



**SACRE
ANNUAL REPORT
2007 / 2008**

**STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Children & Young People's Directorate

**HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DIRECTORATE**

STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

ANNUAL REPORT 2007/2008

Foreword

It is my pleasure to inform you of the work of the Halton SACRE.

The Halton SACRE continues to work in partnership with the Local Authority, Headteachers and teachers to enable us to monitor and support the provision of religious education and collective worship throughout Halton.

Last year was the second year of our new Halton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which came into force on 1st September 2006. Feedback from schools suggests that the new syllabus has helped to raise the profile of Religious Education and that the new syllabus itself is working well in schools. In particular teachers seem to appreciate the increased flexibility that the new syllabus allows, whilst still ensuring breadth and balance and that all statutory requirements are met.

The SACRE through its work continues to encourage, develop and celebrate religious education with the children and young people in our schools. It is also keen to promote wider understanding and awareness of the faiths, beliefs and cultures of others.

Ofsted inspection reports and monitoring by SACRE through the new RE Annual Return suggest that the quality of RE and Collective Worship in Halton Primary schools is always at least satisfactory and usually good or better. Ofsted reports have, in previous years, raised concerns in some secondary schools but the Annual Return for 2007/08 suggests that, in all but one school, these issues have been addressed and that overall the picture in secondary schools is positive. Indeed, Key Stage 4 results in 2008, in Religious Education GCSE, were the best ever achieved in the borough and, when viewed in the context of Halton's socio-economic profile, compare favourably with attainment nationally.

Councillor M Dennett
Chair, Halton SACRE
December 2008

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1.0 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN HALTON SCHOOLS

1.1 Locally Agreed Syllabus

The current Halton Agreed Syllabus came into force on 1st September 2006 and has now been in operation, therefore, for just over two years. The new Agreed Syllabus is based firmly and deliberately on the non-statutory national framework for religious education published by QCA in 2004, amended to reflect the particular needs of pupils in Halton.

The new syllabus, like the framework, is intended to be robust enough to define and defend the knowledge, skills and understanding that is the entitlement of every pupil, but at the same time flexible enough to give teachers the scope and creativity to teach religious education in a way that is appropriate to the needs of the children and young people in their setting.

The syllabus includes a new requirement at KS4 that RE should be delivered for all pupils through a Syllabus leading to accreditation approved by QCA. This is strongly recommended in the QCA Framework. This requirement took effect from September 2008.

1.2 Monitoring the Agreed Syllabus

Information within the Annual Return and other feedback from schools suggests that the new Agreed Syllabus has been well received in the schools for whom it is the appropriate syllabus (i.e. Community schools). Teachers in particular appreciate the increased flexibility that the new syllabus allows whilst still ensuring breadth and balance and that statutory requirements are met. The SACRE continues to meet its statutory responsibility for monitoring the Agreed Syllabus through the scrutiny of Ofsted inspection reports, through the work of the Children and Young People's Operational Plan and now through the RE Annual Return.

This monitoring continues to indicate that the Agreed Syllabus has supported schools well in their delivery of religious education, providing a framework for medium and short term planning and making a significant contribution to raising standards. The SACRE also monitors closely the quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) provision in our schools. Overall the provision is almost always at least satisfactory and mostly good or outstanding.

The SACRE is pleased to note from inspection reports that in most schools collective worship makes an important contribution to promoting spiritual development.

2.0 STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1 Inspection Reports

An evaluation of 29 school Ofsted Inspection Reports (2 nursery, 4 special, 21 primary, 2 secondary) for 2007/2008 was undertaken by the LA on behalf of the SACRE.

2.2 Main Findings from 2007/08 Ofsted inspection reports

Findings from the scrutiny of Ofsted reports for the year 2007/2008 suggest the following:

- All schools for whom it is the appropriate syllabus (i.e. Community schools) follow the Halton Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education
- In all schools, Collective Worship was in line with legal requirements and in most cases made a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development
- In all schools the quality of SMSC provision is at least satisfactory and in most cases good or better.

2.3 Main Findings from 2007/08 Annual Return

In this the first year of the Annual Return a 91% response rate was achieved.

Findings from the scrutiny of the Annual Return for 2007/08 suggest the following:

- The overall effectiveness of RE and Collective Worship by schools' self evaluation is judged to be outstanding in approx. 1/3 of the schools that responded and good or better in 2/3 of the schools that responded to the annual return
- From the responses received the vast majority of schools meet their statutory requirement of the daily act of worship
- The vast majority of schools that responded have procedures in place for regular monitoring and provision for RE and Collective Worship
- All KS1 and 2 schools that responded meet the requirements on the minimum recommended RE entitlement
- Only one KS3 / 4 establishment that responded did not meet the minimum recommended RE entitlement
- The vast majority of schools that responded to the return allocate an adequate budget for provision of RE
- 65% of schools that responded to the questionnaire follow the Halton agreed syllabus.
- The vast majority of schools that responded have a policy on the teaching of RE, Collective Worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- In only one school that responded the quality of RE was judged to be inadequate and some support is already in place – SACRE is pursuing the possibility of further support.

2.4 Examinations in Religious Studies

GCSE Full Course

The number of pupils entered for full GCSE examinations in religious studies for the period 2005 to 2008 is as follows:

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of candidates	408	381	446	382
% of pupils aged 15+ entered	25.29	24.34	27.23	23.39
% of candidates gaining A* - C	42.6	47.2	57.4	61.0
% of candidates gaining A* - G	93.6	94.8	97.3	97.1

Attainment at percentage of entry gaining Grades A* - C improved from 42.6% in 2005 to 61.0% in 2008. The A* to G % has increased from 93.6% in 2005 to 97.1% in 2007.

The 2007 national data (provided by the National Consortium for Examination Results - NCER) comparative information is detailed below. The 2008 national data will be available shortly.

Total entries	140,131
% of pupils aged 15+ entered	23.67 %
% of candidates gaining A* - C	69.3 %
% of candidates gaining A* - G	98.2 %

National Subject Residual for RE

This is produced by NCER by calculating a pupil's average attainment across all entries and then how the pupil in any one entry differs from this average attainment. When these averages and differences are built up to school, LA or National level it produces subject residuals. The calculations use the section 96 points scores which is 6 points per grade. The national and Halton full GCSE RE figures are provided together with the adjusted LA residual. In 2005 the overall adjusted LA residual was -3.23 which means that of the pupils who sat GCSE Religious Studies their performance overall was half a grade lower in GCSE RE compared with their overall GCSE average score when compared to national results. In 2008 the LA adjusted residual was -2.29 which means that the overall grade in GCSE RE was 2.29 points lower than the national overall average GCSE score for those pupils taking GCSE RE which is equivalent to less than a half a grade.

	2005	2006	2007	2008
National	+0.42	+0.58	+0.80	-0.65
Halton	-2.81	-2.38	-0.47	-2.94
Adjusted LA Residual	-3.23	-2.96	-1.27	-2.29

GCSE Short Course

Again, overall performance is significantly improved in 2008 compared with 2007.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of candidates	480	698	391	426	496
% of pupils aged 15+ entered	28.19	43.27	24.98	26.01	30.37
% of candidates gaining A* - C	25.4	41.1	35.0	45.3	57.3
% of candidates gaining A* - G	88.5	91.1	94.9	97.2	97.4

'A' and 'AS' Level

In 2008 there were 7 entries for the Religious Studies A level, with all 7 candidates gaining grades A – E. The grade breakdown was 2 Bs, 4 Cs and 1 D.

There were 4 entries for the Religious Studies AS level with all 4 candidates gaining grades A – E. The grade breakdown was 1 B, 2 Ds and 1 E.

3.0 TEACHING METHODS, MATERIALS AND TRAINING

3.1 The SACRE, in conjunction with the LA seeks to support RE teachers in improving their teaching skills and subject knowledge through the promotion of CPD in relation to RE.

SACRE's commitment to promoting religious education which acknowledges and celebrates other faiths, beliefs and cultures, is still central to its work. The SACRE, therefore, welcomes the LA's efforts to broaden the monocultural nature of Halton. Race awareness training and multicultural education which includes a focus on awareness of other faiths continues to be made available.

A section for Religious Education has been created on the Halton Learning Grid website. This contains curriculum and teaching materials, places of worship available for educational visits and other useful contacts and information. A directory of good practice within the borough enables RE teachers seeking professional development to identify and contact other quality assured practitioners in order to benefit from their expertise. Quality assured externally provided CPD opportunities (e.g. conferences / courses for RE teachers) are promoted throughout the Authority.

4.0 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

4.1 The SACRE is aware of NASACRE's research in this area and is keen to promote good quality collective worship. Scrutiny of Ofsted reports has demonstrated that the provision of collective worship is always at least satisfactory and usually good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. The SACRE, in conjunction with Halton Borough Council, continues to promote effective collective worship.

5.0 COMPLAINTS CONCERNING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

5.1 There have been no formal complaints to the LA in respect of RE or collective worship.

6.0 DETERMINATIONS

6.1 The SACRE has not been called upon to make any determinations concerning collective worship.

7.0 LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

7.1 The SACRE is a member of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education and has received appropriate correspondence during the year to update its knowledge of the work of NASACRE.

APPENDIX 1 - FINDINGS OF ANNUAL FEEDBACK FORM FOR HALTON SACRE 2007/08

These findings relate to 60 schools (91%). It did not include nursery schools.

SECTION A – FACTUAL INFORMATION

1. Number of schools that have a policy on:

- the teaching of RE
- collective worship
- spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

	No.	%	No.	%	
YES	58	97	NO	2	3
YES	57	95	NO	3	5
YES	45	75	NO	15	25

2 Syllabus used

	No.	%	No.	%	
Halton Agreed	39	65	Chester Diocese	2	67
Liverpool Diocese	3	60	Shrewsbury Diocese	7	100
Liverpool Archdiocese	7	100	Indicated other syllabuses only	4	7

- Others AQA (linked with Halton Agreed), QCA, LCP, 'Here I Am', Blackburn, KS4 EDEXCEL specification A Unit C & Unit J Catholic Christianity and Religion and Life based on Catholic Christianity

Some schools used more than one syllabus, one establishment indicated they used none and 4 indicated none of the syllabus specified but indicated others were followed.

3 Is the minimum recommended RE entitlement fulfilled

Minimum recommended RE entitlement (5%)

KS1 36 hrs. per year KS3 45 hrs. per year
KS2 45 hrs. per year KS4 40 hrs. per year

	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
KS1	YES	46	100	NO	0	0
KS2	YES	47	100	NO	0	0
KS3	YES	12	92	NO	1	8
KS4	YES	11	92	NO	1	8

4 **Systematic approach to recording assessment of pupil progress in RE in relation to the Agreed Syllabus/national framework levels**

YES	47	78	NO	13	22
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5 a) **Budget allocation for RE**

YES	49	82	NO	11	18
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b) **Average spend on RE each year (e.g. resources, trips to places of religious interest, visitors etc.)**

- As needed/variable
- Under £500
- £501 to £1000
- £1001 to £2000
- Over £2001

	No.	%
	6	10
	28	47
	6	10
6 (inc. 3 sec. Schools)		10
6 (inc. 3 sec. Schools)		10

6 Regular monitoring, review and evaluation of RE provision in your school	No.	%	No.	%
	YES	56	93	NO 4 7
7 Provision for a daily act of collective worship in line with statutory requirements	YES	58	97	NO 2 3
	YES	51	85	NO 9 15

SECTION B – SELF EVALUATION JUDGEMENTS

No. & % schools that used these for evidence	Quality of RE curriculum provision		Quality of teaching & learning in RE		Standards of attainment & achievement in RE		Quality of collective worship	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Ofsted section 5	27	45	23	38	23	38	23	38
*Ofsted section 48	16	70	16	70	17	74	19	83
Scrutiny of pupil work	31	52	28	47	31	52	14	23
Lesson observations	27	45	30	50	26	43	18	30
Pupil progress data	19	32	18	30	24	40	11	18

* relates to 23 schools)

Other evidence

Record of Achievements, Scrutiny of teacher planning, Creative Curriculum including RE where possible, monitoring programme, monitoring and evaluation mtgs., assembly monitoring / record /observation, pupil behaviour and social development, co-ordinator evaluation/discussion with foundation governors, scheme of work reviews, SDP 2008/09, pupil/parent feedback, pupil interviews,

Judgement grade	Quality of RE curriculum provision		Quality of teaching & learning in RE		Standards of attainment & achievement in RE		Quality of collective worship	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Grade 1 - outstanding	20	33	16	27	17	28	18	30
Grade 2 - good	24	40	28	47	20	33	25	42
Grade 3 - satisfactory	12	20	12	20	19	32	13	22
Grade 4 - inadequate	1	2	1	2	1	2	0	0

Judgement grade	Overall effectiveness of RE and collective worship	
	No.	%
Grade 1 - outstanding	17	29
Grade 2 - good	25	42
Grade 3 - satisfactory	14	24
Grade 4 - inadequate	1	2

3% of schools that responded did not give a grade for any of the categories above.

APPENDIX 2

MEMBERSHIP OF THE HALTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2007/2008 SCHOOL YEAR

GROUP A – CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND OTHER RELIGIONS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Address</u>
Mr D Hemington (Vice Chair)	Catholic	The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, Runcorn
Mrs Anne Maxfield	Methodist	8 Ludlow Crescent, Runcorn WA7 4XH
Miss J Coughlan	Catholic	St Bede's Catholic Infant Schools, Widnes

GROUP B – THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Mrs J Dutton	Runcorn All Saints Church of England Primary School, Runcorn
Miss H J Priestley	Hale Church of England Primary School, Runcorn
Ms Jan Brown	229 Heath Road South, Weston Village, Runcorn WA7 4LY

GROUP C – TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Mrs C Lawrenson	Ditton Church of England (VC) Primary School, Widnes
Mr P Smalley	Fairfield High School, Widnes
Mr D Stubbs	Ashley School, Widnes

GROUP D – LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
Cllr. M Dennett (Chair)	10 Leinster Street, Runcorn, WA7 1ER
Cllr. T McInerney	9 Tuscan Close, Widnes, WA8 9RE
Cllr. C Rowe	101 Heath Road South, Runcorn, WA7 4QH

OFFICERS

Professional Advice	Adrian Hallett, School Standards & Effectiveness Officer, Children and Young People's Directorate
Clerk	Caroline Armstrong, School Improvement Support Manager, Children and Young People's Directorate, 1 st Floor Dee Building, Grosvenor House, Halton Lea, Runcorn, WA7 2WD

MEETINGS DURING 2007/2008: 6 December 2007 and 1 May 2008

APPENDIX 3

Distribution

The SACRE report is sent to the following:-

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Halton Schools

Members of Halton SACRE

Diocesan Education Authorities

Members of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board