

Notice of Meeting

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Tuesday 12th November 2019 at 4.15pm
in Thatcham Baptist Church
Wheelers Green Way Thatcham RG19 4YF

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Janet Giddings on 01635 519644
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WestBerkshire
C O U N C I L

**Agenda - Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education to be held on
Tuesday, 12 November 2019 (continued)**

To: Group A - Other Faiths Members:

Mr Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim), Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church

Group B – Church of England Members:

Mrs Val Bolan (Church of England), Mr Robin Sharples (Church of England) and
Mrs Mary Stagg (Church of England)

Group C – Teaching Association Members:

Mr Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT) and Ms Clare Nolan (NASUWT)

Group D – WBC Councillors:

Councillor Peter Argyle (WBC), Councillor Billy Drummond (WBC), Councillor Tony
Linden (WBC), Councillor David Marsh (WBC)

LA Advisors:

David Rees (LA Advisor)

Guests:

Rachel Manley (Church of England) and Mrs Maria Pratico

Agenda

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| 5 | Minutes
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**Agenda - Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education to be held on
Tuesday, 12 November 2019 (*continued*)**

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WEST BERKSHIRE STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 11 JUNE 2019

VENUE: THEALE GREEN SCHOOL, CHURCH STREET, THEALE, RG7 5DA

Present:

Group A – Other Faiths Members

Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church) and Mr Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim)
(from 4.40pm)

Group B – Church of England Members

Mrs Val Bolan (C of E) and Mrs Mary Stagg (C of E)

Group C – Teaching Association Members

Mr Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT) and Ms Clare Nolan (NASUWT)

Group D – WBC Councillors

Councillor Peter Argyle, Councillor Tony Linden, Councillor David Marsh

Also Present: David Rees (Religious Education Adviser to West Berks SACRE), Sue Dey (Observer), Linda Pye (Principal Policy Officer) and Julie Webber (Theale Green School)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Billy Drummond (WBC), Janet Giddings (Democratic Services Officer), Rachel Manley (LA, Advisor) and Mrs Maria Pratico (C of E)

1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2019 would be presented to the next meeting of SACRE for approval.

2 Matters arising from the Minutes

This item was not discussed.

3 Membership

David Taylor welcomed the three new local authority Member representatives to the meeting – Peter Argyle, Tony Linden and David Marsh.

Councillor Tony Linden noted that the two Teaching Association Members were from the same union (NASUWT). David Taylor responded that there was not always that much of a choice. He welcomed Julie Webber as a guest speaker for this meeting and also Sue Dey as an observer. It was noted that all four groups needed to be represented for the meeting to be able to take place.

4 Religious Studies at Theale Green School - Julie Webber

Julie Webber confirmed that she had joined Theale Green School as a newly qualified teacher 14 years ago and had become Head of Department in 2018.

Theale Green offered both a GCSE and A Level in Religious Education. The GCSE would include extended writing and evaluation and pupils were supported with this skill right from Year 7. There did appear to be some disparity from what pupils had looked at in regards to religious education in primary schools from what was covered in the secondary school. There seemed to be a mixture of content between schools but Julie Webber confirmed that some improvements in this area was now being seen. Staff at Theale Green were trying to go out to Primary Schools to look at what was being done in terms of teaching religious education to ensure that there was more consistency.

The GCSE in Religious Education was now an options subject and Julie Webber confirmed that Theale Green still had a reasonable number of students choosing it – indeed a quarter of pupils in Year 10 had chosen to take this GCSE. 94% of pupils taking the GCSE had achieved a grade of 4+ (C). The GCSE included Ethics and Philosophy. A particular challenge was supporting those less able pupils with the evaluation and analysis element which carried 15 marks. Hinduism was also an area which was challenging as there seemed to be a lack of resources for revision guides. She stated that Theale Green had put together their own revision guide. It was hoped that a trip could be arranged next year to Neasden or Reading Mandir. Councillor Tony Linden asked if it would be possible to obtain more information from Hindu's in the UK or from Universities. Julie Webber replied that she had used RE online which was quite a good resource. Clare Nolan also stated that she had attended seminars at various Conferences and had taken away resources which might be useful.

At A Level standard Theale Green had six pupils in Year 12 and eight in Year 13 taking Religious Education and it was hoped that numbers would improve in the following year. One of the challenges here was that Christian Theology had recently been introduced with only one teacher who was able to deliver it and therefore timing was an issue.

Mary Stagg queried whether there was a difference between non-church and church schools in terms of the delivery of religious education. Julie Webber confirmed that there was a difference with the church schools having a more positive attitude.

David Taylor said that it was good to see that the best results in the school had been in RE and it was noted that they had even been better than in PE.

Sue Dey asked what kind of resources was required in relation to Hinduism. Julie Webber confirmed that the school had made its own revision guide but it was not in depth and she had had to search around to find any information. David Rees confirmed that he would let Julie have some ideas in this area.

Val Bolan noted that the A Level included some very meaty subjects. Julie Webber agreed that it was a big jump from GCSE and the evaluation and analysis essay increased from 15 to 40 marks.

Bernard Eggleton queried whether there were any cross curricular links with other subjects such as History. Julie Webber confirmed that there were links with History and English in particular i.e. Ann Franks Diary and Passion plays.

David Taylor thanked Julie Webber for her presentation and he felt that it was particularly good to see the links with primary schools being strengthened.

5 Actions from previous meetings

Crossing the Bridges:

Val Bolan recommended the Crossing the Bridges website which included a list of religious premises which had been put together in 2017. The list only listed two places in Newbury and Val Bolan had been volunteered to look at the list and to see why some premises were not listed. She had been in contact with a number of Church of England premises and whilst their doors were always open they had not realised that they had to be on a list.

The website was good but it might require some additional resources to update it. David Rees stated that Jan Lever had initially put the list together and that the original database now belonged to the Hub and was protected. He confirmed that he would try and obtain an editable version of the database so that it could be updated. He would try to update the list and get more premises on board if possible. It was noted that the template on the website was fine but it did not state where it needed to be sent once completed.

David Taylor asked if David Rees could explain what the Hub was and how it related to SACRE. David Rees explained that there were six SACRE's in a small area. The idea of the Hub was to pull all the SACRE's together and it included representatives from each area. The focus in the current year was to develop materials to support the syllabus. It was a way of ensuring that all six SACRE's worked together cohesively and he said that if anyone had any ideas of where the Hub could get involved in the future then please get in contact with him.

Communications Representative:

There was a desire to keep communications with the local authority strong and it was noted that SACRE had a page on the Council's website. David Rees stated that it would be good to include some links on that web page e.g. Crossing the Bridges and he would contact the Council's Information Officer to see if he could progress that further.

Action:

- **David Rees to contact Council's Information Officer to see if links to other organisations/resources could be included on the SACRE web page.**

6 Schools

Primary Schools:

David Rees confirmed that the notes from the West Berks Primary RE Teachers' meeting on 14th May 2019 had been circulated for information. The meeting considered what had been happening on a national and local basis and what was working well and not so well.

National Updates:

- RE Online – a new refreshed website was being launched on 25th June 2019 which would make it easier to find resources
- Email a Believer – this was part of RE Online and 10 faiths and world views would be represented. It would be fully monitored and edited and was an excellent way for schools to access faith communities which might not be present locally.

- RE Definitions App – this was a free app which helped develop confidence for RE teachers and students. This was being updated for the second time and was free to use.
- SHAP Festivals Calendar – hosted by RE Online this was free and provided festival information and links to other helpful sites.

Local Updates:

- An update on Hub activities had been given and looked through examples of Teachers' working group output with key questions, recommended content and outcome examples.
- More documents had been developed since the last meeting including KS1 and KS2 Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism – some of these had been shared and discussed and had also been distributed electronically after the meeting. It was noted that Clare Nolan had done a lot of work on this and thanks were given for that.

Secondary Schools:

David Taylor updated SACRE in relation to Religious Education in Secondary Schools.

There were a number of challenges with Secondary Schools. A network meeting was usually held on a termly basis and the last meeting had been held at St. Barts where concerns had been raised about the new GCSE. A further network meeting would be held in the following week at Trinity School.

Two schools were a particular concern as they were not fulfilling their duty in that every child should be receiving religious education and those schools were John O'Gaunt and Park House. John O'Gaunt had lost the GCSE and any religious education teaching that pupils received was not from a specialist in that subject. They did have specific days for the whole school, i.e. 'iDays' and the intention was to include some element of religious education within that. John O'Gaunt was not particularly a big academic school and David Taylor hoped to link up the school with a local faith community – Church of England was strong in Hungerford.

In respect of Park House the school did an afternoon lesson (Wednesday) each week with the whole school called "Character & Values". There was a very small RS element to this. David Taylor confirmed that he had visited the school in September 2018 and not a lot had moved forward to start with. He had then approached Ofsted who had made contact with the school. The school had now appointed RE Coordinators for Key Stages 3 and 4.

Councillor Tony Linden queried whether Ian Pearson or the new Portfolio Holder was aware of this. David Taylor thought not but stated that he was trying to work with schools but by using the carrot method rather than the stick. He confirmed that he would raise the issue with Ian Pearson.

It was queried whether there was a legal requirement to provide a GCSE in Religious Education. There was no requirement to provide a GCSE in Religious Education on the curriculum but there was a requirement to provide some element of religious education across the school and quite often that was just a tick box exercise. David Taylor stressed the need to tread carefully particularly if progress was being made in the schools in question.

Ramadan:

Mobasshir Mushtaq confirmed that he had sent around an update on fasting during the exam period. Pupils would have stopped eating at around 3am until 9pm and there were guidelines for teachers urging them to be mindful of that. There was an option for pupils not to fast during Ramadan but to do it on other days when there were no exams taking place.

Councillor Tony Linden stated that Examination Boards should be made aware of this as he would not like to see pupils disadvantaged. Clare Nolan confirmed that it was possible for these pupils to go into another room if they wished. Bernard Eggleton asked if schools were also aware. Mobasshir Mushtaq replied that some were aware and some were not but that was one of the reasons why guidelines had been produced.

7 2019-20 Action Plan

David Rees presented the West Berkshire SACRE Action Plan for the period April 2019 to March 2020.

The following updates were provided:

- Action 2 – Provide a termly primary RE network meeting for West Berkshire Teachers – David Rees confirmed that he had the dates for Autumn 2019 and Spring 2020 which he would forward to David Taylor.
- Action 3 – Support existing secondary RE network meeting and offer Adviser support – This was difficult as there were not that many secondary schools attending this. However, David Taylor and David Rees would support this network between them. Schools were in the second year of the new GCSE and training had been revised which had made it better.
- Action 4 – Contact primary schools who did not attend networks to arrange visits by SACRE members – David Rees confirmed that he was struggling to identify the right people in schools to which he could send a flyer to directly.
- Action 5 – Continue to work with secondary schools not yet complying with the law, especially Park House – David Rees stated that West Berkshire SACRE was the most proactive in this respect as it was in contact with schools.
- Action 7 – SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and when possible teacher termly network meetings and training events – It was noted that training events could be arranged and there was a possibility of another pan teacher conference coming out of the Hub.
- Action 8 – Produce annual SACRE report – A draft would be brought to the November meeting.
- Action 9 – Review the action plan at each meeting and update for the following year – the action plan was reviewed and updated prior to each meeting.
- Action 10 – Subscribe to NASACRE – it was noted that the AGM for the current year would be held in Manchester.

8 Hub

David Taylor stressed the need to get more information on the website. David Rees said that Sarah Payne was the RE Ambassador for this area but that she only worked one day a month. He recognised that this was a small amount of time but she did cover a large area. He would try and make contact with her.

David Taylor noted that some SACRE's had a newsletter and he wondered if that would be useful for West Berkshire. Clare Nolan felt that it would be useful as not everyone was aware of what was going on. It could include a summary of the current year's plans, resources links and dates of meetings. David Taylor proposed that if it was agreed to produce a newsletter then it would be useful to use a template from another authority. It would also be necessary to decide what the format would be and how often it would be produced. It was therefore proposed that David Taylor would obtain examples of other newsletters for the group to consider at the next meeting.

Action:

- **David Taylor to obtain examples of other newsletters for the group to consider at the next meeting.**

Clare Nolan informed the group that Reading University was going to start to train RE Teachers from September 2019. David Taylor felt that would be beneficial for West Berkshire as it would attract new teachers in the area.

David Taylor advised that the next SACRE Conference would be held in June/July 2020 at the Holiday Inn in Wokingham. If anyone was interested in attending please let David Taylor or David Rees know.

David Taylor stated that membership of the Hub cost £900 and he asked if it was a valued service. He felt that it showed real benefit and value as SACRE could draw on the expertise of David Rees and his colleagues. Clare Nolan agreed that resources which were pan-Berkshire were valuable on a local level and were therefore important. SACRE confirmed that they would continue to support the Hub.

David Rees referred to an application for a Westhill NASACRE award to fund a project entitled 'Real People, Real Faith'. Using the new Pan-Berkshire syllabus as a basis it was intended to take groups of teachers to places of worship and record interviews with the hosts answering key questions from the syllabus. The short interviews would then be used by teachers to create lesson activities and units which would enable students in class to engage with the syllabus questions directly, hearing first hand responses to the same questions from a range of believers. An award of £4,000 had been agreed. David Taylor confirmed that as this was a tight schedule progress would need to be made at the next Hub meeting in July.

9 Any Other Business

There were no items of other business to discuss.

David Taylor thanked Julie Webber for giving a presentation to the meeting and he confirmed that the next meeting would take place on 12th November 2019 at Thatcham Baptist Church at 4.15pm. One item of business for that agenda would be a discussion on Collective Worship from Sue Ball.

(The meeting commenced at 4.15pm and closed at 5.44pm)



SACRE NEWS

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education
Autumn 2019

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RE Network Meeting

This term: Teach Meet

4.15 - 5.30 pm Wednesday 2nd October 2019

St Michael's Easthampstead CE Primary School Crowthorne Road Easthampstead
Bracknell Berkshire RG12 7EH

Bring and share resources that have worked well for you in RE

Bring and share your questions

For Primary and Secondary teachers of RE

Please book with Anne Andrews

anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org



Pan-Berkshire Syllabus Guidance KS3 Material now available

The guidance materials for supporting teachers in delivering the KS3 section of the Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus (2018-2023) are now available along with all the previous materials here:

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/religious-education/religious-education-resources/policies-and-agreed-syllabuses/>

The guidance has been split into two documents to make it easier to navigate. The CORE document covers Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Humanism (as an example of a non-religious worldview) and the OPTIONAL document has suggested content for Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. There are also suggested assessment questions and activities, as well as some resource templates which you may find useful.

We would really value feedback on how helpful these resources are. Please send any feedback to anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org. Alternatively, feedback will be welcome at the next RE network meeting on 2nd October at St. Michael's Easthampstead, Crowthorne Road, RG12 7EH. See above for details.

During the course of the academic year, Bracknell Forest SACRE, in conjunction with the LA will be monitoring the impact of the syllabus on the quality of RE teaching across the borough, so please respond to any requests for information, as this will enable SACRE to improve the materials as required.

Training opportunities this term: **New to RE - or need a REfreshers?**

Tuesday 8 October 2019 9.30am – 3.30pm
Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF
Cost: £95 - £125 depending on school status

With the new OFSTED inspection framework and for church schools an up-dated Statement of Entitlement and SIAMS schedule, this one day course for RE leaders is designed for those who are new to post and for those who feel they need a refresher. The course will cover the basics of subject leadership, including curriculum design, planning, resources, monitoring and evaluating RE.

[Click here to book this course](#)



Global Neighbours

A Christian Aid global education accreditation scheme

Friday 22 November 2019 9.30am – 3.30pm

Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF

Cost: £50

This is a one day course, led by Caz Weir from Christian Aid. Delegates will discuss the “whys and how’s” of engaging pupils in discussion and action to challenge injustice and inequality. They will explore some of the resources available to help them in this work and learn about the Global Neighbours accreditation scheme. Linking to personal development in the OFSTED framework, several strands in the SIAMS schedule and contributing to bold and ethical curriculum decisions, this day will help teachers to tap into the ways young people want to change the world.

[Click here to book this course](#)



Understanding Christianity

Friday 17 January 2020 9.30am – 4.00pm;

Friday 27 March 2020 9.30am – 4.00pm and

Friday 12 June 2020 9.30am – 12.00pm (a delegate must attend all three sessions)

Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF

Cost £235 +VAT (SLA schools) £250 +VAT (non SLA schools) £30 (second delegate)

This two and a half day accredited training course will give teachers access to this essential resource and ample opportunities to explore good RE teaching. Using “Text, Impact, Connections” this resource offers teachers a way to explore core Christianity as a living faith, using core theological concepts. There are units for each year group from F2 through to Year 9 with lesson ideas and resources. This resource is available only to schools that send a delegate on accredited training.

[Click here to book this course \(this link will book all three sessions\)](#)



If you have a member of clergy connected with the school, tell them about this course:

Supporting Schools with *Understanding Christianity*

Friday 18 October 2019 9.30am – 3.30pm

Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF

Cost: £10

This is a one-day course for clergy who are supporting schools in the teaching of Christianity.

Understanding Christianity is a widely used resource, published by RE Today and the Church of England Education Office. The material offers a coherent approach to the teaching of Christianity covering 8 key concepts within a Biblical context. This session will give clergy an opportunity to explore the resource and consider ways to support schools. The resource is not included in this training day.

[Click here to book this course](#)

Bracknell Forest RE Ambassador Scheme

Bracknell Forest SACRE is looking for secondary schools to participate in an exciting project that brings RE to life and engages with local primary schools. The scheme, based on projects running in other parts of the country, will train a group of students to give presentations on an aspect of religion, faith or religious education of their choosing. These students will take their presentations into a local primary school and deliver part of a lesson to pupils there. The training will take place at Ranelagh School, where the scheme has been running successfully for two years.

If you are interested in getting your students involved in this project please contact anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org for further details and to arrange dates.

Real People, Real Faith - a new Crossing the Bridges project

The Pan-Berkshire SACREs have secured funding for a new project to supplement the Crossing the Bridges materials, by adding clips of members of communities being interviewed in their worship or community centres. Called **“Real People, Real Faith”** this project will allow small groups of teachers to visit a place of worship where they will have the opportunity to interview members of the community using questions from the Locally Agreed Syllabus as a basis. These interviews will be recorded and added to the bank of resources that make up Crossing the Bridges. In order to make this project as accessible as possible, the sessions will take place out of school hours, with each one involving a different group of teachers and a different venue spread across the whole Pan-Berkshire region. Most of the sessions will take place in the spring term.

If you would like to be involved in this project either as an interviewer or if you have recording and editing experience, please get in touch with anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org.

If you have used any of the Crossing the Bridges materials to help you plan a trip to a place of worship SACRE would love your feedback and any reports on successful visits. If you have visited a place not on the list, please send us details so that we can add them to the directory. Follow this link for all the resources:

<https://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/training/education-centre/sacre-and-re-resources/>

If you have not yet come across this resource it contains is a directory of places of worship and visitors, information sheets about each of the places listed and suggested activities for pupils to do while there.

OFSTED and RE?

You will be aware that a new OFSTED inspection framework is now in its initial introductory phase. There will be a renewed focus on the curriculum and the general quality of education. This now puts RE back onto the OFSTED agenda as a “deep dive” into RE is possible for any type of school. Government ministers have stated several times recently that quality RE is part of the broad and balanced curriculum that should be offered to all pupils to prepare them for life in modern Britain. The law is very clear that all pupils in school should have RE, at every key stage of their education, and the Pan-Berkshire syllabus sets out the local expectations for what that should look like in every key stage. Paragraph 172 of the latest OFSTED School inspection handbook reiterates this.

It remains to be seen what a “deep dive” into RE (or any other subject for that matter) will actually look like, but it will almost certainly focus on the quality of the curriculum, the intent behind that curriculum, how that is implemented and whether as a result of the curriculum pupils know more and are able to do more. Even if RE is not the subject of a “deep dive”, its contribution to “personal development” and “behaviour and attitudes” will doubtless come to the fore. Every subject leader needs to read “Inspecting the Curriculum”, a document produced by OFSTED in May 2019 and ensure that their subject is as well prepared as possible for an OFSTED visit. Carry out an audit of your curriculum. Check that it fulfils the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus (or funding agreement if in a VA school or an academy), particularly in the breadth and range of religions covered. Ensure that there is progression through the curriculum and that pupils make progress. Internal data will not usually be part of the inspection process, but inspectors will want to know how teachers know that pupils are progressing.

The spring term network meeting will explore further preparing for OFSTED, once a few inspections have taken place and there is more clarity about the process. In the meantime if you have any queries or questions about how to prepare for OFSTED, please get in touch with SACRE through the clerk: lizzie.rich@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

Welcome to our regional NATRE RE Ambassador

Sarah Payne has been appointed by NATRE to be the local RE ambassador for NATRE. Her role is to facilitate communication between NATRE and RE teachers across the region. She will be working for one day a month, and has set up a Facebook page. The group is entitled **RE Teachers in South Central**, so if you are interested in keeping up to date with developments locally and regionally and you are a Facebook user this is the place for you. You can also keep informed on the NATRE page: <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/re-in-your-region/south-central/> where there will be information about upcoming RE network meetings and other training events. NATRE membership is not required to access this information, but if you are interested in receiving a termly mailing, subscriptions are available from £75 per year. Specific primary and secondary mailings are available including a range of resources.



Festivals this term

For RE and collective worship

Ensure that collective worship is inclusive of those of all faiths and none by including a range of festivals as the autumn term has a wide range of festivals of a religious and secular nature. For more ideas than those listed below follow this link:

<https://www.reonline.org.uk/festival-calendar/>

Most schools are familiar with harvest and many make the Bracknell Food Bank the recipient of harvest collections. Think about making the work of the Trussell Trust, the umbrella organisation for foodbanks, the focus of a collective worship. Remember that although harvest festival is often linked to a local church, there are similar festivals in other faith and belief communities. Sukkot is a Jewish festival of thanksgiving for the fruit harvest, overlaid with symbolic meaning, as Jewish people remember the time the people spent in the wilderness after leaving Egypt. This year Sukkot will be celebrated between the 14th and the 22nd October.

Other Jewish festivals this term are Rosh Hashanah, the new year, on 30th September and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, on 9th October. At Rosh Hashanah apples are dipped in honey as people are blessed for a sweet new year. For the fit and able, Yom Kippur is 25 hours of total fasting, with not even water passing the lips of the observant worshipper. The purpose of Yom Kippur is to atone for the sins of the previous year.

L' Shanah Tovah
Have a sweet year!



The Islamic festival of Ashura falls this year on 9th September. This festival remembers the day Noah (Nu) left the ark and the day Moses was saved from Pharaoh as he crossed the Sea. It is usually a day of fasting for Muslims, not wholly unlike Yom Kippur, and is considered by many as an opportunity to atone for the sins of the previous year. This term also sees the festival of Milad al-Nabi (alternative spellings abound) which is the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. This year it will take place on 9th and 10th November, but across the Muslim world there are numerous differences in the way this festival is celebrated. Find out if any of your Muslim students are celebrating either of these festivals and if so, what their family tradition is.

For Sikhs autumn sees the celebrations of the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism. This year that will be on the 12th November (even though the actual birthday of Nanak is on 15th April). This year marks the 550th anniversary of his birth in 1469. Gurdwaras are decorated with lights, flowers and flags and as with most Sikh events, food is served in great quantities. Two days before Sikhs will start with Kirtan – sung prayers from the Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh holy book) and this is followed by an Arkhand Path – a 48 hour reading of the scriptures from beginning to end. Sikhs will also celebrate Divali (usually called Bandi Chhor Divas in the Sikh faith) commemorating the release of Guru Har Gobind from prison, bringing with him a large number of other prisoners, each holding a tassel from his cloak. Lights

and good food accompany this celebration, as for Hindu Divali. Both faiths will this year celebrate on 27th October.

For the Hindu, Divali commemorates the triumph of good over evil as epitomised in the story of Rama and Sita. Also equated with the deity of fortune, Lakshmi, the festival merges into the Hindu new year as families get together and pray for good fortune, wealth and prosperity for each other.



For Baha'i believers the 29th and 30th October are commemorations of the birth of the Bab and of Baha'u'llah respectively. Both Bab and Baha'u'llah are considered by Baha'is to be manifestations of God, the Bab preparing the way for Baha'u'llah, the founder of the faith. The celebration is marked by Baha'is gathering to pray, read from the Baha'i writings, sing and dance and generally celebrate with much joy.

This year, December 1st is also the first Sunday of Advent, the Church's new year, when Christians look back to the first Christmas and forward to the return of Jesus sometime in the future, as predicted by Jesus himself and the books of Daniel and Revelation. All Saints Day is as usual on November 1st, when many Christians remember all Christians who have died. It is worth finding out how Christians around the world mark this day; from taking flowers to the graves of loved ones who have died (chrysanthemums in France), to the Mexican Day of the Dead.

Bracknell Interfaith Week

10th -17th November



Have you ever wondered how religion and science are viewed by Christians or Muslims or Jews or Buddhists?

On Thursday 14 November at 7pm at St Joseph's Church, Braccan Walk, Bracknell Town Centre, speakers from various faiths will address the question "Are Science and Religion compatible?" This is a free event and provides an excellent opportunity to meet with local representatives from a wider range of faith views. More details will be available on the Interfaith week website: <https://www.interfaithweek.org/> in due course.

Get Involved

Bracknell Forest SACRE meets once a term and offers advice to the Local Authority on all matters connected with Religious Education and Collective Worship. There are vacancies for teachers (all key stages) and faith group representatives. SACRE would be keen to hear from members of the Buddhist and Sikh faiths, as well as Church of England, and free churches. If you are interested, please contact any of the people listed below who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

We also welcome any comments on this newsletter or articles for future editions.

For any further information about RE, Collective Worship or SACRE, or to share any news or leave feedback please contact any one of the following:

Elizabeth Rich: elizabeth.rich@bracknell-forest.gov.uk (Clerk to SACRE)

Anne Andrews: anne.andrews@oxford.anglican.org (Adviser to SACRE)

Gary Paterson: gary.paterson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk (Local authority officer)

NEXT SACRE MEETING
Wednesday 13th November
17.00

Venue TBC

**Agenda will be published one week before
the meeting**

1. What is our Purpose?

To advise West Berkshire Council on:

- a) matters of collective worship
- b) Religious Education, in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus

2. How do we achieve this?

- a) Publish and launch the agreed syllabus every 5 years.
We did this in 2018.
- b) Encourage the development of material to support the implementation of the syllabus.
This is ongoing, and our Adviser David Rees is involved.
- c) Support the provision of termly meetings for RE coordinators in primary schools and occasional RE conferences.
We have redirected our budget and are now providing termly network meetings for primary RE coordinators. Either David Rees or David Taylor attends the existing secondary network.
- d) Provide a copy of the *Non-statutory guidance on RE* published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the DfE to each school in West Berkshire.
Have we done this?
- e) Receive presentations from teachers and members of faith communities on issues related to RE and collective worship.
e.g. Mobasshir Mushtaq's paper on the needs of Muslim pupils taking exams during Ramadan, Julie Webber's presentation on RS at Theale Green, and Sue Ball visiting us in November to talk about collective worship.
- f) Support and send representatives to the Pan Berkshire Hub
David R and/or David T go to this each term
- g) Through the Pan Berkshire Hub, the West Berkshire SACRE is part of the Crossing the Bridges project
Val B has been working on promoting this
- h) Publish an annual report of its work
David T has submitted this

3. How are we resourced?

The LA provides us with:

- a) An annual budget
In 2018-9 this was £4,840, and the same for 2019-20. See separate breakdown of costs.
- b) The services of a Clerk
We do have a Clerk at each meeting but we miss having one person who can act as a real link between us and the Council.
- c) An Adviser to act as a strong link between us and the LA.
Rachel Manley recently took over from Keith Harvey in this role.

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Annual SACRE Report 2018-2019 **(Sep 2018-Aug 2019)**

What is a SACRE?

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

To help with this endeavour the West Berkshire SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs). It has also joined with five other neighbouring SACREs to form the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub in order to undertake more significant projects than it could manage alone.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the West Berkshire SACRE over the academic year 2017-2018. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at

<http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=354&MeetingId=4097>

The make-up and terms of reference can be found at the same address.

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

The Clerk – Linda Pye: Linda.Pye@westberks.gov.uk

Adviser – David Rees: david@reesuk.onmicrosoft.com

Local Authority Officer – Rachel Manley: headteacher@yattendon.w-berks.sch.uk

Membership

This year has seen a lot of change in our membership. Councillors Sheila Ellison and Carol Jackson-Doerge, Advisers Alison Harris and Keith Harvey, and Mary Harwood all stepped down during the year. Grateful thanks was expressed to them for their hard work and commitment to SACRE.

Rachel Manley (Head Teacher at Yattendon Primary School) and David Rees (Reading RE Adviser) took over as Local Authority Officer and RE Adviser respectively. In addition, six more new members joined us during the year. Three had served on the committee previously: Mary Stagg (Group B), Maria Pratico (Group B) and Clare Nolan (Group C). The other three were Councillors Peter Argyle, Tony Linden and David Marsh.

David Taylor and Bernard Eggleton continued to serve as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Other active members included Val Bolan and Mobasshir Mushtaq, and we welcomed other occasional visitors.

Meetings

Three meetings were held this year: 6 November, 6 March and 11 June. The first two were held at Thatcham Baptist Church and the third at Theale Green School.

Each of our three meetings was attended by a different Council Officer to take the minutes. Whilst we have appreciated this work being covered, for the sake of consistency and good communication it would be much more beneficial if a permanent Clerk were allocated to us as before. The minutes of our March meeting were lost before they could be delivered to the Committee, which was disappointing to say the least.

Actions and Budget

As planned, we held three primary teachers' network meetings during the year, two run by Alison Harris and one by David Rees. These were well attended and much appreciated by teachers. David Taylor attended the existing secondary network meetings. We also continued to pursue those secondary schools not complying with the law over RE provision, and saw some encouraging developments, though not as much as is needed.

The planned discussion of Collective Worship was postponed until November 2019 when we could discuss this with Sue Ball. Our aim to contact primary schools who do not attend the network meetings proved too ambitious this year.

It was good to hear from Julie Webber about RE at Theale Green when we met there. During the year we also continued to encourage schools to use the *Crossing the Bridges* directory, **Val Bolan progress**, and discussed initiatives taken by the Berkshire Hub (see below). We also heard about support for pupils fasting for Ramadan during exams.

We renewed our subscription to NASACRE during the year which had lapsed.

The Hub

SACRE Chairs and professional advisers to the SACREs continued to meet each term to discuss work undertaken at hub level. During the year the hub recently won a Westhill Award to produce a series of videos interviewing representatives of different faiths in their places of worship, to be used in schools.

Collective Worship

It has not been necessary to renew any determinations during this year. A determination is permission for a school to provide daily collective worship which is not 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.

Public Examination Results

In 2019 there were ??? entries for GCSE Religious Studies. There was a ??% pass rate, with ??% achieving grade 4 or above, as compared to ??% nationally. This represents an improvement?? on last year's performance.

There were ?? entries for A level Religious Studies: There was a ??pass rate, with ?? achieving grade C or above.

Membership of West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2018-2019

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
Group A	Christian denominations and other religions	
	Mr. Mobasshir Mushtaq	1
	Revd David Taylor	3
Group B	The Church of England	
	Mrs Valerie Bolan	3
	Revd Mary Harwood	1
	Mrs Mary Pratico	1
	Mrs Mary Stagg	3
Group C	Associations representing teachers	
	Mr Bernard Eggleton	1
	Ms Clare Nolan	1
Group D	The Local Authority	
	Councillor Pamela Bale (to May 2019)	0
	Councillor Billy Drummond	0
	Councillor Sheila Ellison (to May 2019)	2
	Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge (to May 2019)	0
	Councillor Peter Argyle (from May 2019)	1
	Councillor Tony Linden (from May 2019)	1
	Councillor David Marsh (from May 2019)	1
Clerk	Stephen Chard	1
	Janet Giddings	1
	Linda Pye	1
Professional RE Adviser	Alison Harris (to March 2019)	2
	David Rees (from March 2019)	1
LA Adviser	Keith Harvey (to March 2019)	2
	Rachel Manley (from March 2019)	1

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West Berkshire SACRE action plan April 2019-March 2020						
Aim	Actions	Timescales	People Responsible	Summer 2019	Autumn 2019	Spring 2020
A. CORE BUSINESS: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP	1. Invite someone from COINS (Christian Outreach in Newbury Schools) to bring us a presentation about good practice in collective worship	Summer Term 2019	SACRE Chair			
B. CORE BUSINESS: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	2. Provide a termly primary RE network meeting for West Berkshire teachers, 4.00-5.30pm, SACRE members welcome	Summer term 2019 Autumn term 2019 Spring term 2020	Led by Adviser	14 th May 2019	8th October 2019	4 th February 2020
	3. Support existing secondary RE network meeting and offer Adviser support.	Summer term 2019 Autumn term 2019	SACRE Chair		3 rd October DR attended	
	4. Contact primary schools who do not attend networks, to arrange visits by SACRE members	Spring term 2020 ongoing	SACRE members			
	5. Continue to work with secondary schools not yet complying with the law, especially Park House School	ongoing	SACRE Chair			
C. SACRE INTERNAL	6. Fill membership	End of July 2019	SACRE Chair			

	vacancies		SACRE Clerk			
	7. SACRE members attend termly SACRE meetings (3 per year) and, when possible, teacher termly network meetings and training events e.g. annual SACRE conference	Termly SACRE meetings: Summer 2019: Autumn 2019 Spring 2020 Termly teacher network meetings	SACRE Chair/SACRE Adviser SACRE members SACRE Clerk	11 th June 2019	12 th November 2019	25 th February 2020
	8. Produce annual SACRE Report	Autumn Term 2019	SACRE Chair and clerk		Bring draft to November 2019 meeting	Presented at March mtg and to Councillors on Date tbc
	9. Review the action plan at each meeting and update for next year	At each SACRE meeting	SACRE Adviser and SACRE Chair			
	10. ~Subscribe to NASACRE ~Representation at annual NASACRE conference, NASACRE AGM	Ongoing	NASACRE membership £105 SACRE members SACRE Adviser to organise with other Berkshire RE advisers (To be confirmed for 19-20 year)			
D. Pan-Berkshire Hub	Contribute to the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub.		SACRE members SACRE adviser 6 Chair from all Berkshire SACREs	17 th July 2019	27 th November 2019	