

Barnet SACRE

Newsletter Autumn Term 2014

Good news recently that after much campaigning the [DfE](#) has restored bursaries for secondary teacher trainees. Many organisations and individuals have been campaigning for the reinstatement of training bursaries to help to address the shortage of RE specialists in schools. This move shows that the government has listened to the mounting weight of evidence showing that RE trainees were facing financial hardship. A joint letter from the REC and NATRE has been sent to Secretary of State Nicky Morgan to welcome the bursaries, which will be available for trainees taking up places in 2015-16.

National Religious Studies Examinations 2014

The following are the key outcomes of the 2014 '**A**' level results in England:

- 20,196 RS A level entries were recorded. The numbers of entries have been increasing over the last number of years. The number of entries in 2002/3 was 10,313 so this year marks an increase of 96%.
- RS A level entries increased by more than any other arts, humanities or social science subject this year (up 5.3% on 2012/3) continuing the upward trend over the last 10 years
- In line with other subjects the results were generally lower, but the percentage of students achieving A* at RS A level increased from 5.4% to 6.8%
- The Russell Group of universities has made it clear that RS A level provides '*a suitable provision for University generally*' & Oxford & Cambridge include Religious studies in the top level list of '*generally suitable Arts A levels*'.
- Research from the Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring at Durham University on the comparative difficulty of different subjects at a level showed that RS was '*in the middle difficulty range similar to Geography & more demanding than English*'.

A/S entries for 2014 were 439966 students 20.9% of total entries.

The key outcomes for **GCSE** results in England:

- The combined numbers entered for the full & short course RS was 387,915 a decrease of 8% in 2013 entries (420,151). Full course entries showed an increase by 7% from 251,063 in 2013 to 269,494 in 2014.
- The dramatic fall was in the short course entries that fell by 30% from 169,088 in 2013 to 118,421 in 2014.

This continues the trend over the last few years with a fall in numbers of total entries but a rise in full course entries, as more schools seem to be moving from the short course to the full course. This is positive in some ways as it means that students are spending more time studying RS & at greater depth. However, overall fewer numbers of students are studying RS at GCSE. When RS entries in England over the past three years are compared to those in Wales (where the EBacc & the average point score at GCSE have not been adopted as school performance measures) the following patterns in England emerge:

- Take up of the GCSE RS short course has fallen from 211,269 in 2012 to 99,602 in 2013 (-53%)
- GCSE full course have increased from 216,373 in 2012 to 258,067 in 2014 (+19%)
- Overall it means that compared with 2012 nearly 70,000 fewer 16 year olds in England will have gained a qualification in Religious studies (a drop of 15%). Thus echoing the NATRE(National Association of Teachers of RE) findings published in November 2013, that a third of community schools & over a third of academies without a religious character are still failing to meet their legal or contractual agreements to provide

religious education for this group.

- **Urgent action** needs to be taken to curb this decline.

New Religious Education Council Patrons

These are not, as might have been anticipated, RE professionals but come from very diverse backgrounds and walks of life and agree on the vital part high quality RE can play in the education of all young people. The new patrons are all prepared to use their public standing to support the work of the RE Council in strengthening the provision and quality of RE and the public understanding of the value and purpose of this subject. The patrons are entrepreneur Lord Bilimoria, scientist Professor Joy Carter, newly retired head teacher Kenny Frederick, head teacher Dame Helen Hyde, stand up comedian Sara Pascoe, journalist and broadcaster Lord Singh and writer and film producer Deepak Verma. The REC looks forward very much to having the endorsement of these supporters of RE to help with its work.

Farmington Fellowships for Teachers of Religious Education and Headteachers - Academic Year 2015/2016

The Farmington Fellowship provides wonderful opportunities for teachers to complete research into religious education. There are two types of fellowships: university based & school/home based. They are available for teachers of RE in UK primary, special & secondary schools. The closing date for the application for the academic year 2015-2016 is the 26th January 2015. Further details & an application form can be downloaded from the Farmington website: www.farmington.ac.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2015 is **Keep the memory alive**. A pack will be sent to all schools at the beginning of the Spring Term 2015. The 27th January 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau & 2014 is also the 20th anniversary of the Genocide in Srebrenica, Bosnia so the theme of keeping the memory alive is an important one.

NASACRE (National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for RE) News

Barnet & Enfield have paid their subscriptions for this year & so if you want to access the site these are the details:

Username **members2015**
Password **gr8RE4all**

The AGM was in May 2014 & the presentations are available to read or download on the website. There is to be a joint NASACRE, AREIAC (Association of RE Advisers, Inspectors & Consultants) & AULRE (Association of University Lecturers in RE) on **Thursday 27th November 2014** in Birmingham. Where implications for RE & Collective Worship following the Trojan Horse investigation in Birmingham. It will also look at the new Ofsted framework & GCSE criteria. All are welcome & details will be on the NASACRE webpage. I will be attending so will circulate information afterwards.

Inter Faith Week

This year Inter faith week is from 16-22 November. Michael Metcalf, NASACRE's lead representative on the Council of the Inter Faith Network (UK) writes:

Inter Faith Week has become an established feature of the calendar of nationwide events, and has steadily increased in its scope and significance, and in its capacity to involve a wide range of people and groups, since its beginning in 2009. This year, the Week will be launched at a high profile meeting in London on 13th November, at which NASACRE will have a presence.

SACREs are recommended to study the recent IFN Report, 'Inter Faith Week: Celebrating 2013 and planning for 2014'. This Report gives emphasis to the value of involving young people in Inter Faith Week, and highlights a concern to promote more inter-generational activities. In collaboration with local Inter Faith groups, SACREs are well placed to respond to these themes, especially perhaps those SACREs that are able to sponsor youth SACREs/forums/councils. The Report also gives a useful list of tips and ideas for IF Week.

Possibly relevant to the emphasis on young people, the Report notes the increased use of Twitter in Inter Faith Week 2013, tweeting as @IFWeek, and encourages the use of the hashtag #IFWeek. It would be useful to learn how far SACREs are engaging with social media such as Twitter, in general as well as in relation to Inter Faith Week.

DfE Teacher Standards 2013: an RE exemplification

The Professional Development Committee of the RE Council, and NATRE, have jointly published an RE exemplification of the 2013 DfE Teacher standards. This is a support tool to help individual teachers interpret the DfE standards, and could be used for self-audit or in the context of professional development. The exemplification material illustrates the particular RE applications of the general standards, and also refers to further helpful sources of information such as the RE Council's Code of Conduct and Practice for Teachers of RE, as well as the RE Quality Mark awards criteria. Though not a statement of a statutory requirement, the exemplification is something teachers can use as they wish to support their own development.

The 2015 [Accord Inclusive Schools Award](http://accordcoalition.org.uk/inclusivity-award-2015/) has asked individual SACRE's to recommend any school in your area that you think has done the most in the last year to promote inclusion, cohesion, and the growth of mutual understanding, particularly on the grounds of religion and belief to apply for the Award. The annual Award - now in its sixth year - is open to all schools and is given to those that do most to advance these aims within their particular circumstances. The Award has been highlighted by Ofsted as a way for schools to complement their duties under the Equality Act - to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and tackle discrimination. Previous Award judges have included the former Secretary of State for Education, Lord Baker; the then Shadow Minister for Children, Lisa Nandy MP; Bishop of Buckingham, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson, and journalist Polly Toynbee. The 2015 Award will be judged by another respected and experienced panel of experts from political, professional and religious backgrounds. Winners will be announced in local and national press. For more information on the Award please visit Accord's website at <http://accordcoalition.org.uk/inclusivity-award-2015/>. The deadline for entries is Sunday December 8th, and prizes will be awarded in the New Year. Please contact Accord's National Coordinator, Paul Pettinger, at paul@accordcoalition.org.uk or on 020 7324 3071 with any queries. Manorside Primary school in Barnet has won this award.

Face to Faith – free offer to NATRE local groups

Jo Malone, Face to Faith Manager explains: Face to Faith connects students worldwide so that they are able to learn directly with their global peers. The programme features a series of academically robust lesson activities (evaluated by Warwick university), a secure website and a range of facilitated videoconference opportunities where students are able to discuss global issues from a variety of faith and belief perspectives.

Through Face to Faith, students develop and practice the dialogue skills required to prevent conflict by breaking down religious and cultural prejudices. Through direct exposure to those of different faiths, beliefs and cultures, students are given opportunities to make the unfamiliar familiar & develop their understanding of their place in the world. Members of the UK Face to Faith team are happy to come and speak about the programme and how your schools can get involved at local NATRE meetings in London and the South East, the North West and Yorkshire and the South West. There is no charge for the programme for UK schools and no charge for us to present at your meetings.

More information is available: <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org>

The Global Learning Programme

The Global Learning Programme aims to help young people to understand their role in a globally independent world and explore the issues of justice & sustainability. You can find RE resources related to global learning for KS2 and KS3, produced by NATRE for GLP on the link below:

<http://globaldimension.org.uk/glp/page/10716>

Spirited Arts 2014

There were five categories in this year's Art in Heaven competition, all attracting very large numbers of entries with over 20,000 children and young people taking part. The winning entries can be viewed on the NATRE website: www.natre.org.uk Twitter: @NATREupdate Facebook: NATRE

NATRE National Conference

There is to be an RE conference 'Strictly RE' to be held on Saturday 31st January 2015 at the Grand Connaught Rooms, London. More information can be obtained on courses@retoday.org.uk

Report on the Humanism in RE conference 2014

The British Humanism Association hosted a conference in July 2014 to consider how Humanism & other non-religious world views might be taught in RE. Maxine Beech who had developed resources on her Farmington fellowship agreed for her materials to be shared & the link is https://humanism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Humanism-Resources_Maxine-Beech_BHA-RE-Conference.zip

The next meeting for all primary RE coordinators will take place on Tuesday 18th November 2014.

There will be an opportunity to discuss any of these items at our next SACRE meeting on the 18th November

All good wishes

Anna Sallnow