



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th JULY 2018

STANDARD ADVISOR COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE)

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING IN
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT CABINET MEMBER, CLLR J ROSSER.**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide information to Members on the Council's statutory duties to establish a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).
- 1.2 To update Members on the constitution of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE (Appendix A).
- 1.3 To inform Members that the Annual Report of the RCT SACRE for the academic year 2016-2017 is available (Appendix B).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the content of the Annual Report 2016-2017.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need to advise Members of any revisions to the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Every Local Authority has a statutory duty to establish a permanent body, called a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), to advise the LA on matters concerned with the provision of RE and collective worship (Education Reform Act 1988).

- 4.2 The main function of SACRE is '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'.
- 4.3 The broad role of a SACRE is to support the effective provision of RE and collective worship in schools. Each LA should work with its SACRE whether any changes need to be made in the agreed syllabus or in the support offered which might be taken to improve provision.
- 4.4 Each SACRE must publish an annual report on its work.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The local authority has statutory duties under Section 11 Education Reform Act 1988.

8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

Section 11 Education Reform Act 1988.

9 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The report links to the Councils corporate priority of People – promoting positive lives for everyone.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Changes in the way support for schools is organised and delivered has resulted in a demise of the traditional subject led advisory service to a more school to school self-supporting system. Such changes in working practices has had an impact on the ability of SACRE to fulfil its role and functions with schools.

10.3 Co-ordination of the role and functions of the RCT SACRE is now commissioned through the Central South Consortium.

Other Information

Relevant Scrutiny Committee - Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

CONSTITUTION OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF SACRE

Terms of reference

1. To advise the LA on matters connected with collective worship in county schools.
2. To advise the LA on matters connected with religious education which is given in accordance with the agreed syllabus.
3. To decide when, within the five year statutory time scale, the LA should review its agreed syllabus.
4. To consider with the LA and the Agreed Syllabus Conference any changes required to the agreed syllabus.
5. To consider with the LA the support offered to religious education in its schools, with particular regard to methods of teaching, the choice of teaching materials and the provision of training for teachers.
6. To offer advice on any other matters related to its function as it sees fit.
7. To publish an annual report on its work, which must:
 - a. specify any matters on which it has advised the LA;
 - b. broadly describe the nature of the advice;
 - c. set out its reasons for offering advice on any matters which were not referred to it in the first place by the LA;

The report should also follow the current guidance from Welsh Government on its structure and information that should be included in the report.

8. To participate in the LA's statutory complaints procedures in those instances where the complaints relate to religious education and/or collective worship.
9. To receive and make determinations in respect of applications from headteachers of county schools for the lifting or modifying of the requirements that collective worship in such schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Composition and Membership

10. The council shall comprise persons appointed by the local authority to represent respectively:

- a. Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.
- b. Such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the LA, ought to be represented having regard to the circumstances of the area.
- c. The LA

The council may also include co-opted members.

In order to qualify for membership of RCT SACRE, all members must either reside within Rhondda Cynon Taf or be employed by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council.

Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE has agreed the following membership:

Representatives from religious traditions and denominations.

To optimise the efficiency of the SACRE, membership is sought from a wide range of religious traditions.

14 places from a range of religions and denominations which could include but is not restricted to:

- The Church in Wales
- The Roman Catholic Church
- Free Churches
- Bahá'í Faith
- Buddhism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

Teacher representatives

The relevant statutory provision gives discretion to the authority to determine which associations are to represent teachers and will therefore include.

10 places from a range of teacher associations

The LA

6 members representing the local authority.

Co-opt members (with no voting rights)

Up to 4 members who have an interest in religious education and collective worship and can assist the committee in its functions.

11. Membership of the Council shall be for a period of four years.
Any outgoing members may be re-appointed.

12. Membership of the Council is subject to the condition that the LA has taken all reasonable steps to assure itself that the persons appointed are representative, as the case may be, of the denominations or associations in question.
13. Members representing associations of teachers must include teachers of religious education.
14. Individuals may be removed from the Council if they cease to be representative of the denomination, association or of the Authority they were appointed to represent.
15. Any member of the Council may at any time resign his or her office.

Procedure:

16. The Council shall meet not less than once in each school term.
17. Meetings are open to members of the public unless confidential information is to be disclosed.
18. RCT SACRE is a member of WASACRE (the Welsh Association of SACREs). It shall nominate up to four members, including the RE Consultant, to represent the SACRE at WASACRE meetings.
19. The Council shall elect from its membership a chairperson and vice chairperson at the first meeting in each academic year. The chairperson and vice chairperson in any one year shall not be drawn from the same representative group. An outgoing chairperson may be re-appointed.
20. On any question to be decided by the Council only the representative groups on the Council shall be entitled to vote, and each group shall have a single vote. Before a formal vote is taken opportunity shall be given to each representative group to determine how its vote is to be cast. Resolutions shall be passed to the education department as appropriate.
21. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
22. The agenda for each meeting shall be determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson in consultation with the clerk to SACRE, Director of Education Representative and Professional Officer. Any voting member of SACRE shall be entitled to propose items for an agenda.
23. In the case of any member not being able to attend a Council meeting, a substitute may be nominated by the body which that person represents, provided that the substitute meets the eligibility criteria and the Education Directorate of the LA and the Clerk to SACRE is notified in advance of the meeting.
24. A meeting of the Council will be deemed to be quorate if at least one member of each of the three representative groups is present. The validity of proceedings

of the Council shall not be affected by a vacancy in the office of any member of the Council.

25. The representative groups on the Council, other than that representing the Local Authority, may call, at any time, for a review of the agreed syllabus current in the Authority. At such time an Agreed Syllabus Conference shall be constituted and convened.
26. The Council shall consider its annual report at the first meeting to be held in each academic year. Upon the Council's ratification of the report it shall proceed to publication.
27. The clerk to the SACRE shall arrange for copies of the annual report to be sent to all county schools within the Authority, to DfES, the National Library and to such other individuals and institutions as the LA sees fit.

Rhondda Cynon Taf
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Annual Report
for the Academic Year 2016 - 2017



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SECTION ONE

INFORMATION ABOUT SACRE

1.1 Duty to establish SACRE

All local authorities (LAs) are required to constitute a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) within their local area.

1.2 Composition of SACRE

Representation on SACRE is required as follows:

- such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the LA, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- associations representing teachers; and
- the LA.

It is the duty of the LA to ensure that members of the groups are appointed and that they are representative.

1.3 Membership of SACRE

The list of members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE is set out in Appendix 1.

1.4 Functions of SACRE

The main function of a SACRE is to:

- advise the LA on worship and the religious education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus, including methods of teaching, advice on materials and the provision of training for teachers;
- consider whether to recommend to the LA that its current agreed syllabus should be reviewed by convening an Agreed Syllabus Conference;
- consider applications from schools for determinations (to be exempt from the requirement that worship be “Christian”)
- report to the LA and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) on its activities on an annual basis.

1.5 SACRE meetings

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2016 – 2017 academic year:

- 16th November, 2016
- 15th March, 2017
- 26th June 2017

A record of the main agenda items discussed during the meetings is to be found in Appendix 2.

1.6 Circulation of report

Copies of this report have been circulated to the organisations/establishments listed in Appendix 3.

SECTION TWO

EXECUTIVE Summary

Summary of the advice given to the LOCAL AUTHORITY by SACRE

2.1 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A brief summary of the advice that SACRE has given to the Local Authority follows:

Aim: To monitor provision and standards in religious education

Action

1. SACRE considers and analyses school inspection reports. If there are any issues regarding religious education, such as the non- fulfilment of statutory requirements, the Local Authority follows this up. During the academic year 2016–2017 no such follow up action was necessary.
2. Following discussion during previous meetings, it was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education.
3. SACRE analyses examination results over a three year period and identifies trends in performance benchmarked against All Wales data. Schools are informed of the outcomes of this analysis and any issues raised by SACRE.
4. The LA and its SACRE gather and analyses data via the Consortium regarding key stage 3 teacher assessment in religious education. This information is presented to SACRE and sent to all secondary schools in the LA.
5. In 2016-17 SACRE wrote to all schools in the local authority reminding them that coverage of the programmes of study of the locally agreed syllabus remains a statutory requirement whilst the curriculum is under review. It also wrote to secondary schools drawing specific attention to delivery of RE at KS4 and informing them that coverage of the Global Citizenship unit alone would not be sufficient to cover all aspects of the agreed syllabus KS4 programme of study. It asked all schools to confirm that they understood the requirements of the agreed syllabus and that they are meeting these statutory requirements in their schools.

2.2 AGREED SYLLABUS

Aim: To fulfil the legal requirement to review the agreed syllabus for religious education on a five year basis and to monitor its implementation

Action

1. In 2008 Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. All schools received a programme of Inset in summer 2008 and received a package of

support materials to exemplify the new syllabus. Comprehensive support materials, including schemes of work and electronic *Progress in Learning* files for secondary schools, have already been issued to schools.

2. In June 2013 the Agreed Syllabus Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus for religious education with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.
3. During 2013 – 2014 SACRE members received updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review.
4. In 2014 – 2015 SACRE considered the Donaldson Report on the review of the curriculum in Wales. It was noted that there would be implications for RE and the Agreed Syllabus and that NAPfRE (the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education) would meet to discuss the issues on 15th April 2015. The Committee resolved to respond to the review as a SACRE before the 8th May 2015 deadline. It was agreed to hold a special meeting in order for members to more fully discuss the review however, this meeting was subsequently cancelled. All members were invited to submit their views to the RE Consultant by email. The RE Consultant subsequently formulated a response to the review on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE and this was submitted as part of the Great Debate consultation process. SACRE will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area.
5. In its spring 2015 meeting, SACRE began to consider the value of retaining the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus given the move towards a more flexible curriculum. A letter was written to all schools seeking their views on this matter.
6. An Agreed Syllabus Conference was held on 8th June, 2015 to consider a) whether to remove the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus and b) whether to strengthen the statement regarding the need to allocate sufficient time to RE. It was resolved that due to insufficient responses from schools a decision could not be made. It was agreed to resend the request for a response relating to the core units. It was agreed that a statement regarding time allocation would be drafted and schools would be consulted. The Agreed Syllabus Conference would be reconvened in the autumn term 2016. The Agreed Syllabus Conference in the Autumn Term was not quorate and the Agreed Syllabus Conference has not reconvened.
7. SACRE has received termly updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review. SACRE are awaiting further details from Welsh Government on the shape of RE in the curriculum, and advice from WASACRE, before beginning any RE agreed syllabus review.

2.3 TEACHING MATERIALS

Aim: To ensure that schools are informed of suitable teaching resources

Action

1. All schools were informed of the 2017 **Holocaust Memorial Day** theme and that Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk
2. Schools were advised that the formerly published **RE News** was now available to view on line at the following address: www.religious-education-wales.org

3. **Withdrawal Clause and RE:** A guidance document for schools on managing the parental right of pupil withdrawal from RE is being prepared by WASACRE.
4. **SACRE RE News Bulletin:** A termly SACRE RE News Bulletin was established and distributed to all schools and interested parties..
5. Schools were notified of the **Farmington Scholarships** available to teachers of RE.
6. **Inter Faith News Bulletins** were shared with schools
<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-e-bulletin>
7. Information was shared on **Visit My Mosque**
<http://muslimcouncilwales.org.uk/visit-my-mosque-2017/>
8. A list of free resources for schools was distributed.
9. Information on **visits and visitors** in South Wales was distributed to schools.
10. The **CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN** was shared with schools.

2.4 TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

Aim: To ensure that teachers are able to access appropriate continuing professional development.

Action

1. Due to the lack of take up of advertised courses and the subsequent need for cancellation, no RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year.

2.5 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Aim: To ensure that schools fulfil statutory requirements for collective worship and provide a worthwhile experience for pupils.

Action

1. SACRE monitors the sections of inspection reports that are concerned with collective worship and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If there are any issues such as the non-fulfilment of statutory requirements the LA follows this up. During the academic year 2016 – 2017 no such follow up action was necessary. The provision for collective worship had positive comments stating that schools were promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
2. In 2015-2016 SACRE resolved not to request self-evaluation from schools as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor statutory requirements, provision and quality of collective worship.

2.6 OTHER ISSUES

2.6 OTHER ISSUES

Aim: To ensure a more informed SACRE through providing regular updates on local and national issues.

WASACRE

SACRE has maintained its membership of WASACRE and receives termly feedback from meetings of the association by its representatives.

National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)

The RE Consultant to the Vale of Glamorgan SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf

Curriculum Review

SACRE has received regular updates on the development of the new curriculum and the implications for religious education.

RE and the Welsh Baccalaureate

SACRE received and discussed updates on the survey conducted by WASACRE on RE and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

Revision to A level and GCSE Examination Specifications

SACRE considered the issues surrounding the new A Level and GCSE Specifications for RS and updated schools accordingly.

Use of Incerts

Schools using the Incerts software were advised to ensure that they are using the correct set of Levels for Religious Education.

SECTION THREE

Summary of advice to the local authority on Religious Education

3.1 THE LOCALLY AGREED SYLLABUS

During the spring term 2008 Standing Conference endorsed and adopted a new agreed syllabus for the authority's schools to be implemented from September 2008. The agreed syllabus closely relates to *The National Exemplar Framework for RE*. Comprehensive support materials, including schemes of work and electronic *Progress in Learning* files for secondary schools, have already been issued to schools.

During the 2012 – 2013 academic year SACRE were made aware of the announcement by the Minister of Education and Skills of a pending review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales. This review would involve the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the identification of revisions to the current assessment and curriculum arrangements. In June 2013 Standing Conference endorsed the re-adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed syllabus, with an understanding that the syllabus would be reviewed once further information is received in relation to the assessment and National Curriculum review.

During the summer term meeting of 2014 SACRE expressed concern that teacher representatives reported that the teaching of religious education appeared to be suffering at the hands of certain curricular initiatives. SACRE resolved to send a letter to all Headteachers, and copied to the Chairs of Governing Bodies, reminding them of the statutory nature of religious education and the requirements to adhere to the agreed syllabus.

In spring 2015 SACRE considered the Donaldson Report on the review of the curriculum in Wales. It was noted that there would be implications for RE and the Agreed Syllabus. The Committee resolved to respond to the review as a SACRE before the 8th May 2015 deadline and in order to assist its own discussions would consider the report from NAPfRE (the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education) which met on 15th April to discuss the issues.

It was agreed to hold a special meeting in order for members to more fully discuss the review however, this meeting was subsequently cancelled. All members were invited to submit their views to the RE Consultant by email. The RE Consultant subsequently formulated a response to the review on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE and this was submitted as part of the Great Debate consultation process. SACRE will continue to monitor and respond to developments in this area.

In its spring 2015 meeting, SACRE began to consider the value of retaining the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus given the move towards a more flexible curriculum.

An Agreed Syllabus Conference was held on 8th June, 2016 to consider a) whether to remove the core units as a statutory component of the Agreed Syllabus and b) whether to strengthen the statement regarding the need to allocate sufficient time to RE. It was

resolved that due to insufficient responses from schools a decision could not be made. It was agreed to resend the request for a response relating to the core units. It was agreed that a statement regarding time allocation would be drafted and schools would be consulted. The Agreed Syllabus Conference would be reconvened in the autumn term 2016. The Agreed Syllabus Conference in the Autumn Term was not quorate and the Agreed Syllabus Conference has not reconvened.

SACRE has received termly updates on the consultations undertaken in relation to the National Curriculum and assessment review. SACRE are awaiting further details from Welsh Government on the shape of RE in the curriculum, and advice from WASACRE, before beginning any RE agreed syllabus review.

3.2 STANDARDS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

EXAMINATION RESULTS

SACRE considered examination performance in the secondary schools for 2016. The examination results for Rhondda Cynon Taf are compared with the Local Consortium, the All – Wales figures and with the results of the previous years. SACRE members are also informed of the percentage of the year 11 cohort being entered for the religious studies GCSE examinations. The examination results are sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority.

Details are published in Appendix 4 along with results for 2015 and 2016.

GCSE Religious Studies

- There was a considerable decrease in entries for the GCSE Religious Studies course in 2016 with 872 candidates from 14 schools. In 2015 there were 1030 candidates from 16 schools and in 2014, 959 candidates from 17 schools. In 2013 there were 812 candidates over 16 schools, which is comparable with the 2016 entry. There was a slight decrease in the All – Wales figure with 11051 candidates compared to 11,341 in 2015 and 11,368 students in 2014. There were 11,414 students in 2013 compared with 10,221 in 2012 and 9,464 in 2011.
- The cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2016 was 33% which is lower than both the 38.5% entry in 2015 and the entry for 2014 at 35.2%. The entry for 2013 was higher at 30.45% and the entry in 2016 is also higher than the figures for 2012 (27.4%) and 2011 (29.5%).
- **The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 96.9 % which is comparable to 97.2% in 2015 and with previous performance. The Consortium performance is the same at 96.9%. The All Wales figure of 97.8% is slightly higher.**
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 67.2% which is comparable to the figure of 67.1% in 2015. It remains below the performances of 2014 (70%), 2013 (70.94%) and the performance of 2012 (70.9%). Performance at A* - C of 67.1% in RCT is below the Consortium figure of 69.2% and the All Wales figure of 72%.

- The overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 24.4% which is fractionally higher than 24% in 2015 and comparable with the performance of 2014 at 24.1%. It is below 2013 (30.91%), 2012 (28.7%) and 2011 (27.7%). It remains below the Consortium performance of 29.1% and below the All Wales figure of 27.8%.

GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

- In 2016 there was a decrease in the **number of students** sitting the GCSE Religious Studies short course at **1792 students**. In 2015 there had been a significant increase in entry where 1889 students were entered compared with 969 students entered in 2014. In 2013 there were 1655 students, in 2012 there were 1442 candidates and in 2011 there were 1378 students entered. Across Wales 11,666 students were entered in comparison to 10,098 students entered compared with 12,191 in 2014 and 12,765 students in 2013 and 13,070 in 2012.
- Some schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf enter almost a full cohort and others have a selected entry. The average cohort **entry** for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2016 was **60.8%** which was lower than 70.7% in 2015 when it almost doubled the performance of 2014 at 35.5%. This was higher than the average cohort entry in 2013 which was 62.05% and for 2012 (51.7%), 2011 (49.1%) and 63.4% in 2010.
- The overall % of **A* - G grades** for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2015 was **91.6%** which is comparable to the previous year when it was 92.7% and only slightly below 93.9% in 2014 and 2013 (93.23%). It remains below the performance of 2012 (97.7%) and 2011 (96.9%). Performance at A*-G is slightly below the Consortium figure of 92.6%. It is, however, higher than the All Wales figure of 90.6%.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2016 was 52.5% which was comparable to 2015 at 52.1%. This is higher than the performance of 50.4% in 2014 and above the performance in 2013 of 49.37%. It remains below the performance of 2012 (56.7%) and above the performance of 2011 (45.6%). The % figure of 52.1% is below the Consortium performance of 55.4% but significantly above the All Wales figure of 45.4%.
- The overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2016 17.4%. This has risen from the performances in 2015 at 15.1% and 11.1% in 2014. It was comparable to the 2013 performance of 17.10%. The 2016 performance is below the Consortium performance of 18.9% but significantly above the All Wales figure of 11.4%.

AS level Religious Studies

- SACRE has not previously analysed results of AS Level Religious Studies.
- It will be useful to compare the results next year following the introduction of the new WJEC GCE A Level specification.
- Students achieving A grades in Rhondda Cynon Taf (12.9%) are currently performing below the average of the Consortium at 20.1%. The A-C grades

(63.6%) remain lower than the Consortium figures of 73.5%. At 93.5% the A-E gap in achievement in Rhondda Cynon Taf is not as wide in comparison to the average Consortium figure of 95.8%.

A level Religious Studies

- 2016 saw a significant rise in the numbers of students being entered for A Level Religious Studies. **179 were entered** from 16 schools in comparison to 151 in 2015. This figure has continued to rise. In 2014 there were 140 candidates and in 2013 154 students were entered. In 2012, 155 were entered. The number of candidates who sat the examination across Wales remained consistent at 1446 compared to 1,441 in 2015, 1,432 in 2014 and 1,422 in 2013. In 2016 entries were comparable to the number of entries for 2012 (1,447) but higher than entries in 2011 (1,301).
- The 2016 % pass rate for grades **A* – G** decreased significantly to **90.5%** from 2015 when it was 98%. Performance is lower than the Consortium figure of 93% and with the All Wales figure of 99%.
- The % pass rate for grades **A* – C** saw a decrease at **67%** in 2016 from 71.5% in 2015. This year's figure is comparable to the 2014 performance of 65.71%, but is significantly below the figure for 2013 of 75.32% and for 2012 (77.4%). Performance at A*-C is below the Consortium figure of 79.7% and the All Wales figure of 79%.
- **12.3%** of students achieved **A*-A grades** in 2016. This is significantly below the performance in 2015 when 19.2% of students achieved A* - A grade. However, it remains higher than the performance of 2014 at 9.29%. It is slightly lower than the figures of 2013 at 13.64% and the performance of 2012 (16.8%) but comparable to the figure for 2011(12.2%). Performance at A*-A is significantly below the Consortium performance of 21.3% and the All Wales figure of 19%.

KEY STAGE 3 DATA

Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf SACRE also consider the levels awarded by teachers to pupils at the end of key stage 3. Comparisons are made with previous performance in religious education. The data is sent to all secondary schools within the Local Authority.

End of key stage 3 levels are published in Appendix 5.

SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORTS

SACRE, with the LA's agreement and co-operation, receives reports from professional officers on standards and provision and reviews summary reports of inspection findings as well as Estyn surveys as they occur.

During 2017 fourteen primary schools, one special school and one secondary school were inspected in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements.

Several schools in the Local Authority have positive links with local churches. It was noted that in one school teachers provide good opportunities, through topic work and religious education, for pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures and their role as global citizens. In another report it was noted that many pupils in key stage 2 write effectively for different purposes across the curriculum, for example in science and religious education. In another school the study of other religions and countries, such as Uganda, develops pupils' awareness of life in the wider world.

Letters were sent to each of the schools from SACRE acknowledging the respective good practice.

SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

SACRE had resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. During 2013 – 2014 two SACRE representatives agreed to share their self-evaluation with members. Members were supportive of this method of reporting schools' self-evaluation and expressed a wish that it continues to be shared with SACRE. However, during 2014 – 2015 the decision to request self-evaluation reports was being reviewed by the School Improvement Officers to determine if this was the LA's preferred method of monitoring. It was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not continue to use the school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

3.3 METHODS OF TEACHING, CHOICE OF TEACHING MATERIALS, TEACHER TRAINING

3.3.1 TEACHING MATERIALS

A wide range of teaching materials have been made know to schools by SACRE as follows:

Holocaust Memorial Day

All schools were informed of the 2017 Holocaust Memorial Day theme and that Holocaust resources can be found on their website www.hmd.org.uk – these include lesson plans, film clips, case studies, collective worship materials and worksheets suitable for primary to post 16 students.

RE News

Schools were advised that the formerly published RE News was now available to view on line at the following address: www.religious-education-wales.org

Guidance on the Withdrawal Clause

Gill Vaisey, an Executive member of WASACRE and RE Consultant, has is written a guidance document for schools on managing the right of withdrawal from RE. This will be produced by WASACRE as a resource to be shared with all schools across Wales.

SACRE RE News Bulletin: A termly SACRE RE News Bulletin was established and distributed to all schools and interested parties. Information on **visits and visitors** in South Wales was distributed to schools was also distributed.

Farmington Scholarships

Scholars are free to study any aspect of Religious Education they wish but preference will be given to applicants whose work can be seen to be of direct value to the teaching of RE in schools.

The Scholarship will cover the cost of tuition, board and lodging where appropriate, essential local travel and, by negotiation with the school, the salary of a replacement teacher up to point 6 of the main pay scale.

School/home-based Scholarships may be taken in the form of day release, for instance for one day a week over a term or over the year or for continuous periods up to a maximum of 30 days.

University-based Scholarships may be taken as a block of up to eight weeks or in the form of day release up to 30 days.

For more information schools can visit www.farmington.ac.uk or E-mail: farmington@hmc.ox.ac.uk

Interfaith News Bulletins were shared with schools

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/news/ifn-e-bulletin>

Information was shared on **Visit My Mosque**. In its 3rd year Visit My Mosque, is a national campaign that has grown from strength to strength. IN 2017 year there were over 150 mosques open across the country, with 10 Welsh mosques participating on Sunday 5th February. This was an opportunity for the wider community to visit their local mosque, meet the local Muslims, learn about the religion of Islam, ask questions and make new friends. Information was found on <http://muslimcouncilwales.org.uk/visit-my-mosque-2017/> and shared with schools.

A list of **free resources** for schools was also distributed these included suggested useful websites as was information on **visits and visitors** in South Wales was distributed to schools.

The Churches Together in Wales **CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN** was shared with schools <http://www.cytun.org.uk/index.html>. CYTŪN produces bulletins throughout the year.

3.3.2 INSET

Central South Consortium INSET

Due to the lack of take up of advertised courses and the subsequent need for cancellation, no RE courses were offered by the local authority via Central South Consortium this year.

SECTION FOUR

Summary of advice on collective worship

Monitoring of collective worship has continued through a review of inspection report findings.

4.1 SCHOOL INSPECTION REPORTS

During 2016-2017 fourteen primary schools, one special school and one secondary school were inspected in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Estyn Common Inspection Framework notes that inspectors should only report on instances where the school does not comply with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship. Estyn noted no instances of non-compliance with statutory requirements in relation to collective worship.

There is reference to the quality of collective worship in eleven of the inspection reports.

- Assemblies encourage them to reflect on their own attitudes and values helpfully.
- Staff foster pupils' understanding of fairness and honesty effectively and provide regular opportunities for pupils to share and celebrate their achievements through assembly.
- Collective worship sessions successfully promote respect and sensitivity towards others and help to foster a close-knit community ethos in the school.
- Staff develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs effectively through daily collective worship.
- Acts of collective worship promote tolerance and fairness effectively.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development effectively promoted through the thought provoking assemblies. As a result, pupils, benefit from opportunities to explore their own beliefs and develop an understanding of right and wrong.
- Staff promote respect for diversity and racial equality successfully, for example through assemblies.

SACRE wrote to all schools to acknowledge their good practice.

4.2 SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

SACRE had resolved to use school self-evaluation as a means of fulfilling its statutory responsibility to monitor provision and standards in religious education. During 2013 – 2014 two SACRE representatives agreed to share their self-evaluation with members. Members were supportive of this method of reporting schools' self-evaluation and expressed a wish that it continues to be shared with SACRE. However, during 2014 – 2015 the decision to request self-evaluation reports was being reviewed by the School Improvement Officers to determine if this was the LA's preferred method of monitoring. It was resolved at the summer 2016 meeting that SACRE would not continue to use the

school self-evaluation proforma as a means of monitoring provision and standards in religious education.

4.3 DETERMINATIONS

As last year, no applications were received from schools for determinations to be made on the lifting of the requirements for collective worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

SECTION FIVE

Summary of other issues

5.1 WASACRE

SACRE continues to support the work of the Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE) and recognises the value of the body in promoting religious education and collective worship on a national basis. During 2016- 2017 issues considered at WASACRE meetings have been fully reported back to SACRE. The RE Consultant to SACRE is also Secretary to WASACRE.

5.2 National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPfRE)

The RE Consultant to RCT SACRE is a member of NAPfRE and regularly attends meetings on SACRE's behalf. In this way SACRE is able to keep abreast of developments in Wales and play a crucial role in informing decisions and policies that affect religious education.

5.3 Curriculum Review: Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales.

SACRE has received termly updates on curriculum development and will continue to monitor further developments in the curriculum review and respond accordingly on an ongoing basis as appropriate. RE remains a statutory curriculum requirement from reception. In the new curriculum it should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience. Welsh Government agreed to send a termly newsletter to SACREs outlining the developmental work of the Pioneer Schools in relation to RE in the Humanities. The most recent newsletter refers to the Humanities working group recommendation to follow the 'Big Ideas'/What Matters approach as exemplified within Wynne Harlen et al's *Working with Big Ideas in Science*. This identifies the key knowledge/concepts, skills and competencies for each discipline within the Humanities and then 'building' the AoLE by identifying overarching 'big ideas'/what matters key concepts that will be drawn across the disciplines. The next strand in the development work will begin during the Autumn term. The Executive Summary and the Humanities working group's recommendations will be discussed by SACRE at its Autumn 2017 meeting and a suitable response will be made to Welsh Government if necessary.

Appendix 1

SACRE MEMBERSHIP
AS AT 31ST JULY 2016

LA: 6 Places

Religions and denominations: 14 Places

Teacher Associations: 10 Places

ORGANISATION	NAME
Officers	Esther Thomas RCT Sue Walker RCT Emma Griffiths RCT Clerk to SACRE Paula Webber RE Consultant
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Mark Adams
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Jeffrey Elliott
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Geraint Hopkins
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Jayne Brencher
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	County Borough Councillor Margaret Griffiths
Church in Wales	Father Haydn England-Simon
Church in Wales	The Reverend Peter Lewis
Catholic Church	Wendy Lavagna
The Evangelical Movement of Wales	Mr Brian Rogers
Baptist Union of Wales	The Reverend David Brownutt
Bahá'í	Carol Adams
Jewish	Prof. David Cohen
Sikh	Mr Gurwinder Singh
SHA	Dr Sue Mitchell
NASUWT	Mr Mathew Maidment (Bryncelynnog Comp
NUT	Lynsey Parsons (Cwmlai Primary)
ATL	Dr Alec Clark

NAHT	Mr Rob James (YG Y Cymer)
ICAC	Mrs Llinos Rees (YG Y Cymer)
Valleys Religious Education Teachers Association	Mrs Lynda Davies (Pontypridd High School)
TBC	Mr Justin O'Sullivan (Cardinal Newman RC Comp.)

Appendix 2

RECORD OF SACRE MEETINGS

Three meetings of SACRE were held during the 2016 – 2017 academic year:

- 16th November, 2016
- 15th March, 2017
- 26th June 2017

16th November, 2016

- Apologies
- Election of chair person
- Election of vice chair person
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters Arising
- Responses to the Questionnaire on Welsh Baccalaureate
- SACRE Membership
- SACRE Constitution
- Annual Report 2015 – 2016
- Monitoring provision and standards - RE and Collective Worship
- Letters and survey sent to RCT secondary schools with regards to statutory requirements for RE
- Curriculum Review
- Lead Practitioner work to support the implementation of the new RS GCSE
- WASACRE minutes and business
- SACRE News Bulletin items
- Holocaust Memorial Day 2017
- Future meeting dates

15th March, 2017

- Apologies
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising
- SACRE Constitution and Membership
- Monitoring provision and standards
- Key Stage 3 Levels Data
- Estyn Thematic Review of RE at KS2 and KS3 in 2017 / 2018
- Visits and Visitors for RE
- Resources and support for schools
- Curriculum Review
- NAPfRE 'What Is Good RE?' document Lead Practitioners for new GCSE Specification
- Religious Studies examination results 2016
- Mosque Open Day – Visit My Mosque Project

- Report from meeting with Manon Jones, Welsh Government
- WASACRE minutes and business
- Letters to schools with regards to statutory requirements for RE
- SACRE News Bulletin items
- Religious Diversity In Primary Schools Project
- Schedule of future meetings:

26th June 2017

- Apologies
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising
- SACRE Membership
- Monitoring provision and standards - RE and Collective Worship
- GCSE/GCE Examination data 2016
- Schools inspected and self evaluation reports
- Curriculum development update and Lead Practitioner
- Welsh Government planning group: Update
- WASACRE minutes and business including voting for the WASACRE Executive Committee
- SACRE News Bulletin
- NATRE/Trinity St. David RE Conference
- Dates and venues of future meetings for 2017-2018

Appendix 3

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH THIS REPORT HAS BEEN SENT

- All schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- DfES
- Welsh Government
- Estyn
- Directors of Education, all other Welsh LAs
- Wales Association of SACREs
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Welsh National Centre for Religious Education-Bangor
- Central South Consortium
- Church in Wales (Diocese of Llandaff)
- The Roman Catholic (Archdiocese of Cardiff)
- Other Churches
- Association of Religious Education Teachers in Wales
- National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
- Religious Education Movement Wales
- Cytun
- Swansea Metropolitan University

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Examination Results Analysis 2016 - GCSE Religious Studies

	RCT 2014	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	All Wales 2016
A* - A	24.1%	24%	24.4%	29.1%	27.8%
A* - C	70%	67.1%	67.2%	69.2%	72.0%
A* - G	98%	97.2%	96.9%	96.9%	97.8%
Entry	959 students (35.2% of cohort) 17 schools	1030 students (38.5% of cohort) 16 schools	872 students (33% of cohort) 14 schools	4482 students (46.6% of cohort)	11051 students (34.3% of cohort)

Examination Results Analysis 2016 - GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

	RCT 2014	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	All Wales 2016
A* - A	11.1%	15.1%	17.4%	18.9%	11.4%
A* - C	50.4%	52.1%	52.5%	55.4%	45.4%
A* - G	93.9%	92.7%	91.6%	92.6%	90.6%
Entry	969 students (35.5% of cohort) 15 schools	1889 students (70.7% of cohort) 16 schools	1792 students (67.9% of cohort) 15 schools	5848 students (60.8%)	11666 students (36.2%)

Examination Results Analysis 2016 - AS Level Religious Studies

	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	All Wales 2016
A	12.9%	20.1%	Figures not available
A - C	63.6%	73.5%	
A - E	93.5%	95.8%	
Entry	217	740 students	

Examination Results Analysis 2015 - A level Religious Studies

	RCT 2014	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	All Wales 2016
A* - A	9.29%	19.2%	12.3%	21.3%	19.0%
12A* - C	65.71%	71.5%	67.0%	79.7%	79.0%
A* - G	96.43%	98%	90.5%	93.0%	99.0%
Entry	140 students 16 schools	151 Students 16 schools	179 students 16 schools	586 students	1446 students

Consortium percentages		0.0	0.1	1.3	8.3	36.6	34.6	16.2	1.7	0.1	0.6	0.3	100.0 0	89.3	52.7	18.1
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Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council SACRE

Examination Results Analysis 2017

Points to note:

Results are for pupils in NC Year 11 (PLASC 2017)

For consistency with WG published figures data includes entries taken in previous years
CSC figures are not necessarily comparable to WG figures due to discounting being applied by WG if candidates enter more than one examination in the same subject group.

GCSE Religious Studies

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	ALL WALES 2017
A* - A	24%	24.40%	20.00%	27.80%	24.70%
A* - C	67.10%	67.20%	66.20%	71.50%	68.30%
A* - G	97.20%	96.90%	97.90%	98.50%	97.50%
Entry	1030 students (38.5% of cohort) 16 schools	872 students (33% of cohort) 14 schools	999 students (38.8% of cohort) 16 schools	4789 students (50.8% of cohort)	12401 students (39.5% of cohort)

Comments

- There was an increase in entries for the GCSE Religious Studies course in 2017 with 999 candidates from 16 schools. In 2016 there were 872 candidates from 14 schools. 2017 entries are almost in line with those of 2015 when there were 1030 candidates from 16 schools. There was also an increase in the All – Wales figure with 12401 candidates compared to 11051 candidates in 2016 and 11,341 in 2015.
- The cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 38.8% which is an increase on the 2016 entry which was 33% and 38.5% in 2015.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 97.9% which was higher than 96.9 % in 2016 and comparable to 97.2% in 2015 and with previous performance. The Consortium performance is the fractionally higher at 98.5%. The All Wales figure of 97.5% is fractionally lower.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 66.2% which is fractionally lower than the figures of 67.2% in 2016 and 67.1% in 2015. Performance at A* - C of 66.2% in RCT is below the Consortium figure of 71.5% and the All Wales figure of 68.3%.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council SACRE

Examination Results Analysis 2017

- In 2017 the overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 20.0% which is a decrease from the 2016 figure of 24.4% and than 24% in 2015. It remains below the Consortium performance of 27.8% and below the All Wales figure of 24.7%.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council SACRE

Examination Results Analysis 2017

Examination Results Analysis 2017 - GCSE Religious Studies Short Course

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	All Wales 2017
A* - A	15.1%	17.4%	2.4%	7.5%	9.8%
A* - C	52.1%	52.5%	28.9%	34.3%	39.6%
A* - G	92.7%	91.6%	87.1%	86.9%	90.2%
Entry	1889 students (70.7% of cohort) 16	1792 students (67.9% of cohort) 15	868 students (33.7% of cohort)	2607 students (28%)	9343 students (29.8%)

*EOTAS – Education Other than at School

Comments

- In 2017 there was a noticeably significant decrease in the number of students sitting the GCSE Religious Studies short course at 868 students from 16 schools in comparison to 1792 students from 15 schools in 2016. In 2015 entries were at 1889 students. Across Wales there was also a significant drop in numbers of candidates entered at 9343 students in comparison to 11,666 students in 2016. In 2015 entries throughout Wales were 10,098.
- In 2017 schools used selective entry, whereas in 2016 some schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf entered almost a full cohort. The average cohort entry for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 33.7% in comparison to 60.8% in 2016 and 70.7% in 2015.
- The overall % of A* - G grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 decreased to 87.1% from 91.6% in 2016 and the previous year when it was 92.7%. It is, however, slightly higher than the Consortium figure of 86.9% but is below the All-Wales performance of 90.2%.
- The overall % of A* - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 was 28.9%. This is a significant decrease from 2016 performance which was 52.5%. In 2015 performance was also significantly higher at 52.1%. The Consortium figures and those across Wales have also significantly decreased this year. The % figure of 28.9% remains below the Consortium performance of 34.3% and the All Wales figure of 39.6%.
- The overall % of A* - A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2017 is 2.4%. This is a significant decrease from the 2016 figure of 17.4% and the performances in 2015 at 15.1%. The 2017 performance is below the Consortium performance of 7.5% and the All Wales figure of 9.8%.

Examination Results Analysis 2017

AS Level Religious Studies

	RCT 2016	Consortium 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017
A	12.9%	20.1%	0.0%	7.1%
A - C	63.6%	73.5%	35.3%	40.2%
A - E	93.5%	95.8%	67.6%	76.4%
Entry	217 students	740 students	34 students 12 schools	127 students

Comments

- SACRE first analysed results of AS Level Religious Studies in 2016.
- The new WJEC GCE A Level specification was introduced in September 2016 with these first examination results in 2017 for AS Level.
- There is a significant decrease in the number of students who sat the AS Level examination compared to 2016.
- The overall % of A - E grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 67.6% which is significantly lower than in 2016 at 93.5%. Performance is lower than the Consortium figure of 76.4%.
- The overall % of A - C grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was 35.3% which is significantly below the figure of 63.6% in 2016. Performance at A-C is below the Consortium figure of 40.2%
- The overall % of A grades for Rhondda Cynon Taf was **0.0%** compared to 12.9% in 2016. Performance at A grade in the Consortium figure of 7.1%

Examination Results Analysis 2017

A level Religious Studies

	RCT 2015	RCT 2016	RCT 2017	Consortium 2017	All Wales 2017
A* - A	19.2%	12.3%	9.7%	18.9%	18.2%
12A* - C	71.5%	67.0%	73.1%	75.2%	78.1%
A* - E	98%	90.5%	97.9%	95.7%	99.8%
Entry	151 Students	179 students	145 students	513 students	1305 students

Comments

- 2017 saw a drop in entries for A Level Religious Studies at 145 students from 14 schools compared to 179 candidates from 16 schools in 2016. This is comparable to 151 entries in 2015. The number of candidates who sat the examination across Wales is marginally lower at 1305 students in comparison to 1446 in 2016 and 1,441 in 2015.
- The 2017 % pass rate for grades A* – E increased significantly to 97.9% from 90.5% 2016. This is comparable to performance in 2015 when it was 98%. Performance is higher than the Consortium figure of 95.7 % but lower than the All Wales figure of 99.8%.
- The % pass rate for grades A* – C saw an increase to 73.1% from 67% in 2016 and 71.5% in 2015. Performance at A*-C is below the Consortium figure of 75.2% and the All Wales figure of 78.1%.
- 9.7% of students achieved A*-A grades in 2017. This is a decrease from 12.3% in 2016 and significantly below the performance in 2015 when 19.2% of students achieved A* - A grade. However, it remains higher than the

performance of 2014 at 9.29%. Performance at A*-A is significantly below the Consortium performance of 18.9% and the All Wales figure of 18.2%.