



### SECTION 1: Introduction

#### 1.1 Words from the Chair of SACRE

It is with great pleasure I have continued to chair the Wokingham SACRE, which is made up of a group of dynamic members, all of whom care deeply about the provision of RE for the children and young people who attend Wokingham Schools. As a SACRE we have worked as an independent body, but also alongside our SACRE friends across all of Berkshire, to ensure that all children and young people are able to explore their own lives, the lives of others and engage intellectually with different religions.

The ongoing pandemic has presented us all with challenges to our daily lives; children and young people have been affected greatly. The teachers of Wokingham have continued to provide outstanding RE for our children and young people. This is clearly evident from our conversations with teachers at network meetings and training courses, and from the report of the one full inspection of a Wokingham school which took place during this academic year. We have not had the benefit of A-Level and GCSE data again this year to support our monitoring of provision in schools, as our secondary colleagues have worked hard to assess their own classes and award grades to pupils. The SACRE has identified some concerns regarding possible gaps in RE provision in some secondary schools, which we will explore further in order to support these schools appropriately once the considerable challenges of the pandemic for schools have eased.

This year we have continued to work with our friends across Berkshire SACREs to further cement the work of the Pan-Berkshire Hub and it is with great pleasure we were able to complete the 'Real People Real Faith,' project. NATRE are kindly hosting these videos on their website and I would implore you to watch them: they are the culmination of true partnership.

We have been in a fortunate position to organise a Wokingham 'Festival of RE.' Every school in the borough has been gifted a resource, and in the autumn term of 2021 teachers will be provided with several training courses run by experts at RE Today. We have been able to continue our termly primary network meetings (which continue to be well attended) and we are very pleased that this year these have also been attended by some secondary school colleagues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the SACRE who have sadly left us to move into pastures new. We have been very fortunate to have had a stable membership for many years and it is always hard to say goodbye- however we wish them well in their new endeavours. The Wokingham SACRE is only effective if it has strong members and I am proud to work alongside the committed, dynamic and amazing members of the Wokingham SACRE, who give up their time freely. In addition, I would like to thank Angela Hill, our dedicated, serene and thoughtful advisor. Finally, I would like to thank the Local Authority for their ongoing and unwavering supporting of the SACRE in particular our link officer, Emily Waddilove, and clerk (who keeps us all in check), Catherine Newport.

I hope you enjoy reading this report- it gives a flavour of the ethos of the Wokingham SACRE!

Stephen Vegh, Chair: Wokingham SACRE

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## SECTION 1: Introduction *continued*

### 1.2 SACRE Overview

The Wokingham SACRE has met once each term to progress its work, structuring this through an agreed action plan. All meetings for the academic year 2020 – 2021 took place online, via Microsoft Teams. These meetings were livestreamed in accordance with Covid-19 protocols for public meetings. All meetings were quorate.

### 1.3 Working Groups Overview

The SACREs of the six unitary authorities across Berkshire, namely, West Berkshire, Reading, Bracknell Forest, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham, have a well-established working group, called the Pan Berkshire SACRE Hub. Wokingham SACRE is an active member of the Hub. Wokingham SACRE's Chair and Vice Chair as well as its RE Consultant attend Hub meetings, representing the SACRE. Hub meetings are usually held termly.

During the academic year 2020 to 2021, there were two Pan Berkshire Hub meetings.

Additional informal meetings between the SACREs' RE consultants were also conducted to prepare for the launch event of the 'Real Faith: Real People' videos and resources.

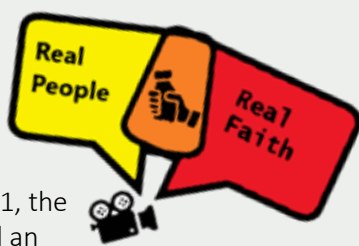
### Launch Event Real People: Real Faith videos and resources

On Wednesday 28th April 2021, the Pan Berkshire SACRE Hub held an online event to launch a set of videos for use in primary and secondary RE classrooms to teachers and SACRE members. The video and resources are being hosted on the NATRE (National Association for Teachers of Religious Education) website and can be viewed here: <https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/real-people-real-faith/> The event launched the videos and classroom resources produced with funding from the Westhill NASACRE Award.

Based on key questions from the Pan Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus (2018-2023), the Hub worked with teachers, SACRE members and members of local faith communities to produce a series of videos and accompanying classroom resources for use with pupils from key stage 1 to 3. These videos feature local representatives from faith communities in their places of worship.

### Preparing for syllabus review

The Pan Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus is due for review by 2023. This academic year, the Pan Berkshire Hub began to consider its approach to the syllabus review, devising a comprehensive survey to give teachers and leaders of RE an opportunity to voice their opinions on the current locally agreed syllabus.



## SECTION 2: Religious Education

### 2.1 The locally agreed syllabus and RE in schools

The SACRE believes that most, if not all, academies in the borough are using the Pan Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus. The syllabus is regularly discussed at primary teachers' network meetings, with the training elements of these meetings often focussing on aspects of the syllabus. The Pan Berkshire Hub Westhill Award project, 'Real People: Real Faith', produced videos and resources directly linking to key questions in the syllabus, and teachers have access to extensive resources, freely available, to support them to teach the syllabus effectively.

In the forthcoming academic year, when preparations for the syllabus review begin in earnest, teachers will be encouraged to complete a comprehensive survey, giving the SACRE greater insight into the extent to which the Pan Berkshire Locally Agreed Syllabus is being utilised to create RE curricula in Wokingham's schools.

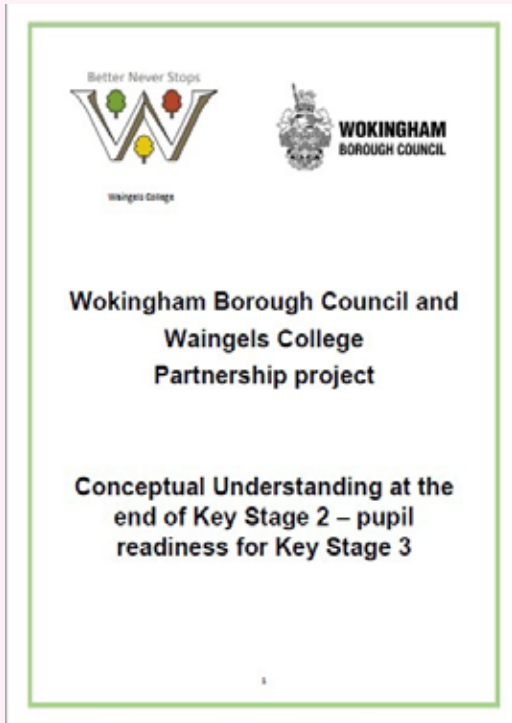
### 2.2 Standards and monitoring of RE

Conversations with teachers at network meetings and training events strongly suggest that teachers have continued to provide excellent RE provision despite the challenges of the pandemic.

GCSE and A Level Religious Studies outcomes data have not been available to the LA for the last two years. These data would, ordinarily, form part of the SACRE's monitoring. SACRE uses such data to monitor the percentage of students entered for GCSE Religious Studies, as well as the standards achieved. SACRE has expressed some concerns, based on previous years' data, about a low number of entries for the GCSE in some schools. Contact will be made with schools to discuss this, at an appropriate time, when pressure relating to the challenges of the ongoing pandemic is less prevalent.

As part of the SACRE's development plan, members were to be encouraged to visit schools. Due to the ongoing situation around the pandemic, this has not been possible.

Primary and secondary teachers worked collaboratively with the SACRE and its RE Consultant to produce a page on Religious Education for the Wokingham Schools' Conceptual Understanding document. This document sets out the key knowledge, understanding and skills that Wokingham teachers agree that pupils should acquire in primary school to aid smooth transition to secondary school. The intention is to promote a common understanding that will raise standards in both primary and secondary teaching and learning in RE.



### Monitoring of Ofsted Inspection Reports

We monitor Ofsted reports for any comments about collective worship and RE. Comments identifying good practice are shared via our annual reports. Only one full inspection (and one interim visit and one monitoring visit) was carried out in Wokingham by Ofsted during this academic year, as for much of the year Ofsted inspections were not being carried out as usual due to the pandemic. None of the three Ofsted reports specifically mention RE or collective worship, but the report of the full inspection makes general comments that will include the teaching of RE:

### 2.3 Teacher training and materials and advice for schools

#### Training and networking opportunities for teachers provided by Wokingham SACRE

##### Teacher network meetings

Primary teachers have continued to attend termly network meetings online. This year, the spring and summer meetings were made available to secondary colleagues, as teachers worked collaboratively to produce a page on RE for inclusion in the Wokingham 'Conceptual Understanding' document. This document is intended to aid pupils'



▶ In what ways do science, belief and religion interact and what difference might this make?

▶ Why might it matter that sacred texts are open to interpretation?

transition from primary to secondary school by clearly and concisely articulating the key concepts that pupils should understand before moving on to secondary education. Network meetings offer updates on both national and local developments in RE, as well as providing a training focus for teachers based on their present needs and priorities. Teachers continue to appreciate the network meetings which are well attended. At the summer meeting, teachers were updated on the Pan-Berkshire Hub's 'Real People, Real Faith' project, from which videos and resources were launched in April.

The training focus for each meeting continues to be decided democratically by the teachers attending the previous network meeting. Teachers attending the network meetings are always enthusiastic. They openly share good practice with one another as well as exchanging ideas and discussing concerns. Teachers of varying experience continue to participate at network meetings, which provide a constructive and supportive forum for teachers to develop their practice in the teaching of RE and engagement with collective worship. All of this is also true in respect of the online meetings held this year.

#### Primary RE Subject Leader training

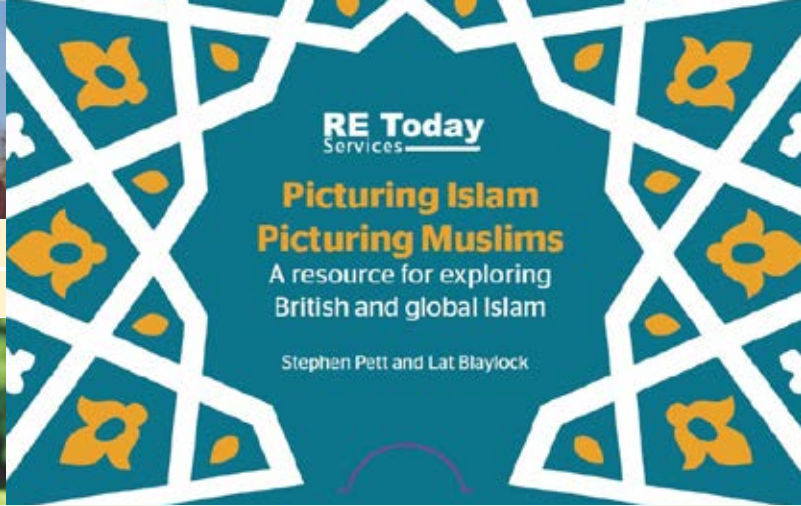
Training for Primary RE subject leaders was very well-attended, with 20 teachers participating in January 2021. Teachers reported that the training was of a high standard and equipped them with useful information and resources for embarking upon or developing their role as RE subject leader at their school, or as a reminder of the main responsibilities of the role.

#### Secondary GCSE RS training

Although only four teachers attended the GCSE RS training, those who did were extremely positive in their feedback, expressing that the training had been useful, of high quality and being keen to share ideas and resources with their colleagues. SACRE is reflecting on the low attendance and considering a variety of options for engaging secondary teachers of RE with future training offers.

#### Materials and Advice to schools

Teachers receive comprehensive local and national RE updates at all network meetings. In addition, updates around RE, collective worship and SACRE are published in the Local Authority's newsletter on a termly basis. This is circulated to all schools in the Local Authority.



In the summer term, Wokingham SACRE purchased well-regarded RE resources published by RE Today for its schools, which were provided free of charge:

- The 'What Happens In...?' primary RE resource was provided to all primary schools
- The 'Picturing Islam, Picturing Muslims' resource was provided to all secondary schools

The SACRE arranged a package of training for all schools, for the forthcoming autumn term (2021). Training to enable teachers to use the above resources effectively in the RE classroom was built into this training package.

## SECTION 3: Collective Worship

### 3.1 Standards and monitoring of collective worship

Ofsted have not raised any concerns with regards to the compliance with the law or standards in relation to collective worship in Wokingham's schools.

### 3.2 Determinations

Wokingham SACRE has not received any applications for determinations.

### 3.3 Teacher training provided

Wokingham SACRE provides extensive training and networking opportunities to its schools. Training requirements are determined by teacher requests at network meetings. As teachers have indicated that their training needs relate to RE, no specific training has been provided this year relating to collective worship.

News of training opportunities from a range of respected providers is shared in termly Local Authority newsletters and at network meetings.

### 3.4 Materials and advice for schools

The SACRE has distributed all relevant information relating to supporting collective worship in schools via termly network meetings and updates in the Local Authority's newsletter.

## SECTION 4: Links with other bodies

### 4.1 National bodies

Wokingham SACRE is an active member of NASACRE. SACRE members are given the opportunity each year, paid for by SACRE, to attend the NASACRE Conference and AGM. The SACRE's RE Consultant, Angela Hill, represents Wokingham SACRE at this event. She and all SACRE members are kept up to date with training offers from NASACRE and are invited to attend.

At the online conference in May 2021, Angela Hill co-facilitated the presentation on the Pan Berkshire Hub's Westhill Award Project, 'Real People: Real Faith'.

Wokingham SACRE supports Stop Ecocide International. This campaign is led by a group of international lawyers, researchers and diplomats who are working to make ecocide (damage or destruction of ecosystems) an international crime.

### 4.2 Local bodies

The Wokingham SACRE has established and active links with the Pan Berkshire SACREs Hub.

## SECTION 5: SACRE's own arrangements

### 5.1 Professional and administrative support and how the LA supports the SACRE

The LA provides the SACRE with an annual budget to fund its work, enabling it to fulfil its statutory duties as well as deliver training and network meetings free of charge to teachers, and contribute funding to the Berkshire SACRE Hub. The LA provides a clerk to the SACRE, who does much work to support the committee between meetings, including sharing useful information with teachers of RE; helping to recruit new members to the SACRE; and keeping the SACRE/RE area of the Wokingham Schools Hub website updated with training materials and guidance documents. An LA officer who is part of the school improvement team also provides much support to the SACRE and liaises with the RE advisor to support her work.

The RE advisor is recruited by the LA in partnership with the SACRE chair and vice-chair. Our current advisor, Angela Hill, is a national advisor for RE Today and a highly experienced and knowledgeable RE teacher and teacher trainer.

Two elected councillors are proactive members of the SACRE, and whole-heartedly support the SACRE's work. Cllr Jackie Rance recently took over from Cllr Graham Howe, and Cllr David Hare has been a longstanding SACRE member.

### **5.2 Membership, representation & recruitment**

The SACRE is active in recruiting members to represent all groups. It also considers co-opting those with skills, knowledge and experience who can help to develop its work.

Membership vacancies are discussed at meetings alongside the SACRE development plan. The SACRE has been recently seeking to recruit two new members for Group C – Teachers, teaching unions and educationalists – and a member for Group A from a Christian denomination other than the Church of England. The SACRE also has an ongoing vacancy for a Buddhist member in Group A, which it has been unable to fill to date, despite much effort. All other positions on the SACRE are filled.

### **5.3 Training for SACRE members**

All new SACRE members receive a guide to SACRE and the responsibilities associated with SACRE membership. The SACRE Clerk, LA Officer and RE Advisor are on hand to advise SACRE members.

All members are invited to attend all training provided for schools. They are also offered a place at the NASACRE Conference and AGM, paid for by the SACRE.

### **5.4 Finance given to SACRE for its work**

The LA provides an annual budget to the SACRE. Members shape the use of this funding, and are provided with budget updates by the LA Officer at each SACRE meeting.



## **The Pan-Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2018- 2023**