAINpedia, a project bringing Jainism into the 21st century. Tickets can be booked through the V&A website www.vam.ac.uk.

CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY: PHD SCHOLARSHIPS

Canterbury Christ Church University welcomes applicants for full-time PhD scholarships, comprising a stipend of £11,700 pa and free tuition for three years. Applications are invited across a range of subjects and themes including Education, Arts and Humanities, and Applied Childhood Studies. The closing date for applications is 30 April 2012 - for more information and a prospectus, please visit: <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/StudyHere/Postgraduate/PostgraduateResearch/MPhilPhDScholarships.aspx>

CONFERENCE: RELIGION, EDUCATION AND CRITICAL REALISM

The inaugural conference for the International Association for Religion, Education and Critical Realism will be held from 7th-8th September 2012. Bringing together academics, researchers and classroom practitioners, it will aim to foster an exchange of ideas and encourage dialogue at the interface of Theology and Religion, Education and Learning, Religious Education and Critical Realism. For more information the conference and the call for papers, please visit: <http://www.education.brookes.ac.uk/conferences/2012/critical-realism/> or email jarecr@brookes.ac.uk This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it

CREATIVITY, CREATION, AND A BIG BANG

Science and religion in the school curriculum is the focus of this one day conference to be held at St Edmund's College, Cambridge, on Saturday 19th May at 2012 by the Faraday Institute. The keynote speaker will be Prof. John Hedley Brooke, author of *Newton, Science and Religion*, and there will be research and resource sessions from the LASAR team (Learning about Science and Religion). The cost is £20, including lunch (£15 for trainees and HE students). To register, please visit the conference page at www.faraday-institute.org

This page is intentionally left blank