



Introduction by the Chair Kevin McSharry

Three meetings took place: 6th November 2018; 3rd March 2019 and 25th June 2019 all were quorate. Termly newsletters were circulated before each meeting outlining any material that pertained to Religious Education & Collective Worship.

At the **November meeting** members were encouraged to view resources on YouTube that looked at RE & the impact it had on young people under the section 'My Future, My Career, My Religious Education'. Members viewed one of the films & commented that the young people showed the positive aspects of learning about religions & its impact on their educational & working lives. Material on Alevism that had been discussed at a previous meeting were circulated.

At the same meeting an Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) was convened & the working party (Mr Gerry Cohen, Rabbi Mark Goldsmith, Mr Kevin McSharry, Ms Marina Robb, Dr N. Shah & Dr A. Sallnow) presented the proposed changes for the new syllabus. These were discussed & a vote was taken & it was unanimously agreed by all four groups to accept the new syllabus for implementation in September 2019.

Items from the SACRE newsletter were discussed including the recommendations made by Westminster Faith Debates '**A New Settlement Revised: Religion & Belief in Schools**' by **Charles Calrke & Linda Woodhead** July 2018, which contained **16** quite radical recommendations. Members split into small groups, and then fed back their views on some of the recommendations. Lively discussion ensued & comments were reported back to the authors.

The SACRE development plan was discussed & proposals made. These included:

- *to provide or organise CPD and INSET for teachers, with faith communities to the fore;*

- *to use the expertise of SACRE members;*
- *to run conferences for a day, to bring SACRE members, teachers and governors together, or doing courses on new syllabuses, guidance, schemes of work or planning.*
- *to give authentic faith community voices an audience among teachers.*

There was collective agreement that training staff to deliver this new curriculum could lead to people being better informed.

At the **March meeting** the paper that had been circulated on National & Barnet Religious Studies examination entries & results were discussed. Concern was expressed at the fall nationally of entries to all examinations. The reasons for this decline were discussed including the exclusion from the Russell University's list of Facilitating subjects & NATRE's identification of successive governmental policy decisions that have failed to maintain & support RE as part of the broad & balanced curriculum.

New Ofsted Framework Katie Dawbarn assured members that Ofsted had recognised the above issue, which partly led to an alteration in their framework. Via its new framework, Ofsted would now focus less on attainment data and more on reviewing schools' intent, implementation, and impact in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. It was noted that the new Ofsted Framework would be in place from September 2019.

School visits by SACRE members were discussed & material to support these visits had already been written.

It was decided that the syllabus launch would take place in the June meeting with invitations sent to local RE leaders & presentations made by local schools. Dr Anna Sallow announced that she would be retiring at the end of the Autumn Term having spent fifteen years as the RE consultant.

At the **June meeting** the main item was the launch of the new syllabus. The Mayor Councillor Caroline Stock agreed to participate as did the Archbishop **name** SACRE members, pupils, teachers & local dignitaries. A pack that included an outline of the new syllabus, the REC material on Why RE Matters & the population data on religion in Barnet.

Faith groups were invited to have stalls where they could display any resources for use in schools & there were seven tables of resources.

Presentations began by looking at What is special about the Barnet syllabus?

The key points that were made were:

- it is **locally decided** by teachers, faith groups & SACRE members

- Barnet's syllabus is arranged with **Key questions Key Concepts** & is enquiry based. A participatory activity designed to explore what this meant & this provided discussion & debate.
- The importance of being religiously literate & a quiz was produced that participants completed in twos & the answers discussed

Pupils' Voices

The students were asked to reflect on the following questions: What I have learnt from RE that has made me think differently? Why RE is important? If we didn't study RE what would the loss be?

5 schools participated two primary schools & three secondary schools. They represented faith schools, community schools & academies. Their presentations were of a very high standard, they spoke with enthusiasm, knowledge & conveyed the importance they placed on having high quality RE. The Director of Education thanked them. Also, at the meeting Dr Anna Sallnow was presented with gifts & thanked for her work.

Membership

The chair embarked on a recruitment drive & a number of new members were recruited : from March Ajantha Tennakoon (Buddhism) Ms Joan Scannell Free Churches, Mr Suri Khatri (Hindu), Robin Sims-Williams (London Diocese) Mrs Agnes Slocombe (London Diocese)

Resignations were received from Rev Dr Gregory Platten (London Diocese) & the Rev Tristan Chapman St Albans Diocese

2. Advice to Statutory Bodies SACRE continues to have a close relationship with the Local Authority with support for the Agreed Syllabus Conference.

3. Standards & Quality of Provision of Religious Education

Enclosed an outline of last years data this will need to be completed once Jan has the figures

National Examination results 2018

A level Religious Studies 2019

Barnet A level Results 2018 for comparison

176 students were entered for the examination compared with 211 entries in 2017, (191 in 2016 & 165 in 2015). This decrease follows the national trends as indicated above. However, the figures over the last few years have fluctuated between 165-211. The entries came from the following 16 schools: Ashmole; Bishop Douglass, Copthall, East Barnet, Finchley Catholic High, Hendon, J CoSS, London Academy, Menorah High, Mill Hill High, Queen Elizabeth Girls, St James', St Michael's, The Compton School, Whitefield & The Wren Academy. The same number of schools entered pupils , however Hasmonian High has stopped entering students . Whitefield are entering students. The results obtained: A* 2%; A 17% (with 19% achieving an A* or A grade) (national average 24.2%) B 36% ; C 23%;D 15%; E4% Unclassified 2%. This

compares with the figures for 2017, 6.1% achieved an A* (national average 5.7%) with 31.1% achieving an A* or A grade (national average 24.2%) 53.8% achieving an A*-B grade (national average 49.2%) so an increase in achievement in A* & A grades with more entries as compared with 2016 when 22.3% achieved an A*or A result & 62.6% achieved an A*-B grade.

The RS AS-level nationally customarily attracted a lot of interest among students. Numbers fell from **19,027 in 2017 to 8454** this year, a drop of **44 per cent**.

Barnet A/S level results 2018 there were 76 entries as compared with 179 entries 2017 & 335 entries in 2016 so a huge drop in numbers reflecting the national trend. The following schools 14 schools entered students: Ashmole, Bishop Douglass, Copthall, East Barnet, Hendon, Christ College Finchley, London Academy, Mill Hill High, Queen Elizabeth Girls, St James', St Michael's , The Compton School & The Wren Academy.

GCSE 2018

The number of pupils in England and Wales taking GCSE Religious Studies full course **has fallen for the second year in a row, down 10.4%** against 2017 to 241,749. In addition, the number of pupils in England and Wales taking the short course GCSE in Religious Studies has fallen even more sharply, down 35.8% from last year to 34,087. The decline is greater in England than in Wales. In England the number of entries for GCSE Religious Studies full course has fallen by 10.7% to 229,189. In Wales the equivalent figures are down by 4.2% to 12,560, although these come after last year's record high.

All schools, including Academies, have a legal requirement to offer Religious Education at all key stages, but today's figures suggest that this is not sufficient to ensure that all pupils in England get to study the subject at Key Stage 4. In too many cases, there are no consequences for those schools that decide to flout their legal obligation, with Religious Education not featuring in measures such as the EBacc that are used to hold them to account.

At a time when greater religious literacy is even more necessary than ever before, the decline across England and Wales in students taking GCSE Religious Studies is troubling.

The fall in entries comes despite pupils emphasising how much they value and enjoy studying Religious Education (underlined by the overall rise in entries at A-Level and GCSE over the past decade) and despite the fact that the Government is rightly emphasising the importance for young people to have knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs.

This year's drop in entries should not detract from a decade of strong growth for Religious Studies GCSE. In 2008 there were 166,628 entries for Religious Studies in England and Wales. The number of entries increased every year until reaching a peak in 2016. While there has been a decline this year, the number of pupils receiving a full course GCSE in Religious Studies is still 45.1% greater than in 2008.

It has been encouraging to hear that Ofsted intend to pay closer attention to whether schools are meeting their requirements to teach Religious Education. Today's figures show how important it will be for Ofsted to do this.

The key outcomes for Religious Education in England and Wales at KS4 in 2018 are as follows:

- There were 241,749 entries for the full course in GCSE RS, a fall of 10.4% from 2017 (269,839)
- There were 34,087 entries for the short course in GCSE RS, a decline of 35.8% from 2017 (53,071)
- There were 275,836 entries for GCSE RS (combined short and full courses), a decline of 14.6% from 2017 (322,910). Entries for GCSE RS (combined short and full courses) peaked in 2011 at 461,795. Today's figures show a decline in entries of 40.3% in seven years with 186,000 fewer pupils achieving a qualification in RS at the end of KS4.
- 7% of entries for the full course in GCSE RS were awarded at least an A or a 7
- 7% of entries for the short course in GCSE RS were awarded an A or an A*

GCSE RS entries – England and Wales (2008-2018) Diagram

Source: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses> HYPERLINK "http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses"]
HYPERLINK "http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses" [cq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses](http://www.jcq.org.uk/examination-results/gcses)

Barnet GCSE full course 2018

In 2018 there were **1602** entries compared with **1807** (2017) & 1751 (2016) (The following 19 schools (compared with 24 schools in 2016) entered pupils for GCSE full course: Bishop Douglass, Christ College, Copthall, East Barnet, Finchley Catholic High, Friern Barnet, Hendon, JCoss, London Academy, Mill Hill High, The Queen Elizabeth's Girls, St Andrew the Apostle, St James', St Michael's, The Compton, Henrietta Barnet, The Totteridge Academy, Whitefield & The Wren Academy. There were no entries from Hasmore High & Menorah High

Barnet GCSE short course no data was available.

No complaints about RE were received

4. Agreed Syllabus

An Agreed Syllabus conference was convened with participants from all the four SACRE groups, a questionnaire was devised, circulated to all schools & the responses collated & used to inform discussions. 4 subsequent meetings took place. The Revised Syllabus was approved at the November 2018 Meeting for implementation in the Autumn of 2019. Barnet SACRE has provided all schools with plans of work & support materials. The next review will take place in 2024.

5. Collective Worship

The guidelines are in place & no applications for determination or complaints were received

6. Management of SACRE A recruiting drive was put in place by the Chair Kevin McSharry supported by other SACRE members this has resulted in a number of new appointments, ensuring that SACRE reflects the communities of which it is a part. All meetings were quorate.

A termly newsletter is circulated to all members & school & training is held on a regular basis either as part of the meeting or in a separate pre-meeting session.

No complaints were received about Religious Education or Collective Worship

7. SACRE's contribution to the wider Local Authority Agenda

A Holocaust pack was produced for use by schools, SACRE members & the wider community. It was written by Rabbi Bernd Koschland, Anna Sallnow & designed by Sister Jacinta O'Driscoll O.P. from the community of Dominican Sisters at Rosary Priory Bushey. The theme this year was '**Torn from Home**' & included stories of the many people throughout the world who have been torn from home as a result of religious persecution. Young people from local schools who attended the 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project also included reflections on their experiences & read their material at the annual Holocaust Remembrance Service in Barnet.

Students from Queen Elizabeth School have continued the project begun with a grant from the Westhill Trust. The students prepare material from their religion to then make presentations to local primary schools in their cluster group. It has been a very successful project & we are grateful to the trust for their initial support. Women from the Interfaith Network have also begun to visit schools in pairs talking about their religion.

We are fortunate that we receive great support from Barnet Local Authority & all the members of SACRE.

Support is provided for all primary schools with termly newsletters & coordinator training. A local NATRE group (Enfield & Barnet) also has regular meetings.