
“No Single Story”



A slide from a Power Point of a keynote talk at the Bristol Annual RE Conference January 2021

Ed Pawson. Adviser to Exeter SACRE

Bristol SACRE Annual Report
2020-2021

Bristol SACRE's Annual Report 2020-21

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	Welcome from the Chair Overview – SACRE Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference
2	Religious Education	Locally Agreed Syllabus Monitoring Learn Teach Lead RE (LTLRE) Hub Annual Conferences Communication School Support
3	Collective Worship	Policy and guidance Monitoring and support Determinations
4	Links with other organisations	NASACRE LTLRE Church of England Diocese Other local involvement University of Bristol
5	SACRE arrangements	Organisation Membership

1. Introduction

1.1 Words from the Chair

There is no denying that, once again, the pandemic has had a major impact on the lives and work of everyone involved with education. We have continued to face extreme challenges, the impact of which on our schools remains evident. Thanks must go to our school leaders, all staff, and parents for working tirelessly under rapidly evolving COVID restrictions to deliver and support quality education both face-to-face and online. This gratitude extends to SACRE members, who have given their time generously to support the work that we do. I greatly appreciate all of your undertakings to further our initiatives and realise our aims.

In May 2021, NASCARE produced a report on the funding received by SACREs. This highlighted tremendous disparities, with some Local Authorities providing as little as £105 to their SACRE. In Bristol, this is thankfully not the case, for we receive £10,000 under our current Service Level Agreement. However, this figure has been static for a number of years and remains below the national SACRE mean of £11,000. We know that our SACRE provides excellent support and value for money to our Local Authority. The lack of increase over the years to keep pace with inflation alongside sharply rising costs now mean that a review is necessary if we are to not only maintain what we offer, but also innovate to ensure that the RE knowledge and understanding our children receive is not only strong but also can be applied holistically within and outside of school.

As part of our innovations, therefore, this year we commenced our five-year Agreed Syllabus Review. A survey was sent to schools and a working party was established to take forward the results to develop our next Agreed Syllabus. After consultation and discussion, it was decided to continue for the moment with our existing Agreed Syllabus for several reasons. Firstly, our teaching community is over-worked and exhausted from the impact of Covid, both professionally and personally, such that it would be unreasonable to ask them to adapt to an entirely new curriculum at this time. Secondly, the Templeton World Charity Foundation has commissioned the Religious Education Council and RE Today Services to develop a toolkit of materials for syllabus design to meet the new demands for a Worldview approach; these guidance materials will not be finalised until 2024. As there is a groundswell in Bristol SACRE to move towards a Worldview approach, it would be prudent for us to wait for this toolkit work to be completed. We can then align our curriculum more effectively with developments in Bristol's One Bristol Curriculum, the Impact Report on which was published in early 2021.

Despite the Covid-related turmoil of the past year, our SACRE continued to offer direct support to Bristol's schools, via easy-to-access materials to support RE, excellent CPD in the form of two conferences, and collegial local RE Hub meetings led by Higher Learning Practitioners across the Local Authority. In addition, SACRE

provided refreshed guidance to our primary and secondary schools on offering inspiring Collective Worship (Assemblies) during Covid. We also created additional guidance too on overcoming participation barriers. These can all be found on our Bristol SACRE Website: <https://bristolsacre.org.uk/site/>

Improving faith representation on our SACRE has been a long-term focus of mine, and I am pleased that we received Bristol City Council approval in 2021 to amend our Constitution to better realise this. Most significantly, we have now increased our Group A membership, thus allowing our Humanist representative to have full voting rights and augmenting both the number of faiths fully represented in our SACRE as well as diversity within faith groups other than Christianity (which is already addressed by the existing group representation). Bristol's faith diversity is part of what makes this such an interesting and vibrant city to live in, and I would like to continue to improve representation of our faith communities on our SACRE and in our local RE syllabus. A working knowledge of faiths and non-faiths is fundamental to living harmoniously with one another, since through knowledge we can establish mutual understanding and respect.

I look forward to the return of normality in our schools and to continuing to deliver quality Religious Education to our children and young people.

Tamar Hodos Lucas

Dr Tamar Hodos Lucas

Chair of Bristol SACRE

March 2022



1.2 Overview – SACRE

A Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) is legally constituted by a Local Authority with the responsibility for overseeing Religious Education and Collective Worship in community, VC (RE only not CW), foundation schools without a religious character and trust schools.

Academies, Free schools & VA schools lie outside the SACRE remit, but a good SACRE will try to establish links with any of these schools in its area.

SACRE has met three times in the last academic year. Two meetings were held online using video conferencing and one was held at Clifton College Synagogue. All meetings were quorate and well attended, participation was good, despite the limitations of video conferencing.

In meetings the following aspects were discussed:

- Agreed Syllabus review and funding, suggested RE resources
- SACRE constitution and membership
- Covid 19 impact and support for schools
- OFSTED research review
- RE conferences
- SACRE conferences
- Guidance about leading Collective Worship during Covid
- The work of the three working groups (Diversity Equalities and Inclusion, Long Term Agreed Syllabus and KS4 non examined)
- Support for individual schools
- Religion and Worldviews (and its potential impact on teaching of RE)

1.3 Overview – Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC)

Bristol SACRE began to collaborate with the team of SACREs mainly in the South West that share the Awareness Mystery Value Agreed Syllabus in 2011 and offered some extra support materials in 2016. This syllabus and guidance materials can be found here: <https://www.awarenessmysteryvalue.org/> In this reporting period we have been reviewing our agreed syllabus. As 2011 was some time ago, some felt a new agreed syllabus was overdue, however other schools were appreciative of the syllabus and the materials available. A questionnaire was sent to schools to ascertain their evaluations of the current Agreed Syllabus for RE and their needs. An agreed syllabus working party met and debated whether to keep the current agreed syllabus or to consider an alternative syllabus.

In discussions, some concerns were raised at the timing of a change of syllabus, given the context of the Covid pandemic and the work of the RE Council in the

CORE report indicating a seismic change for RE in the pipeline as it becomes “Religion and Worldviews”. The writing of the new guidance for Agreed Syllabus Conferences, commissioned by the Religious Education Council, will not be finalised until 2024.

A decision to engage with a refreshing of the existing syllabus was then agreed through a formal vote by the Agreed Syllabus Conference on 10 March 2021.

This process is now underway and the refreshed materials and guidance to support the Agreed Syllabus will be shared with schools in spring and summer terms 2022 with appropriate online CPD.

2. Religious Education

2.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

The locally agreed syllabus in schools is Awareness Mystery Value. This is shared by Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and the London Borough of Haringey. This is utilised by many schools across the authority, including academies. During the last year some Bristol RE teachers have contributed new schemes of work to the website, further swelling the bank of materials available. A significant number of primary schools and secondary schools use other resources as well (such as “Discovery RE” or elements of the South Glos. Agreed Syllabus). A number of Church of England Schools (VC and VA) also use the “Understanding Christianity” resource, which is recommended by their Diocese.

2.2 Monitoring

Covid has posed a considerable challenge to SACRE’s usual monitoring processes. Exam data for the last academic year is unavailable due to the changes to assessment processes during the pandemic, as a result of which there are no validated results for either GCSE and/or A Levels. We expect national data to be published in 2022 and therefore will be able to share this next year.

SACRE members and the SACRE Adviser have been unable to visit schools in this period due to Covid regulations. We have also been mindful of the extreme pressures and difficulties faced by schools at this time. Therefore, support was offered to schools through the Adviser writing and sharing guidance on home learning activities for RE and CW available via the Local Authority portal, Right Choice. There is evidence from feedback we have received from schools that the guidance and activities were useful and accessed appropriately.

2.3 LTLRE (Learn Teach Lead RE) Hub in Bristol

RE Hub leaders get access to high quality training and facilitate three hubs per year aimed at both Primary and Secondary teachers, and teaching assistants.

Lead Teachers have received training on worldviews; the OFSTED research review; and strategies to be a strong subject leader.

The Bristol LTLRE Hub is very strong and well led. Sarah Bateau from Elmlea Junior School was the Primary Schools Lead, and the Secondary Schools Lead was shared by Merryn Evans (Redland Green), Claire Anderton (Colston Girls/ Montpellier High School), and Hannah Fox (St Bernadette's RE Secondary School, Whitchurch).

All meetings took place online and were very well attended (between 15-32 attendees, which is many more than used to attend when we met in person). Feedback has been incredibly positive and there is a real sense of a shared RE community in this group, as well as innovative, exciting ideas shared.

2.4 Conferences

Our Regional RE conference was held online in January 2021 and the theme was 'No single story'. 36 teachers from Bristol attended this conference. The focus was on ensuring teachers share diverse representations of belief and practice within and across religions and worldviews. Ed Pawson and Katie Freeman presented key notes on Primary Schools' worldviews curriculum and the use of story to create inclusive RE. Workshops for all key stages provided practical ideas on worldviews in the classroom; sessions on Hindu Dharma and Islam were also presented. Feedback on the conference was very positive (see below), and teachers expressed enthusiasm to take the ideas and suggestions back their classrooms.

Some feedback from teachers attending:

'Lovely ideas - that can be also used and adapted for many different areas of the curriculum - thank you'

'Thank you, this was really interesting and helpful as a new RE lead'

'Thank you so much. I have lots of ideas now and I am eager to share them across my school'

'Lovely to see such a focus on practical and creative ideas - love the forest school ones! Thank you!'

The LTLRE conference was a blended conference held at Engineers' House in June 2021, with 20 delegates attending in person and 46 online. There were 10 delegates from Bristol Schools, in person and 24 online. The title 'This is my truth tell me yours' included presentations from keynote speakers Ruth Flanagan and Richard Kueh, and presented current thinking around worldviews and diversity in RE. Teachers took part in a variety of workshops including interpreting stories,

disagreeing well in the classroom, reflective stories, and the animation resource 'Nobody Stands Nowhere'. Those able to attend in person were grateful for the opportunity to meet with colleagues in the same space, and those online were appreciative of the chance to receive presentations and workshops despite being unable to attend the event physically.

Some feedback on the event:

'I appreciated being able to attend this conference online. I felt just as much a part of the conference as if I had been there in person... I got so much from it and I can't wait to start implementing the great ideas I picked up from this day'

'I was very impressed with how the conference was able to provide this blended option – a definite blueprint for the future if available for people who would wish to attend but can't in person. Intermittent use of break out rooms used effectively, in similar way you would provide opportunities for discussion face to face. Interesting and engaging speakers. Any technical issues that occurred were dealt with promptly – great team! I also really enjoyed balance of contributors / workshops I chose. Encouragement and time to reflect pedagogy / own practise / own ideas - in morningpractical ideas for classroom in the afternoon'

2.5 Communication

Termly newsletters have continued, with all schools receiving a SACRE newsletter three times per year. The newsletter contains contact details for various communities and resources, as well as ideas for the classroom and information on upcoming events and CPD.

2.6 School support

During Covid times and ongoing, all schools have been offered the opportunity of 1:1 support from the Adviser. 9 schools have accessed a 1.5 hour Adviser-led session supporting them with the development of RE and/or collective worship, These have mainly been happening using video conferencing during this reporting period.

At the beginning of the academic year, in September, and repeated in December, new RE subject leaders were signposted to training about how to be an effective subject leader that was jointly led by the SACRE Adviser. 14 teachers from Bristol schools attended this training.

The SACRE Adviser offered online training for Primary ECT (Early Career's teachers) about RE, Collective Worship, SMSC (Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural aspects of learning), and British Values on the 30 March 2021. 9 delegates attended this training session.

3. Collective worship

3.1 Policies and guidance

SACRE has not reviewed its CW or SMSC policy or guidance during this period. Additional guidance was created during this year for both primary and secondary schools to help teachers and those leading Collective Worship / Assemblies with support and resources during the lockdown periods and on returning to school under Covid guidelines.

3.2 Monitoring and support

During this reporting period it has only been appropriate for SACRE to provide guidance and support, and not monitoring and scrutiny, of Collective Worship. Schools have shared their appreciation for the support offered.

3.3 Determinations

During this reporting period there were no determinations applied for.

4. Links with other organisations

4.1 NASACRE

Bristol SACRE continues to maintain its membership to the National Association of SACREs. This provides access to important updates on national issues and the use of recommended templates for policies and guidance documents. SACRE members were invited to attend the NASACRE AGM on 24 May 2021. The theme of the event was 'Authority in RE', with keynote speakers Denise Cush and Richard Kueh presenting on 'sources of authority in RE' and 'RE and OFSTED'. A variety of workshops were available on subjects such as bringing faith communities into the classroom, lesson plans for the Big Ideas project, and what makes a text sacred. Four members attended this conference.

4.2 LTLRE

As outlined above, Bristol SACRE continues to have significant commitment and practical involvement with the Learn, Teach, Lead RE programme. The Adviser to SACRE assists in the planning and running of meetings and communicates with hub members regularly with RE updates and information via email. She is also chairs the steering committee for the project, and works very closely with Ed Pawson, the project manager, and manages the finances for this project.

4.3. Diocese

SACRE maintains strong working relationships with the Church of England (Bristol diocese). Through contractual agreements, the Adviser to SACRE is also a schools adviser for Bristol Diocese and a large amount of goodwill and RE development takes place in Bristol through this relationship.

4.4 Other local involvement

Governor training – SACRE offers governor training on RE, Assemblies, and SMSC on an annual basis. The focus this year was on RE, CW, SMSC, British Values, and PSHE(RSHE) and its contribution to the “Personal Development” strand of the Ofsted framework.

Regional SACRE conference – this was held online this year due to Covid restrictions. Three delegates from Bristol SACRE joined in discussions around how SACREs were coping and continuing to work during the pandemic, listened to a presentation from Farid Panjwani on ‘decolonising the curriculum’ and also a presentation from Richard Kueh, HMI, on how SACREs can learn from the summer OFSTED and reports on RE from OFSTED.

4.5 SACRE Involvement with Civic Developments within the City

During 2020-21, our Chair participated in regular Zoom meetings organised by the Rt Rvd Viv Faull, Bishop of Bristol, to connect Bristol faith leaders with Bristol City Council colleagues involved in Covid support programmes across the city. She represented Bristol schools at these meetings to connect local faith group support activities with school undertakings.

4.6 Relationship with the University of Bristol

We are incredibly fortunate to have a Chair of SACRE who is also a member of the University’s Free Speech Academic Advisory Group, and Faculty EDI Committee. Her expertise in terms of leading on issues to do with diversity and inclusion are invaluable.

Teresa Griffiths, who leads the RE PGCE course at the University of Bristol, also sits on SACRE and is on the steering group for the LTLRE programme in the area. This means that from the beginning of Secondary RE teacher training in the city, there are pathways of support and access to an active RE learning community.

5. SACRE arrangements

5.1 Organisation

Chair: Tamar Hodos Lucas

Vice-Chair: Duncan Struthers

Clerk: Steve Gregory steve.gregory@bristol.gov.uk

Local Authority link officer: Jenny Brookes

Adviser: Katy Staples katy.staples@bristoldiocese.org

5.2 Membership

As reported in the introduction, all meetings in this period were quorate.

In the March 2021 meeting, the constitution was revised and Matt Evans was welcomed formally onto the SACRE as a member of Group A, (with full voting rights) as a humanist representative. The SACRE recognised this change (having previously been a non-voting co-opted member) as the beginning of an inclusive outlook for the constitution.

At the same meeting Dh. Advayamati (Triratna Buddhist), Clive Lawton (Co-opted Orthodox Jewish) and Simon Parminter (Teaching) were welcomed as new members within Groups A (Advayamati and Lawton) and Group C (Parminter).

At this meeting, we also said a fond farewell to Councillors Liz Radford and Carole Johnson. Cllr Ruth Pickersgill stood down as a Councillor but agreed to serve on SACRE in Group E, Co-opted members, as a Community Representative, providing particular expertise on equality, diversity and inclusion.

In the June meeting, we welcomed new Councillors Sharon Scott and Christine Townsend; new Councillor Amal Ali was confirmed shortly after the meeting. We also said a fond farewell to Vicky Wiltshire, who has served on Bristol SACRE for 12 years in Group C and has acted as an RE Hub leader and led workshops at conferences.

Further recruitment for representation is needed on Group A, as there are several faith communities locally that would benefit from more diversity of representation on SACRE.

At the June meeting, which was held at the Clifton College Synagogue, we were also joined by 7 RE Secondary PGCE students from University of Bristol who observed the meeting to understand the importance of SACREs for RE teaching.

SACRE Members September 2020-July 2021

Group A: Christian and other religious denominations

Tamar Hodos Lucas (Chair)
Progressive Jewish
Matthew Evans (June meeting)
Humanist
Daniel Leiblich
Roman Catholic
Mohammad-Nassir Miah
Muslim
Rachel Noyce
Independent Church
Dh Advayamati
Buddhist
Reissa Beth Perring
Bahai
Clive Lawton (June meeting)
Orthodox Jewish

Group B – Church of England

Duncan Struthers
Jill Dickinson
Fiona Dorman

Group C – teachers nominated by Bristol TCC

Simon Parminter
Vicky Wiltshire

Group D – Local Authority representatives

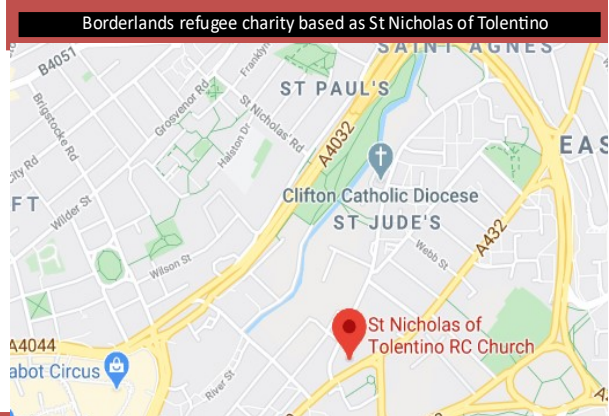
Cllr Ruth Pickersgill (Oct; Mar)
Cllr Liz Radford (Oct; Mar)
Cllr Carole Johnson (Oct; Mar)
Cllr Sharon Scott (June)
Cllr Christine Townsend (June)
Cllr Amal Ali (post-June)

Group E – non voting co-opted

Ruth Pickersgill (June)
Community
Matt Evans (Oct; Mar)
Humanist
Teresa Griffiths
University of Bristol
Clive Lawton (Oct; Mar)
Orthodox Jewish

Answer the question:

‘Bristol has a duty to look after refugees’
Discuss



A key question posed in a scheme of work about the work of St Nicholas Tolentino RC Church in supporting Refugees in its “Borderlands” project. This was written by teachers at Redland Green Secondary School and can be found on the Bristol SACRE website <https://bristolsacre.org.uk/site/faith-in-action-st-nicholas-of-tolentino-ks3/>