



THE LONDON BOROUGH
www.bromley.gov.uk

BROMLEY CIVIC CENTRE, STOCKWELL CLOSE, BROMLEY BRI 3UH

TELEPHONE: 020 8464 3333

CONTACT: Jo Partridge

joanne.partridge@bromley.gov.uk

DIRECT LINE: 020 8461 7694

FAX: 020 8290 0608

DATE: 26 June 2018

To: Members of the
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Reverend R Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans, David Jefferys, Keith Onslow and
Chris Pierce

Church of England: Mrs V Corbyn, Mr C Town and Reverend S Varney

Teachers: Mrs D Angell, Ms H Arnold and Ms S Odusola

Other Faiths: Mrs S Barnett, Mrs P Colling, Mr S Gupta, Mr R Hagley,
Mr S Mahmood, Mr A Nandra and Mrs E Whitman

A meeting of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education will be held at
Bromley Civic Centre on **WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2018 AT 6.00 PM**

MARK BOWEN
Director of Corporate Services

Copies of the documents referred to below can be obtained from
<http://cde.bromley.gov.uk/>

A G E N D A

- 1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**
- 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**
- 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST MARCH 2018 (Pages 3 - 8)**
- 5 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**
- 6 REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE (Pages 9 - 10)**

7 ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS

8 SCHOOL VISITS

9 NASACRE CONFERENCE AND AGM (Pages 11 - 30)

10 SACRE SELF EVALUATION (Pages 31 - 64)

11 SACRE DRAFT ACTION PLAN (Pages 65 - 66)

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Wednesday 31st October 2018

Wednesday 27th February 2019

All meetings to start at 6pm

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 6.00 pm on 21 March 2018

Present:

Reverend Roger Bristow (Chairman)

Councillors Kevin Brooks, Robert Evans, David Jefferys
and Sarah Phillips

Mrs D Angell, Ms H Arnold, Mr R Hagley, Mr S Mahmood,
Mr A Nandra, Mr C Town and Reverend S Varney

Also Present:

Julia Andrew, LBB Head of School Standards

20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed Julia Andrew, Head of School Standards to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keith Onslow, Samantha Barnett, Patricia Colling, Virginia Corbyn, Sanjay Gupta, Edlene Whitman and Carol Arnfield – LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Sarah Phillips and Christopher Town.

The Chairman informed members that Mr Jed Stone had resigned from his role on the SACRE Committee. As the London Borough of Bromley's Development Control Committee had not ratified their decision to grant planning permission for Bullers Wood School for Boys, Mr Stone felt he could no longer sit on a Council Committee. The Chairman said that he had tried to contact Mr Stone on a number of occasions to discuss his decision. Currently, he had not received a response, and had hoped that now a temporary site for the school had been agreed, Mr Stone may reconsider his resignation.

Mr Mahmood emphasised that Mr Stone would be a great loss to the SACRE as he had made a valuable contribution over many years. This had been expected to continue, with Mr Stone providing support in relation to the secondary elements of the SACRE Advisor's role. Mr Mahmood's plea was for the Chairman to try and persuade him to return. The Chairman agreed that he would continue to try and make contact with Mr Stone to discuss his decision.

ACTION: Chairman

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

**22 A) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH DECEMBER
2017**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2017
be confirmed as a correct record.**

B) MATTERS ARISING

Minute 15: Oral Update & Publications – A) SACRE Advisor

The Chairman advised members that the letter to schools encouraging them to engage with the SACRE had not yet been sent, as the issue of resourcing the SACRE had not yet been resolved. This would be delayed until the SACRE was able to say something worthwhile, and be in a position to deliver anything they promised.

Minute 15: Oral Update & Publications – B) Humanist Representative

The Chairman informed members that since the last meeting, he had advised Humanists UK and the member of the Baha'i faith who had been interested in joining the SACRE, that representatives were not currently required for the Bromley SACRE.

Minute 17: SACRE Draft Action Plan

The Chairman advised members that Bromley schools were not using Fronter in the way LBB officers had expected. In the past, the Bromley Agreed Syllabus and related documents had been uploaded on to Fronter as it was believed it would allow them to be easily accessible for all staff. The LBB Head of School Standards said she had since discovered that only Headteachers and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO) had access to Fronter, which was password protected. Although the use of Fronter was being reviewed in Bromley, it was considered to be useful. SACRE needed an area within it, which was available to all, so she was exploring if all teachers could be provided with password access.

A teacher representative noted that her school had previously used Fronter, but had since decided it was not suited to their needs, and were using Pixl instead. Another platform suggested was London Grid for Learning (LGfL), which required a login and password, but all teachers would already have access. Members considered that there was no need for SACRE documents to be password protected. They felt it was important that the documents were available to everyone, including parents. There would be a need to communicate to Headteachers what information was available and how it could be accessed. The Chairman agreed, and said that this would be included in the letter drafted to schools.

ACTION: LBB Head of School Standards

23 COMPLIANCE OF THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The Chairman informed members that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) would come into effect from 25th May 2018. The SACRE would need to be sure it handled any data it held properly, and be aware of who was responsible for it. As the SACRE was part of the London Borough of Bromley they were ultimately responsible, but if individuals processed any data that could identify people, they needed to do it carefully. If one person misused the data, lost information or breached the regulations, the whole of the SACRE would be accountable.

Members were requested to inform the Chairman and clerk as soon as possible if they became aware that a document had been mislaid; and any papers that they handled, which included any personal information, would need to be kept securely. Members noted that the personal details of SACRE members should only be used for the purposes of the Committee, and not be passed on to any third parties.

The Chairman advised SACRE members that 'Compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)' would become a standing item on future agendas to act as a reminder.

24 ORAL UPDATE & PUBLICATIONS

a SACRE ADVISOR

The Chairman reminded SACRE members that at the last meeting on 6th December 2017, a possible plan to cover the SACRE Advisor role had been suggested, with Ms Virginia Corbyn using some of her time to cover the primary elements, and Mr Jed Stone the secondary. As Mr Stone had since resigned from his role on the Committee, the Chairman and LBB officers were considering a way forward, and welcomed any suggestions from members.

In response to a question, the Chairman said that every Local Authority had a pot of money allocated for School Standards. In previous years, when the pot of money had been larger, SACRE had been allocated its own budget. As this was no longer the case, the SACRE would need to bid for money required from the School Standards budget. There was an argument that the School Standards budget should only be used to the benefit of the schools that the Local Authority had direct responsibility for. However, very few schools were left, as most within the Borough had become Academies.

Members considered that if there was not a SACRE Advisor, the SACRE would be unable to fulfil its statutory duties. Previous SACRE Advisors had arranged teacher training events and activities for schools. These were highly valuable and it was felt that all students should benefit, whether they attended Local Authority schools or Academies. Reverend Varney noted that during the previous academic year there had been money available, indirectly, to fund

the time of Mr Kieran Osborne, and at the last meeting it had been agreed that Bromley SACRE would draw on Ms Corbyn's expertise, which it was assumed would not be cost free. The Chairman stated that it had been planned to share the cost of Ms Corbyn's time with the London Borough of Bexley, but a definitive amount had not yet been decided. Reverend Varney said that some of the required elements of work to be undertaken were known; leading on school visits and writing report; attending meetings and following up any actions; and contributing to the SACRE Annual Report. The required hours to deliver these could be roughly calculated, and a bid for funding submitted. It would then be up to the London Borough of Bromley to decide if they would fund the role. Members understood that there was a structural problem in the method the money was drawn down, but this was not the SACRE's issue and they needed an Advisor's time and expertise in order to deliver their statutory role.

Reverend Varney offered to meet with the Chairman and LBB officers to discuss the SACRE's requirements. The Chairman agreed that this would be beneficial and requested that a meeting be arranged after Easter for himself, the LBB Head of Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education, the LBB Head of School Standards and Reverend Varney to agree the requirements of funding a SACRE Advisor role. It was noted that Ms Corbyn had agreed to assist with the primary elements of the role, but a secondary advisor would still need to be identified. If Ms Corbyn was to facilitate the revision of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus, the work required by the secondary advisor would be reduced. Members considered that as most secondary schools in the Borough were Academies, the RE leaders were able to facilitate network and communication methods via a different model to primary schools. The Chairman noted that before Mr Osborne had left his role as LBB RE Advisor, he had been exploring the possibility of forming a wider schools network with the Heads of RE at Hayes School and Ravens Wood School. The Chairman said he would contact Mr Osborne and see if this had been established, and if so, enquire if and how it could be 'tapped into'. **ACTION: Chairman**

RESOLVED that a meeting be organised after Easter to discuss a bid to fund a SACRE Advisor role.

b SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

SACRE members had been provided with a copy of the Annual Report 2016-2017. The Chairman advised that the report was mainly factual and included exam results tables, membership and attendance at meetings. Members commented that overall the report was very positive.

Members enquired as to how the production of the Annual Report had been funded. The Chairman responded that it had been a joint effort between himself, the LBB Head of Service for Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education, and the clerk as part of their job roles. It was noted that when the SACRE had an RE Advisor, there had been more content than what there was currently.

Members enquired who the SACRE Annual Report was circulated to. The Chairman confirmed that the clerk submitted it to NASACRE, the Secretary of State for Education and all Councillors. Councillor Representatives queried why the report did not go to a meeting of Full Council, and requested that it did so in order to raise the profile of the SACRE. **ACTION: Clerk**

c NASACRE AGM

The Chairman advised members that he would be attending the NASACRE Conference and AGM, which was being held on Thursday 24th May 2018 at the Merchant Taylors' Hall, City of London. The theme of the conference would be 'Stronger Together - Celebrating the power of Community'. There was scope for another member of the SACRE to attend, and members were advised to contact the Clerk as soon as possible if they would like a place booked.

The Chairman would report back on the NASACRE Conference and AGM at the next meeting.

d MONITORING / COMPLAINING ABOUT NON-COMPLIANCE IN THE TEACHING OF RE

SACRE members were provided with copies of two documents entitled 'Report for NATRE on LA maintained schools' and 'Why SACREs should complain to schools when they neglect RE'. Both documents referenced the 'State of the Nation Report', which the Chairman had highlighted at the last SACRE meeting. It was noted that these documents acted as a reminder that this was part of a SACRE member's responsibilities. Members visited schools by invitation, which would cease if the schools felt that the SACREs feedback was that they were not happy with what they had seen. The SACRE was there to support and assist the schools, and were not there to inspect them, but members could not 'turn a blind eye' if what they saw was wrong, as it would make them complicit with it.

Members enquired if there were any schools which SACRE representatives had visited where they had been worried about what they had seen. The Chairman said that a number of interesting discussions had taken place with Headteachers during previous visits, where he had been firm and advised that they could not do certain things, but there was nowhere that he had been where he had thought it was terrible, although if a school knew they were not compliant, they would be very unlikely to invite SACRE members to visit.

The Chairman stated that, when invited into schools to see their delivery of Religious Education, SACRE members were generally impressed with what they saw. They sometimes made suggestions of other things that the school could do, and if they did not see any Collective Worship taking place, they usually just commented that they were disappointed not to view what the school did. Mr Mahmood expressed that he favoured an indirect approach, with members saying what the SACRE's understanding is, and then drafting a report following the visit. In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed

that a report was written after each visit to a school, and the school were provided with a copy. The report should be available for Ofsted Inspectors to view, however it was not known how often they would request to see documents relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship. The LBB Head of School Standards said that Ofsted should be viewing documents from across the curriculum, and that the Headteacher should be making these documents available to Ofsted Inspectors. There should also be a policy on Religious Education, and a lead within the school.

25 SCHOOL VISITS

The Chairman advised members that as the SACRE did not currently have an RE Advisor, no school visits had been able to take place since the last meeting. However, he had been invited to attend this years' RE Day at James Dixon Primary School, and the invite had been extended to SACRE members. The clerk had informed members that it would take place on the morning of Wednesday 28th March 2018, 9.00am - 12.00pm, and the Chairman, Councillor Robert Evans, Edlene Whitman and Virginia Corbyn would be attending.

26 SACRE DRAFT ACTION PLAN

SACRE members were provided with a copy of the SACRE Draft Action Plan for 2017-18. Members noted that the Action Plan would be a good starting point for setting out the requirements for the SACRE Advisor role, and enable them to apply for funding from the School Standards budget.

27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Mahmood informed SACRE members that he would be unable to attend the meeting planned for 6th June 2018, and asked if it would be possible to look for an alternative date. The Chairman agreed that this would be explored, and members would be advised of the new date. **ACTION: Clerk**

Subsequently, a new date of Wednesday 4th July 2018 was agreed for the summer term meeting.

28 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 4th July 2018
Wednesday 31st October 2018
Wednesday 27th February 2019

All meetings to start at 6pm

The Meeting ended at 6.57 pm

Chairman



LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 To advise the Local Authority (LA) upon such matters connected with collective worship in community schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an Agreed Syllabus (including methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and the provision of training for teachers) as the LA may refer to SACRE or as SACRE may see fit.

1.2 To advise on the effective and creative implementation of the collective worship requirements of the Education Act 1996 and to consider requests by schools for determination.

1.3 To encourage the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus and in this regard to monitor the production of teaching resources and support material.

1.4 To support the LA in reviewing provision for religious education and collective worship in county schools within the Borough.

1.5 To disseminate an understanding of the educational role of religious education and collective worship and to encourage the active involvement of local religious groups and organisations.

1.6 To keep under review the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus until such time (and no later than five years after the publication of the last agreed syllabus) it decides to require the LA to convene an Agreed Syllabus Conference to institute a formal review.

1.7 To publish an annual report on its work specifying in particular any matters on which it has advised the LA, broadly describing the nature of that advice, and setting out the reasons for offering advice on any matters not referred to it by the LA.

1.8 To submit its annual report to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)¹ by 30th December each year as well as to local schools and other persons and organisations as it sees fit.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF SACRE

2.1 SACRE shall comprise four Committees, whose members are appointed by the LA, as follows:

Committee A: Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations reflecting the principal religious traditions in the community.

- Free Church Christian members nominated by the Free Churches' Council
- Roman Catholic members nominated by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark
- Representatives from other faiths

¹ No longer in existence

Committee B: The Church of England
Members nominated by the Diocese of Rochester

Committee C: Teachers' Associations
Members nominated by Professional Associations representing as far as is practicable, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools

Committee D: The Local Authority
Members nominated by Council

2.2 Members of Committees A, B, C and D are appointed for a period of four years but shall thereafter be eligible for re-nomination by their nominating bodies. The level of membership of each Committee should be reviewed regularly and additional Members appointed to reflect the different communities in the locality.

2.3 Any member of SACRE may at any time resign his/her office and a replacement be sought from the relevant nominating body.

2.4 SACRE shall have the right to co-opt additional Members who shall remain co-opted for as long as SACRE deems necessary or until such time as the co-opted Member resigns.

2.5 SACRE will appoint its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman annually from amongst its membership.

Decision-making

2.6 Voting at SACRE shall be on the basis of one vote per Committee and formal resolutions to the LA shall be passed only if all four Committees are in agreement. Within each Committee, voting shall be by single majority.

Attendance at Meetings

2.7 The membership of any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without good cause shall lapse and a replacement or reinstatement be sought from the relevant nominating body.

2.8 SACRE meetings are to be considered quorate if one-third of members of SACRE are in attendance, rounded up to the nearest whole number, with at least one member from each of Committees A, B, C and D.

2.9 Meetings of SACRE shall be open to the public except under those circumstances where matters under discussion are considered by SACRE to be confidential.

Frequency of Meetings

2.10 There will normally be three SACRE meetings held each academic year.

Report No.
CSD18101

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Date: 4th July 2018

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: NASACRE 2018 CONFERENCE & AGM REPORT

Contact Officer: Carol Arnfield – Head of Service - Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education

Chief Officer: Gillian Palmer, Interim Director of Education

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report;

NASACRE's 'Silver Jubilee' 25th Anniversary Conference & AGM took place on 24th May 2018. A summary of the day is provided, accompanied by the speeches of the two key speakers – Rt Hon Charles Clarke and Dr Vanessa Ogden.

2. Recommendation;

Members to note the report.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People: this report relates to schools and their role in supporting Bromley's children to attain and achieve to their potential.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: n/a
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head:
 5. Source of funding: n/a
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): n/a
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): n/a
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

NASACRE's 'Silver Jubilee' 25th Anniversary Conference & AGM - 24th May 2018

In the stunning setting of Merchant Taylors' Hall in the heart of the City of London, NASACRE held its 25th Anniversary Conference & AGM.

Patron, **Charles Clarke**, paid tribute to the work of SACREs during the tremendous changes of the past 25 years in promoting cohesion between communities and in encouraging tolerance between religions and between those of faith and those of none.

However more needs to be done and more government support is needed. The Government's Green Paper on Community Integration recognises the value of faith and Charles encouraged SACREs to do even more in their communities.

Keynote Speaker, **Professor Vanessa Ogden** highlighted that RE is fundamental to the curriculum and indeed to a civilised society. Professor Ogden emphasised the progress made in the last 25 years, but said we are again in a time of division characterised by racial and religious faultlines. As we have become more religiously and racially diverse, insecurities have reared their head and this is exacerbated by the immediacy of modern communications. She emphasised the importance of RE to understand the basis of religion and its impact on human nature. There has been a deep change in personal attitudes over the last 5 years and dialogue is the crucible of mutual understanding. It is her view that there has never been a time when good RE and good RE teachers were more important.

After useful work in groups discussing Dr Ogden's speech, and a range of other questions raised by the CoRE (Commission of Religious Education), there was a jolly good lunch! Then, Mr **David Hampshire** (soon to be Dr Hampshire), Assistant Director of the Inter Faith Network, spoke about the Network's activity. In particular, he focused on their work with young people based on 5 consultations in Birmingham, Leeds, London, Cardiff and Glasgow. Young people, of course, want to build a better society and the freedom to develop their own interfaith activities. However, some of the interesting insights drawn from this work were that:

- many did not understand the language of interfaith
- people often learn about religion in silos and therefore don't see the connection between different faiths
- some young people don't see the need to know about other people's beliefs
- the 'nones', who often have religious or spiritual thoughts but don't identify with any particular ideology, were often the most interested in this work

Then an illustrious panel considered questions from the audience on:

- National entitlement and localism, with strong support from Professor Ogden for local syllabi
- Concerns about funding and support for SACREs, some of whom are not even receiving minimal clerking help. It was considered that the solution here has to be political, rather than a legal sanction.
- How more RE teachers can be recruited. Rudi Eliot Lockhart pointed out this was a wider problem than RE and much work had been done by the Religious Education Council. Jane Brooke advocated more RE ambassadors, including current NQTs.

- A concern about the disconnect between what students heard at home and at school, and how we could bridge the gap.
- Church and 'faith' schools and their ability to help with cohesion. Charles Clarke said the term 'faith school' is defined in vague and different ways.

Next, were the WESTHILL Awards. Three Projects in receipt of a WESTHILL award were outlined to the Conference.

Ros Garside and Helen Sellers from Bradford SACRE presented their project on Collective Worship. As a result of working with a pilot primary school and then with school headteachers in a seminar, they had developed a SACRE policy on Collective Worship. As a result, schools were distinguishing between moral and spiritual content and moving to whole school Collective worship and differentiating this from 'assemblies'.

Claire Clinton outlined Newham's project on anti-religious bullying with some very powerful videos made by the Youth SACRE.

Lastly, Elizabeth Jenkerson talked about Hampshire's 'Youth Voice to SACRE', engaging Year 9 & 10 pupils in an Annual Conference to discuss issues that concern them.

Michael Metcalf of Westhill Awards announced the winners for next year's grant as:

Bedford Borough
 Cheshire East
 Cheshire West and Chester
 Cumbria
 Waltham Forest and Newham in a joint project

The AGM and NASACRE business meeting concluded the day, with Robert Morgan confirmed as NASACRE's next Vice Chair, and Sheila Gewolb and Linda Rudge joining NASACRE as elected executive members.

It was a busy and invigorating day.



Agenda Annex

Remarks by Rt Hon Charles Clarke at NASACRE AGM May 24th 2018

This AGM celebrates 25 years of the work of NASACRE.

Over that time the National Association of SACREs has brought together, informed and represented the more than 150 local Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) – established by every Local Education Authority - which cover the whole country.

They have worked with their Agreed Syllabus Conferences, in accordance with the principles first set out in the 1944 Education Act and then confirmed universally by the 1988 legislation, and have thus determined the syllabi for Religious Instruction, and then Religious Education, through which children throughout the country learnt about religion and other belief systems.

There are many things to celebrate in that work. They include the syllabi which have been created, the educational creativity and inspiration which have been promoted and the sense of purpose which has been generated.

Tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of individuals have worked together to make that contribution happen. The great things that have been achieved would not have been achieved without the efforts and commitments of those people in every part of the country, including those in this room today and our education system owes all of them a great debt of gratitude.

There are many particular examples of outstanding work for which school and wider communities have been immensely grateful.

Of course I know that it is also the case that there have been problems, most notably the absence of resources in some parts of the country, which have made the work a real challenge.

And the work has also taken place in many circumstances where the commitment to RE, and respect for the law, has been tolerated at best, actively opposed at worst.

Up and down the country SACREs have had in this last 25 years to carry out their responsibilities in a climate of enormously rapid change in two critically important respects:

- change in the structure of schooling
- and profound changes in the nature of religion and belief in our communities.

The authors of the 1944 Act simply would not have comprehended the extraordinary extent of the way that these changes have impacted upon the lives of every family in the country.

And that is why I want today to highlight what I think is in many ways the greatest achievement of the SACREs over these 25 years.

That is the contribution of the SACREs, both in their institutional work and in the commitment of individuals, to the cohesion of the communities of which they are a part.

Most of the debates about 'community cohesion' have tended to focus upon race and the position of minority ethnic groups. These important aspects have dominated the debates and actions of governments, opinion-formers and the media – national and local. For most of the time the issues around the cohesion of communities with different religions, and indeed no religion at all, have tended to take second place.

In a way that is understandable and just follows the sad code of etiquette which suggests that neither politics nor religion can be discussed in polite society.

But it has been a major gap in thinking, often hidden by the valiant work of SACREs up and down the country as they have sought to bring together in mutual understanding and tolerance people and communities of different faiths and beliefs, and to bring all of them together with the local education systems.

Of course that great success in promoting and spreading understanding and tolerance between religions, and with those who have no religion, which I believe to have been the greatest practical contribution of SACREs, has been under increasing challenge in recent years.

The challenge has mainly come from the threats of terrorism, and only two days ago we remembered the dreadful Manchester Arena attacks of

last year. But even before the rise of “Islamic fundamentalism” there were potential conflicts with other religions, for example those closely related to Northern Ireland, and today we see the shocking and threatening rise of anti-semitism in ways which for the first time in my lifetime are threatening communities.

The role of SACREs in these circumstances has been entirely positive but I would say not enough and needing more support.

But this year we have seen the new development that the government has for the first time directly recognised the importance of faith, and that positive and strong community cohesion must involve the type of practical good inter-faith relations which SACREs encourage.

In July 2015, following the so-called Trojan Horse affair in Birmingham, David Cameron and Theresa May asked Dame Louise Casey to report into what could be done to strengthen cohesion in the most isolated and deprived communities in the country.

Very significantly Louise’s report devoted a whole chapter to faith – and the need to understand and address its role in either weakening or promoting community cohesion. Her report was published in December 2016 and that led directly to the publication of the new Integrated Communities Green Paper in March 2018.

This Green Paper from the then Communities Secretary Sajid Javid, now Home Secretary, and the new Education Secretary Damian Hinds, was entitled “Building stronger, more united communities”. Following the lead of Louise Casey’s report it recognizes the importance of faith.

This important Green Paper shows that the balance of judgment has changed, quite rightly, away from the outdated idea that things can simply be kept as they are. In fact it is a conservative (with a small ‘c’) approach which most risks damaging the cohesion of society. Action has to be taken and the gathering pressure for change is steadily becoming unstoppable.

No organisational structure has been anything like as successful as SACREs in promoting engagement both among faith communities and between faith communities as a whole and the rest of society. SACREs

have a wealth of experience, skills and expertise which exists, at least to some extent, in every part of the country.

So I want to take this opportunity to urge SACREs to develop their contribution to building community cohesion from just in schools to more widely across their communities.

Professor Linda Woodhead and I will be submitting evidence, before their deadline of June 5th, to the DCLG and DFES in response to that Green Paper.

We will be urging that the government places faith as one of the central aspects of their efforts to “build the stronger and more united communities” which the Green Paper proclaims.

We will reiterate our views, already expressed in our evidence to the government’s consultations a year and a half ago on removing the free faith schools’ cap, about the best ways to develop the role of faith schools and promote high quality religious education in schools.

We will argue that there need to be organised efforts to promote good interfaith relations and good understanding of what faiths are, and what they are not, in every community in Britain.

We will suggest that the experience of SACREs, particularly where properly resourced and respected locally, offer an excellent example of what can be achieved.

We will suggest that the role of properly resourced SACREs could be developed to play a wider role and that would probably be a better way of making this work practically in local communities than just leaving it to local government or setting up a whole set of entirely new organisations.

We will argue that careful consideration should be given to the best ways in which SACREs, or indeed other organisations, could work to bring work around faith into the centre of community cohesion work.

We will suggest that one important component of this will be to develop relations between universities, particularly their faculty and students engaged with religion and belief, and community cohesion, and their local community, particularly schools.

And we will say that we believe that many local authorities would very much welcome the contribution that developed SACREs could make to

bringing faith into the centre of their community cohesion work and would be ready to fund that.

And of course we will also argue that such an approach would require serious government commitment, including to proper levels of funding, but most of all to mechanisms for really making change happen.

I believe that 30 years after the 1988 Education Act, with the establishment of SACREs across the country, and 25 years after the foundation of NASACRE, the time is ripe to build upon the enormously important experience and skills of SACREs across the country and extend even more widely to the challenge of building stronger, more united, communities.

END

This page is left intentionally blank

SPEECH

Title: SACREs, Schools and Society: Building Bridges Across the Fault-lines

From: Dr. Vanessa Ogden, CEO of Mulberry Schools Trust and Headteacher of Mulberry School for Girls

Delivered on: 24th May 2018

Location: NASACRE Silver Jubilee Conference, Merchant Taylors' Hall, City of London. 30 Threadneedle St, London EC2R 8JB

First Published: 24th May 2018

Thank you for inviting me to speak at your conference today. It is a great privilege to be here to celebrate the silver jubilee of NASACRE and its championship of the work of SACREs in support of schools and communities across the country for 25 years. This is, coincidentally, the same length of time as I have been in the profession as a teacher of RE and (for the past 12 years) as a headteacher with a total commitment to social justice, viewing state education as a public good with a wider social purpose than individual, private benefit. This philosophical stance on education leads to a particular view of the role of religious education in a school's provision – a role that is fundamental to the formal curriculum – and a role that has a wider importance within schooling. And so the title of this conference – Stronger Together: Celebrating the Power of Community – is for me a very fitting subject for discussion today as we think about the next 25 years and what we want for our children.

I want to focus on three themes in this talk:

1. The character of social change, especially as we live through the technology revolution, with all its benefits and challenges
2. The role of RE in schools, its nature and purpose in a harmonious, enlightened and prosperous society
3. Our responsibility to our nation's children, their future and a less dystopian, more utopian world

1. The Character of Social Change in the Early Twenty First Century

We are in a period of time unlike any other. Society is shifting shape. The information and communications technology revolution, for example, brings with it many benefits; it also brings considerable challenges. Other scientific advancements, such as the ability to travel quickly between countries, and innovations in artificial intelligence, are changing interactions between people in ways that, 70 years ago, when Beveridge wrote the report which established a state secondary education system that was free at the point of delivery, society could not imagine.

Education is in many ways in a very different place to then. As a result of technological change, there is a generational divide between young people and those over 30 years old. The creation of the worldwide web in 1989 following hard on the heels of the developing internet brought changes to living for younger people that deeply affect our existence. Education is altering its character as a result of more powerful access to information, the rise of virtual reality experience and the ability for communication across the world at any time of day or night – 24-7. The web has changed in one stroke what is possible in a classroom. Thus, it has also changed the nature

of schools; most teachers' own experience of learning was very different. The technology revolution has had other social effects too.

Space and time has compressed. Communication through the worldwide web and the internet is more immediate and crosses continental distances in a moment. This intensifies human existence and speeds up the pace of life. Whilst this is powerful for some – more can be achieved more quickly and globally than ever before – it creates distance for others, for example where connectivity is a challenge.

An underlying sense of 'risk' is also at large within society, fired by insecurities about power and the erosion of the nation state and its cultural institutions such as authority. Information technology through the web gives free access to an ever-changing, kaleidoscopic range of worldviews, life stances, beliefs and cultures – windows into the lives of others. For many, this is empowering and enriching – but for at least half our society (as we saw in the Brexit vote) it is deeply troubling. Fear of 'the other' looms large for some, especially in relation to loss of control of culture, money and power. Economic migration fuels the fear, un-helped by the dystopian picture of our world that is often portrayed. The fault-lines appear down the lines of race and religion.

You can see this from these slides which baldly illustrate the problems faced just by one community – my own, in Tower Hamlets, where I run schools. The fault-lines are clearly visible. The free expression of Islamophobia for a long time has seemed to pass uninhibited. Terror attacks since 9/11 seem to have given some the sense that they can freely articulate with impunity their suspicion and hatred of what they regard as 'the other' – in this case of Islam. The register of Muslims proposed by the US president shortly after his election is redolent of Hitler's early days and the Nazis' institutionalization of anti-semitism. The recent 'Punish a Muslim Day' letter that was sent to targeted individuals by a far right nationalist group in Britain was equally troubling. And so, despite the social advancements there have been since the Second World War ended, we find ourselves full circle in a time of social division exposed in racism or anti-religious feeling – often the two are conflated.

For me, this goes right to the heart of why religious education is one of the most important subjects in our curriculum.

In 1943, when legislation for education was being considered and preparations were started for post-war reconstruction, we were in the midst of war: a war which people like my grandparents fought because they believed they were fulfilling a duty to God and humankind in combating evil. The experience of world war and the uncovering of the Holocaust – the end point of supremacism if left unchecked – created a moment in which many people deeply re-thought their ideals. This has often been forgotten by the public at large as it passes out of living memory – as has the rationale for the establishment of the welfare state, of which free secondary education was a part. These things were the means by which we would battle against the 'five giants' of the Beveridge Report.

The 'five giants' were the evils that held back a progressive and fair society. Disease was one of the giants – hence the National Health Service – and ignorance another, hence the state education system as we have it now.

People believed at the end of the Second World War that it was time to deliver a better future for this country through an education for all that would safeguard us from the occurrence of such atrocities again. They sought to heal the divisions – to bridge the fault-lines of class and

social mobility, of poverty and disempowerment. Education was a fundamental part of this project.

There were a number of ways in which the education system was then designed to guard against any possibility of, for example, anti-semitism actively being taught through a national curriculum in schools. It included the enshrinement of religious education as a subject to be taught in schools to children of every age. It was the only subject required by the law. In drawing up the 1944 Act, RA Butler – the minister of the time – stated he felt he was giving recognition to a widespread desire that religion should be included in the curriculum and life of a school and Churchill supported this.

The role of RE in schools was seen to be closely connected with fighting against intolerance, injustice, genocide and dictatorship. It was connected to pupils' spiritual and moral development – to the spiritual and moral health of the nation - and to the establishment of a good society where there existed a social safety net for the poor, equality of access in education and health and the opportunity for social mobility. This would be a new and progressive post-war society with a vision for equality, human dignity and flourishing for the public good – RE was to be a very important part of this for all the reasons described.

I support the wisdom of this for today, albeit with a different character for the subject than was envisaged at the time of post-war Britain. The fault-lines remain even though British society has changed since the war, becoming religiously, racially and culturally very diverse and much work has been done over the years to improve social mobility and cohesion. Technological and scientific transformations have advanced many of our powers but, as with all deep social change, societal insecurities have reared their head and the rifts are evident.

RE has a pivotal role in helping young people in an informed way to think through their responses to encounters with beliefs and ideas they feel alien to, in a manner which benefits society rather than divides it through bigotry and racism. Like no other subject, it gets to the heart of what it means to be human and allows space for debate on deep spiritual and religious issues – many of which are closely allied to race and culture and some of which therefore have the potential to be incredibly sensitive or controversial – in a safe environment, handled by skilled teachers, in a young person's most formative years. I agree with the Swann Report of 1985 "Education for All" which argued for RE as

"the best and only means of enabling all pupils, from whatever religious background, to understand the nature of religious belief, the religious dimension of human experience and the plurality of faiths in contemporary Britain".

This I have experienced in the classroom as a teacher and in school leadership as a headteacher. My early career was formative in this respect and is illustrative of the importance of RE, its role and character and the points I have just made.

2. The Role of RE in Schools, its Nature and Purpose in a Harmonious, Enlightened and Prosperous Society

My first post after qualifying in 1993 was in a school where, prior, RE had hardly featured in the curriculum offer before. When I started, we had 5 sets of 30 text books between the two of us (15 each). There were no artifacts and no worksheets. There were rudimentary schemes of work not fit for purpose. There was no display. At KS4, the compulsory RE element was 6 weeks of 1 period on a carousel. The short course in RE did not exist then but we had a new Local Agreed syllabus that year (in response to the Swann Report and the 1988 Education Reform Act) which

focused on six world faiths and humanism – so things were beginning to look brighter locally despite the lack of resources. The SACRE was active and I was able to draw upon the help of one of their number in particular.

Partly as a result of the school's failure previously to offer a proper provision for RE, I found myself on the frontline of deep racial divide which I regard as one of the biggest threats to a civilized society. The community of my first school had significant presence from far-right groups proselytizing racist extremism and white supremacy. The school did not have an anti-racism policy and they left out teaching about India because they could not deal with the racist backlash from pupils. I am not sure if you can imagine what it was like when I started to teach Y9 about Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X and Y10 Judaism and the Holocaust within such a context. I had boys like Billy* laughing at the massacre of Sikhs in the Golden Temple by General Dyer; I had Alfie* proclaiming in a documentary on the Holocaust that he could work for Hitler. Martin Luther King was met with some level of respect – until we got on to deeper discussion about slavery, its legacy, the civil rights movement in the 1960s and institutional racism, at which point the barriers went up. This is not an acceptable situation and the implications for society of allowing this to prevail in a school anywhere are obvious.

So it became the focus of my work to try and deal with this through what I did in the classroom, in my department with my one other colleague and within the wider activities of the school for 4 – 5 years. I won't rehearse in detail what I did but it included getting really good results, curriculum change, SMSCD, contributing to a major exhibition on Islam and holding several festivals of religion, belief and culture which included one in which the school's staff constituted my visiting speakers. Superficial change is possible fairly quickly – children will stop saying things in front of you (which is a good start) and they will write answers to questions that you want to see but you can also get deep attitudinal change over a 5 year period through RE – and I have seen this.

I also engaged directly with the Ealing SACRE, which as I mentioned had launched its locally agreed syllabus. There I encountered Brother Daniel Faivre – I am sure some of you will have known him. A Jesuit priest placed to work in Southall, West London. He began work there to bring about harmony and understanding between different faith groups in 1979, during a period of violent unrest in the predominantly Sikh and Muslim community and spent 28 years there establishing inter-faith dialogue. His work was remarkable. He believed in the supreme importance of the dignity of the human person, irrespective of creed and culture or social condition and so he brought people from different faith and non-faith groups together to meet on a monthly basis and to visit each other's places of worship. He also established a multi-faith pilgrimage.

The work was deep, sensitive and subtle, undertaken with deep respect and in an atmosphere of generosity and kindness. Fostering trust and understanding through sharing text, prayer, reflection, meditation and food, he worked at the dialogue between people – the crucible of mutuality and human understanding. I borrowed much for my RE classroom from watching him work both on SACRE and in the community. And I came to the conclusion that RE has within its role a social purpose and that there are three ways in which a school could contribute to the building of bridges across deep social divide.

a) The development of literacy in religions and worldviews, as well religious literacy: what I mean by this is that people need to be well-informed. RE is a rigorous, diverse, academic discipline that is rich in content and requires students to master tools of study peculiar to itself such as being able to identify truth-claims, and how to use and interpret religious language or symbolism.

Just as science requires students to accomplish the skills of scientific investigation, so religious study requires students to be familiar with the process of, say, critical philosophical argument. There is mastery of the skills of religious dialogue and the quest to uncover truth as expounded in religious frameworks of belief and those of worldviews such as humanism. There is a raft of technical language, some of which is highly mysterious. There is the need to know religions and worldviews well enough to identify when false claims are being made in the interests of persuasion to a particular course of action – to know when you are being exploited or when propaganda is governing the truth – to know when hatred or fear of others is dominating a particular discourse.

I have found that the more challenging the students are, the more they love the academic experience of RE. To be in the intellectual realm of ideas, beliefs, reasoning, debate and argument – to dissect concepts – to feel passionate about moral and ethical principles and learn how to articulate your response in a convincing and persuasive way – there is little more exciting than this for all of us in that classroom. Students are so bright and clever, their minds so agile and this applies as much in an inner city classroom as it does in a grammar school but in both contexts (differently), it takes on a particular character. Survival for young people on some of the large inner London housing estates like the White City estate or Sand's End requires creativity, the ability to think through and respond to challenging situations rapidly and the sophisticated use of a particular genre of language which changes all the time. As a teacher, you learn to use those things for the foundation and extension of academic study. You start with the context you have and build learning from there. Tackling the nature of God and learning to use confidently the religious and philosophical language associated with academic discussion of this has yielded some memorable learning moments for me.

For example, in learning about the omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of God in my second school one day, carefully avoiding blasphemy, the pupils talked about the headteacher's use of the tannoy in school. The students pointed out that the head, although unseen, just seemed to know everything that was going on everywhere all the time; he seemed to be everywhere all the time through his use of the tannoy, which went to every room in the school; and from this tannoy, he sometimes issued instructions – hence his appearance of being all powerful. We moved on in our learning to religious experience and miracles as one of the arguments for the existence of God.

MIRACLE STORY

Being properly informed and equipped to deal intellectually with a sophisticated understanding of religion, equips students to enter meaningfully into dialogue with new frameworks of belief and people as they encounter them. But they also need confidence in their own sense of self. This brings me to the second way in which RE contributes to bridge-building across the divide.

b) Rich personal development: this is sometimes referred to as 'character education' – I think, though, that I mean more than is often envisaged by that term. What I am talking about here is a religious education that does a number of things for the individual's sense of self. It helps a student to develop:

- Awareness of her / his own identity and beliefs
- Skills and dispositions such as imagination, self-reflection, sensitivity, critical and analytical thinking
- An enquiring, thoughtful, open mind with a strong understanding of the wider world
- Awareness of what it means to be a young man or woman in 21st century Britain

- Confidence in one's beliefs and the ability to articulate them along with the resilience to meet challenges to these and the ability to change in response as appropriate

I am talking about RE which contributes to strong moral, spiritual, social and cultural development for young people. It combines subject-based knowledge with personal development and the growth of a student's identity.

Experience has taught me that for a young person, the ability to be confident in who you are and to have the skills to manage this effectively in response to the challenges of the external world is fundamental to individual well-being. I have seen this in many settings but perhaps the most illustrative of this is at Mulberry School for Girls, where I have found myself again on the frontline of racism in a different way than before. I mentioned earlier in this talk the experience of Muslim pupils and their families and showed some slides. The Islamophobia I have seen experienced by members of my community on a repeated basis over the past decade or more has been shocking. It goes from thinly veiled Islamophobia and racism to outright, open attack. Girls and families have reported being spat at in the street. Recently, on her way to an International Women's Day celebration at the school, one of my mothers was assaulted and almost pushed into the road in front of cars – fortunately, members of the public intervened.

Journalists have written about my girls at the theatre in the most appalling way – here is an excerpt from just one article

INSERT

In this onslaught of bigotry and racism, we have to equip pupils to be strong and confident in their identity, which fundamentally includes their religious belief or worldview. Private belief drives public action. A great religious education works at this interface in all sorts of ways, including being able to articulate and advocate on behalf of yourself and your community. Having been in discussion so often with people who have a deficit view of women in Islam, we gained the support of Michelle Obama, whose visit to Mulberry was the conversation changer we needed. Ever since, the interest in my girls is in their achievements and their ambitions as opposed to the headscarf or forced marriage. People, in the First Lady's words, 'see beyond the headscarf'. For now.

As a young person, how do you deal with this level of scrutiny and questioning of your faith and identity without becoming alienated from society or destructively angry or bitter? It has been our life's work at Mulberry to ensure that students are equipped, through religious education and the wider work of the school, to have a secure sense of identity, based on well-informed knowledge of their faith and the opportunity to articulate this in as many different settings as possible. This is so that they leave us confident in their ability to face down discrimination in as positive a way as they can – so that they are contributing to social harmony and working against division – a response that is one of 'generous peace'.

It has also been important for us to find platforms for the girls to advocate for themselves and their community and to speak up for who they really are. This is not to suggest that there isn't danger from forms of extremism that purport to be Islamic. However, the most fertile ground for extremism of any kind is when a young person feels voiceless and alienated from society – and when such alienation is ignored, as was the case in my first school's community. This brings me to the third way in which RE contributes to bridging the fault-lines in society.

c) Engaging in inter-faith dialogue and actively building bridges: beliefs influence how people live their lives privately and how they engage publicly through their interactions with society as a citizen or their relationships with others in the community or wider world. In the 21st century, it is necessary to have an objective understanding of, and a critical engagement with, the beliefs of others (religious, philosophical and ethical) truthfully represented. A superficial or wrong understanding of religions yields conflict and division, the implications of which can be devastating for individuals, families and communities. In the RE classroom, one encounters deep questions for young people that are raised by modern existence to which they must find answers situated in a proper understanding of what they are dealing with and not some kind of post-truth analysis of the kind that we have recently seen and which has been so damaging.

There have been many lesson moments in my career which are illustrative of the need for young people, in this era of 'high modernity', to have knowledge and experience of how a particular response to life is governed underneath by belief. For example: talking in a lesson with students about the belief of some Christians in becoming 'one flesh' through sexual intercourse, the resulting lifelong bond of marriage and the reason why someone opposes sex before marriage and divorce; talking about the hijab in Islam, its meaning and symbolism, for many its feminism (taking the definition of feminism as equality between women and men), and the controversy in France over its possible ban in public places such as schools; talking about the five K's in Sikhism, the deep religious significance of uncut hair and wearing a turban to work on a construction site which requires a safety helmet; and a year before 9/11, talking through issues raised with me about religious beliefs concerning usury and its perceived connection with capitalism and world trade structures – the subject of angry discussion in local religious supplementary schools – and let's be clear, this was not in Tower Hamlets.

This last example is one that I often think about – a young, black Muslim man who had fled Somalia and who was angry with capitalism, the US and Israel. He talked to me a lot about the difficulties of the world over the course of his RE lessons and how to live within a prevailing social structure that doesn't fit with your faith. Finally, on his last day of school he asked me what I believe about God. Now I have a policy of not talking about this with students unless it is their last day – or mine – for all sorts of reasons to do with the power and influence of the teacher. Mostly, students forget to ask when they leave but this young man didn't. So I told him. I told him that if God is just and loving, then there cannot be only one way towards God. In Brother Daniel's words, 'The lamps are many, but the light is one.' I remember his response – and in that moment we built a permanent bridge across the divide.

Not long after that moment came 9/11 and the divide that I had been dealing with in my classroom opened as a deep chasm on the world stage, the implications of which are now playing out in war, terror and destruction perpetrated on all sides in all sorts of different ways with attempts by people to legitimize these actions by drawing upon religion and often rhetoric designed to induce public, wide-spread 'fear of the other'. This is often achieved through the reduction of such critical national or world issues to single un-factual tweets, repeated over and over again and accepted uncritically because they reflect what people want to believe rather than what is true. Interfaith dialogue and the tools it develops for future adult life in a super-complex society are essential work in the RE classroom to break all of this down.

Never, in my view, has there been a time since the second world war when good RE in schools and therefore good RE teachers were more important. We have to have specialists in the classroom who are prepared to – and trained to – get to the heart of the issues and beliefs driving these conflicts and have space for pupils to encounter them and learn to deal with them

constructively, positively, confidently, secure in their own sense of self and able within a controlled environment to find a way through.

This brings me to my third and final point and to our responsibilities as schools and SACREs working together to build bridges across the fault-lines.

3. SACREs, Schools, RE and the Integrity of Society

SACREs have done great work for more than 25 years. They have worked locally to achieve consensus over what should be taught in RE classrooms – provision that reflects both the national expectation and local priorities. In some cases, they have challenged poor practice in schools where headteachers are not fulfilling the entitlement for students. In some cases, they have faced down legal challenge from those who wish to dominate the agreed syllabus in favour of one religious perspective or another. They have also in some cases, like that of Brother Daniel, supported a significant contribution to local inter-faith dialogue and strengthening of community cohesion.

The role that SACREs have is an important one and it needs to grow and change with the world of the next 25 years that we are seeing coming over the horizon. The figures which the RE Council and other guardians of RE have produced concerning take up of the subject at GCSE and provision in KS1 – 3 are troubling. Pressures on curriculum and the fight for time and status by all subjects continues intensely. Performance levers, funding and curriculum time are the practical things that drive what headteachers offer – and where schools have more challenges in relation to these things, the danger for a subject which doesn't have currency in the system is real. Back at the beginning of my career, 25 years ago, this was the situation. Again, here we are. We need to consider a national body, a national entitlement and a statutory requirement for headteachers like me to publish online the provision they make for RE – in the same way that we do for SEN.

SACREs must start to consider a wider leadership role. SACREs are uniquely placed to help schools deliver on community cohesion and the building of social harmony. When I undertook a year long action research project on RE and KS2 – 3 transition in 1998, I had the opportunity to work with my counter-part Y6 teacher in a local primary and her class with my Y7 class. We created a unit of work that built in inter-faith dialogue and visits to faith communities. In the feedback, pupils talked about the power of direct engagement with faith other their own and of witnessing the lived experience. This has been a continuing theme from young people in my professional work since then.

Hence, the importance for me of your title for this conference. Stronger Together: the Power of Community. Leading such work in our schools would be truly transformative. It goes beyond content and intellectual engagement which, important as it is – as I have argued today already – it is not alive without the context.

“In many parts of the world....- not least in Britain and the USA – it is the integrity of society that is at stake. By the word ‘integrity’ I mean the organic unity of society, a unity that may as certainly be disrupted as enriched by religious and cultural diversity, especially if the educational implications are not understood, or if understood simply ignored.”

As a PGCE student in 1993, I read this article from which this one particular quotation has stayed with me – its truth struck me forcibly at the time. The experiences I have had since then – as outlined today – have led me to believe that RE (preferably alongside discreet Citizenship

education (at least in KS3) and a rich provision for wider spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) is evermore important as society comes to terms with a global age driven by the freedom, speed and power to make the truth mutable that information and communications technology has. Anthony Giddens was writing about this time on the subject of 'high modernity', the implications of technology, the growth of a global age and the tensions in society that would result as people's identity, sense of security and belonging are challenged.

So – no pressure then. This is our task. If we want to build a prosperous, creative, reflective and cohesive society – a civilized society – that is culturally and socially rich, as well as economically successful, then we must invest ourselves in the provision of an education for all which includes the very best practice of RE. SACREs have an important role to play in this, working shoulder to shoulder with schools and RE teachers.

Great RE gets to the heart of faith which, in its expression, has a direct impact on public life and the very essence of unity, integrity and humanity. Without it, education only skates the surface of the intricacy of interwoven beliefs and ideas that influence the dynamics of our 21st century world and ultimately affect the well-being and security of us all. RE has a unique and important contribution to make to the education of our young people in the way that I have outlined. So you and I have a job to do – and, I am arguing, a duty to do it – in remembering the post-war ideals which sought to create a harmonious, self-confident and fair society without fear of the other; in remembering what can happen if we do not pay proper attention to this in the education of our young; and in acting to bring about social harmony, security, prosperity and human flourishing, no matter what challenges we face.

**Names of pupils changed*

This page is left intentionally blank

Report No.
CSD18100

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Date: 4th July 2018

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: SACRE SELF EVALUATION

Contact Officer: Carol Arnfield – Head of Service - Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education

Chief Officer: Gillian Palmer, Interim Director of Education

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report;

The self-evaluation of SACRE is a continuous process which informs the development of the committee and the annual report to the DfE each December.

2. Recommendations;

At the Summer meeting the committee needs to look at the self-evaluation document which is attached, with the results from last year (Appendix 1), and revisit the effectiveness of Bromley SACRE.

It is suggested that in advance of the meeting Group A members (representatives of other faiths and Christian denominations) look at section 5, Group B members (the Church of England) look at section 3, Group C members (teachers) look at section 2 and Group D members (Councillors) look at section 4 and come ready to discuss their thoughts.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People: this report relates to schools and their role in supporting Bromley's children to attain and achieve to their potential.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: n/a
 3. Budget head/performance centre:
 4. Total current budget for this head:
 5. Source of funding: n/a
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): n/a
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

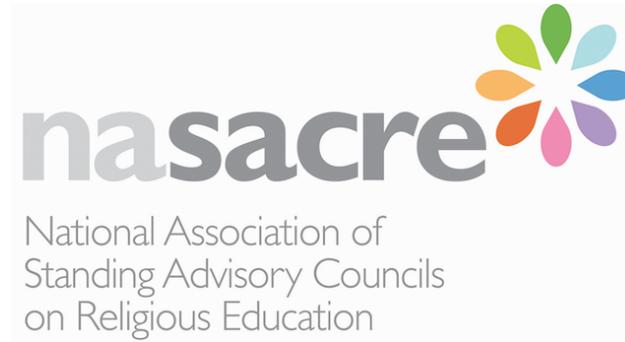
Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): n/a
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

Summary of Ward Councillors comments:



SACRE RETool

SACRE - Bromley

The SACRE RETool: Reporting and Evaluating Toolkit

Introduction

The essential role of the SACRE is to support its Local Authority (LA) and the local authority's schools in meeting the entitlement of pupils across the local authority to engage in high quality Religious Education and Collective Worship. In an educational context where standards and accountability are at the top of the agenda, a SACRE's work has become increasingly challenging and diverse, but also more rewarding and stimulating. Good SACREs will therefore tackle their responsibilities and opportunities with enthusiasm, whilst recognising the need for realistic and ongoing appraisal and self-review.

In many ways SACREs reflect the work of governing bodies in schools, in so far as they act as critical friends to the local authority on matters of religious education and collective worship. Like school governors, members are unpaid volunteers who give up their time to support religious education (RE) and collective worship locally.

This Reporting and Self-Evaluating Toolkit is an amended version of the original SACRE SEF (2004). It takes account of changes in inspection arrangements and in the role of local authorities, and of the development of maintained schools independent of their local authority. It is designed to help individual SACREs evaluate their role and, in particular, to consider their impact on pupils' educational experience and learning. It also helps SACREs review their organisational patterns and structures, and their partnership with the local authority and other key stakeholders.

The Toolkit highlights five key dimensions of a SACRE's work and provides exemplification of good practice. A SACRE that uses this self-evaluation guidance should gain a clear picture of its strengths, identify areas for further development, and establish its key priorities for action.

The DCSF publication "Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance" (2010) ("the Guidance") remains the most recent official statement in this field: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010>. The Guidance sets out the responsibilities of SACREs and Local Authorities as well as those of other stakeholders in RE. Key summaries from the Guidance are included in the Annex to this document.

Rationale

The RETool focuses on the following five aspects of the work of SACREs:

1. promoting improvement in the standards, the quality of teaching, and provision in RE
2. evaluating the effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus
3. promoting improvement in the provision and quality of collective worship
4. managing the SACRE and building the partnership between the SACRE, the LA and other key stakeholders
5. contributing to cohesion across the community and the promotion of social and racial harmony.

Each aspect forms a section within the RETool matrix and each section is divided into focus questions to help SACREs explore their provision. Descriptors for 'Developing', 'Established' and 'Advanced' practice will enable SACREs to evaluate their standing within each focus question.

In the final column SACREs may wish to identify any issues and action points within that focus as appropriate. Key priorities can then be identified at the end of each section to inform the development of an action plan.

The intention is that, over time, exemplars of good practice from different SACREs will be made available on an open website, together with annual reports, as a way of adding further support to SACREs and local authorities. Clearly the capacity of any SACRE to make the most of this will be dependent on the extent of the support it receives from, and the quality of its relationship with, its Local Authority.

SACREs are invited to use the format of this RETool to compile their annual report to their local authority. A copy of the annual report should also be lodged electronically with the central database memsec@nasacre.org.uk When compiling their report, SACREs could either use the entire RETool document, or copy sections of text from it into another document; the annual report could focus on specific areas in any given year.

Section 1. Standards and quality of provision of Religious Education

***How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, evaluate standards and the quality of provision for RE in schools?
How effective are the strategies to improve standards and the quality of provision?***

In principle, every pupil is entitled to RE of the highest quality. At its best RE will be one of the most popular, relevant, stimulating and truly educative elements in the curriculum. This potential gives SACREs both a benchmark for their aspirations, and a spur for their actions.

A core duty of a SACRE is to gain an overview of the quality of the RE provision in local authority maintained schools and to develop effective strategies to promote the highest standards. SACREs may also request information from Academies, academy chains and Free Schools where they educate pupils from the local authority which appointed SACRE. In the light of the current inspection culture of partnership and self-evaluation, SACREs will need to approach the achieving of this overview with some sensitivity and astuteness.

Information to assist the SACRE in carrying out its role is likely to come from a range of sources. This may include:

- public examination results
- reports from School Improvement Partners
- analysing questionnaires
- sharing of information from subject self-evaluation forms as appropriate, and in agreement with schools
- feedback from professional development activities
- presentations to SACRE from local teachers

The Guidance offers analysis and advice to support SACREs in reviewing their own effectiveness, their patterns of partnership, and their strategies in relation to enhancing the quality of RE provision in local authority maintained schools. In addition, in the light of the development of academies and other non-LA maintained schools, SACREs also need to take note of and respond appropriately to this new diversified scenario. (In the ensuing pages, the phrase “academies etc” is used as shorthand to refer to all non-LA maintained schools within a particular LA area.)

Key Area: 1a. RE provision across the LA. <i>How effectively does the SACRE gain information about RE provision in schools and put in place strategies to support the delivery of pupil entitlement?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little knowledge of which schools are fulfilling pupil entitlement in RE because local processes are insufficient to gather such information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some knowledge of which schools are providing adequate time for effective learning in RE and have a scheme of work that enables them to deliver the Agreed Syllabus. SACRE's process for acquiring this information is adequate but lacks coherence. Have limited opportunities to implement strategies in support of pupil entitlement.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have robust processes (for example effective and wide-spread use of the RE SEF) in place to gain a full and accurate overview of RE provision within the LA. It works effectively with the LA to support and promote pupil entitlement. Examples of different models for fulfilling pupil entitlement within local schools will be shared with all schools so that schools can have a menu from which to adapt an approach that delivers pupil entitlement whilst meeting the specific needs and priorities of their schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 1b. Standards of achievement and public examination entries <i>How does SACRE use information about standards and examinations to target support and training for schools?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited knowledge of standards in primary and secondary schools including examination entries. The SACRE has no clear strategy to address this.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some process in place to find out how well learners are doing in KS 1-3, (e.g. by meeting teachers, pupils and through the LA). SACRE will be provided with adequate information about examination entries and standards in examinations in secondary schools and how these relate to national figures. Analysis would be limited as would strategies to address issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have robust processes (for example including effective and wide-spread use of the RE SEF) in place to gain accurate information about standards in all schools and examination entries in secondary schools, with useful analysis that enables it to address issues effectively in partnership with the LA. entitlement whilst meeting the specific needs and priorities of their schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 1c Quality of learning and teaching.		
<i>How well does SACRE use knowledge of quality of learning and teaching to target support appropriately?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little or no knowledge of the quality of learning and teaching in the LA schools and therefore is unable to provide appropriate challenge and support to the schools. The SACRE has no means to offer or recommend support to schools as there is little professional support in the LA working with the SACRE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some information regarding the quality of learning and teaching from LA SIPs, the RE SEF and from contact with teachers and pupils. Limited analysis of this information, however, means that SACRE's attempts to improve learning and teaching have limited effect. be able to circulate information about national courses and support mechanisms to schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a robust relationship with schools and the LA to gather meaningful information about the quality of learning and teaching in RE. This information is analysed to identify trends, areas of strength and areas for development and SACRE draws on expertise in effective schools to support all schools in the LA. advise the LA on the support that is needed and have access to professional support that can be linked to schools in need.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 1d Quality of leadership and management, including the provision and management of resources.		
<i>To what extent does SACRE have and use information about the effectiveness of senior and middle leadership of RE in its schools?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little knowledge about the quality of leadership and management in RE in local schools. They are unaware of issues relating to the availability of resources for RE in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some information regarding the quality of leadership and management (including senior leadership interest in RE) from the LA, the RE SEF and from contact with teachers and pupils. Limited analysis of this information, however, means that SACRE support to improve learning and teaching has little effect.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a robust relationship with schools and the LA to gather meaningful information about the quality of L&M (including senior leadership interest in RE). This information is analysed to identify trends, areas of strength and areas for development. SACRE draws on expertise in effective schools to support all schools in the LA.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 1e. Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff.		
<i>To what extent does SACRE use information about specialist provision in their schools to target training and support recruitment?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little knowledge of data and issues related to the recruitment and retention of subject specialists in schools. Little or no support from the LA.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some processes in place, supported by the LA, to gather information on staffing in schools, both in relation to subject specialism and teacher commitment to RE. The SACRE would have limited opportunity to act effectively on this information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a robust relationship with schools and the LA to gather meaningful information about specialist and committed staff in RE. This information is analysed to identify gaps, training needs and ways to support recruitment and retention.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 1f. Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools.		
<i>To what extent has SACRE developed a pro-active strategy in relation to academies and other non-LA maintained schools in its area?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have haphazard information about the RE situation in local academies etc, and little or no established relationships and liaison with them. No serious attempt has been made to develop an overall strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have made some effort to establish liaison with each academy etc and to keep updated SACRE's information about their RE situation. By and large academies co-operate with SACRE at this level. SACRE keeps under review the ongoing situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a pro-active policy of liaison with all academies etc and of sustaining a wider professional RE network within the area. While the independence of academies etc is genuinely respected by SACRE, many academies value this network and look to SACRE for ongoing advice and leadership in RE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

Section 2: The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus

How effectively does the SACRE, in partnership with the LA, monitor the impact and evaluate the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus in raising standards? How effectively does the Agreed Syllabus Conference in partnership with SACRE make decisions about the use of national guidance and exemplar material in a review of the agreed syllabus?

The locally agreed syllabus is the bedrock on which schools will build robust sequences of effective learning experiences in RE. A good modern AS will support both the delivery of high quality RE in schools and RE's contribution to the schools' wider curriculum aims and impact measures.

The major factors to be considered in creating or revising an AS include statutory requirements, non-statutory guidance and exemplar material, developments in the school curriculum generally, and local circumstances. Key advice on producing an AS is given in the Guidance. SACREs and ASCs are recommended to take note of this advice in their work on the AS.

Local authorities are required to review their locally agreed syllabus at least every five years. This cycle of reviewing, revising, re-launching and re-implementing the AS gives SACREs and ASCs opportunities for ongoing development and improvement of their effectiveness in providing schools with a locally agreed syllabus that is truly "fit for purpose".

While the ASC holds the legal responsibility for revising the agreed syllabus, in practice much of the preparatory and supplementary work will be carried by the SACRE within its routine business. Moreover, in most LAs the membership of SACRE and ASC overlap substantially or are identical. This can contribute to greater inclusiveness and coherence, but good practice will ensure that it is always clear at any time which body is in place at a meeting, and that it is the ASC which is in session when formal decisions about the AS are to be considered.

Academies etc are in principle free to choose their own RE syllabus. In practice, however, many may well continue to use their local AS. There are some sound reasons for SACRE and the LA to encourage this where possible, and to enable academies etc to have some involvement in the process of revising the AS or of devising a new AS. Relationships between SACREs and academies will necessarily be entirely voluntary and not covered by existing legislation or guidance. SACREs should therefore approach such relationships in a spirit of mutual respect and collegiality. These issues have not been incorporated into the matrix below, but see Section 4.

Key Area: 2a – The review process		
<i>How does the SACRE review the success of the existing agreed syllabus?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited arrangements in place to monitor the impact of the agreed syllabus, particularly in raising standards. This provides little or no opportunity to review the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus. not know the views of teachers and have had no systematic evaluation of the strengths/weaknesses of the syllabus. The SACRE is unclear how to proceed with the five-yearly syllabus review and there is little or no budget allocation made by the LA.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have reviewed the opinions of schools and RE teachers in several ways and have a good idea of the strengths/areas of weakness of the current agreed syllabus. have devised a costed action plan in partnership with the LA, and have been allocated a sufficient budget for the agreed syllabus review and relaunch.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a clear and systematic process for monitoring the effectiveness of the agreed syllabus built into its development plan. Reviewing the agreed syllabus includes full consultation with schools and other key stakeholders, including faith communities. Issues that have arisen have been discussed and addressed in planning for a Review. An ASC budget has been planned and allocated in partnership with the LA to include consultation meetings, administrative support and printing/ distribution costs. There is a strong sense of shared ownership of the prospective agreed syllabus review, with clear targets for what needs to be achieved.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 2b – The quality of the local Agreed Syllabus		
<i>How well does the locally Agreed Syllabus promote effective learning & teaching in religious education? Is it “fit for purpose”?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	ensure that the Agreed Syllabus sets out what is to be learnt at each Key Stage. Levels are made available, but do not link directly to the learning and there is no clear expectation of quality learning in the Agreed Syllabus.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	ensure that the Agreed Syllabus provides a clear framework for and expectations of learning in RE. make clear the value of RE in school both in terms of learning and of wider issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	ensure that the Agreed Syllabus provides a thoroughly professional and inspirational framework for effective learning in RE which is proactively supported and promoted by the LA. have set out clear expectations of the role of the LA and school leadership in ensuring adequate resource and provision in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?	
--	--

Key Area: 2c – Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus
How well does SACRE promote the AS and provide training to prepare teachers to use it effectively?

Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	<p>provide for no special launch or other publicity, so that schools are unaware of the significance of the syllabus revisions for learning and teaching in RE.</p> <p>have little training provision for implementing the revised syllabus.</p> <p>be prevented from providing any significant additional guidance or extended training on using the agreed syllabus by a shortage of financial and human resources.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	<p>use other forms of communication (for example the LA website) to promote the launch.</p> <p>have clear arrangements for training teachers on implementing the syllabus provided by the LA; this training is well supported and managed.</p> <p>provide additional guidance or extended training on using the Agreed Syllabus over the life of the Agreed Syllabus.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	<p>Involve the wider community and use strong media coverage, to give the Agreed Syllabus a high profile as an important development in the work of the LA and SACRE. The launch event would include high quality presentations from a range of local faith or belief groups and schools.</p> <p>provide effective training on implementing the Agreed Syllabus, which is supported by all schools, leads to teachers being clear about standards and expectations in the Agreed Syllabus and the implications for teaching and learning. The SACRE provides clear guidance about ways in which schools might begin the process of reviewing their own provision for RE in the light of the revised syllabus.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 2d – Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

To what extent is the membership of ASC able to fulfil its purpose?

<p>Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:</p>	<p>have a membership that fulfils basic statutory requirements. There are limited induction and training opportunities; members are unclear of their roles, or how an agreed syllabus can be structured. Particular faith or belief groups or teachers from different phases do not attend.</p> <p>provide clerking, admin and advisory support for only a very limited amount of time or range of work. Routine admin arrangements are in place. Agendas and papers are distributed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Established A SACRE with established practice would:</p>	<p>have a membership that strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious and professional community. There are some opportunities for members' training and the purpose and action plan for the work of the ASC are clear.</p> <p>have all four committees well represented at meetings. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance so all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:</p>	<p>have a membership that is well informed and highly representative of the diversity of the local community. Where particular faith or belief expertise is missing locally there are arrangements to work with consultants. There is a strong, co-ordinated programme of induction and training opportunities for members.</p> <p>Have lively and purposeful meetings with a wide variety of contributions. Members of all 4 groups regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience, expertise and insights.</p> <p>provide effective admin to support the process</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?</p>		

Key Area: 2e - Developing the revised agreed syllabus		
<i>How robust are the processes for producing a strong educational Agreed Syllabus?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have no clear structure for developing a new agreed syllabus. It does not undertake a thorough revision, tending to add material rather haphazardly to the existing syllabus, leading to lack of coherence in the final outcome. There is little or no consultation during the development of a new agreed syllabus.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have clear objectives for the revision and involve a wide range of local expertise in its construction. The LA and the ASC in partnership ensure that strong direction is provided to design an agreed syllabus which is coherent, clear and accessible. Working parties and consultations are reasonably managed and supported.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	ensure that high quality advice is sought to review and advise on the revisions as they develop. The ASC in partnership with the LA holds well attended consultation meetings and briefings to ensure teachers are fully involved in, and have a sense of ownership of, the revision process. The Agreed Syllabus has a clear framework for progression and challenging learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 2f - Making best use of National Guidance		
<i>How does the Agreed Syllabus Conference make choices relating to the use of national documentation? (See footnote*)</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a limited awareness and understanding of national documentation in relation to the agreed syllabus review process and are unable to use national guidance in a coherent way. have members not fully understanding the broader curriculum and how this is organised and have no opportunity for training to give them the skills to understand how RE might best play a part in the education of the whole child.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be aware of national documentation and some of its implications for the Agreed Syllabus review process, but does not ensure its use reflects local circumstances. Have ASC members who take note of the broader curriculum picture but do not link the Agreed Syllabus to it systematically or appreciate how teachers will be able to make use of it to link to the wider curriculum in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	take full account of national documentation in the construction of the revised Agreed Syllabus, while ensuring their work reflects local circumstances. The syllabus is devised so that RE fits appropriately with other curriculum areas at all key stages and guidance about how to make the best links is given to schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?	
--	--

*Documentation includes: the Non-Statutory National Framework in RE; the Programmes of Learning in RE (Primary) and Programmes of Study in RE (Secondary), the new Primary and Secondary Curriculums, and “Religious education in English schools: “Non-statutory guidance 2010”.

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

Section 3. Collective worship

How effectively does the SACRE fulfil its responsibilities for the provision and practice of collective worship?

Maintained schools are required to provide a daily act of collective worship for every pupil. In community schools not having a religious foundation, the acts of collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, without being distinctive of any particular denomination. Part of a SACRE’s role is to support the effective provision of collective worship in community schools and to advise the LA on issues related to provision and quality. It must also consider applications from head teachers in community schools that the requirement for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character be disapplied for some or all of the pupils in that school. SACRE ‘determines’ the appropriateness of that application and grants a ‘determination’ to those schools where the application is judged to be in the best interests of the pupils. All pupils in schools with determinations continue to have an entitlement to daily collective worship.

Collective worship can be a rich and rewarding element of the curriculum as a whole. SACREs have the opportunity to enhance the quality of collective worship by appropriate guidance and support.

Key Area: 3a – Supporting pupil entitlement

What strategies are in place to enable the SACRE to support the delivery of pupil entitlement in the LA's schools?

<p>Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:</p>	<p>be unaware of the issues facing schools in providing collective worship. provide little advice or support towards fulfilling pupil entitlement to collective worship.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Established A SACRE with established practice would:</p>	<p>understand local issues of delivering pupil entitlement and of the challenges facing schools in providing collective worship. provide some advice in support of delivering pupil entitlement and would seek to ensure that schools had access to, and advice on, appropriate resourcing towards delivering collective worship.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:</p>	<p>have a balanced and realistic overview of provision and its challenges across the LA. provide or arrange for systematic support and guidance for schools experiencing difficulty in delivering pupil entitlement. obtain feedback from schools to evaluate the impact of advice and support, and periodically reviews its strategies for supporting pupil entitlement.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?</p>		

Key Area: 3b – Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship		
<i>How does SACRE seek to influence the quality of collective worship in the LA's schools?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	<p>not be adequately supported for promoting quality of provision of collective worship.</p> <p>have agenda items about collective worship dominated by the issue of SACRE trying to find a mechanism for obtaining data.</p> <p>have little understanding of the nature and potential of collective worship and of what effective provision in each school might be.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	<p>have occasional agenda items on collective worship, with some insight into how collective worship is being delivered in the LA's schools.</p> <p>understand what effective provision is but members of the SACRE have little 'hands-on' experience of collective worship in schools.</p> <p>promote in-service support for teachers with responsibility for collective worship, and provides advice on enhancing quality of provision.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	<p>have a good overview of quality of provision across the LA, with information from the LA and from presentations by schools.</p> <p>have first-hand experience of collective worship in schools.</p> <p>disseminate good practice in consultation with schools and teachers, sponsors an ongoing programme of in-service development, and assist schools in evaluating and enhancing the quality of their provision.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 3c – Responding to requests for determinations		
<i>How robust are SACRE's procedures for responding to requests from schools for a determination?</i>		
<p>Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:</p>	<p>have had little or no experience of any requests for a determination, and have given at most only minimal attention as to how it might respond to such a request.</p> <p>be found unprepared and at risk of making an unsound decision or giving erroneous advice by a request for a determination.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Established A SACRE with established practice would:</p>	<p>be aware that schools have the option of requesting a determination, and that SACRE has a major role in this process.</p> <p>have provided some training to its members regarding determinations, either directly through working on earlier requests, or through specific elements in developmental sessions.</p> <p>be found by a request for a determination able to respond in an adequate but piecemeal fashion, without a systematic overview of this area of work.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:</p>	<p>be fully equipped for responding to requests for determinations, with a good understanding of SACRE's responsibilities.</p> <p>have a well-established and effective framework for responding to requests, with which members are familiar and comfortable.</p> <p>Meet a request with a judicious and well-informed appraisal of the request by SACRE, leading to a sound decision communicated clearly to the school in a context of ongoing advisory support. SACRE periodically reviews all existing determinations.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?</p>		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

Section 4: Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other key stakeholders

How far does the SACRE's partnership with the LA enable it to carry out its responsibilities effectively?

The relationship between a Local Authority and its SACRE is essentially one of partnership and collaboration, with mutual obligations and responsibilities. So that a SACRE can advise and act effectively for the LA in the field of Religious Education and collective worship, the LA must ensure not only that there is a local SACRE, but also that it is able to fulfil its functions. The extent to which a SACRE is supported, by funding and personnel, will determine how well individuals and committees can work together. Where a SACRE is valued by the Local Authority, it is more likely that the members of the SACRE will be able to contribute both to the SACRE's work and to the LA's wider strategic objectives.

By bring together many local stakeholders (faith/belief communities, teachers, local politicians and cooptees such as universities and parents) into a statutory body, SACREs can act positively for LAs as a sounding board on their core business of RE and collective worship, and also on wider strategic educational objectives such as raising standards, narrowing the gap and promoting community cohesion, as well as community matters related to interfaith collaboration and wellbeing. These core and value added functions work best when the SACRE is appropriately supported, resourced and managed, and when channels of communication with the LA are good.

The potential for SACREs to contribute more widely is dependent on SACRE members feeling that the meetings are outward looking, focused on pupil needs, purposeful and enjoyable. This can be achieved, for example, by meeting in different locations (schools, places of worship, cultural centres and Council meetings rooms) and by ensuring that all members feel they are equal partners whose views and experiences are sought, listened to and valued.

Alongside this, SACRE has the power to develop structural relationships with academies etc by exploring ways in which an academy "presence" can be incorporated into SACRE itself, e.g. by co-options (non-voting), through additional places in Group C (teacher organisations), or by creating a non-voting notional "Group E" (as had been envisaged in the Grant Maintained era). Similar considerations apply to the ASC. Although the legal framework would currently not allow voting rights to any distinct academy representation, SACREs and ASCs would surely not wish to proceed with decisions which were clearly not acceptable to the academy sector represented in their wider membership.

Key Area: 4a – SACRE meetings

How purposeful, inclusive, representative and effective are SACRE meetings?

<p>Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:</p>	<p>hold meetings regularly with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● routine administrative arrangements ● appropriate distribution of agendas and papers <p>Business is dealt with in a prompt and orderly way. There are limited opportunities for teachers and representatives of faith communities to be invited to share their work. Business tends to be focused solely on routine statutory requirements.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Established A SACRE with established practice would:</p>	<p>have good attendance where all four committees are well represented. Agendas and papers are distributed well in advance ensuring all members have time to consider them carefully. Meetings are well managed with strong contributions from a wide range of members. Meetings move beyond routine matters to consider wider issues about the quality of RE and collective worship.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:</p>	<p>have SACRE members contributing to the development of the agenda. Meetings will be lively and purposeful with a wide variety of contributions focused on the major priorities for improvement in schools. Teachers and representatives of faith communities regularly attend and participate fully in meetings, sharing their experience and insights. Meetings are held in a variety of venues, including local places of worship and schools.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?</p>		

Key Area: 4b – Membership and training		
<i>To what extent is the membership of SACRE able to fulfil SACRE's purpose?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a membership that fulfils the basic statutory obligations. Arrangements to fill vacancies are not always effective. There are limited induction and training opportunities for SACRE members.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have a membership that strongly reflects the diversity of the wider religious and professional community. There are some opportunities for SACRE members to participate in training activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	make good use of co-option to ensure membership of the SACRE is well informed and is highly representative of the diversity of the local community. There is a strong and co-ordinated programme of induction, and training opportunities for SACRE members.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 4c – Improvement/development planning		
<i>How effective are the priorities and actions identified by SACRE in improving the experience of pupils in schools?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	not have an action plan to focus its future work and there is little overt linkage between the priorities of the LA's development / improvement plan and the work of the SACRE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have a basic action plan which is reviewed regularly and updated on an annual basis. This provides an effective focus for the SACRE's work. There is some attempt to link the plan to the wider LA priorities. The SACRE is regularly represented at national events relevant to its work; for example, NASACRE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have a well-defined action plan with clear objectives and success criteria. Resource implications are clearly defined. There is a clear link between the plan and the wider objectives of the LA.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 4d – Professional and financial support		
<i>How well supported and resourced is SACRE?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have financial and management support to allow it to exist. Representatives of the LA attend meetings but there is limited subject specialist advice available. There are resources for basic SACRE functions but there is no specific budget for the SACRE and little opportunity for the SACRE to take initiatives requiring funding.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have some access to subject specialist advice and is informed of local and national initiatives. The LA is represented at meetings and can provide a means of communication with the wider LA. The SACRE has a modest budget which enables it to fund some initiatives. Meetings are clerked and the clerk maintains communication with the Chair and other members between meetings as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	be well supported by a subject specialist who provides effective advice and is well informed about the provision and quality of RE in the LA and about national developments. Representatives of the LA attend meetings and the SACRE is also attended by a lead officer from the LA who can provide a strong link between the work of the SACRE and the wider LA. SACRE's plans are linked to other local work and projects. The SACRE has access to funds to enable it to make decisions about its priorities and ensure these can be properly resourced.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 4e - Information and advice		
<i>How well informed is SACRE in order to be able to advise the LA appropriately?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	receive limited information about public examination data from the LA. Limited information is provided about wider national and local developments. The SACRE tends to receive information from the LA rather than ask questions of the LA and challenge its work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be regularly provided with clear information relevant to the quality and provision for RE and collective worship in local schools. The SACRE receives the information in a way that enables it to challenge and question the LA's work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	receive detailed and well-analysed information about the quality and provision for RE and collective worship. As a result SACRE uses this information effectively to give advice to the LA which leads to strategic action to improve standards. This can include advice related to the review of the Agreed Syllabus. The SACRE has a strong partnership with the LA and plays an active role in promoting ideas and initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 4f - Partnerships with key stakeholders		
<i>What partnerships does the SACRE have with key local and national stakeholders, and of what quality are these?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have little contact with or awareness of other local agencies, and rarely has contact with pupils or parents.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be well informed about other key stakeholders supporting RE and has some contact with the groups involved.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	build its activities effectively on local networks. Links with other bodies, such as local Inter-Faith groups, are positive and able to support raising standards and developing community cohesion. The SACRE has opportunities to hear the views and experience of pupils and parents about RE. Representatives of key support networks such as ASTs and higher education providers are regularly involved with the SACRE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 4f – Relations with the Academies sector		
<i>How effectively is SACRE encouraging academies etc to see themselves also as stakeholders in their local area, specifically by devising ways in which an academies presence is incorporated into SACRE itself?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have nothing formal in place. Little encouragement, if any, is extended to academies to relate to the SACRE's proceedings, and there are no channels through which academies can contribute.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have made some attempts to set up an academies presence in SACRE, but these have been hampered by e.g. lack of confidence or vision on the part of SACRE, or by confusion over what is legally valid and possible. Nevertheless, some academies are now committed to working with SACRE and to finding a constructive way forward.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have considered systematically the legal and structural options open to them, and have set up formal procedures for establishing a permanent and sustainable academies presence on SACRE. A high proportion of academies in the area regard themselves as stakeholders and partners with SACRE.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

Section 5: Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community

How effectively does SACRE, in partnership with the Local Authority and the faith communities, contribute to the promoting of cohesion across the community?

“By community cohesion, we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community”¹.

Schools play a major role in helping to shape the future of our society, and the duty laid on each school to promote community cohesion is a significant part of that role. One of the most obvious and effective contributors to the community cohesion agenda is Religious Education. SACREs should take every opportunity to promote the contribution of RE to the community cohesion programmes in local schools. Where properly supported by the LA, SACREs themselves can act as powerful vehicles for promoting community cohesion in schools, in education more widely, and in the local community. SACREs should exemplify good practice in their internal relations and in the ways in which they go about their business. Advice on the contribution of SACREs and RE to community cohesion is given in the Guidance.

¹ Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, speaking in Parliament on 2 November 2006. Based on the Government and the Local Government Association’s definition first published in Guidance on Community Cohesion, LGA, 2002 and resulting from the Cattle Report in 2001.

Key Area: 5a – SACRE’s membership		
<i>How representative is SACRE’s membership of the local community?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a membership that is not necessarily strongly representative of the religious diversity of the local community.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have membership that broadly reflects the religious diversity of the local community. This is regularly reviewed by the SACRE in partnership with the LA particularly where there is a high mobility of communities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have strong representation from all major local religious communities including different groups within the same religious tradition (e.g. different Muslim communities). It would also endeavour to include representation from small local faith communities and / or have links with national bodies that can broker advice from those communities elsewhere in the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 5b SACRE’s understanding of the local area		
<i>How much do SACRE members know and understand the local community in its religious, cultural and ethnic dimensions?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have limited knowledge about the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity in the local area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be provided with a detailed analysis of the religious and cultural diversity within the LA and therefore be well aware of different groups representing the diversity within the local area. know about local Inter Faith groups and the work that they do in the locality.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	have detailed knowledge of the nature of the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity in the local area and take active steps to inform itself further about the distinctive needs and opportunities created by this diversity. SACRE would have good liaison and seek to develop initiatives with local Inter Faith groups. The SACRE would be aware of the impact of this local context on schools and on the provision for RE and collective worship in those schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 5c – SACRE’s engagement with the community cohesion agenda.		
<i>How much does SACRE understand the contribution which RE can make to a schools’ provision for community cohesion?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	have a basic grasp of what community cohesion means and therefore a limited understanding of the contribution which RE can make to the community cohesion agenda. It may also have little opportunity to promote RE’s contribution to schools of faith communities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	have an understanding of what community cohesion means and the duty on schools to promote this. The SACRE would understand and have a clear commitment to the part RE can play in promoting community cohesion and would seek to promote this throughout its work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	understand what community cohesion means and be clear about the duty on schools and the LA to promote this. The members of SACRE would appreciate their key role in promoting RE’s contribution to the community cohesion offer of its schools. SACRE would ensure this is explicit in the local Agreed Syllabus and related guidance. SACRE members, as representatives of different sections of the wider community, would appreciate how they and their wider constituencies can work in partnership with other agencies to enhance the promotion of community cohesion in schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Key Area: 5d – SACRE’s role within wider LA initiatives on community cohesion		
<i>How well is SACRE linked to or consulted about LA initiatives promoting community cohesion?</i>		
Developing A SACRE with developing practice would:	be given little information about, or contact with, wider LA initiatives linked to the promotion of community cohesion.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established A SACRE with established practice would:	be aware of some LA initiatives promoting community cohesion and have opportunity to discuss and contribute to this work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced A SACRE with advanced practice would:	be a key partner and stakeholder in the work of the local authority in this area and take the initiative in promoting activities and links, which relate to this work. be aware of and work in partnership with local Inter-Faith groups to ensure the LA’s work has a broad consultation base.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where are we and where do we find evidence to support this?		

Successes/ What are we good at?

Barriers to success

Areas for development/ Action points:

- **For the SACRE**

- **For the LA**

Date of review (1)

Date of review (2)

Date of review (3)

ANNEX

The responsibilities of a Local Authority

The detailed rights and responsibilities of local authorities can be seen in full in *RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*. This can be found at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/re/guidance/>

In brief, local authorities are legally required to:

- establish a SACRE and appoint representatives to each of the four committees
- establish an occasional body called an agreed syllabus conference (ASC)
- institute a review of its locally agreed syllabus every five years
- appoint members of the committees represented on the ASC
- ensure that membership of group/committee A on the SACRE and ASC is broadly representative of the local area
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that SACRE and ASC membership is representative

The responsibilities of a SACRE

The detailed rights and responsibilities of SACREs can be seen in full in *RE in English Schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*. This can be found at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/subjects/re/guidance/>

In brief, SACREs are legally required to:

- advise the local authority on RE and collective worship
- publish an annual report on their work
- send the annual report to QCDA (or its successor body)
- meet in public, unless confidential information is to be disclosed
- make their minutes available to the local authority and make provision for public access to their agenda and reports

The Guidance also indicates that SACREs should, as a matter of good practice:

- Monitor the provision for both RE and Collective Worship
- Provide advice and support on RE and Collective Worship to schools
- In partnership with the local authority, keep the locally agreed syllabus and provision in schools under review
- Offer advice to the local authority

In addition, SACREs may:

- Require their local authority to review the locally agreed syllabus
- Decide to advise their local authority
- Co-opt members who are not members of any of the four groups.

The Guidance also makes it clear that SACREs can and should make a strong contribution to the promotion of community cohesion in schools and in the local community through their promotion of good quality RE and through their operation as a SACRE.

Bromley SACRE Self Evaluation July 2017 results

Key Area		Developing	Established	Advanced
Standards and Quality of Provision of RE				
1A	RE provision across the LA		x	
1B	Standards and achievement		x	
1C	Quality of learning and teaching		x	
1D	Quality of leadership and management		x	
1E	Recruitment and retention of skilled specialist RE staff		x	
1F	Relations with academies and other non-LA maintained schools			x
The effectiveness of the locally Agreed Syllabus				
2A	Review of the Agreed Syllabus		x	
2B	The quality of the Agreed Syllabus		x	
2C	Launching and implementing the Agreed Syllabus	x		
2D	Membership and training of the Agreed Syllabus Conference		x	
2E	Developing the revised agreed syllabus		x	
2F	Making best use of National Guidance		x	
Collective Worship				
3A	Supporting pupil entitlement in LA's schools		x	
3B	Enhancing the quality of provision of collective worship		x	
3C	Responding to requests for determinations		x	
Management of SACRE				
4A	How purposeful, inclusive, representative and effective are SACRE meetings?		x	
4B	Membership and Training		x	
4C	Improvement/development planning		x	
4D	Professional and financial support	x		
4E	How well informed is SACRE to be able to advise the LA appropriately?	x		
4F	Partnerships with key stakeholders		x	
4G	Relations with the Academies sector		x	
Contribution of SACRE to promoting cohesion across the community				
5A	Representative nature of SACRE in the local community			x
5B	SACRE's understanding of the local community in its religious, cultural and ethnic dimensions		x	
5C	SACRE's engagement with the community cohesion agenda	x		
5D	SACRE's Links to LA initiatives promoting community cohesion	x		

This page is left intentionally blank

SACRE DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2018-2019
To meet the statutory duties of a SACRE

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Date	Success criteria
1. SACRE meetings are planned and dates published annually	Agenda planning Meeting preparation Report writing Meeting attendance Minute taking Publication of meeting agendas and minutes	Clerk, Chairman, Education Services	Termly committee meetings	Effective meetings with action points carried out. Members have a working knowledge of the syllabus and an understanding of the responsibilities of SACRE
2. SACRE consider reports and initiatives from NASACRE	Consider relevant material from NASACRE	Chairman and nominated rep	As information is published	Attendance at relevant NASACRE meetings Minutes record discussions
3. Produce annual report of SACRE.	Collate information and write report based on NASACRE template	Educational Advisor to write Chairman to read Clerk to circulate.	Substantially completed by end Dec 2018, and submitted within first 3 months of 2019	Completed on time and copies provided for SACRE members, Director, Assistant Director, CYP portfolio holder, libraries, schools and their governing bodies. NASACRE and the secretary of State for Education
4. Annual engagement with local schools to observe and understand Religious Education Collective Worship approaches	1. Annual letter to schools - encouraging them to engage with the SACRE and advise of available resources 2. Invite school visits 3. Members undertake school visits 4. Committee considers school reports	SACRE members at least one per year	Up to 4 school visits - 2 per term	Meaningful visits or discussion completed and reports discussed at SACRE meetings.
5. Share best practice with local SACREs	Invite local SACREs to present once a year, providing an update on how they are doing	Chairman / Clerk	Annually	
6. Provide information on curriculum to schools	Upload resources onto the Fronter system.	Education services	Occasional updating	Schools able to access syllabus
7. Evaluate SACRE work and establish priorities	Item at each meeting - using the NASACRE self-evaluation document	All SACRE members	Summer term meeting	Evaluation identified success criteria are met
8. Preparation of Revised Syllabus	Revision of the current Bromley Agreed Syllabus for RE	Education services	By January 2019	Revised Agreed Syllabus for RE available for schools from Jan 2019

This page is left intentionally blank