

NASACRE Conference Report: 22 May 2023 – Fishmonger’s Hall, London.

Celebrating 30 years: SACRE’s for the future?

Format

Showcase Presentation: **1993 – NASACRE memories – 2023**

Key Address 1 by Dr Kathryn Wright, Chief Executive, Culham St Gabriel’s Trust

An Education in religion and worldviews – the next 30 years.

Aim of the Trust: *‘A broad-based, critical reflection on religion and worldviews – contributing to a well-informed, respectful and open society.’*

NASACRE has 4 aims:

1. Strengthening voices – communities and teachers
2. Strengthening innovation – e.g. developing pedagogy
3. Representing the community – RE community
4. Celebrating an education in religion and worldviews

The next 30 years NASACRE sees the need to:

- Strengthening partnerships –
 - Multi-Academy Trusts are interested in the subject and the work of SACRE? Advise a MAT Rep on your SACRE.
 - Working despite Gov’t, it seems. (Report by Independent Faith Engagement Adviser *‘Does government ‘do God?’*)
 - Strengthen community relations.
 - Collaboration with others.
- Supporting Understanding –
 - An approach to RE: Hermeneutical, humility, reflective, disciplinary, and lived experience.
 - Providing and signposting professional development in RE.
- Representing the religion and worldviews community – a National Plan (?); the importance of freedom of religion and belief (FORB)
- Celebrations to continue: Survey results show high percentage of parents supporting the scope of religions and worldviews.

‘The most valuable pearls are those that are highly reflective...’

Kathryn’s summary transcript can be found using this link.

<https://nasacre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Summary-Transcript-of-Keynote-by-Kathryn-Wright.pdf>

Key Address 2 by Charles Clarke

'The Role of SACREs in the emerging educational landscape'

Charles Clarke is a Labour Party politician who held various Cabinet positions under Prime Minister Tony Blair from 2004 to 2006, including Home Secretary from Dec 2004 to May 2006.0

CC is very enthusiastic about RE because, unlike any other subject its value lies in trying to address the difficult problems in life.

2015 to 2023 CC calls the anarchic period in education but feels more optimistic about the place of religion and faith in education now.

Strengths of SACRE (politics)

- RE occupies the moral high ground and contributes to a coherent society.
- RE brings people together: a force for community coherence, in practical ways.
- RE is about young people and families; influences the children are brought up, their value systems and the respect that children learn to have for others.

Weaknesses of SACRE

- Money and resources
- Marginal role of SACRE
- Variable capacity of SACREs

Looking to the future: how can we build

- The work of SACRE must be shared within the community, seek out others.
 - SACRE to make social resilience and cohesion an objective.
 - Establish roles; curriculum development and advice, Interfaith Dialogue, openness and interplay.
 - Compare best practice throughout the country.
- SACREs are central to what needs to be done.

Claire Clinton and RE Hubs

- A one-stop website for resources etc. www/RE-Hubs.uk
- Calendar for local groups, school speakers

Key Address 3 by Dr David Hampshire

An Analysis of SACRE Annual Reports

Points:

1. A primary function of a SACRE is to give advice to its appointing LA and schools maintained and controlled by the authority regarding RE and Collective Worship, as well as to make determinations and investigating complaints brought to it by the LA.
 - a. A minority of SACREs gave advice to their LA for RE (42%) and Collective Worship (7%).
 - b. The majority of SACREs gave advice to schools in the LA for RE (56%) and CW (65%).
 - c. (some conflated the advice given by their professional officer/support with the advice given by SACRE)
 - d. Many SACREs included determination as a separate category and complaints as a category in their report. The vast majority reported they had none.
 - e. Some SACRE also monitored withdrawal from RE and Collective Worship.

2. Monitoring
 - a. The majority monitored results in RE at GCSE (65%) but fewer monitored standards in RE at Primary (39%) and A Level (29%).
 - b. SACRE should advise councils e.g., where RE is not taught.
 - c. Only 27% SACREs reported on monitoring collective worship.
 - d. *“Working more closely with the LA enable SACRE to be more effective”*

3. SACREs would do well to report on the impact of their work/ responses/ differences.