

ISLINGTON SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



1. CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Religious Education encompasses not only religious literacy and the knowledge of the values and insights of religious and non-religious world views, but also the endorsement of diversity and the encouragement of tolerance, respect and mutual understanding within our neighbourhood, our nation and the wider world. Since it is the only strand of the National Curriculum which can be moulded by local circumstances and perspectives a SACRE is in a unique position to take account of local needs and circumstances. In so doing Islington SACRE seeks to provide the encouragement, support and steer local schools as they seek to provide teaching of the highest quality.

After the successful launch in September 2017 of a new RE Curriculum for Community Schools in the Borough, Islington SACRE's task has been, with the support of RE Today consultant Kate Christopher, to roll-out the new syllabus for the teaching of RE in all Key stages and to provide support and training to RE teaching. In this, we have sought to provide a framework for the teaching of Religious Education based on current thinking on religious education, but attentive to local circumstances and the needs of Islington schools. Continuing the implementation of the syllabus and scheme of works, along with developing the syllabus to take account of local knowledge and circumstances will be SACRE's first and most important on-going task. Work with local schools and faith communities will be the key to this, so that the continuing renewal and broadening of the membership of Islington SACRE remains an important task for the committee. It's to be hoped that other groups not currently represented can be encouraged to provide representatives to ensure that all voices are heard and every perspective included.

Summary of strategic plan arising from this report is given on page 5- section 8.

2. ADVICE TO STATUTORY BODIES

a) Local Authority

The major advice offered to the LA by SACRE in the year 2017-18 has been that the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education initialled in September 2017. This is a statutory requirement of SACRE. The requirement has been discussed in SACRE meetings, and SACRE have made efforts to alert the Local Authority to the need to be involved in SACRE's decision regarding the Syllabus.

SACRE are pleased to state that councillor Michelline Ngongo has pledged their attendance at SACRE's AGM, thus providing the quoracy required to approve updates to the Agreed Syllabus. We are grateful for her support.

b) Schools

Through the Syllabus Launch on September 2017, SACRE has advised schools of the need to consider updating the Agreed Syllabus and has sought to engage Secondary and Primary school leaders and teachers in further developing the Scheme of work to provide a range of relevant useful alternatives, relevant to the local context. Teachers are strongly in favour of adopting RE Today's Model Agreed Syllabus as Islington's Agreed Syllabus, as many SACREs across the country are doing. This is seen as the most supportive option for teachers across Islington. Objections were raised and explored, but did not override desire for a practical, assessment-driven syllabus.

3. STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF PROVISION OF RE

a) Public examinations

It seems that SACRE should not publish public examination results, as was noted in the 2013-14 Annual Report. Examination results were last published in 2012-13's Annual Report.

Table 1: Islington's 2016 and 2017 RS GCSE data:

2016 RS GCSE	Islington Yr 11 inc special schools	2017 RS GCSE	Islington Yr 11 inc special schools
A*	53	A*	60
A	148	A	119
B	272	B	186
C	201	C	187
D	137	D	109
E	55	E	62
F	29	F	50
G	12	G	22
U	12	U	12
X	0	X	3
No of entries	919	No of entries	810
No of C and above	674	No of C and above	552
% on roll entered for GCSE RS	53.6	% on roll entered for GCSE RS	58.7
% of entries achieved C and above	73.3	% of entries achieved C and above	68.1

The 2016 data above shows that only 53.6% of all pupils on roll are entered for GCSE RS. In 2017 this figure was 58.7. The 2012 Agreed Syllabus does not contain specific work for KS4. This could suggest that a significant proportion of KS4 pupils are not receiving any RE at all, in breach of the law, or there could be other reasons. This is the sort of analysis SACRE could pursue with data relating to specific schools.

Public examination data at KS5 (A' Level) can also provide useful trends in individual colleges and schools.

b) Attainment in RE not covered by public examinations

SACRE does not have straightforward access to monitoring and reporting of RE at KS1, 2 or 3 apart from through teachers. All schools are currently engaged in developing monitoring and assessment systems to replace levels. Government guidance has been for schools to develop their own schemes and there is a great deal of uncertainty and replication of work. SACRE could support schools in formulating an assessment scheme for Religious Education at all age groups. The Model Agreed Syllabus offers a reliable method of assessing RE which could be tweaked by individual schools, with SACRE's support. Such an initiative could also provide a useful mechanism for SACRE to gain insight into quality of provision in schools.

c) Quality of RE provision in schools

In previous years Islington SACRE has supported initiatives to strengthen local RE; a youth SACRE ('RE Champions'), a joint conference with Camden to address RE's contribution to community cohesion, a Primary and Secondary RE network and a day conference for teachers and pupils. Links with Islington Faith Forum have also been forged. Sustaining these initiatives and connections is currently taking a back seat to decisions regarding a new syllabus, but their continuance should be part of SACRE's strategic plan.

In the process of deliberating on a new syllabus, SACRE members have articulated further ideas and suggestions to strengthen the proposed curriculum. These developments would be a valuable addition in the form of appendices to the Syllabus. The appendices could be introduced to teachers through RE sessions at

the teachers' networks. This would offer a local flavour to the Syllabus, ensure SACRE members' expertise is of direct benefit to teachers and offer an opportunity for teachers and SACRE to connect. Again, this could become part of SACRE's strategic plan to support and strengthen the local RE curriculum.

In addition SACRE could consider putting on another joint conference with Camden and Westminster SACREs. This would be a way for SACRE members to offer their skills and knowledge outside of SACRE business meetings. SACRE members could contribute to a discussion of what constitutes collective worship in a plural city in the 21st Century. This could then be produced as a guidance document for schools and made available on the Islington SACRE website.

4. Agreed Syllabus

a) Review

The Agreed Syllabus, launched in September 2017, with the involvement of Islington RE teachers.

5. Collective Worship

a) Compliance with Statutory Requirements

Collective worship is a statutory requirement of all maintained schools, and of Free Schools and Academies according to their funding agreements. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher (maintained schools and Academies) or the governors (voluntary aided schools). It should happen once a day, outside curriculum time, and be 'broadly Christian' unless the school has an alternative religious designation. It is not the same as assemblies, and could take place in one class or year group only. Parents have the right of withdrawal. 'Collective worship' should be educational and inclusive, as opposed to 'corporate worship', which is active religious worship by members of the same faith. For this reason all children should attend collective worship unless withdrawn.

This reflects the most recent legislation regarding collective worship; DfE circular 1/94. However in 2012 the DfE gave schools the choice as to follow circular 1/94 or not. There is much confusion regarding this subject.

b) Quality of Collective Worship and Reflection

SACRE has a responsibility to monitor and support collective worship. SACRE could examine any inspection reports for mention of collective worship (as well as Religious Education) and offer guidance to Heads and school leaders. No school has yet approached SACRE for support in this area. However, materials now available on the Islington SACRE website have been made available to support discussions by school teachers and leaders in providing relevant, bespoke Collective Worship and Reflection for their context.

c) Determinations

SACRE also carries the responsibility of granting determinations, where a school requests that collective worship of a broadly Christian character is inappropriate for their students and teachers. There have been no requests for a change of determination.

d) Complaints about Collective Worship

There have been no complaints regarding collective worship.

6. Management of SACRE

a) Attendance at SACRE by Committee

Committee A: Christian other than the Church of England/other Faiths and Beliefs

Committee B: Church of England

Committee C: Teacher and Headteacher association, others representing education interests

Committee D: Local Authority councillors

SACRE was inquorate for every meeting in 2013-14, according to that year's Annual Report. No member from Committee D attended any meeting, and attendance by members of Committee C was also of concern. In the year 2015-16, one meeting was inquorate, but members of Committee D attended all three meetings. In the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 two meetings were inquorate due to non-attendance of Committee D members. The issue of inquoracy seems to centre around the attendance of Committee members C and D. After conversations the clerk and adviser have come to understand that Councillors need more advance notice, which SACRE will undertake to provide. SACRE are grateful for the Borough's support of their work. Further recruitment of Committee A and C would helpfully broaden the representative base of SACRE. Although the Annual Report of 2015-16 noted that Committees B also seemed to be a problem, this is not at the moment the case.

b) Membership and Training

SACRE have not received any formal training this year, although faith members have made valuable contributions to discussions surrounding the new syllabus. It is to be hoped this interest could lead to SACRE members directly contributing to teaching and learning, supported by the adviser to SACRE, through appendices to the Agreed Syllabus.

As noted, a SACRE conference could be a forum to both utilise SACRE members' expertise and offer further development in their understanding of the role of SACRE.

7. Contribution of SACRE to the wider Local Authority Agenda

a) Contribution of SACRE to LA agenda

One of Islington's major priorities is tackling inequality through housing, opportunities and employment. For young people with a tough start in life educational qualifications are one mechanism by which they can improve their prospects. In this sense every subject of the curriculum can contribute to tackling inequality. RE is unique in that it is outside government control and thus could provide a forward-thinking curriculum aimed at equipping young people with the knowledge and skills needed for the 21st Century. There is interest of a curriculum along these lines in SACRE. This could be developed in conjunction with further additions to the Agreed Syllabus.

It has long been shown by antiracist studies in education that schools themselves tend to reproduce societal inequalities, such as along class, ethnicity and gender lines. This is a wider issue than one subject of the curriculum and concerns teacher education. However, bringing teachers together to consider how schools can be fairer and more equal in their outcomes could be part of SACRE's work in supporting the Borough's attempts to fight inequality.

b) Contribution of SACRE to equality duty

Attached is the Islington census data by religion from 2011, showing a striking diversity. Although learning about other groups does not automatically ameliorate social alienation or tensions, a chance to find out about others is a key part of improved social relations. Therefore, a contribution SACRE could make to exploring diversity in Islington could be through an RE curriculum reflecting this diversity. As mentioned, a scheme of work on the Alevi community of Islington already exists. A Jain member has offered to contribute to the Syllabus. Examples such as these show how the RE curriculum could give pupils the opportunity to find out about other groups in the borough and offer a safe space to talk, ask questions and listen. Initiatives such as a youth SACRE and interfaith work could also contribute to a wider equality agenda by offering opportunities for dialogue and friendship, in conjunction with learning about the structural and political causes of social exclusion.

c) Support of schools

SACRE’s major contribution to schools will be through the provision of an Agreed Syllabus every 5 years. SACRE can ensure this is as up to date and supportive as possible, allowing teachers to deliver high quality RE and contribute to students’ critical faculties and general education. SACRE can also support teachers through the network or conferences and pupil days in delivering high quality RE.

8. Summary and Suggestions for Strategic Plan

NB: the existence of a strategic plan is noted in 2014-15 and 2015-16’s Annual Reports. These would form a helpful basis for future planning and can be appended to this Report.

- To continue to expand and develop the Agreed Syllabus, in concert with schools, faith communities and others some of the diversity of Islington.
- Improve the dialogue between and among SACRE and Islington RE teachers through the networks
- Use examination and other school data to monitor trends and identify areas of need or concern
- To disseminate information on collective worship and reflection which will be of value to teachers and school leaders, and to support schools in seeking best practice for collective worship and reflection
- To evaluate the performance of SACRE and continue to seek to renew the membership of each section of the committee.
- To encourage schools to gain RE Quality Mark status
- To develop a youth SACRE across the borough
- To consider how far RE in Islington can support a wider equality and diversity agenda.

9. Membership of SACRE, including LA officers, clerk, chair and adviser

Category A

Name	Judith Fox
Faith/Organisation	Board of Deputies of British Jews

Name	Mohamed Mahmoud
Faith/Organisation	Muslim Welfare House Trust

Name	Merium Bhuiyam
Faith/Organisation	Muslim Educational Trust

Name	Teddy Prout
Faith/Organisation	British Humanist Association

Name	Rosalind Miller
Faith/Organisation	Sikh

Name	Vinay K Shah
Faith/Organisation	Jain

Name	Frank Tettsu Woods
Faith/Organisation	Harrow Zazenkai-White Wind Zen Community

Name	Conor McGinn
Faith/Organisation	Roman Catholic Church

Name	Tim Bradshaw
Faith/Organisation	Free Church Federal Council

Category B

Name	Fr David Allen, Chair
Faith/Organisation	Church of England

Name	April Keech
Faith/Organisation	St. Mary Magdalene Academy – Church of England
Address	Lough Road, London N7 5RR
E mail	april.keech@smmacademy.org

Name	Mary Thorne
Faith/Organisation	London Diocesan Board for Schools
Address	LDBS,36 Causton Street, London, SW1P 4AU
E mail	Mary.thorne@london.anglican.org

Name	Revd Dave Tomlinson
Faith/Organisation	Church of England

Category C

Name	Sophie Morgan
Faith/Organisation	Secondary RE Lead
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Name	Ian Benson
Faith/Organisation	Head of RE Special Schools
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Name	Damien Parrott
Faith/Organisation	Primary Head's
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Name	Ann Dwulit
Faith/Organisation	Primary Head's
Address	Federation of St Luke's CoE and Moreland Primary Schools
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Category D

Name	Cllr Joe Caluori
Faith/Organisation	Islington Council Majority Party (Labour)
Address	Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD
E mail	joe.caluori@islington.gov.uk

Name	Cllr Michelline Ngongo
Faith/Organisation	Islington Council Majority Party (Labour)
Address	Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD
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Category D Reserves

Name	Cllr Asima Shaikh
Faith/Organisation	Islington Council Majority Party (Labour)
Address	Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD
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Type	No. filled	No. of Vacancies
Committee A		
Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster	1	0
Methodist	1	0
Salvation Army	0	1
United Reform Church	1	0
Baptist Union	0	1
Society of Friends	0	1
Greek Orthodox Church	0	1
Elim Pentecostal Church	0	1
Jewish	1	0
Muslim Community	2	1

Name	Cllr Raphael Andrews (retired May 2018)
Faith/Organisation	Islington Council Majority Party (Labour)
Address	Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD

Supporting officers:

Name	Anthony Doudle
Faith/Organisation	London Borough of Islington – School Improvement Team
Address	Municipal Building 222 Upper Street, London, N1 1XR
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Name	Kate Christopher
Faith/Organisation	National RE Today Adviser
Address	RE Today Services 5-6 Imperial Court, 12 Sovereign Road, Birmingham, B30 3FH
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Name	Victoria Osbourne
Faith/Organisation	London Borough of Islington – Clerk to SACRE
Address	Municipal Building 222 Upper Street, London, N1 1XR
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Jain	1	0
Buddhist	1	0
Islington Baha'i Community	0	1
Hindu	0	1
Sikh	1	0
Daoist	0	1
Humanist	1	0
Committee B		
Church of England	4	0
Committee C		
NUT	0	1
Association of School and College Leaders	1	0
NAHT	0	1
NASUWT	0	1
Head of RE Secondary Schools	1	0
Head of RE Special Schools	1	0
Head of RE Primary Schools	1	0
Committee D		
Islington Council	2	0
Representatives of Governor Organisations	0	1
Total	20	14