

ANNUAL SACRE REPORT

MILTON KEYNES

1998 – 1999

Letter or forward from the Chair of SACRE

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1.1 Introduction

- 1.2 Following a tradition of meeting at the civic offices it was decided that future SACRE meetings should take place in schools. The summer term meeting was held in a ??? school. It is also a practice of the Milton Keynes SACRE to receive a presentation at each meeting from a member of a faith group about their tradition. Due to absence only one such presentation took place, and was given at the November meeting about the Anglican Church.
- 1.3 The development plan agreed by the SACRE was approved by the education committee of Milton Keynes. However, several aspects were not completed and reported as planned because the local authority's religious education adviser left during the year to take up a post in Buckinghamshire. SACRE's monitoring of religious education and collective worship continued as agreed through the analysis, by subcommittees, of Ofsted inspection reports and visits by members to three schools to observe collective worship.
- 1.4 To replace the religious education adviser, Milton Keynes obtained the services of two consultants, Danny Sullivan and Jo Fageant, to work for twenty days a year to jointly support schools in the development of religious education and collective worship and advise the SACRE.
- 1.5 Three meetings were held during the reporting year:
 - 2 November
 - 25 March
 - 17 June.

2. Religious Education

Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education

- 2.1 Milton Keynes continues to work with the syllabus originating in Buckinghamshire which was formerly adopted by the authority for a five year period in 1997. The next review will be required in 2002 and will take account of any changes introduced by Buckinghamshire in its earlier review of the same syllabus.

Standards in Religious Education

- 2.2 A subcommittee of the SACRE is responsible for analysing the judgements about religious education in Ofsted and section 23 inspection reports. It reports to SACRE on a regular basis.
- 2.3 Three schools, each using a different examination board, entered a total of 276 students for a full GCSE in Religious Studies. In one of these schools where RE was studied by the whole cohort and 96% were entered for the examination, boys in the group outnumbered girls. In the other two schools, where the subject was a study choice and far fewer students sat the examination, girls very significantly outnumbered boys. In none of these schools did more than 9% of students fail to achieve a grade.

Two schools, each using a different examination board, entered their year 11 cohort of students for a short course GCSE in Religious Education. In each case 96% of the students sat the examination. In one school 31% gained grades A-C and 7% failed to

achieve a grade. In the other school 33% gained grades A*-C and less than 1% failed to achieve a grade.

Only one school entered students for an A level in Religious Studies. Both students were girls and both achieved grades between A-C.

Teaching RE

- 2.4 **Methods of teaching**
Responding to Key Issue 4 in the development plan, meetings were held at which teachers worked to draft material to support the study units within the syllabus. Further work is necessary, however, before the planned packs can be available to schools.
- 2.5 **Teaching Materials**
Schools in Milton Keynes have access to a range of resources on a loan basis. These are currently stored in a school. Each school has a list of the resources available and this can be found in appendix ?
- 2.6 **Teacher training**
After consultation with Religious Education coordinators in relations to the SACRE development plan, a number of training sessions were planned. Thirty coordinators attended twilight meetings during the autumn and spring terms on the following themes:
Developing an RE policy
Developing schemes of work
Monitoring and evaluating RE
Writing units of work.
During the year sessions were also held with individual RE coordinators, headteachers and staff. Over twenty such sessions took place in individual schools.

3. Collective Worship

- 3.1 **Monitoring**
A subcommittee of the SACRE is responsible for analysing judgements about collective worship in Ofsted and Section 23 inspection reports. It reports to the SACRE regularly.
- 3.1.1 Members of the SACRE valued the opportunity to observe Collective Worship in a number of schools. They appreciated the commitment of schools to this important aspect of school life and were keen that the SACRE continued, through the work of the RE consultants, to support the development of quality Collective Worship. The SACRE has been pleased to find that the standard and quality of collective worship in Milton Keynes schools improved within the year 1998/9 although it continued to express concern at the inconsistency of the quality of reports and standards expected by inspectors.
- 3.2 **Training**
A whole day's inservice training on Collective Worship was held at the Open University offices in Stony Stratford in the spring term and was attended by 11 RE coordinators and one member of SACRE.

3.3 There have been no requests for determinations, which exempt schools from the obligation to provide collective worship which is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', from schools in Milton Keynes.

4. Links with other agencies

4.1 One of the religious education consultants working with Milton Keynes is a member of the Association of religious education advisers, inspectors and consultants (AREIAC) and as such is able to keep members updated with a number of important issues relating to religious education.

5. SACRE arrangements

Professional and Administrative Support

5.1 The Milton Keynes SACRE is clerked by a member of the Resources Directorate. Meetings were also attended by the religious education adviser, before he took up a post outside the authority, and later, by religious education consultants from the Diocese of Oxford who now provide professional support to the SACRE and schools within Milton Keynes.

Finance

5.2 Approximately £1000 was made available for the work of SACRE during this reporting year

