

## **STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.30 pm on 7 November 2012

### **Present:**

Martin Sweet (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Anne Manning (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors: Reg Adams, Kate Lymer and Gordon Norrie.  
Virginia Corbyn, Christopher Town and Rev Steve Varney.  
Fiona Hawkes and Jackie Tranchina.  
Samantha Barnett, Patricia Colling, Sanjay Gupta,  
Ray Hagley, Saiyed Mahmood and Swarn Riat.

### **Also Present:**

Ms Penny Smith-Orr, RE Adviser  
Tessa Moore, Assistant Director, Education Services  
Christine Reeks, Clerk to SACRE

## **1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED** that Martin Sweet be elected as Chairman and Mrs Anne Manning be elected as Vice-Chairman of SACRE for the 2012/2013 academic year.

## **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Carr, Councillor Roger Charsley, Councillor David Jefferys, Arlene Fane, Emma Honey and Sue Polydourou. Councillor Stephen Wells the Portfolio Holder for Education also submitted his apologies. Prior to the meeting Councillor Reg Adams and Mr Swarn Riat apologised for having to leave the meeting early due to other commitments.

It was reported that due to personal circumstances it had unfortunately been necessary for Christine Duncan to resign her membership of SACRE. The Chairman would write to her to thank her for her contribution to the work of SACRE.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **4 A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2012**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 be confirmed subject to the following amendments:

Minute 35: last paragraph, third line, amend, “the Sikh Temples at Woolwich and Gravesend on the last Sunday of the month” to read “the Sikh Temples at Woolwich and Gravesend any day and on the last Sunday of the month in Bromley”.

Minute 36: fourth paragraph, first line, “RE Quality mark” should read “RE Quality Mark”.

Appendix 1: The State of RE - second paragraph, fourth line, “no certainly” should read “no certainty”.

#### **B) MATTERS ARISING:**

Minute 26: (Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2012.) The Chairman had been in contact with Bob Stewart MP and invited him to attend the next SACRE meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013. However, he would unfortunately be unavailable on that date.

Minute 34c: Inter-faith Walks 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July 2012 - Patricia Colling reported that this event had been very successful. The Bromley route had included visits to the Bromley Reform Synagogue, Bromley Parish Church, St Joseph’s RC Church and Bromley Baptist Church. The Chairman suggested that perhaps the route taken by the walk might be something schools could consider undertaking in future.

Minute 34d: The All Party Parliamentary Group for Religious Education was looking into teacher supply, local support and the impact on RE. The RE Adviser had been asked to send a questionnaire to primary and secondary school teachers (Heads of Departments) in Bromley to provide information for the All Party Parliamentary Group.

Minute 38: The Chairman suggested that perhaps a mini questionnaire could be sent to school governors as a way of obtaining feedback on the teaching of RE, particularly in regard to collective worship.

The Assistant Director for Education suggested that a way forward might be to contact Janet Heathcote, Governor Support Officer and ask that an LBB Education Department Circular be sent to the Chair of Governors for all schools (including academies) requesting the necessary information.

**ACTION: RE Adviser to liaise with the SACRE Chairman and contact the Governor Support Officer.**

## **5 ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS**

### **a) London SACREs event - Annual meeting of the London and South East SACREs**

The Chairman and Councillor Mrs Manning had attended the above event on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at the National Zoroastrian Centre in Harrow, Middlesex.

The Chairman commented on the address by John Keast which included a report on the work of the RE Council. (A copy of the presentation was circulated at the meeting.) There had also been a presentation by Mary Myatt on the Religious Education Quality Mark.

Religious Education was not in a good state nationally and there were a lot of challenges. Local SACREs needed to be more pro-active. Suggested points for action in Bromley:

- (i) Invite more schools to 'present' about RE at SACRE meetings
- (ii) Try to capture what the learners feel about RE – pupil surveys?
- (iii) Engage more with academies.

The RE Adviser commented that pupils' opinions had been expressed in the survey sent to the Bromley Schools RE co-ordinators earlier in the year. She suggested that some of these opinions could be included in the SACRE Annual Report for 2011-2012. **(Action PSO)**

Notes of the annual London and South East SACREs meeting are attached to these minutes (Appendix 1). Also attached for information, NASACRE updates: June to October 2012 (Appendix 2).

### **b) Youth SACRE - update**

The RE Adviser reported that there had not been a meeting of the Youth SACRE during the previous term but a meeting was planned for the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 at Coopers Technology College.

### **c) Islamic Competition**

This would take place from 7 - 9pm on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at Darul Uloom. Mr Mahmood informed the meeting that four schools were participating; Bullers Wood, Bishop Justus, Langley Park School for Boys and Coopers Technology College. All SACRE members were welcome and were asked to arrive by 6.50pm. A modest dress code was required; ladies should wear a long loose dress/skirt and a headscarf. SACRE Members were asked to notify Mr Mahmood if they wished to attend. The SACRE clerk would circulate further details by email. **(Action CR)**

The Chairman remarked that arrangements had been made for students from Darul Uloom to visit St. Nicholas Primary School in Chislehurst on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Mr Mahmood commented on the keen interest which was always shown by the SACRE Chairman and stated that Mr Sweet was a great

asset to the Council. Mr Mahmood asked for his comments to be formally recorded in the minutes.

*(Councillor Adams, Mr Riat and Rev Varney left the meeting after consideration of this item.)*

**d) SACRE Annual Report for 2011 - 2012**

The RE Adviser was preparing the annual SACRE report for 2011 - 2012 and would incorporate pupil comments (see item 5a above). The report would be checked by the Chairman before being sent to NASACRE and the Department for Education in December 2012. The report would also be distributed to all Bromley schools, SACRE Members, the Portfolio Holder for Education and members of the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee. The Chairman suggested, and SACRE members agreed that a copy of the annual report should be sent to Michael Gove MP and Liz Truss MP with a covering letter. It was further agreed that a copy of the report should be sent to the local Members of Parliament drawing their attention to the fact that the report had been sent to the above named MPs.

**e) National RE Update**

National RE Review: The RE Adviser reported that earlier that day she had attended a meeting of the RE Council, as a member of the Association of Religious Education Inspectors Advisors and Consultants (AREIAC). She had been given a copy of a report on Phase 1 of the National RE Review which had been release from embargo that afternoon. (The review was to run alongside the review of the National Curriculum.) The report had been prepared by a Panel of four experts who had interviewed 50 people; teachers, pupils, advisors and inspectors. From 12<sup>th</sup> November until 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 there was going to be a public consultation on the document. The RE Adviser would forward the report and questionnaire to SACRE Members and encouraged them to respond. **(Action PSO)**

RE Quality Mark: This had been discussed at the RE Co-ordinators meeting. Details of the Quality Mark can be seen on the following website: [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org) (see also Appendix 1). The RE Adviser would be happy to assist schools who wished to pursue this.

RE Council – Sponsored Walk: In order to help support the costs of the RE Review the RE Council would be having a sponsored walk in May 2013. This would also coincide with the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RE Council. Further details would be circulated when available.

Inter Faith Week: This would take place from 18<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2012. Resources can be found on [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org) Patricia Colling (the Catholic representative on SACRE) said that she had been asked to produce something on “what you see when you go into church” and understood that other religious groups had been asked to do something similar. The RE Adviser said that she was not aware of this but it might be something which

could be a useful resource for schools. Mrs Colling said that she would make some more enquiries about the project. **(Action PC)**

*(Mr Town left the meeting after consideration of this item.)*

**6 DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**  
**Report no. ED12053**

The Chairman and RE Adviser met with the Head of Commissioning and Business Services in January 2012 and agreed a costed development plan which was presented to SACRE at their Spring meeting. The development plan was for four terms in order to move it in line with the Council's financial year.

SACRE Members considered a report prepared by the RE Adviser which updated them on the progress of the development plan. Following discussion the following points and amendments were made:

Item 2: Make a Faith Directory for Schools. "...a few speakers who have volunteered and been checked" should read "a few appropriate speakers who have volunteered and been trained." It was agreed that the RE Adviser should try and arrange another training event for volunteers from faith groups who had offered to talk in schools. (Unfortunately it had been necessary to postpone the training event which had previously been organised, as little interest had been shown.) The training event would be held in the evening and as much notice as possible would be given of the date. The RE Adviser would contact the SACRE clerk to make the necessary arrangements. **(Action PSO and CR)**. It was important that the training session should be evaluated and participants would be asked to complete an evaluation form.

Item 12: "Moral, Social and Cultural" should read "Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural"

Item 13: Ensure schools are aware of the statutory nature of RE – this should be reworded to read **all** schools

**RESOLVED that**

- (i) the updating report and amendments be noted;**
- (ii) the RE Adviser to organise a training session for the Faith Directory volunteers.**

*(Mr Hagley left the meeting after consideration of this item.)*

**7            AGREED SYLLABUS UPDATE  
              Report no. ED12054**

Agreed Syllabuses have to be reviewed by SACRE every 5 years and are usually revised and updated every 10 years. The current Bromley Syllabus was written in 2006 and was due for review. The current scheme of work for schools was written in 1995 and updated in 2004. As a result of discussion regarding the current documentation of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus, it was decided to revise the syllabus and rewrite the scheme of work to bring them in line with current thinking on RE teaching.

The RE Adviser submitted a report which outlined the progress to date. Copies of completed draft units which had been prepared were circulated at the meeting. These related to Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam Judaism and Sikhism. Following discussion it was agreed that more time should be allowed for individual faith representatives on SACRE to consider and comment on the units. The RE Adviser agreed to email the relevant units to the SACRE members concerned for their consideration. The Chairman suggested that in addition to detailed faith comments, feedback should be given on a general impression/overview.

A grid of the proposed timetable for teaching the units, divided by term and into year groups was also circulated. Virginia Corbyn commented that it needed to be clear which were statutory and non-statutory units. Some concern was expressed at the meeting that not enough time was being allocated to the teaching of Christianity. Fiona Hawkes remarked that the Unit on "Should we care for our world" would also cover Christianity. Christmas and Easter were also included in the timetable. Councillor Norrie considered that the proposed timetable was too heavily biased against the Christian religion. The RE Adviser commented that in Bromley more and more children were not of the Christian faith or had no faith. The current syllabus did not reflect this and was out of date. The Chairman said he understood Councillor Norrie's concerns but the teachers involved had endorsed the suggested units and timetable. Mr Mahmood considered that a good positive start had been made but agreed that SACRE Members needed to look at the units for their individual faith groups. The RE Adviser emphasised that the units which had been prepared were not final and were still in draft form.

In order to progress the matter it was suggested and agreed by SACRE Members that the Agreed Syllabus Update should be given priority discussion at their next meeting which should start at the earlier time of 6pm. The revised materials should be made available in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the new Agreed Syllabus would need to be ready before the end of the summer term 2013 for implementation in September 2013.

**RESOLVED that individual faith groups on SACRE should be sent copies of the appropriate draft units of work for comments and the RE Adviser should continue working on the Agreed Syllabus update.**

*(Councillor Lymer and Councillor Manning left the meeting during consideration of this item and Mr Gupta left the meeting at the end of the item)*

**8 SCHOOL VISITS  
Report no. ED12055**

It had been agreed that the RE Adviser should be released from organising and making school visits during the year in order to use the time to work on the Bromley RE Syllabus revision.

The Chairman informed the meeting that arrangements had been made for the following visits to take place:

Castlecombe Primary School - 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 at 10.25am.

Hayes Secondary School – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 (time to be confirmed).

The SACRE clerk would circulate details to SACRE members who were asked to notify the Chairman if they would be able to accompany him on the school visits.

**RESOLVED that details of the proposed school visits be circulated and SACRE Members notify the Chairman if they would be able to attend.**

**9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**10 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013 – meeting to start at **6pm**.

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013 – meeting to start at 6.30pm.

The Meeting ended at 8.52 pm

Chairman

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# Minute Annex

## APPENDIX 1

### Report on 6<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the London and SE SACREs Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2012

#### Excellent RE

The event was held at the National Zoroastrian Centre in Harrow and the delegates were shown around the centre and given an informative talk about their faith and practices.

The delegates divided into small discussion groups and were encouraged to report on successes, challenges and issues. These were then fed back to Bruce Gill and Denise Chaplin to be fed into the day as questions if appropriate, or to take back to the NASACRE executive to inform their work and the role out of a national initiative to replicate the London and SE SACRE group in other parts of the country.

Among the issues raised, delegates were concerned with the issues of non-compliance of schools to teach RE and the impact that the current situation regarding changes to schools and education are having on the state of RE in general.

#### Report by John Keast on the work of the RE Council.

The RE Council is an umbrella organisation, with membership made up of representatives from all the major faith and non-faith groups, RE professional bodies and other national voluntary bodies. They have 2 meetings a year and currently have 59 member groups. The aim of the RE council is to present a coherent national voice, working through a number of partnership organisations.

John presented the conference with some key facts about the state of RE:

- RE is no longer required by statute to be taught in academies or Free schools, although it may be required as part of their funding agreement with the government.
- Academies are no longer required to teach the local agreed syllabus. Whilst most academies have RE and CW included in their funding agreements – this can be changed by any secretary of state for Education in the future!
- There is no national QC(D)A advisor therefore no detailed analysis of data.
- There has been a reduction of the targets for RE PGCE students. With fewer RE teachers being trained than ever before the result will be that some teacher training institutions, with only a handful of students, are likely to close their RE department.
- The removal of exemplars, levels and programmes of study, in line with other subjects.

- RE was excluded from the government review of the curriculum.
- The move away from GCSE in favour of the EBacc will leave the subject in limbo. (Martin comment: by reducing its place in KS3 curriculum?)
- The education department has abolished bursaries for RE students (along with drama, citizenship and D.T.)
- There has been a leaked report to the effect that a 16+ Abacc may be introduced (replacing A levels), and this is likely not to include RE (in line with Ebacc policy)
- Fewer take up with short course GCSE in RE (due to non inclusion in end of year 11 stats)
- GCSE RE long course numbers are growing, but it is anticipated that this is unlikely to remain so.

The facts lead to John's simple first conclusion that RE is being dismantled of all national support structures, rendering RE totally a 'local matter'. So taking on board a consideration the significance of local developments:

- the loss of the RE subject paragraphs in OFSTED reports, so less information getting through to SACREs
- the loss of RE advisor posts
- diminishing or no budget for local SACRE
- disappearance of local professional development provision
- most secondary schools are now outside the remit of the LA and SACRE.

John's somewhat depressing conclusion was to suggest that there is also an increasing collapse of local support and structures for RE. He went on to suggest that there is a wholesale change in the way the government wants RE to be perceived. The intention, it seems, is to leave it up to local schools to determine their own response to the requirement (whatever that is) to teach RE. Whilst the government still continues to assert that RE is statutory, clearly this is not the whole picture. John asked what might be the role of the faith communities in this situation?

The key consequences:

- fragmentation of the RE curriculum
- fewer trained RE teachers
- reduction in provision and quality of RE teaching

His fear is that the end of RE as we know it could be in sight! So therefore the question comes to mind: why do we bother and continue to struggle? His response is to suggest that the REC will continue to propose that good RE is important to the development of society. He believes that the RE council, local SACREs and other key stakeholders need to take responsibility for the subject.

The REC produced a strategic plan a few months ago with 5 key areas of work, each one driven by a committee or working group:

1. CAQ (curriculum assessment and qualification group) – they have set up their own ‘expert’ panel and they are undertaking their own independent review of RE which will be published in Dec 2012. This will not have the same status of the previous RE National Framework, because of the width of its membership, it will still have impact, and in the absence of any other guidance, it will attempt to be seen as setting a benchmark for future RE developments, not least in its value to local SACREs as they re-writing their agreed syllabus.

They have also intend to set up a working group in 2012 looking at the rationale for RE to look at issues of curriculum, assessment and qualification, to be published in summer 2013.

(note: John has already published a paper on qualification reform in RE on the REC website?)

2. PD (professional development group) –
  - They are setting up a PD portal on the REC website
  - Continue to build on the Resilience campaign
  - Continue to develop the ‘sacred spaces’ initiative
  - Role out the RE quality mark (see later item)
3. PR (public relations group) – this includes meeting with ministers (schools minister met with REC earlier this year but was lost to a reshuffle so need to meet with ‘new’ schools minister Mrs Elizabeth Truss). Also letters to local ministers and other political parties in parliament. However, John noted that he is disappointed at the lack of response from government ministers (including the secretary of state for education) to any letters sent. (John suggested something along the lines of ‘turning a deaf ear’). He added that most MPs do not respond effectively to questions about RE and this gives the impression that most would appear ignorant of what is happening with RE. All this underpins the importance of the EDM (Early Day Motion) that was tabled by Stephen Lloyd MP (conservative) which has now helped the formation of the APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) on the topic of RE. This group is currently enquiring into how teacher supply and local support will impact RE.

The REC is setting in motion a reThinkRE campaign for 2013 and they are also trying to link up with head teachers, governors and academy trusts.

4. Resources
  - Invite key people to become patrons of REC
  - Develop their supporters base
  - Build on the young ambassadors schemes
  - Fund raising!

5. Governance
  1. Expanded membership
  2. More individual members
  3. Working together smarter!

Questions put to John Keast:

1. Question about what might be the role of the REC in networking religious groups? John felt it was important to encourage faith groups to work together and speak with a single voice.
2. Question regarding extremist views in admission policies of academies? John felt that with the increased fragmentation of RE, the RE curriculum might descend into merely a list of topics or faiths we don't want to see. However, he added that whilst there are extremist opinions (the questioner mentioned extreme secularist opinions) the BHA is supportive of good RE and are part of the REC coalition.
3. One questioner asked if John felt this is all being driven by the Secretary of State for Education. John graciously suggested that Michael Gove has great energy but is dogmatic in his particular approach to education. He has a lot of support and is in a powerful position. However, he has created the impression that current changes in education are a huge experiment in two key areas: school autonomy and developing a core knowledge based curriculum. One key is that the Ebacc will become the dominant factor (common destination for students) and will determine everything else regarding school curriculum.
4. Another questioner expressed the concern that in a 'privatised' or commercial education system, is it not the case that he who pays the piper .. ? John replied that if RE is not being assessed (or validated?) it will not be taught. In other words, if schools are no longer judged on the quality or content of their RE .. they will drop it to focus on those area of the curriculum that is.

In conclusion, as we see the decline in the take up of short course GCSE in RE, and the projected drop in numbers for the long course RE, John suggested that the decline of RE in schools will lead to a growing lack in Religious Literacy within all levels of society. A closing anecdote was his worry that someone who is religiously illiterate will never understand the need for religious literacy in the first place!

### **Presentation by Mary Myatt on the Religious Education Quality Mark**

The aim of this project is to recognise outstanding teaching and learning in religious education. It is an accreditation system which seeks to recognise good practice in RE, and designed to be a mechanism for whole school improvement beyond RE as its principle focus is to enhance pedagogy (see additional notes below).

The REQM is currently available to all schools, academies and it includes faith based schools too and additional information can be gathered from their website [www.reqm.org](http://www.reqm.org). The purpose of the REQM is to provide a framework that will encourage schools increase their range and quality of planning, teaching and learning in Religious Education, and, by improving the standard of pedagogy in RE, aim to impact whole school improvement.

The main concern Mary suggested was that where there is little or no RE in a school, it is difficult to capture the role and impact of RE on SMSC (Social Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development of each child or student).

The way the REQM will benefit each school will be in:

- the dissemination of good quality RE through networking.
- maintain the position of RE as schools move forward towards a more creative curriculum.
- Assess the findings of Transforming RE initiative (reported 2012), especially relating to enquiry based RE teaching.

The REQM assesses 5 criteria:

- Learners and learning
- Teachers and teaching
- Curriculum
- Subject leadership
- Continuing professional development.

An evaluation form was completed by each of the delegates and Martin Sweet will be producing a report on this for the London and SE SACREs planning group.

Suggested points for action in Bromley:

1. Invite more schools to 'present' about RE at SACRE meetings
2. Try to capture what the learners feel about RE – pupil surveys?
3. Engage more with academies .. not less, especially as we spend time reviewing the Agreed Syllabus.

Note: Pedagogy: the method and practice of teaching children – from Greek to lead children.

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### NASACRE UPDATES June to October 2012

#### Feedback from SACRES at the AGM

##### My SACRE looks to NASACRE for:

Consultation

Representation at policy/ national level (with REC); Guidance/representation?  
Of policy developments; collective solidarity.

A possible model/draft syllabus to be used by small SACREs.

Advice, support, recommended articles, books for resources.

Up to date info about legislation and its impact upon RE e.g. National Curriculum Review. Academies.

Keeping SACRES informed of national picture and developments and of ways they can support. Less about research and more about HOW SACREs might support schools in (this) financially challenging climate. Examples of good practice.

##### Other comments:

NASACRE needs to emphasise that the real authority re RE lies with local authorities and their SACREs. As a consequence we expect more consultation with local SACREs prior to making representations with the Government, DfE or the REC (which claims to speak for the RE community).

Sharing what different SACREs do and who they? to – perhaps on NASACRE website. This would allow development of SACREs and development of good practice and experience. My own SACRE believes SACRE should be more proactive rather than reactive to Government initiatives. Developing a package for parents on what RE is. Any follow up to the work of the other year on Inter Faith Dialogue?

Rather concerned that the paper on CW is available for all and many people will not know all the difficulties with Circular 1/94. Until this paper has been agreed by NASACRE and AREIAC it should not be in the front page of the website. Many may not read it as a consultative paper. It could backfire and feed into those who are so anti CW as evidence to use fighting a change in the law.

#### SACRE Survey 2012 (selected sections)

This builds on the surveys of 2010 and 2011. The 2011 SACRE survey received 47 responses (30%) from SACREs. By mid-August the 2012 survey had received 69 responses and by early September this had increased to 71(46%).

Three responses did not identify the SACRE.

Of those SACREs responding, significant proportions reported that they still had:

- Specialist advisers and consultants – 84%
- RE Advisors/Consultants who were LA officers with knowledge of and access to local schools -72%
- LA clerks – 97%

**How many days of support is your SACRE receiving? 57 answers**

1-5	16	(28%)
6-10	8	(14%)
10-15	9	(16%)
16-20	7	(12%)
20-30	2	(4%)
.>30	15	(26%)

**What budget is the LA providing for the SACRE in this financial year (2012/13)? 53 answers**

None	4	(8%)
£1,000 or less	4	(8%)
£1,001 - £3,000	5	(9%)
£3,001-£5,000	10	(19%)
£5,001-£10,000	11	(21%)
£10,001-£15,000	14	(26%)
£15,001-£20,000	5	(9%)
>£20,000	9	(13%)

**When will you next review your Agreed Syllabus? 57 answers**

Currently doing so	15	(26%)
2013 -14	11	(19%)
2014-15	5	(9%)
2016-17	14	(25%)

**To your knowledge, will the support you are receiving this year continue into 2013-13? 53 answers**

Yes we have assumed continuation at this level	23	(43%)
Yes, but likely to be reduced	14	(26%)
Yes	42	(72%)
No	16	(28%)
Yes	42	(72%)
No	16	(28%)
No	2	(4%)
Uncertain	15	(28%)
Other	12	(22%)

**Greatest concerns of your SACRE for the new academic year (September 2012 to July 2013)? 52 answers.**

The stated concerns were:

- Continued **Support** for SACREs (27)
- The place of **RE in the curriculum** (23)
- Access to **academies** (16)
- **Monitoring of RE** in all schools (including academies) (11)
- Future **role of SACRE** (12)
- Review of **Agreed Syllabus** (10)
- Supporting schools (**monitoring provision for and standards in RE**) (9)



- Meaningful access for pupils to **non-Christian religious traditions**. (8)
- The **profile of the SACRE in the LA (8)**
- **Professional development** for teacher and RE leaders (3)
- Supporting schools on **collective worship (4)**
- **Teaching of RE** by non-specialists (2)

These are helping to shape and guide NASACRE priorities for the period 2013-2016.

**Annual Reports** - Send to NASACRE – note that many SACREs are also sending copies to the SoS (50 received to date, a number of SACREs running behind their own schedules because of local pressures.

**ASCs** – Minimalist approach maintained.

**InterFaith Week** -IFN Briefing

**RE Subject Review** – timetable and consultation points.

**NASACRE and AREIAC's joint statement on Circular 1/94 and collective worship**      October 2012

Since March of this year NASACRE and AREIAC have been in contact with the Department for Education regarding the status of Circular 1/94 with respect to what this Circular says about collective worship. In the course of this correspondence it has been made clear that 1/94 has no legal or semi legal status, nor does the Circular have a quasi-legal status. It does not represent the Government's official advice on collective worship which schools are in some sense obliged to follow. Officials state that in this area local determination is a key strength and for this reason all schools and Academies can choose whether or not to use the Circular

The view of NASACRE and AREIAC is that collective worship can and should be an inclusive experience which, when done well, can make a valuable and highly positive contribution to life in general in all schools. All schools and Academies should be meeting the legal requirements for collective worship. However, we are aware that in attempting to do so many institutions experience difficulties which stem from statements which appear in Circular 1/94. The Circular is thus often a barrier to good collective worship. For this reason NASACRE and AREIAC advise that schools and Academies should not use Circular 1/94 but that their provision for collective worship should be guided by the legal requirements as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and confirmed in the 1996 Education Act. NASACRE has provided a guide to Collective Worship for schools which is available on the website, highlighting good practice.

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