

LINCOLNSHIRE SACRE ANNUAL REPORT 2016 – 2017



Introduction from the Chair

During the course of the year SACRE, with a few small changes in membership, has continued to monitor and support the provision of Religious Education and collective worship in the Local Authority area. Members continue to depend heavily on the work and advice of the RE Adviser and are also grateful for the maintenance of good contact with the Diocesan Board of Education.

SACRE continues to receive from the Adviser not only details of her visits to schools, but also the invaluable briefings on Ofsted reports. Members have been assisted in discerning, despite the variations in reporting style and detail, where there has been good practice and where there is need for improvement, and consequently I have been able, at the Committee's behest, to send congratulatory letters to some schools, and also offers of support to those where Inspectors' reports have revealed a need for improvement.

Members are aware of the particular difficulty in small rural schools serving largely mono-cultural communities of preparing young people for life in a multi-ethnic and religiously diverse nation, and have been heartened by reports of specific efforts to overcome this problem. Thus, SACRE was delighted to receive a presentation by members of a rural school which had set up an active link with a city school in Leicester. On another occasion several members were pleased to attend a lively World Religions day which the pupils of one school presented for parents and other members of their local community. SACRE has sought to provide appropriate forms of support and training for teachers and, by setting up an Agreed Syllabus Committee, began the process of reviewing and updating the Local Agreed Syllabus, which we hope will continue to form a sound basis for teaching our young people about the values and beliefs held in the world they inhabit.

Neville W McFarlane
Chairman of Lincolnshire SACRE

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1: Background

The Education Reform Act (1988) established Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACRE). The main function of a SACRE is to advise the Local Authority (LA) on matters connected with RE and collective worship. SACREs also oversee the five-yearly revision of the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education (RE) and consider any complaints about the provision and delivery of RE and collective worship referred to it by the LA.

The membership of SACRE comprises four groups, together with nominated Advisers. The groups are:

Committee A: Christian denominations and other religions and religious denominations

Committee B: The Church of England

Committee C: Teachers' associations

Committee D: The Local Authority.

[See Appendix A for details of membership.]

2: Meetings and Membership

Lincolnshire SACRE met three times during 2016/17 – in November, March and July. The November meeting was inquorate as there were no representatives from Committee C. SACRE's constitution states that one representative member from each of the four representative groups needs to be present for the meeting to be quorate.

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

In accordance with the procedure for election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman detailed in the constitution of the SACRE, it was moved and seconded that Neville McFarlane be elected as Chairman and Chris Burke be elected as Vice-Chairman of SACRE for the ensuing year. Christopher Rose, Society of Friends, was appointed to Committee A.

In accordance with its Constitution SACRE carried out an annual review of its membership. It was noted that there was no headteacher representative on Committee C. It was requested that Mark Plater (who has regularly attended as an observer) should be appointed to the vacancy on Committee B.

During the March meeting SACRE was informed that the Lincolnshire Jewish community had not responded to a request to nominate a representative from that community to represent them on SACRE. It was also noted that no response had been received from the United Reformed Church.

During the summer meeting the Chairman welcomed Councillor Bob Adams from Lincolnshire County Council to his first meeting of SACRE. The Chairman stated that Christina Dring (Baptist Church) had resigned from SACRE due to moving to the north east of England and that the Clerk was in the process of seeking a replacement for her.

3: SACRE agenda items

3.1: Summary of OFSTED Inspections of Lincolnshire Schools with Reference to the Provision for Pupil's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

During 2016-17 inspection reports were analysed from 71 primary schools (including infant and junior), 14 secondary schools (including academies) and 1 special school. In the majority of cases judgements were positive. The most common areas for improvement were related to lack of understanding of different religions and ways of life.

Examples of positive comments from reports

'The curriculum teaches pupils effectively about the different cultures and religions in Britain and around the world, including different forms of Christianity. As a result, pupils become thoughtful, reflective and knowledgeable young people who are well prepared for life in modern Britain.'

'The excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development lies at the heart of the school...'

'Pupils explained how important it is to show respect to those who hold different religious beliefs to their own, or those who have no belief.'

'Regular visits to places of worship, such as a mosque in Grimsby and visitors, such as the local rabbi from the synagogue, enhance pupils' understanding of British culture in all its diversity.'

'Following an assembly on British values, one pupils wrote, "I am proud to be part of a tolerant community."'

Examples of areas for improvement

'Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum fosters pupils' understanding of diversity. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inadequate.'

'Although the school's attractive displays promote respect and good behaviour, too many pupils do not exhibit these values in their conduct towards others.'

'Although the school's population is culturally diverse and pupils get on well together, a less well-developed area of their learning is the extent to which pupils understand faiths and cultures that are different from their own....they are not as well prepared as they could be for life in modern Britain.'

Letters of Commendation sent by the Chairman to the following schools during the year:

Tydd St Mary Church of England Primary School
Skegness Seathorne Primary School
Deeping St James Primary School
Boston West Academy

Wyberton Primary Academy
Branston Community Academy
Kirkby-la-Thorpe CE primary School, Sleaford
Belmont Community Primary School, Grantham
The Lincoln St Peter at Gowts CE primary School, Lincoln
Hawthorn Tree School, Boston
William Hildyard CE Primary and Nursery School, Market Deeping
The Beacon Primary Academy, Skegness
St Faith's CE Infant School, Lincoln
Wainfleet Magdalen CE/Methodist School
Welbourn CE Primary School
Waddingham Primary School
Morton Trentside Primary School

In addition, a letter was sent by the Chairman to the Frances Olive Anderson CE (Aided) Primary School, Gainsborough, with a copy to the Chairman of governors, congratulating them on being awarded International School award by the Times Educational Supplement.

Letters were also sent from the Chairman offering support from the RE Adviser to some schools.

3.2: School visits made by LA RE Adviser

Schools identified for support through regular SMSC analysis (see above) were offered support for RE, SMSC and British values from the LA RE Adviser. (Church schools are supported for RE by the Diocesan RE Adviser.) During 2016-17 ten schools (seven primary, three secondary, one special) were visited. The following areas were addressed:

- pupils' understanding of British values – respect, tolerance, knowledge of different religions
- curriculum planning, clarification of what is being taught in order to ensure progression
- monitoring of standards
- review of RE curriculum (2 visits + staff meeting)
- provision at key stage 4
- assessment

3.3: RE/SACRE conference, Bishop Grosseteste University, 20th October 2016/ Lincoln City Faiths Walk

The Chairman stated that it had been hoped to hold an RE/SACRE Conference at Bishop Grossteste University on 20th October 2016 but due to lack of response this Conference had to be cancelled. In its absence it was agreed to have a 'walkabout' in Lincoln with a group of teachers. Visits were organised to the Bailgate Methodist Church, Lincoln Cathedral, Lincoln mosque and the Alive Church. SACRE welcomed the practical aspects of this idea and recognised the value of visiting different religious places of worship. Members appreciated that for some schools this was difficult due to their location and lack of religious diversity.

3.4: Review of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus

During the November SACRE meeting members received a report summarising the initial meeting of the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC) held on the 17th October 2016, set up to oversee the review of the Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus for RE. The Chairman reminded the meeting that it was the ASC that would make any key decisions. It was further explained that a teachers' working party had been set up and this would have a key role in preparing draft documents. The RE Adviser stated that it was necessary to review the current AS for a number of reasons:

- there was a statutory duty to do so
- the present document was no longer fit for purpose
- there had been significant changes in society reflected in the 2011 census
- there was an increase in the amount of RE taught by non-specialists
- it was considered that the current agreed syllabus (AS) was longer supporting teachers in the way that it should.

She stated that there was no change to the statutory requirement that Christianity remained compulsory throughout the RE curriculum. It was proposed that the new AS would also include the study of Islam and Hinduism as part of compulsory units. Alongside these were 'additional units', which would allow schools to teach other faiths such as Judaism or develop themes, such as a local study. In addition, there was nothing to prevent a school including aspects of Judaism, for example, in teaching of the compulsory units. The distinction was made between using Old Testament texts to support the teaching of Christianity and teaching about Judaism as a religion in its own right. Some members felt that there was some potential for confusion, particularly for very young children – it was suggested that only Christianity should be emphasised at this early stage. It was pointed out that in the previous syllabus there had been a requirement to teach two religions in depth at key stage 1.

During the summer meeting it was noted that the AS would be emailed to members at the beginning of the autumn term to allow them to comment. It would then be passed to the County Council for approval and then launched to schools. One hard copy would be provided for each school (including academies) and a copy of the syllabus would be put on the website. It was proposed to launch the syllabus during the spring term 2018 and introduced into schools from the autumn term 2018. Training would be provided by Wendy Harrison and Gillian Georgiou.

3.5: Updates from the LA RE Adviser, Wendy Harrison The Commission on RE (CORE)

SACRE received a report and presentation about this high profile, independent commission which has a remit to make recommendations designed to improve the quality and rigour of RE and its capacity to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The Commission proposes to bring out an interim report during 2017.

Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants' (AREIAC) Conference

SACRE received a verbal report and presentation in connection with national initiatives in RE discussed at the annual AREIAC conference. The main focus of the conference had been on assessment and progress. The key message from the conference had been "do less but in more depth". Dr Barbara Winterskill gave a presentation about the Big Ideas project, to be published later in the year.

3.6: Annual Conference in York on 16th May 2017

The Chairman stated that the SACRE had been invited to attend the annual NASCRE conference in York on the 16th May 2017. Andrew Hornsby expressed an interest in attending the conference. The SACRE received a report for Andrew Hornsby on his attendance at the Annual Conference in York on 16th May 2017

3.7: Lincolnshire SACRE Annual Report 2015-16

SACRE considered the draft Lincolnshire SACRE Annual Report 2015/16, together with a presentation, before it was sent to NASACRE. Members drew attention to the following points:

- There was an increase in the number of pupils taking the GCSE RE full course but a reduction in the number of pupils taking the GCSE RE short course.
- The results needed to be examined in more detail to explain why there appeared to be significant outcomes in terms of gender in some schools, e.g. it was suggested that actual numbers should be examined instead of percentages.
- The teaching of RE was a core subject in Church of England schools.
- There was concern that when a school offered a non-examination course on RE then the subject became "crowded out" by other subjects.
- Religious Studies often compared unfavourably with other subjects such as English in terms of time allocation.

3.8: SACRE Action Plan Progress Report

The Action plan continued to be discussed during meetings with a view to presenting a final version to SACRE during 2017-18.

4: Diocese news/events

4.1: The Statement of Entitlement for RE

This document sets out the expectations of the CofE in relation to RE. It outlines the way in which the Church understands the purpose of RE, the relationship between the teaching of Christianity and other faiths/non-religious belief systems, and the role expected of church school leaders in supporting high quality RE.

4.2: Understanding Christianity

This is a resource from the CofE Education Office and RE Today Services. Its key purpose is to support pupils in developing their understanding of Christianity. The resource is suitable for both church and non-church schools but sets the bar for the quality of teaching and learning about Christianity in

church schools. The Statement of Entitlement (see above) explicitly states that it expects pupils to progress in their knowledge and understanding of core religious concepts in RE, which is the approach taken to the teaching of Christianity in this resource.

4.3: REConnecting Lincolnshire: Culture, Creativity, Community

This initiative began as a community event in Swineshead as a response to a particular need at that time. From there a project was brought together to enrich understanding about Christianity and Islam, the two largest faith communities within the region. On the 16th, 22nd, and 23rd November 2016 three performances were presented, bringing together pupils from Scunthorpe CofE Primary School, Stallingborough CofE Primary School, and Swineshead St Mary's CofE Primary School. Parents, teachers, members of faith communities and other local representatives attended these events. The purpose of these events was to support and develop general levels of religious literacy in the region.

4.4: Lincoln Faiths Festival

The inaugural Lincoln Faiths Festival took place between 21st April and 1st May 2017. The aim of the festival was to celebrate faith and belief diversity in and around Lincoln and to acknowledge the contribution made by faith/belief groups to the wider community. A range of events took place, including visits to local places of worship, exhibitions in public spaces and a 'web of faiths' walk around the city.

5. 2017 Examination results

5.1: National overview - taken from the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE)¹

The number of pupils in England and Wales taking GCSE Religious Studies full course has fallen for the first time in more than a decade, down 4.6% against 2016 to 269,839. In addition, the number of pupils in England and Wales taking the short course GCSE in Religious Studies has fallen even more sharply, down 24.6% from last year to 53,071.

The decline is driven by a fall in entries in England where the number of entries for GCSE Religious Studies full course has fallen by 5.2% to 256,729. In contrast, the equivalent figures for Wales are up by 8.5% to 13,110, a record high.

All schools, including academies, have a statutory duty to offer RE 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 RE not featuring in measures such as the EBacc that are used to hold them to account. This impact is made clear from a comparison of entry patterns between England and Wales. In contrast to the decline in entries at exam centres in England, in Wales, where the EBacc is not a performance indicator, the number of entries for full course GCSE have reached a record high.

¹ <https://www.natre.org.uk/news/latest-news/falling-numbers-of-religious-studies-gcse-entries-suggests-schools-struggling-to-meet-legal-obligations/>

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

The fall in entries comes despite pupils emphasising how much they value and enjoy studying RE (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 2007 there were 158,607 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 70.1% greater than in 2007.

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 2017 are as follows:

- There were 269,839 entries for the full course in GCSE RS, a fall of 4.6% from 2016 (282,915)
- There were 53,071 entries for the short course in GCSE RS, a decline of 24.6% from 2016 (71,299)
- There were 322,910 entries for GCSE RS (combined short and full courses), a decline of 8.6% from 2016 (353,276)
- 28.3% of entries for the full course in GCSE RS were awarded an A or an A*
- 16.3% of entries for the short course in GCSE RS were awarded an A or an A*

Examination results for Lincolnshire 2017

GCSE Full Course

Number of entries: 3020 compared to 3497 in 2016

	National 2017 (2016 in brackets) A*-C	Lincs 2017 A*-C	Lincs 2016 A*-C	Lincs 2015 A*-C
All pupils	71.1% (71.5%)	70%	70%	69%
Girls	77.6% (78.1%)	78%	76%	75%
Boys	64.0% (63.9%)	62%	64%	63%

Lincolnshire results for A*- C are broadly in line with the national average for all pupils and girls. Girls out-performed boys with boys achieving below the national average.

Schools achieving around/above the national average (71.1%):

1. Boston Grammar School: 86%
2. Boston High School: 92%
3. Bourne Academy: 72%
4. Bourne Grammar School: 100%
5. Caistor Grammar School Academy: 94.5%
6. Deepings School: 80.5%
7. Gainsborough Queen Elizabeth High School: 100% (12 entries)
8. Grantham Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School: 96%
9. Grantham The King's School: 100.0%
10. Grantham the Walton Girls' High School Academy: 100% (14 entries)
11. Horncastle Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School: 88%
12. Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy: 96.5
13. Lincoln Castle Academy: 79% (10 entries)
14. Lincoln Christ's Hospital Academy: 91.5%
15. Lincoln The Priory Academy LSST: 81.5%
16. Market Rasen De Aston: 100% (12 entries)
17. North Hykeham Robert Pattinson Academy: 79%
18. Priory Ruskin Academy: 83.5%
19. Queen Elizabeth's Grammar Alford: 76.5%
20. Sleaford Carres Grammar: 77%
21. Spalding high School: 92%
22. Spilsby The King Edward VI Academy: 71.5 (10 entries)
23. St George's Academy: 75%
24. Tattershall The Barnes Wallace Academy: 94.5% (11 entries)
25. Thomas Middlecott Academy: 79%
26. William Farr CE Comprehensive School Academy: 92.5%
27. William Lovell CE Academy: 79% (10 entries)

Schools requiring support

1. Boston The Haven High: 40.5% (Girls: 58%, Boys: 23%)
2. Caistor Yarborough Academy: 50% (Girls:33%, Boys 67%)
3. Charles Read Academy: 38.5% (Girls: 60%, Boys: 17%)
4. Cherry Willingham Community School: 40%
5. Lincoln the Priory City of Lincoln Academy: 45%
6. Long Sutton The Peele Community College: 0% (1 entry)
7. Louth Academy: 19% (Girls:31%, Boys 7%)
8. Somercotes Academy: 0% (1 entry)
9. Stamford Welland Academy: 47% (Girls: 37%, Boys: 57%)
10. St Peter and St Paul, Catholic Voluntary Academy: 46.5%
11. The Gainsborough Academy: 37.5%

GCSE Short course

Number of entries: 757 compared to 805 in 2016.

	National 2017 (2016 in brackets)	Lincs 2017	Lincs 2016	Lincs 2015
A*-C				
All	54.3% (56.4%)	68.5%	78%	69%
Girls	63.3% (64.6%)	79%	86%	73%
Boys	54.3% (48.7%)	58%	67%	39%

Lincolnshire results for A*- C are above the national average. Girls significantly out-performed boys but both were above the national average.

Schools achieving in line/above the national average at A*-C (54.3%):

1. Gainsborough Queen Elizabeth High School: 66%
2. Grantham The King's School: 100%
3. Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy: 97%
4. Spalding High School: 95%
5. Louth King Edward VI Grammar School: 81.5%
6. Spalding High School: 95%
7. University Academy Holbeach: 61.5%
8. West Grantham Academy St Hugh's: 79%

GCE A Level [Note: there are some inconsistencies in the data]

Number of entries: 257

	National 2017 2015 in brackets	Lincs 2017	Lincs 2016	Lincs 2015
A*- C				
All pupils	80.8% (80.4%)	82%	84%	81%
Girls	81.7 (81.5%)	82%	84%	83%
Boys	78.5% (77.7%)	82%	83%	74%

Lincs results are above the national average for girls and boys.

AS level

Number of entries: 131 compared to 334 in 2016

	National 2017 (2015 in brackets)	Lincs 2017	Lincs 2016	Lincs 2015
A*-C				
All pupils	71.5% (69.3%)	74.5%	73%	73%
Girls	72.5% (70.6%)	65%	74%	75%
Boys	69% (66.0%)	84%	70%	66%

Lincolnshire results are above the national average with boys' results significantly higher the national average and girls' results.

Appendix

Membership of SACRE 2016-17

Committee A: Christian and Other Religious Denominations

Neville McFarlane BEM, Chairman, Salvation Army
Chris Burke, Roman Catholic Church
Christina Dring, Baptist Church
Lynette Gaylard, Ground Level Network of Churches in Lincolnshire
Andrew Hornsby, Methodist Church
Swathi Sreenivasan, Hindu Community
Dr Tanweer Ahmed MBA, Islamic Association of Lincoln
Chris Rose, Society of Friends

Committee B: Church of England

David Clements
Cherry Edwards OBE
David Scoffield

Committee C: Associations Representing Teachers

Catherine Williamson, NAS/UWT
Elizabeth Moore, NAS/UWT
Kay Sutherland, NAHT
Sarah Thornton, NUT

Committee D: The LA

Cllr Mrs J Brockway
Cllr Mrs E J Sneath
Cllr C L Strange

Officers/Advisers in attendance

Steve Blagg, Clerk to SACRE
Jill Chandar-Nair (Inclusion and Attendance Manager, Lincolnshire County Council)
Gillian Georgiou (Diocesan RE Adviser and Lincoln Cathedral Schools Officer)
Wendy Harrison (RE Adviser, LA)
Mark Plater (Bishop Grosseteste University)

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