

**Rotherham Standing Advisory Council
for Religious Education (RSACRE)**

Annual Report 2013/2014

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Chair's Forward: Sept 2013 – July 2014

We have continued to take our calling to serve on RSACRE very seriously with a special emphasis this last year on developing both our Annual Conference and REwards Ceremony.

I was delighted to be elected as Chair for RSACRE and was extremely grateful to Gail Atkin, who having served as Chair, was willing to remain as vice chair and continue working alongside myself and Vanessa Gregory, Local Authority RE Advisor in leading RSACRE

Vanessa has continued to ably lead the team of members of RSACRE, inspiring us all to be effective and encouraging us to use our strengths and individual knowledge to best serve the group as a whole. She has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure things happen and events are organised.

To enable us to remain connected into the bigger national picture we once again invited Lat Blaylock (RE Today) to come and lead our annual conference.

This year's topic: Investigations, Creativity and Spiritual Development – was aimed at teachers of RE in primary and secondary schools, with an emphasis on spiritual and moral development and attitudes of tolerance and respect in the context of British Values. The conference was planned to give busy teachers lots of ready-to-use activities in making RE more focused on the values that pupils develop and ideas that they have.

In June we held our second REwards ceremony. Nominations were received in three of the four categories: - students, teachers and teams. Four students were nominated, along with one teacher and five teams. It was a tremendous celebration of good practise in RE across Rotherham.

RSACRE continues to work in partnership with Zaidah Ahmed MBE, our Schools' Community Cohesion Officer. Zaidah during a presentation at our February RSACRE meeting outlined her work with schools co-ordinating visits and festivals work, and community cohesion events. The School Linking Project was continuing with the theme 'One World One Community'. The Model United Nations was taking the crisis in Afghanistan as its focus and debate topic. The Roma Integration Project had been initiated to induct members of Rotherham's new and emerging communities in British law, health, education, culture and background. Zaidah informed RSACRE Members that the reporting of racist incidents had increased.

Mariam Shah, RSACRE representative and Regina Drabble, Development Worker talked of their work with “Who is our neighbour” at our February and June meetings. This project, led by the Methodist Church, aimed to create safe spaces for people to come together to talk about the things that were impacting on them. These issues included far right extremism, new and emerging communities, countering Islamophobia and getting groups together.

Having established a working party RSACRE members have continued to work on our Collective Worship Document due for release in September 2014. The RE Team continues to contribute greatly to the quality of Collective Worship experienced by our Rotherham Schools and has been able to contribute to the discussion around our Collective Worship document.

RSACRE continues to have a vital role within the LA and are actively seeking representation from the various religions and groups who are eligible to serve. It is our hope that we can build on the enthusiasm of the existing members in encouraging others to give of their time and experience.

Nicki Goodwin

1. Local Authority Support for RSACRE

The Local Authority has continued to provide annual support to RSACRE through secondment of a curriculum consultant (based full-time in a secondary school) and a Clerk to the RSACRE, including administrative support.

2. GCSE and A-level results: -

Numbers of students in Rotherham who have completed the GCSE and AS/A2 Religious Education and Religious Studies courses.

2012 – 1,223 students entered for the full-course GCSE – 71.5% A*-C / A* - G = 98%.

2012 – 641 students entered for the short-course – 29% A*-C / A*-G = 90.3%.

2012 – 33 students entered for the AS level – 15.2% A or B grades, 72.7% got A-E grades.

2012 – 59 students entered for the A2 level – 45.8% got A* - B, 100% for A* - E.

2013 – 1,134 students entered for the full-course GCSE – 71% A*-C / A* - G = 99.4%.

2013 – 399 students entered for the short-course – 25.3% A*-C / A*-G = 88.5%.

2013 – 24 students entered for the AS level – 20.8% A or B grades, 70.8% got A-E grades.

2013 – 77 students entered for the A2 level – 41.6% got A* - B, 100% for A* - E.

2014 – 1,175 students entered for the full-course GCSE – 63.5% A*-C / A* - G = 98%.

2014 – 15 students entered for the AS level – 46.7% A or B grades, 73.3% got A-E grades.

2014 – 62 students entered for the A2 level - 48.4% got A* - B, 100% for A* - E.

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL???

Further detailed validated statistics for GCSE can be found via the Department for Education website link: -

www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/

OFSTED/COLLEGES LINKS??

3. RSACRE meetings 2013/2014

The RSACRE meetings are chaired by Nicki Goodwin of Group A (Other Christian Denominations and other faiths). The role of vice-chair is filled by Gail Atkin, of Group B (the Church of England).

Three meetings were held in the school year on 10th October, 13th February and 16th June. They took place at Wingfield Business and Enterprise College, the Rotherham Town Hall and the New York Stadium respectively.

We were delighted to welcome several new members during 2013/2014, Roy Dyson (Group A – Catholic), T. Williams (A - Baha'i), T. Griffin (A - Humanist), L. Shaw (A - Salvation Army).

The agendas included standing items REwards, Collective Worship, Determinations, Training Opportunities, GCSE/A Level results and school and visiting speaker presentations.

The agenda and minutes from the RSACRE meetings held during 2013/2014 is below: -

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=437&Year=0>

4. Collective Worship and Determinations: -

Collective Worship and Determinations were discussed at each of the three RSACRE meetings held during 2013/2014.

Three Determinations were granted at the 16th June, 2014, meeting. This followed the Schools applying to renew their existing Determination from following a Collective Worship pattern that was 'mainly, broadly' Christian. A working party of RSACRE members attended assemblies at the Schools who had applied to quality assure the collective worship that was taking place.

The three schools that were granted a Determination were: -

- Broom Valley Community Primary School;
- Thornhill Primary School;
- Saint Ann's Junior and Infant School.

The Determinations would last for a period of three school years.

5. Community Cohesion update: -

Zaidah Ahmed MBE, Schools' Community Cohesion Officer, continued to attend the RSACRE meetings. An outline of the updates she presented to the meeting during 2013/2014 is shown at section 7.

6. Speakers and presentations: -

6.1 Community Cohesion - given at 13th February, 2014, meeting by Zaidah Ahmed MBE, Schools' Community Cohesion Officer. Zaidah outlined her work with schools co-ordinating visits and festivals work and community cohesion events. The School Linking Project was continuing with the theme 'One World One Community'. The Model United Nations was taking the crisis in Afghanistan as its focus and debate topic. The Roma Integration Project had been initiated to induct members of Rotherham's new and emerging communities in British law, health, education, culture and background. Reporting of racist incidents had increased;

6.2 'Who is my Neighbour' – given at 13th February and 16th June 2014, meeting by Mariam Shah, RSACRE representative and Regina Drabble, Development Worker. This project was led by the Methodist Church and aimed to create safe spaces for people to come together to talk about the things that were impacting on them. These issues included far right extremism, new and emerging communities, countering Islamophobia and getting groups together;

6.3 The RE Team – given at 10th October, 2013, meeting. This update covered the focus of the RE Team, their growing scope, including the setting up of a base at Mexborough. The package that was available to schools to buy-in. The RE Team had raised £200 with Wingfield Academy for 'Comfort Ministry' and was working with Rawmarsh Readers to facilitate reading partnerships between men and boys to increase reading ages in the Learning Community.

7. REwards for 2013/2014 school year

Nominations were received in three of the four categories: - students, teachers and teams. Four students were nominated, one teacher and five teams nominated.

The RSACRE would like to record their congratulations to: -

- Anilah Ahmed;
- Grace Keenan;

- Newman School;
- the RE Team;
- The PAIS Project;
- Annette Morris;
- Herringthorpe Junior School.

8. Training and development opportunities: -

29th January, 2014 – Investigations, Creativity and Spiritual Development – This conference day was aimed at teachers of RE in primary and secondary schools, with an emphasis on spiritual and moral development and attitudes of tolerance and respect in the context of British Values. The conference was planned to give busy teachers lots of ready-to-use activities in making RE more focused on the values that pupils develop and ideas that they have.

9. Publications by the RSACRE during 2013/2014 and significant reference documents

The Local Agreed Syllabus (due for revision 2015/2016);

Drat Collective Worship (due for publication 2014/2015);

RSACRE constitution and terms of reference.