

ANNUAL REPORT
NORTHUMBERLAND
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ACADEMIC YEAR 2012 - 2013

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Letter from the Chairperson of the SACRE

The work of Northumberland's SACRE has continued and 2012-13 proved to be another busy year. I am pleased to report that the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus, revised in 2011, continues to be popular with all the schools using it, and that teachers have found it helpful to access it in electronic form via the SACRE webpage of the Northumberland County Council website.

In some respects, our focus has remained the same: monitoring Ofsted reports, looking at the work of individual schools, considering the exam results at GCSE, AS Level and A Level, and reflecting on best practice in the County and elsewhere.

We continue to work in a rapidly changing educational environment. The growth in the number of academies and free schools, and the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), have had an impact in Northumberland as everywhere else. We share concerns over the future of RE in our secondary and high schools as the subject struggles to remain relevant outside the EBacc.

Northumberland continues to be hard hit in the very difficult financial climate faced by local authorities, more so since challenging financial settlements are nothing new to us.

Resources to support the work of the SACRE have diminished, but the commitment of all SACRE's members continues. We depend on the goodwill of a very small central team who have an impact way beyond their numbers. The same is true of those working in our schools, many of them facing their own pressures.

These really are challenging times.

It is an absolute privilege to have served as Chair of the SACRE and to work with a group of dedicated, enthusiastic and knowledgeable members. Our meetings are enjoyable and based on shared commitment to the continuation of the best possible provision of teaching and learning. We work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and celebrate what we can learn from each other in reflecting our increasingly diverse communities.

I want to thank all those who have helped us in the last year, and particular thanks go to my colleagues who make this task so worthwhile.

Robert Arckless
Chairperson, Northumberland SACRE

SACRE Meetings

The SACRE met on three occasions in the academic year 2012 - 2013, on 17th October 2012, 30th January 2013 and 26th June 2013. On each occasion the SACRE was quorate. A majority of SACRE members were able to attend all or at least two SACRE meetings, thereby ensuring continuity and progression from one meeting to the next. To sustain links with the academies, the Head of Philosophy, Theology and Ethics at Bede Academy had observer status. The Head of RE at Astley High School also had observer status, even though the school is not an academy.

Advice Offered

The SACRE advised the local authority that, in order for the SACRE to fulfil its responsibilities adequately, consideration should be given to (a) allocating an agreed budget for the financial year, and (b) ensuring that the part-time RE Consultant is given an appropriate number of days per annum to meet his various responsibilities. Regarding the budget, the SACRE received assurances that all reasonable costs would be met centrally. Regarding the part-time RE Consultant, it was agreed that he would work for approximately ten days on SACRE-related matters on behalf of the local authority.

The SACRE advised the local authority about schools where good or excellent work is undertaken in relation to RE and collective worship, and about schools where there is still room for improvement.

The SACRE also emphasised that the current OFSTED inspection framework makes it almost impossible to draw firm conclusions about the quality of RE, collective worship or Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development. For some years now, inspection of subject teaching has been much less of an issue (although the SACRE appreciates that "Transforming RE", published by OFSTED in 2010, has important and valuable things to say about how RE is taught nationally).

The SACRE made a few recommendations to the local authority about the training programme that might be offered to teachers in the academic year 2012 - 2013. However, the SACRE recognises that some of the most effective training now and in the future will be provided to staff in individual schools, or to RE teachers in specific partnerships working through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes which they shape themselves.

Religious Education

The SACRE has been able to monitor the quality of RE by various methods, including:

- public exam results (in particular, those at GCSE and A Level);
- feedback from individual SACRE members following visits to schools;
- reports from the RE Consultant following his visits to schools;
- consultations with RE co-ordinators and heads of RE departments;
- feedback from teachers attending training courses;
- examples of good practice described in the SACRE's termly Newsletter; and

- the albeit limited information deriving from OFSTED inspection reports (OFSTED inspection reports no longer offer comment on the standards of teaching and learning in RE).

From September 2012, OFSTED began using a new inspection framework and, as a result, inspection reports assumed a character and an appearance markedly different to the period up to August 2012. Up to August 2012, every inspection report contained a table in which different aspects of a school's work were assigned a grade. One aspect of a school's work which was assigned a grade was SMSC Development. Because RE had not benefitted from inspection for a number of years, the grade for SMSC was, in nine cases out of every ten, the only light that OFSTED inspection reports shone, albeit indirectly, on RE.

From September 2012, only four aspects of a school's work have been assigned grades in an inspection report: achievement of pupils, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety of pupils, and leadership and management. Consequently, SMSC is no longer assigned a grade. This means that, since September 2012, inspection reports do not readily provide insights into SMSC, let alone RE. It is true that SMSC often secures a comment or two in an inspection report, but inspection teams do not comment about SMSC in every report. Moreover, as was discovered when an officer working for the SACRE engaged in a trawl through some of the inspection reports for September 2012 to July 2013, the most that you find are comments such as "Students' SMSC Development is promoted well in lessons" or "SMSC is addressed superficially". In consequence, OFSTED inspection reports no longer provide the means to draw reliable conclusions about the quality of SMSC within a local authority. The monitoring role of the SACRE has therefore been made even more difficult than it was prior to September 2012.

The Locally Agreed RE Syllabus

A revised Locally Agreed RE Syllabus was ready for use by schools from September 2011. Decisions about what would be revised were shaped, to a considerable degree, by the outcomes of a questionnaire circulated in 2008 to all schools which had used the Agreed Syllabus. However, the content of the "Non-Statutory National Framework for RE", "Transforming RE" and "Religious Education in English Schools: non-statutory guidance" also helped determine the decision-making process. As a result, changes were not made to the units of study themselves (RE teachers believe that the existing units of study allow for sufficient breadth, depth and flexibility, and therefore almost unanimously petitioned for their retention), but to the introductory and the guidance components which establish the broader context for RE in the contemporary era.

Needless to say, most of the training provided in the academic year 2012 - 2013, and the great majority of school-based and electronic (email) consultations, were undertaken with the view to ensuring that schools and RE teachers were in a better position to successfully implement the revised Agreed Syllabus.

Standards in RE

Above, we have discussed how difficult it now is to comment in an informed way about the quality of RE and SMSC Development in Northumberland schools because of the latest inspection framework and the inspection reports which derive from it. Here, we concentrate on results in public exams.

RE GCSE Full Course

In 2013, 794 students sat the RE GCSE Full Course. From 2008 to 2012, 788, 470, 532, 565 and 872 students sat the exam respectively. The number of entrants in 2013 is therefore a substantial improvement on the number of entrants sitting the exam from 2009 to 2011, but is significantly down on the number sitting the exam in 2012. In fact, in 2013 the number of entrants is almost exactly the same as in 2008. In 2013, 94.6% secured A to G grades and 58.2% secured A to C grades. The comparable figures for 2008 were 98.9% and 66.2% respectively, for 2009 they were 99.8% and 79.8% respectively, for 2010 they were 99.8% and 75.8%, for 2011 they were 100% and 79.5% respectively, and for 2012 they were 96.6% and 54.2% respectively. Results for A to G and A to C grades in 2013 are therefore broadly comparable with the results in 2012, the poorest of the years identified above.

Among the schools with a significant number of entrants (40 or more), stand-out results derive from Hexham Queen Elizabeth High where 84.9% of entrants secured A to C grades, and St. Benet Biscop RC High where 71.2% of entrants secured A to C grades. The results from these schools are excellent. St. Benet Biscop RC High entered 222 students for the exam, and Ashington High entered 260 students, both of which are remarkable figures.

RE GCSE Short Course

In 2013, 635 students sat the RE GCSE Short Course. From 2008 to 2012, 1445, 1467, 944, 901 and 656 students sat the exam respectively. The number of entrants in 2013 is therefore the lowest in the last six years and substantially down on the number of entrants from 2008 to 2011. In 2013, 88.1% secured A to G grades and 32.2% secured A to C grades. The comparable figures for 2008 were 94.5% and 37.8% respectively, for 2009 they were 94.5% and 30.6% respectively, for 2010 they were 92.4% and 26.7% respectively, for 2011 they were 91.3% and 36.6% respectively, and for 2012 they were 80.0% and 25.9% respectively. Results for A to G grades in 2013 are the second worst for the six year period, but the A to C grades are the third best for the six year period.

Among the schools with a significant number of entrants (40 or more), stand-out results derive from James Calvert Spence College where, of 56 entrants, 62.5% secured A to C grades, and The Duchess's Community High where, of 161 entrants, 38.5% secured A to C grades. Berwick Academy entered 124 students for the exam and Blyth Community College entered 177 students.

2013's figure of 1429 for the total number of entrants for the RE GCSE Full AND Short courses is the lowest for the six year period for which data exists.

RE AS Level

In 2013, 45 students sat the RE AS Level. From 2008 to 2012, 25, 36, 47, 34 and 38 students sat the exam respectively. In 2013, 84.4% of entrants secured A to E grades and 31.1% secured A to C grades. The comparable figures for 2008 were 84% and 61.2% respectively, for 2009 they were 85.7% and 56.4% respectively, for 2010 they were 83% and 57.4% respectively, for 2011 they were 88.2% and 44.1% respectively, and for 2012 they were 94.7% and 21.1% respectively. The number of students taking the RE AS Level is too small to allow for meaningful discussion about trends.

RE A Level

In 2013, 70 students sat the RE A Level. From 2008 to 2012, 104, 107, 106, 101 and 88 students sat the exam respectively. The number of students sitting the RE A Level in 2013 has therefore dropped significantly, and for the second year in a row. In 2013, 100% of entrants secured A to E grades and 60% secured A to C grades. The comparable figures for 2008 were 100% and 81% respectively, for 2009 they were 100% and 71% respectively, for 2010 they were 99.1% and 61.3% respectively, for 2011 they were 100% and 65.3% respectively, and for 2012 they were 98.9% and 43.2% respectively. When compared with 2012, results in 2013 indicate a significant improvement in the number of students securing the highest grades.

The figures above are best understood in relation to the exam statistics for RE in England as a whole. In England as a whole, 10.6% more students sat the GCSE Full Course in 2013 than in 2012, but 28.7% fewer students sat the GCSE Short Course in 2013 than in 2012. This is equivalent to an overall net drop of 9% in students taking GCSE RE in 2013, reversing an upward trend since 1995. However, the situation is better at A Level. In England as a whole, 1.35% more students sat the RE A Level exam in 2013 than in 2012, and 3.7% more students sat the RE AS Level exam in 2013 than in 2012.

Here in Northumberland, RE GCSE does NOT mirror the national situation. The number of students who sat the GCSE RE Full Course decreased rather than increased, and the number who sat the GCSE Short Course decreased only slightly, perhaps because of the very steep decline in the number of entrants between 2011 and 2012. Northumberland seems to mirror the national situation for RE AS Level by recording an increase in entrants, but for RE A Level Northumberland records a sharp decline in the number of entrants, despite the fact that, nationally, there has been a slight increase in the overall number of entrants. All the concerns expressed by the SACRE about the well-being of RE in our secondary and high schools for the last two to three years seem to be confirmed by these worrying trends.

Methods of Teaching, Choice of Teaching Materials and Professional Development

The Locally Agreed RE Syllabus does not prescribe what teaching and learning methods teachers should use (although it does reflect on the variety of methods that teachers might utilise).

Consequently, teachers select the methods they deem to be most appropriate, given the content addressed and the needs and the learning styles of the pupils and students concerned. Needless to say, as the children get older, more mature and more sophisticated in their outlook, and as greater emphasis is placed on learning from rather than learning about religion and belief, teachers in middle, secondary and high schools experiment with less didactic and more open-ended and exploratory teaching and learning methods, ones designed, above all, to create independent learners able to engage with the evidence in a dispassionate and rational manner. However, some OFSTED inspection reports, and anecdotal evidence deriving from SACRE members and others, reveal that some of the most innovative teaching and learning methods exist in our first schools where every effort is made to approach the study of religion and belief in a cross-curricular manner. Such cross-curricular approaches emphasise that, for large numbers of people, religion and belief impact on many, if not all, aspects of life.

Again, the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus does not prescribe what teaching and learning materials should be used, but the non-statutory guidance highlights a wealth of printed and electronic material which teachers may find useful. Moreover, the Agreed Syllabus contains up-dated advice about good resources that have come on stream since 2004. The SACRE termly Newsletter and RE Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training sessions are used to up-date teachers about more recently produced teaching and learning materials.

RE teachers can access training about RE from at least four possible sources:

- contacting the Northumberland CPD College to arrange in-house RE training for an individual school, for a cluster of schools, or for RE co-ordinators/heads of RE in a partnership;
- contacting the part-time RE Consultant or the School Improvement Partner with responsibility for RE;
- contacting the North East Religious Learning Resources Centre (NERLRC);
- attending training events arranged by neighbouring local authorities which are offered to teaching staff beyond their boundaries.

During the academic year 2012 - 2013, schools where training/in-depth consultations were undertaken included:

4 first schools
2 middle schools
1 high school.

Issues addressed during school-based training/in-depth consultations included:

- The content of the Locally Agreed RE Syllabus;
- Revising RE long-term plans to better reflect the demands of the Agreed Syllabus;
- RE and Assessment for Learning;
- Ensuring feeder middle schools in a partnership teach the same topics to the same year groups;

- Good visitors and places to visit; and
- Inspiring RE.

Discussions with the NERLRC suggest that no NCC teachers were able to attend any of the RE-related courses provided by the Centre.

Complaints Concerning RE

During the course of the year, no formal complaint relating to RE was received by the local authority.

Collective Worship

NCC's most recent Policy and Guidelines for Acts of Collective Worship (ACWs) were formally launched in September 2007. During the academic year 2012 - 2013, the SACRE termly Newsletter reminded schools about the sound advice the document contains. We know of two schools that revised their in-house policies for ACWs to take account of the NCC Policy and Guidelines.

No formal complaint relating to collective worship was received by the local authority. Nor was the SACRE required to make a determination about the appropriateness, for either a school or a group of pupils or students in a school, of collective worship which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Taking the County as a whole, there are very few recorded instances of pupils or students withdrawn from RE or ACWs. We take this as confirmation that most schools are therefore providing RE and ACWs which take full account of the rich diversity of religion and belief that presently exists in Northumberland. In other words, RE and ACWs are provided in ways that are in sympathy with the needs and aspirations of the whole school community.

Links with Other Agencies

National:

Membership of the National Association of SACRE (NASACRE).

Local/Regional:

Close working relations exist with the NERLRC;

Close working relations exist with the region's Free Church denominations and other religious and faith communities, many of which are represented on the SACRE;

Close working relations exist with the Anglican and the Roman Catholic dioceses, which are represented on the SACRE;

Close working relations exist with the North East Humanists, who are represented on the SACRE; Individual SACRE members sit on other SACREs in the region, or are asked to attend other SACREs' meetings to contribute to discussions and debates.

SACRE Arrangements

Staff

The local authority has a School Improvement Partner with ultimate responsibility for RE and Collective Worship, but such responsibility is merely one among many. Consequently, the local authority employs part-time (approximately 10 days per annum) a Consultant to assist with matters relating to RE and Collective Worship. Democratic Services provides the SACRE with a clerk who not only minutes the meetings and fields correspondence, but also engages in a host of tasks designed to ensure that the SACRE can conduct its business in an enviably efficient and cost effective manner.

Finance

Regarding a budget, the SACRE has received assurances from the local authority that all reasonable costs will be met centrally.

Any Other Business

The SACRE continues to publish a termly A4 Newsletter which varies in length from 4 to 8 pages. The Newsletter keeps school-based colleagues informed about the latest developments relating to RE and ACWs; highlights best practice within the County; notifies about training options; provides early warning about important festivals and national and international events that schools may wish to discuss during RE lessons or ACWs; and alerts teachers about the most up-to-date RE resources. We are pleased to note that a few other SACREs in the region (e.g. Darlington, North Tyneside) have found it beneficial to experiment with similar exercises designed to promote best practice.

Every 3 to 4 weeks during term time, the RE Consultant sends approximately 60 colleagues across the County an email containing useful information about RE, ACWs, community cohesion and a host of equality and diversity matters.

During the academic year 2012 - 2013, the SACRE continued to work its way through its action plan (which was up-dated in January 2012) to ensure its work has structure and coherence (the up-dated action plan can be found in Appendix 2). The NASACRE singled out our action plan as one worthy of emulation.

The SACRE now has a designated webpage (accessible via the Northumberland County Council website) where schools, teachers and governors can access the revised Locally Agreed RE Syllabus, the Policy and Guidelines for Acts of Collective Worship, and copies of all the SACRE

newsletters, among other things.

Schools were encouraged to consider applying for the highly worthwhile Accord Award for Inclusive Schools, and attention was also drawn to the RE Quality Mark. Moreover, one of the SACRE's most comprehensive discussions revolved around the issue of what sort of relationship should the SACRE sustain with the growing number of academies.

The SACRE Members, 2012 - 2013

(a) Representatives of Other Churches and Faiths

Baptist Church	Also Represented by the United Reform Church
Methodist Church	Mr. D. Fenwick
Roman Catholic Church	Vacancy (filled in September 2013)
United Reformed Church	Reverend E. Marley OBE
Hinduism	Bhakti Rasa Adhikhara
Judaism	Mrs. D. Van Der Velde
Sikhism	Harpal Singh

(b) Representatives of the Church of England

Mrs. E. Bainbridge
 Mr. B. Hedley
 Mr. D. Johnson
 Mr. P. Rusby

(c) Representatives of the Teachers' Associations

Mrs. L. Atkinson
 Mrs. S. Brett
 Mrs. H. Shaw
 Mr. T. Nicholls

(d) Representatives of the Local Authority

Councillor Mr. G. R. Arckless (Chair)
 Councillor Mr. A. H. Murray
 Councillor Mr. J. E. Smith
 Councillor Mr. R. Styring (until May 2013)
 Councillor Mr. B. Pidcock (from May 2013)

(e) Co-Opted Member

Mrs. C. Butterworth North East Humanists

Terms of Reference

Terms of reference as per Circular 3/89, Circular 1/94 and legislation such as the 1988 Education Reform Act and the 1996 Education Act:

“To advise the Authority 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.”

The SACRE Action Plan

Distribution List:

All Schools in Northumberland
Head of Children's Services, Northumberland County Council
Department for Education
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
University of Northumbria at Newcastle
County Library Service, Northumberland County Council
Northumberland's four MPs
All Northumberland County Councillors
The CE and RC Diocesan Authorities
Karenza Passmore, North East Religious Learning Resources Centre
Rowena Francis, United Reformed Church, Northern Synod Office, 4 College Lane,
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE1 8JJ
Rev. L. Osborn, Chairman of District, Methodist Church
Mr. D. Lennox, Secretary of the Baptist Union, North East Region Interfaith Group in
Newcastle
North East Humanist Association
Harnham Buddhist Monastery, 2 Harnham Hall Cottages, Belsay, Northumberland, NE20
OHF
The Board of Deputies of British Jews
The United Hebrew Congregation, Newcastle
The Newcastle Reform Synagogue
Muslim Council of Britain, PO Box 57330, London, E1 2WJ
Sikh Council for Interfaith Relations UK, 43 Dorset Road, Merton Park, London, SW193EZ
NASACRE

Northumberland SACRE Action Plan 2012-2015

Key Element: Monitoring standards, quality and provision of RE. Rationale: To monitor, support and evaluate the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus.					
Objective	Action	Responsibility	Costing	Success criteria/Outcomes	Date achieved
To support school staff as they implement the Agreed Syllabus	Provide, or help to organise, support (e.g. consultations), as requested, and Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as appropriate, for all staff in a school, or for RE subject leaders/specialists in one or more schools	GH, PA	GH's and PA's time	<p>All schools develop schemes of work which comply with the Agreed Syllabus</p> <p>Support and CPD for RE subject leaders/ specialists results in increased teacher confidence and improved practice</p> <p>The quality of RE improves in all key stages</p> <p>Pupils and students enjoy RE even more than at present</p> <p>Teachers apply the QCA level descriptors to pupils' and students' work</p> <p>Pupils and students engage more effectively in peer- and self-assessment</p>	

<p>To monitor delivery of the Agreed Syllabus</p>	<p>Encourage schools to submit examples of schemes of work to SACRE</p> <p>GH or PA to report to SACRE about delivery of the Agreed Syllabus observed during visits to schools</p>		<p>GH's and PA's time</p>	<p>ICT is used appropriate-ly as a learning tool</p> <p>The amount of time allocated to RE matches the advice in the Agreed Syllabus</p> <p>Evidence exists that schools are meeting their statutory duties in relation to the Agreed Syllabus</p> <p>SACRE is better informed about what is being taught in schools</p>	
<p>To monitor progress in public exam courses</p>	<p>Examine RE/RS exam results annually for short GCSE, long GCSE and post-16 courses, and compare results with past results in Northumberland and nationally</p>	<p>GH, PA to liaise with the data management team</p> <p>GH, PA to collate data for Autumn/Spring meeting of SACRE</p>	<p>GH's and PA's time</p> <p>GH's and PA's time</p>	<p>SACRE has an accurate picture of the provision of exam courses and the success achieved by students in the County</p>	
<p>To ensure that good use is made of RE resources in schools that close</p>	<p>Letter to closing schools seeking information about what will be done with their RE resources</p>	<p>Chair, GH</p>	<p>GH's time</p>	<p>Resources recycled and used at point of need</p>	

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Key Element: Monitoring the provision and quality of Collective Worship.
 Rationale: To audit Collective Worship provision and ensure good use is made of the 2006 NCC Collective Worship policy and guidelines.

Objective	Action	Responsibility and date	Costing	Success criteria/outcomes	Date achieved
<p>To monitor provision of Collective Worship in relation to the 2006 Collective Worship policy and guidelines</p>	<p>Letter to all schools seeking confirmation that Collective Worship follows the advice in the 2006 policy and guidelines</p>	<p>Chair, GH</p>	<p>GH's time</p>	<p>SACRE has an accurate picture of Collective Worship provision throughout the County</p>	
<p>To invite schools to share with each other successful ACWs complying with the 2006 Collective</p>	<p>Letter to all schools with appropriate information</p>	<p>Chair, GH</p>	<p>GH's time</p>	<p>A number of model ACWs exist which can be disseminated among schools</p>	

<p>Worship policy and guidelines</p>				<p>Collective Worship is inspirational, of a consistently high standard and addresses diverse teaching and learning styles</p> <p>Opportunities for pupil and student participation in preparing and presenting Collective Worship are increased</p> <p>Collective Worship is inclusive for all pupils and students whether they are Christian, followers of other faiths or have no faith at all</p>	
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Key Element: The development of SACRE's role and work.
Rationale: To raise awareness of SACRE's role and responsibilities among schools and the local community.

Objective	Action	Responsibility and date	Costing	Success criteria/outcomes	Date achieved
<p>To comply with SACRE's statutory responsibilities, on behalf of Northumberland County Council</p>	<p>Produce a 3 year SACRE Action Plan</p>		<p>PA's time</p>	<p>Raised awareness of the role and the responsibilities of SACRE amongst SACRE members</p>	

<p>To continue producing a termly SACRE Newsletter for schools</p>	<p>Formation of an editorial group</p>	<p>SACRE</p>	<p>LP's support and time, PA's time as editor/drafter of material, LA design team support and time</p> <p>Cost of producing and distributing the Newsletter</p>	<p>Awareness of SACRE's role and responsibilities raised among schools and governors</p> <p>Teachers contribute examples of good practice to disseminate via the Newsletter</p> <p>Good practice re. RE and Collective Worship is replicated in readers' schools</p> <p>The amount of copy produced by the editorial team is reduced as others, including teachers, contribute by writing articles</p>	
<p>To produce an annual report about the work of SACRE for QCDA, etc.</p>	<p>Chair to collate information and write the report for QCDA, etc.</p>	<p>Chair, PA, GH, LP</p>	<p>GH's, PA's and LP's time</p>	<p>Statutory duty met and good work carried out by SACRE and NCC schools affirmed</p>	
<p>To broaden the membership of SACRE, thereby ensuring, a) all four voting committees have sufficient</p>	<p>The Church of England, other faith communities, Teachers' Associations and the Local Authority to be</p>	<p>Chair, LP, PA</p>	<p>LP's and PA's time</p>	<p>SACRE embraces a rich variety of religions and beliefs, and accesses the viewpoints of a wide range of stakeholders, all of whom seek to</p>	

<p>representatives for SACRE to be quorate, and, b) other stakeholders are represented through co-option or as observers</p>	<p>approached for representation, as appropriate. Other stakeholders to be approached, as appropriate</p>			<p>improve RE and Collective Worship in Northumberland</p> <p>SACRE enhances its knowledge, understanding and skills re. RE and ACWs</p> <p>SACRE informed about concerns, priorities, developments, etc. across the country as they relate to RE and Collective Worship</p>	
<p>To send a delegate to NASACRE's Annual Conference</p>	<p>A representative of/officer associated with SACRE volunteers to attend the Conference and to report to SACRE about the main outcomes</p>		<p>Conference fee, return rail fare to venue. Officer's time, if an officer attends</p>	<p>SACRE informed about the concerns, priorities, etc. of SACREs elsewhere in the UK, and about the latest developments in relation to RE and Collective Worship</p>	
<p>To organise the occasional SACRE meeting in a school or academy rather than County Hall</p>	<p>NCC officers enquire of schools or academies that would like to host a SACRE meeting</p>	<p>LP, GH, PA</p>	<p>LP, GH and PA's time</p>	<p>SACRE acquires first-hand insight into RE and/or Collective Worship provision in specific schools or academies, and SACRE's profile is raised beyond County Hall</p>	

P.S. This significantly reduces the workload compared with the 2008-11 action plan, despite the addition of an extra action point. But are there any oversights? E.g.:

Should we reflect annually on what is happening in Northumberland re. free schools and academies (e.g. the number and where they are emerging and the impact on SACRE's work/client group)?

Should we engage in a task to ensure that all those schools which must use the Agreed Syllabus are actually using the new one and not the old one?

Do we need to remind schools of their statutory duty to provide RE and Collective Worship – or are the occasional reminders in the Newsletter adequate/sufficient?