

Herefordshire
Standing Advisory Council on
Religious Education
(SACRE)

Draft SACRE Annual Report for the Academic
Year 2012/13

1 Herefordshire SACRE Annual Report 2012-2013

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is a statutory body set up to advise the Local Authority on matters related to religious education and collective worship. Its members are drawn from teachers, Local Authority representatives including Councillors, faith representatives from the Church of England and a range of Christian denominations, and representatives from other religious groups represented in the region.

SACRE's key functions include monitoring the provision and quality of RE, and providing advice and support on the effective teaching of RE in accordance with the agreed syllabus. This includes advice on methods of teaching, choice of teaching material and provision of teacher training. This is primarily done through the review and implementation of the locally agreed syllabus, a process which is required every five years. This is followed by on-going monitoring of its effectiveness in the light of changing national education policy.

SACRE is grateful to Herefordshire County Council for its continuing support, but notes that in the current reduction in funding across the Council, SACRE has not been spared. SACRE endeavours to offer maximum support to schools through its use of conferences and network meetings.

Herefordshire SACRE met twice in 2012-2013. The minutes of these meetings are available from David Penrose, Clerk to SACRE (dpenrose@herefordshire.gov.uk)

2 Supporting RE in Herefordshire

The key activities of SACRE over the period 2012-13 have focused on maintaining support for teachers as they implement the revised Agreed Syllabus from 2011.

3 A day for Special School RE 10 October 2012

This joint event with Gloucestershire SACRE included expert input from Anne Krisman, subject leader for RE at Little Heath Special School Redbridge. 15 delegates from 12 schools attended, along with three LA/Diocesan advisers. The focus was on how to use the revised Agreed Syllabus for planning great RE, and how to promote spiritual development in special schools.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, including the following representative comments:

- *Very interesting event. Nice to have an event like this centred around Special Education rather than having to adapt.*
- *A wonderful day – thank you for inviting me.*
- *Today was so relevant to what we do and the needs we cater for. Wonderful.*
- *Thanks to Anne for some wonderful insights, ideas, tips and information. The day worked on so many levels. The best courses send you out with an urgent enthusiasm to get back into school and try it out with the kids.*

4 Primary Network Meeting 17 October 2012

18 teachers attended a network meeting held at St James' CE Primary School, Hereford. The focus was on good practice, exploring the features of good practice in RE and trying out some resources to use in the classroom. A second network meeting due to be held in Bridstow on 18 October was cancelled because of insufficient numbers.

5 Annual Conference 28 June 2013

51 delegates attended the conference, from primary, special and secondary schools. The focus was on making good progress in RE. Workshops included planning and integrating assessment in the primary school, promoting deeper thinking in primary RE; teaching Islam; and raising achievement at KS3. Keynote speakers and workshop leaders were Lat Blaylock and Stephen Pett, from RE Today,

with SACRE members taking part in a 'Grill a SACRE rep!' session and Venerable TsultrimTenzin Choesang leading a session on understanding Buddhism. Whitecross Academy were generous and accommodating hosts.

As usual, feedback was very encouraging: 88% rated the day as excellent, 12% as good. Typical comments include:

- *An excellent day filled with inspiration and practical ideas. Very refreshing.*
- *Very well organised conference thank you. Useful to have time to focus on RE and gather lots of ideas.*
- *I found the day very accessible and realistic about what can happen in the classroom. Inspirational speakers and fab resources.*
- *Excellent day. Lots of great ideas – so nice to have practical ideas we can actually use rather than theory.*
- *Very inspirational as always – so many super resources. Can't wait to use them and inspire others back in school with ideas.*
- *Some really useful resources and ideas for lessons that have challenged and made me re-think all my planning for next year.*
- *Fantastic ideas, amazingly presented. Thank you!*

6 Monitoring

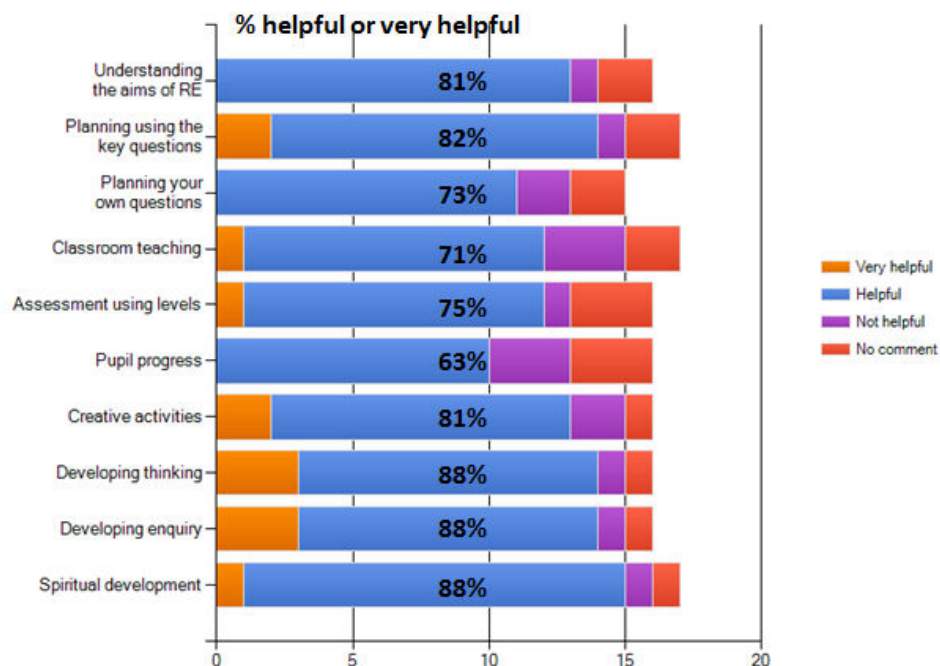
SACRE takes its monitoring duties seriously and has carried out primary and secondary online surveys this year. The information feeds into discussions about ways in which Herefordshire County Council and SACRE can continue to support teachers.

The **primary school survey**, carried out in January 2013, revealed some encouraging responses in respect of the new agreed syllabus:

- 83% of schools responding were confident or confident in aspects; 11% were unsure in aspects and only 1 school was not confident about implementing the syllabus.
- 33% had fully implemented the syllabus, 61% had partially implemented, and only 1 had many aspects still to implement.

The graph below gives a snapshot of the impact of the syllabus on various aspects of primary practice:

Are there particular areas of your RE provision that have been enhanced by the revised agreed syllabus? (Select more than one as appropriate)



The **secondary school survey** reveals that 57% of responding schools have fully implemented the syllabus and 29% have done so partially. One school has not implemented the syllabus.

7 Commentary on exam results Summer 2013

- Fifteen more pupils took the full course GCSE in 2013 compared with 2012. However, results were less favourable with 73.7% gaining a C grade or above compared with 79.8% in 2012. Girls outperformed boys.
- The short course attracted almost 25% more pupils this year. Results again were less favourable overall, with 41.4% of pupils gaining a C grade or above. Again, girls significantly outperformed boys by 12.7%. The difference between boys and girls was reduced this year, from a 2012 gap of 25.7%. The uptake of RS GCSE by both genders is very similar.
- The Entry Level Qualification band C course attracted slightly fewer pupils this year. The number of pupils gaining grade 1 or 2 was significantly higher than in 2012.
- A levels attracted 7 more candidates in 2013, however, those gaining C or above were lower by 22.4% than 2012. All candidates achieved a level E or above.
- Two girls took AS level, both gained an E or above.

See appendix for further data.

8 Quality of teaching in Herefordshire.

There is limited information about religious education in Ofsted reports, although lesson grading in inspections must comment on the quality of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) aspects of learning. All reports will include some details pertaining to these elements found in lessons, and wider afield, for example in the school curriculum, pastoral care, ethos, aims, relationships, etc. Whilst this may not be a measurable aspect of school life, specific observations will be collected as evidence of a good school.

Overall in its Ofsted inspections, Herefordshire has been judged as having 79% of its schools as good or outstanding. In effect, as teaching and leadership and management have to be at least good for this grading, it can be assumed that the quality of SMSC is good or better, in almost four out of five of our schools.

Although there is room for improvement, the situation appears to be better, on the surface at least, in Herefordshire, compared to the Ofsted RE subject report findings in 2010. This report, *Transforming Religious Education*, states that the quality of teaching was 'less than good in around half of the lessons seen', a finding that was only slightly improved in the 2013 report, *Realising the Potential*. Whilst noting that RE lessons are not the same as SMSC, the overlaps in curriculum content and pupils' attitude as well as quality of teaching should be worth noting from Ofsted reports.

10 Future support for RE

On-going support for implementing the syllabus, and for improving teaching and learning in RE, is planned for 2013-2014, including:

- Annual SACRE conference for primary teachers, focusing on planning and assessment, in partnership with Worcestershire SACRE.
- Annual SACRE secondary conference, in partnership with Herefordshire and Worcestershire SACREs, focusing on assessment in the light of Government policy to remove the use of levels.
- Training for special school teachers of RE, in partnership with Herefordshire and Worcestershire SACREs.

11 Other matters

SACRE considered many issues over the year, including:

- The reduced support for SACRE has meant that SACRE has taken the decision to cut one meeting per year, so as to maximise the consultant's time for supporting RE in schools rather than supporting meetings. This means that there were not the usual three meetings in 2012-2013, with the summer meeting cut. Instead, a 'strategy group' will act as an immediate contact group for the consultant to give ideas and initiate projects as required.
- The challenge of monitoring teaching and learning in RE in Gloucestershire schools
- The impact of government policy on academies and free schools, and its implications for RE and SACRE; SACRE has worked to maintain links with academies in order to support RE in the county.
- Continuing discussion on the impact of Government policy on the provision of RE, including the English Baccalaureate and the absence of RE from the National Curriculum Review.
- Consideration of the RE Council's Review of RE.

Many thanks are due to Judith Tinsley who left her role in the Local Authority after two years as schools' LA officer to SACRE. Also, to Paul James, who was Clerk to SACRE from 1998-2013 and whose efficiency and extensive knowledge of the legal niceties of SACREs and Local Authorities has been invaluable over many years.

This report was compiled by Stephen Pett, our RE consultant from RE Today Services, and Bronwyn Mabey, School Improvement Advisor, Learning & Achievement Service.

Cllr John Stone
Chair of SACRE
November 2013

GCSE 2013 Results for Religious Studies

GCSE 2012 Results for Religious Studies

Appendix A

Religious Studies

Religious Studies

	Full Course					Full Course				
	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	Number A* to G	% A* to G	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	Number A* to G	% A* to G
Boys & Girls	680	501	73.7%	668	98.2%	665	531	79.8%	662	99.5%
Boys	327	215	65.7%	319	349.0%	314	230	73.2%	314	100.0%
Girls	353	286	81.0%	349	98.9%	351	301	85.8%	348	99.1%

Religious Studies

Religious Studies

	Short Course					Short Course				
	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	Number A* to G	% A* to G	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	Number A* to G	% A* to G
Boys & Girls	348	144	41.4%	329	94.5%	281	121	43.1%	267	95.0%
Boys	176	63	35.8%	168	95.5%	137	41	29.9%	128	93.4%
Girls	172	81	47.1%	161	93.6%	144	80	55.6%	139	96.5%

Religious Studies/Education

Religious Studies/Education

	ELQ Band C					ELQ Band C				
	Entered	No. Grds 1-3	% Grade 1	% Grade 2	% Grade 3	Entered	No. Grds 1-3	% Grade 1	% Grade 2	% Grade 3
Boys & Girls	92	92	20.7%	45.7%	33.7%	99	99	8.1%	47.5%	44.4%
Boys	59	59	20.3%	50.8%	28.8%	67	67	10.4%	52.2%	37.3%
Girls	33	33	21.2%	36.4%	42.4%	32	32	3.1%	37.5%	59.4%

GCE A' Level 2013

GCE A' Level 2012

Religious Studies

Religious Studies

	A Level					A Level				
	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	No. A* to E	% A* to E	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	No. A* to E	% A* to E
Boys & Girls	25	18	72.0%	25	100.0%	18	17	94.4%	18	100.0%
Boys	13	11	84.6%	13	100.0%	4	4	100.0%	4	100.0%
Girls	12	7	58.3%	12	100.0%	14	13	92.9%	14	100.0%

AS Level

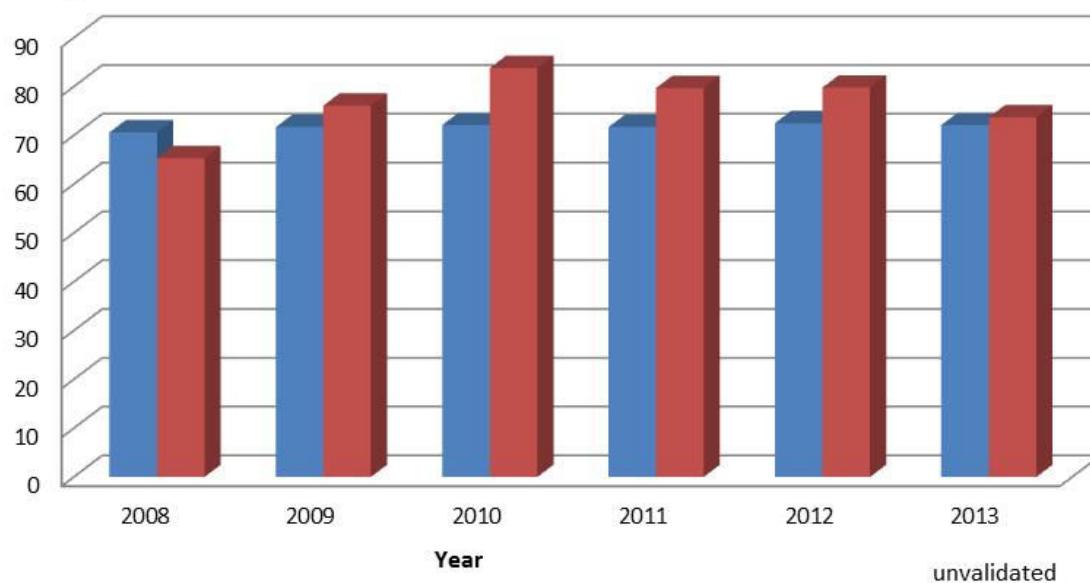
AS Level

	AS Level					AS Level				
	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	No. A* to E	% A* to E	Entered	Number A* to C	% A* to C	No. A* to E	% A* to E
Boys & Girls	2	1	50.0%	2	100.0%	9	6	66.7%	9	100.0%
Boys	0			0		4	4	100.0%	4	100.0%
Girls	2	1	50.0%	2	100.0%	5	2	40.0%	5	100.0%

Religious Studies GCSE Full course % A* to C Grades

Percentage

■ NCER National ■ Herefordshire



Religious Studies GCSE Short course % A* to C Grades

Percentage

■ NCER National ■ Herefordshire

