

Hackney SACRE

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education

Promoting, supporting and encouraging good practice in the teaching of Religious Education in Hackney schools



Annual Report 2019 -2020

The annual report is produced in accordance with the Education Act 1996.

Members approved this report on 10.2.21



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Chairman's Introduction

Each year SACRE is required to produce a summary of its activities. The Education Act 2002 requires that religious education must be provided as part of the basic curriculum in addition to the National Curriculum. Amended guidance on the content and format of this report is based on the NASACRE (National Association for Standing Advisory Councils) guidance February 2015. The report outlines our work to promote RE and Collective Worship in the Borough, to develop the good teaching of Religious Education in our schools and to support community cohesion. This report covers the Academic year 2019-20, and includes GCSE and Religious Studies results from this period and a brief overview of SACRE discussions.

Hackney SACRE with Hackney Education (previously the Hackney Learning Trust) continues to promote RE, Collective Worship, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Community Cohesion. It is a legal requirement that SACREs review their Syllabus every 5 years, and having completed a review, the new Hackney Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was published in 2019 following wide spread consultation with teachers and local faith leaders, as well as taking into account the publication of the Final Report of the Commission on RE (CoRE) September 2018, articles and papers such as "A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools" July 2018 and 'State of The Nation' of 2017, and the latest Ofsted Inspection Framework. This syllabus was unanimously agreed by the Agreed Syllabus Conference and well received by schools.

We will continue to support our schools' development of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Community Cohesion with the production of the School RE Calendar, which, with the help of the Hackney Education, we send to all Children's Centres, Secondary schools and Primary schools in the borough, and will include pupils' artwork.

Our support for RE in schools continues through well attended and evaluated training sessions, the dissemination of updated schemes of work for key stages 1 and 2, and network meetings for Heads of Departments in Secondary schools.

Finally, I want to thank the Hackney Education in continuing to support our work over the past year.

SACRE Chair
Sandra Hall

1. Standards and quality of provision in RE

Key area 1a: Provision, compliance and time allocation for RE

The Hackney Agreed Syllabus 2019 recommends that 5% of curriculum time is dedicated to RE, and that this should equate to approximately: 36 hours per year for KS1; 45 hours for KS2; 45 hours for KS3 and 40-48 hours for KS4. This excludes time allocated for collective worship. Religious Education remains statutory for all students and Hackney expects schools to provide all students with their entitlement to study the subject, including at KS4 when they should preferably be entered for GCSE RS. While requirements for some Academies may differ, their funding arrangements ensure that they make provision for all pupils in RE.

Following the guidance for school governors regarding the inclusion of RE in schools, created and shared by Hackney SACRE in 2015, Hackney schools were also invited to take part in a survey, the results of which were included in our 2016-2017 Report. A further survey will be sent to schools in the next academic year, as part of the review process of the Syllabus. Further informal consultation with schools has been carried out by the RE Advisor throughout the academic year 2019-20, a summary of which is below.

Primary Schools

In general, the provision of RE remains constant, although 10% have increased the provision and now nearly a third of all Hackney primary schools follow the schemes of work provided by the RE Advisor.

In nearly all schools:

- The delivering teachers are Non-specialist i.e. hold no RE qualifications beyond GCSE in all schools
- No schools have received external training other than the borough (Hackney Education) termly training, which is provided by an RE specialist, to which 25 schools regularly attend/engage.

Secondary Schools

In general, the provision of RE remains similar to that recorded last year (please see table, below). Most schools continue to share information about RE provision with parents via newsletters and/or the school website and also have space for displays of pupils' RE learning on walls. However, many are failing to provide the minimum time allocation requirement in KS4, with RE remaining optional for pupils in KS4.

Hackney 2017	Hackney 2018	(CoRE) September 2018
All pupils in KS3 and KS4 were taught by an RE specialist teacher	Similar	
All schools delivered KS3 RE through schemes of work derived from the Hackney Local Syllabus	Similar	Nearly 20% of all schools offer no RE @KS3
All KS4 pupils followed an examination board syllabus for Full Course RE	Several schools GCSE from 2018 optional only	1/3 of all schools provide no RE @KS4.
All pupils received at least the minimum time allocation requirement in KS3 and KS4, and in schools of a religious nature they received more time	No longer the case – see above	Drop of 43000 in Full Course GCSE in 3 years Drop of 229000 in Short Course over 8 years
All schools regularly share information about RE provision with parents via newsletter/website	Similar	
All schools also have space for displays of pupils' RE learning on walls	Similar	

Key area 1b: Public Examinations 2019-20

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, pupils did not sit formal examinations for the academic year of 2019-20. Pupils were instead graded through internal assessment, and therefore no official/verified data was provided. However, following consultation with secondary schools who attended the Secondary School RE Networks provided with the support of Hackney Education, it was reported that most schools maintained consistency in pupil attainment to previous years and in accordance to predicted grades for their cohorts of pupils.

The following text and tables detail the received data for the previous years (except for 2016-7 when no data was made available), showing the number of entries and the results achieved by Hackney students for full course RE in relation to national figures. GCSEs are now graded from 9 (top) to 1 (lowest) instead of the grades A*-E, with 9-4 considered a standard pass or 9-5 a strong pass.

GCSE Full Course summary

Hackney	2015	2017	2018	2019	
Total pupils	1984	1976	2002	Not provided	
Entered for full RS GCSE	934	865	993	1151	
% 9-5 passes	77.6	93.9	63.3	58	
National	% 9-5 passes	72.0	71.3	71.8	61.1
	Difference	+5.6	+22.6	-8.5	-3.1

In 2018-19 the number of pupils being entered for the Full Course GCSE across our schools increased slightly to 1151 pupils. Hackney SACRE has still not been provided with the total number of pupils on roll at the end of Year 11, and therefore it is difficult to assess the proportion of pupils in the cohort being entered. However, this is a positive comparison with the national figure, where entries dropped a further 1% to 227, 913 pupils being entered.

The RE Advisor had to independently source figures for the national percentage of pupils achieving 9-5 passes. Sadly, this remains higher than Hackney attainment of 58% of pupils achieving 9-5 passes at GCSE, although the gap between the national picture and that in Hackney has closed by over half what it was in the previous year.

Full Course GCSE detail by Hackney school

School	Entries					% A* - C/ 9-5 points				
	2014	2015	2017	2018	2019	2014	2015	2017	2018	2019
Bridge Academy			25/173	31 (19%)	26			88	83.8	81
Cardinal Pole	155	127	143/162	144 (92.9%)	167	85.8	77	69	59.7	53
City Academy	24	30	58/176	42 (24%)	37	100	86.6	95	73.8	62
Clapton Girls Academy	158	139	174/175	168 (97.7%)	168	82.3	81	87	74.4	86
Hackney New School				74 (83.1%)	81				59.5	40
Urswick Academy	125	60	135/136	0	126	64.8	65	70		49
Haggerston	65	93	166/179	96 (69.6%)	125	73.8	73	61	58.4	55
Our Lady's	104	88	121/121	122 (100%)	120	71.2	81	77	50.9	58
Skinner's		63	136/170	148 (88.6%)	135		98	79	70.9	65
Petchey Academy	81	85	153/169	168 (96%)	165	66.7	74	58	62.5	42
National										61

No data was provided for Stoke Newington School.

Most schools experienced a drop in attainment of the higher levels in the summer 2019 examinations.

Only two schools showed an increase in those achieving 9- 5 points: Clapton Girls' Academy goes up from 74.4% to 86% - i.e. by 11.6 percentage points (or by 15.6%) and Our Lady's by 7.1 percentage points or by 13.9%, both with a large proportion of the cohort being entered. The Bridge Academy remained consistent, but still achieving way over the national average of 61%.

Only four out of the ten schools achieved on or over the National Average for 9-5 points. Cardinal Pole, Haggerston, Hackney New School and The Petchey Academy all achieved well below the national average of pupils achieving the highest 9- 5 points. Of these, Hackney New School only had 81 pupils entered, meaning 60% of all the pupils they entered achieved 4 points or less in the GCSE.

*N.B. Lubavitch Senior School for Girls enter their pupils for the i-GCSE, which is not included in the GCSE data provided. No results were provided for Mossbourne City Academy or Yesodey HaTorah.

Religious Studies – A Level

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, pupils did not sit formal examinations for the academic year of 2019-20. Pupils were instead graded through internal assessment, and therefore no official/verified data was provided. However, following consultation with secondary schools who attended the Secondary School RE Networks provided with the support of Hackney Education, it was reported that most schools maintained consistency in pupil attainment to previous years and in accordance to predicted grades for their cohorts of pupils.

The following text and tables detail the received data for the previous years.

Hackney	2015	2017	2018	2019
Total pupils				Not provided
Entered for RS AS level	76	67	41	Not provided
% A-B passes	47.3	57	46%	50%
National % A-B passes	54.5	54.6	52.7%	50.2%
Difference	-7.2	+2.4	-6.7	-0.2

No judgements about the number of pupils being entered for the A Level examinations can be made, as no data was provided at the time of writing this report. However, Hackney schools have managed to close the gap to match the percentage of pupils nationally achieving the higher grades in the A level examinations.

A Level detail by Hackney school

School	Entries				%A* - B			
	2015	2017	2018	2019	2015	2017	2018	2019
Cardinal Pole	6	6	4	Not provided	83.3	67	50	71
Clapton Girls Academy	16	9	4	Not provided	43.8	33	75	0
Haggerston	11	6	4	Not provided	54.5	17	75	75
Our Lady's	5	9		0	20	67		
Mossbourne	13	22	18	Not provided	69.2	64	77	83
Petchey Academy	2	12		Not provided	50	67		0
The City Academy		3	2	Not provided		67	0	22

2. Management of the SACRE and partnership with the LA (Local Authority) and other key stakeholders

Hackney SACRE met three times during the academic year 2019-20.

All agendas and approved minutes of these meetings are saved regularly and will be made accessible via the Hackney SACRE website: <https://www.hackneyservicesforschools.co.uk/extranet/sacre>

Agenda items for these meetings included (in no particular order):

- Training of primary teachers
- Support for Secondary teachers
- Updating primary Schemes of Work
- Borough RE Calendar
- Accommodation for SACRE meetings and the move to online meetings
- Budget and Advisory support for SACRE
- Website access to SACRE information
- Attendance and membership to SACRE
- Agreed Syllabus Review, and publication
- Determinations and Collective Worship Guidance
- Constitution
- RSE Guidance and implications for faith schools, particularly Orthodox Jewish

Hackney Education supports the work of Hackney SACRE by providing an RE Specialist who continues to advise SACRE, deliver teacher training and support, and lead the review of the Hackney Agreed Syllabus.

Membership of SACRE is reviewed in all meetings, and members are reminded that they should provide a representative in their absence, or introduce a replacement when they resign the SACRE committee. Concerted efforts have been made to acquire representatives from Catholic, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Church of England faiths. Following changes at the Local Authority buildings, meetings have been since at the Town Hall or online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with increased efforts to align Local Authority and Hackney Council working practices and systems.

Hackney Education support to SACRE provided during 2019- 2020

Hackney Education receives the total SACRE funding provided by Hackney Council, and disseminates funding upon individual requests. This includes:

- CPD and support materials for staff for Hackney Schools on RE teaching and learning
- Administrative support for the SACRE from Governor Services
- Photocopying and distribution costs for SACRE and for papers or information for schools developed by SACRE to promote good RE and Collective Worship
- SACRE and Religious Education web site development and maintenance by Advisor
- Designing, publishing and dissemination costs for the Hackney Agreed RE Syllabus
- Design, production, publishing and distribution costs for the Hackney RE Calendar
- Training and networking opportunities for the Advisor and SACRE members

The Local Authority, Hackney Education, has consistently provided the support of a Religious Education Advisor to attend and prepare for SACRE meetings and working parties, to respond to queries and Freedom of Information requests (FOI), and, where possible, to represent Hackney at events regionally and nationally. They also provided a generous allowance of 36hrs a year to develop CPD to train and support our schools, led by the RE Advisor.

Hackney Education have honoured their commitment to supporting RE teaching and learning by continuing this allowance for teachers' CPD. However, the reduced availability of the RE Advisor from an allocation of one day a week to approximately 3 hours a week, with no additional time provided for the work on the syllabus, has had an impact on the number of school visits able to have been made. This may have a further impact over the next academic year and beyond. Hackney Education have indicated that SACRE can apply for additional time for additional activities.

3. Collective Worship

Hackney SACRE support an inclusive approach to collective worship that promotes spiritual development and contributes to community cohesion. SACRE have previously provided resources for use in school assemblies, which were shared with schools at a primary training day along with the Recommended Approach for Collective Worship (2008 version).

This issue continues to be discussed in primary training, led by the RE Advisor, and is included in advisory work/support materials that have been delivered as part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development training in schools, also provided by the RE Advisor.

Hackney SACRE have now updated the procedures for schools to apply for a determination, and updated guidance has been approved by Hackney council and made available to schools. However, due to a reduction in the support available from the RE Advisor by the Local Authority, the desired review and development of Collective Worship support and materials has been delayed.

Determinations: There have been no applications for determination during 2019-2020.

4. The Effectiveness of the Agreed Syllabus

Hackney SACRE published the previous Syllabus in June 2013, and all schools and children's centres were each sent two hard copies. It is a legal requirement that SACREs review their Syllabus every 5 years.

Having completed a review, the new Hackney Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education was published in 2019 following a lengthy and wide spread consultation with teachers and local faith leaders, as well as taking into account the publication of the Final Report of the Commission on RE (CoRE) September 2018, articles and papers such as "A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools" July 2018 and 'State of The Nation' of 2017, and the latest Ofsted Inspection Framework.

As such, decisions have been made to incorporate specific reference to how our RE Syllabus contributes to pupils' understanding of 'British Values', as well as further exemplification of strong pedagogical practice in RE, and reference to the wider Hackney society, including, for example, the Alevi community. Further, the RE Advisor has held a consultation with Local Authority officers on inclusion of the PREVENT Agenda.

This Syllabus was created to include guidance that provides greater support for the development of the skills in enquiry, critical analysis, reflection and comparison. These all promote AT2 (attainment Target) in lessons.

The reduced availability of the RE Advisor from an allocation of one day a week to approximately 3 hours a week, with no additional time provided for the work on the syllabus has meant that the completion and publication of the Syllabus was delayed. However, it was unanimously agreed by the Agreed Syllabus Conference, as per Hackney SACRE minutes, and has since been made available via the Hackney SACRE website. Early reports suggest it has been well received by schools, but a more in depth review will take place in the future academic years.

In addition, Hackney SACRE continues to support both the creation of new and the revision of previous aforementioned primary schemes of work by the RE Advisor that complement this syllabus, using contributions and feedback from the schools. These schemes have been structured in a way that pupils' critical thinking and analytical skills are developed further and they are increasingly engaged in philosophical and ethical discussion and are exposed to a wider range of content. The schemes continue to be developed to allow all pupils from all backgrounds to engage with the subject, and will be updated in line with the new Agreed Syllabus.

5. Contribution of the SACRE to Community Cohesion and wider diversity agendas

Much work through Hackney SACRE supports community cohesion. Our membership reflects the rich mix of faiths and communities found within the borough, including attendance to SACRE meetings representatives from the Alevi and Humanist communities, and much work is directed at supporting wider diversity agendas.

Hackney SACRE supports RE that meets the needs of all students with or without religious beliefs, and promotes inclusion and religious, non-religious and racial harmony. We believe that RE promotes understanding and respect for all communities and it is even more vital now that we continue to do this, with the rise of fundamentalism and extremism in the UK and worldwide. Through the teaching of RE, negative stereotypes and prejudices can be tackled and we can generate understanding, overcome barriers, and promote community cohesion.

The revised Hackney Agreed Syllabus of 2019 contains information about how RE should support the development of SMSC, and efforts have been made to increase references to a wider range of religious and non-religious beliefs that are represented in our community. This includes specific mention and expectation in the syllabus for schools to teach about our Alevi and Haredi Jewish communities in Hackney, and will require the future development of teaching and learning materials by our RE Advisor.

In addition, we are working to better support the development of the understanding of both religious and non-religious responses to ultimate questions and ethical issues within these schemes and within the guidance included in the Syllabus, as well as through the training that has been provided at borough level. These elements will remain central to the work of the SACRE.

Furthermore, Hackney SACRE has again, thanks to the support of Hackney Education, been able to produce a full-colour wall calendar showing religious and non-religious festivals and other significant dates. This was illustrated with artwork selected in a competition open to all Hackney primary school pupils. The calendar was sent to all Hackney schools and Children's Centres, thus supporting and promoting the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.

Other opportunities and projects were explored by the RE Advisor to further support community cohesion, interfaith dialogue and the promotion of networking between Hackney schools, including devising a unit/scheme of work for KS3 pupils to investigate beliefs about life and death through art and/or music. This will be created collaboratively with secondary schools across the Borough.

6. Summary

Hackney SACRE continues to work with teachers in improving the quality of teaching and learning of RE in both primary and secondary schools by providing training, and publishing updated schemes of work and materials and guidance to develop and support SMSC, Assessment for Learning and effective teaching and learning strategies.

It has become increasingly challenging to ensure curriculum provision and quality of RE in our schools. There have been changes in accountability measures of schools for example RE excluded from the EBacc. Further, the GCSE reform has had a negative effect on the numbers of students being entered for GCSE, school provision of RE and attainment. However, with the increased focus on foundation subjects in the 2019 Ofsted Education Framework, we are hoping to find a continued increased focus on the improvement of RE teaching and learning in our schools both at KS3 and KS4.

Hackney SACRE strives to continue to support the teaching and learning of RE in Hackney schools, and are exploring other opportunities – beyond the continued training -to engage our schools in pedagogically sound activities/workshops/initiatives, and those which align with the new Ofsted Framework. For example, recent national reports and publications have been reflected in the Syllabus revision, there has been continued production of all school resources and materials, created in conjunction with Hackney SACRE, in order to support the continued development and improvement in the teaching and learning of RE in the borough.

Members of SACRE 2019-20
As of December 2019

Committee	Name	Representation
1. Religious Faith Groups	Ruhi Altun	Alevi
	Dulmini Wimalasekera	Buddhism
	Priya Reid	Jain/Hindu
	Sheikh Yasar Zaman	Islam
	Omer Dogan	
	Rumana Rafique	
	Naftali Loewanthal	Judaism
	Raj Dharma	Sikhism
	Justin Madubuko	Catholic
	Rev Andrew Letby	Methodist
2. Church of England	Lynn Hargreaves	
	Rev J Westcott	
	Prebendary Rosemia Brown	
3. Teachers	Sandra Hall	NEU
	Sheena Merchant	NEU
	Michelle Byrne	
	Natalie Petzel	
	Nasima Ephraim	
	Brenda Humphreys	
	Jon Pedlar	
4. Local Authority	Harvey Odze (Cllr)	Councillor
	Katie Hanson (Cllr)	Councillor
	Kam Adams (Cllr)	Councillor
	Jessica Webb (Cllr)	Councillor
	Sade Etti (Cllr)	Councillor
	David Pollock	Humanist
	Stacey Burman	Adviser