

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
(SACRE)

ANNUAL REPORT
September 1997 - August 1998



SACRE ANNUAL REPORT

1997-98

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1999

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Annual Report

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Dear

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)
ANNUAL REPORT 1997-1998**

As the newly appointed Chair of SACRE I am delighted to be able report on our activities during the September 1997 to August 1998 period.

Having recently agreed a new Syllabus for Religious Education in Kingston we have spent much of this year preparing and implementing our Development Plan.

It is the first year that we have prepared a Development Plan and to maintain a focus on the action required, we receive updates at each meeting on action undertaken.

We considered that our work needed to be planned for a longer period than one year and we have therefore requested that a three year Plan be introduced to cover the period 1998-99 to 2000-2001. Whilst this does not represent work which was undertaken in the year 1997-98, I have attached a copy of this Plan for your information.

At each SACRE meeting we see the OFSTED reports relating to Religious Education, Collective Worship and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development in the schools in the Borough. We would in presenting this information wish to commend the teachers who strive to make Religious Education an important part of the school curriculum, relevant to the lives of all pupils.

I hope that you find the Annual Report and the Development Plan informative publications on our activities.

Finally, I would like to thank Councillor Ian McDonald who was the Chair of the SACRE for part of the period covered by this report for his contributions to the SACRE.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Wood

Chair to Kingston SACRE

KINGSTON UPON THAMES LEA
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 1997 TO AUGUST 1998

Chapter One

1. OVERVIEW AND THE ROLE OF THE SACRE

- 1.1 This report covers the period during the implementation of the second year of the new Kingston upon Thames LEA syllabus for Religious Education with support materials for schools. During this time we have considered feedback on the implementation of the Syllabus from individual OFSTED inspections. This has been mostly positive and we have concentrated our efforts on preparing and implementing a Development Plan.
- 1.2 Section 390 of the Education Act 1996 requires every Local Education Authority (LEA) to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). This is the eighth Annual Report of the Kingston Upon Thames SACRE and also contains our Development Plan.
- 1.3 The SACRE has a duty to advise the LEA upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit.
- 1.4 SACRE also has a duty to carry out the determination function, which upon an application by any head teacher (of any county school maintained by the authority or any grant maintained school which is in the authority's area and in relation to which section 379 applies) allows it to consider whether it is appropriate for the requirement imposed by section 386 (2) to apply in the case of the school or in the case of any class or description of pupils at the school.

- 1.5 As a local SACRE we have sought to bring a clearer understanding of other religions, denominations and associations within the Borough. We have achieved this partly by rotating the venue's for our meeting and inviting the host to offer escorted viewings of their place of worship. This has proved to be a popular and informative development and has led to the first stages of a Resource Databank being prepared. When this is complete it will contain information about all of the places of worship in the Borough and contacts which schools can use in any visit that may be made.

Chapter Two

2. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Section 1 The local agreed syllabus

- 2.1 The Syllabus for Religious Education was agreed by the Education Committee in January 1996 for implementation in September 1996, but in the event was published in its final form in March 1997.
- 2.2 The responsibility for the oversight of religious education in the LEA is with the Chief Inspector, who also represented the Director of Education & Leisure on the SACRE. Following this appointment the proposal to produce a SACRE Development Plan was implemented and was prepared for the 1998-99 period.
- 2.3 In an effort to assist schools in implementing the Agreed Syllabus we have made a start on the preparation of a Resource Databank which will contain information about the places of worship in the Borough and the availability of these places as a possible venue for school visits. We are also establishing whether those places of worship will be able to offer anyone who could visit schools to assist in informing pupils about different religions, denominations and associations.
- 2.4 Once this databank has been completed, in the 1998-99 period, it will be distributed to the schools and places of worship. It is expected that this will

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also be expanded over time to include places of worship that are outside of the borough area but maybe of regional significance.

Section 2 Complaints

SACRE have not had to deal with any complaints on either the agreed syllabus or regarding collective worship.

Chapter 3

3. COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Section 1 Advice on collective worship

3.1 We have not issued any advice to the LEA on Collective Worship. Consideration of any advice we can offer the LEA on Collective Worship will be part of our work during 1999-2000.

Section 2 Determinations

3.2 We received no requests for determinations (lifting the statutory requirement that collective worship be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character).

Chapter 4

4. LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

Section 1 National bodies

4.1 We continued to be a member of the National Association of SACRE and have benefited from attendance at meetings and conferences which they have hosted. We have also given consideration to the newsletters and other material provided by the National Association.

4.2 We have found the various QCA publications to be helpful in focusing on our work and to compare initiatives undertaken in other areas.

4.3 We have also benefitted from the advice offered by Mr John Logan, Director of the National RE Centre, Brunel University. John has attended all of our meetings and offered advice about a variety of RE matters.

Section 2 Local bodies

- 4.4 We have been able to rotate our meetings in local places of worship with an escorted viewing to learn more about that religion/denomination/association.
- 4.5 We have also suggested that a resource databank and an information sheet be established which we will give consideration to in the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 years.

Chapter 5

5. THE SACRE'S ARRANGEMENTS

Section 1 Professional and administrative support

- 5.1 The Kingston upon Thames SACRE is supported by professional advice from the LEAs Chief Inspector and the Director of the National RE Centre, Brunel University.
- 5.2 The SACRE is supported by the Secretariat office of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames who provide the services of one of their Committee Secretaries as the Clerk to SACRE. The Clerk services each of the meetings and undertakes a variety of administrative tasks arising from the SACREs work.

Section 2 Finance

- 5.4 The financial needs of the SACRE are met by the local authority.
- 5.5 The Director of Education and Leisure, through the budget controlled by the Chief Inspector have been able to assist with the funding of the membership fees for the National Association and to purchase publications for Members of SACRE.