

LA SACRE Report 2023-24

Welcome from Advisors

Rebekah Guy started as Primary Advisor for Somerset SACRE in September. She has joined the team alongside Shell Sullivan who is Secondary Advisor. Rebekah and Shell have both worked with several primary and secondary schools to support with their curriculum and suggesting resources that could be used alongside the Somerset Agreed Syllabus. Rebekah has also collaborated with the School Library Services on their SACRE resource boxes.

LTLRE (Learn, Teach, Lead RE) hub meetings have continued this year. In the autumn term, a meeting was held with a focus on a multi-disciplinary approach. This included looking at an existing resource and how it could be used within the Somerset Agreed Syllabus. The network of teachers has continued to grow, and more teachers are interested in attending since the Symposium in November. The next meeting is due to be held in the next week. Our thanks to Leanne and Abby for their continued work with LTLRE in Somerset. The annual conference is being held at University of Bristol in conjunction with the Shared Space Project on 28th June.

Various events took place across Somerset for Holocaust Memorial Day including Fragility of Freedom, A Commemoration Event at The Church of St John the Evangelist, Taunton.

Curriculum symposium

This took place at Holyrood Academy on 24th November 2023.

The aim was to:

1. Create a network of Somerset RE teachers across all phases, offering clear communication and support.
2. Engage Somerset RE teachers with the national RE changes.
3. Engage Somerset RE teachers with the Agreed Syllabus Conference, which is due in 2024.

We managed to contact many influential RE people who were excited by the prospect of taking part. We secured some amazing speakers - Dawn Cox, Gillian Georgiou, Sophie Smith and Alice Thomas and they were to present on how to use a multi-disciplinary approach in a Religion and Worldviews curriculum.

The teacher feedback was tremendous. 94% gave between an 8 and 10/10 in answering the question 'how useful did you find the symposium today?'. 45.2% gave a 10/10. We had a fantastic time and felt we connected to many teachers, which we look forward to working with. We know we met our aims.

The biggest barrier was getting the contacts for teachers in the first place and ensuring our advertisement was robust and continuous. We wanted as many teachers as possible, so we had to learn how to navigate social media successfully.

Now we have the connections, we are excited to work with SACRE and teachers to develop our present Agreed Syllabus and to further improve the quality of teaching and learning for students in Somerset.

Locally Agreed Syllabus

Rebekah and Shell have researched many areas of syllabus and curriculum provision. We have looked at other SACRE syllabuses, 'off the shelf' products and reviewed the timeline of creation. The start date of the ASC was pushed back, and the first meeting will be held in April 2024. The Chair and Vice-Chairs have been updated with suggestions from the RE Advisors. An action plan will be decided on at the first meeting and SACRE will be updated accordingly.

SACRE Resource Boxes

The School Library Service continue to receive requests from schools for loans of SACRE resource boxes. Loan figures for the summer 2023 – February 2024 can be seen below.

	Religion	Number of boxes available	Number of boxes loaned	Number of Schools who loaned boxes
Summer 2023	Buddhism	4	0	
	Christianity	8	2	
	Hinduism	6	4	
	Islam	6	7	
	Judaism	7	7	
	Sikhism	3	2	
				18
Autumn 2023	Buddhism	4	0	
	Christianity	8	9	
	Hinduism	6	7	
	Islam	6	1	
	Judaism	7	7	
	Sikhism	3	1	
				17
Spring 2024 (until Feb half term)	Buddhism	4	0	
	Christianity	8	4	
	Hinduism	6	1	
	Islam	6	4	
	Judaism	7	5	
	Sikhism	3	2	
				8

Four schools were unable to receive a Christianity box, and one school was unable to receive a Judaism box in the autumn term as they were already fully reserved.

To maximise use, some boxes were used for shorter loan periods to allow more than one school to use a box in each loan period.

The figures highlight that there have been no requests for the Buddhism resource boxes, although there is one booking in the system for summer term 2024.

Ofsted Inspection Reports

Recent Somerset School Ofsted Inspection reports have resulted in the following comments. Those relating to Religious Education or Diversity have been pulled out.

Primary

St George's Catholic School (Good, February 2023)

Pupils learn to respect differences. The promotion of equality and diversity is a priority for leaders.

St Benedict's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School (Good, January 2023)

Pupils learn how to maintain positive physical and mental health. They understand that people have different beliefs. Leaders provide a wide range of purposeful opportunities for pupils to learn about their community and beyond. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Preston School Academy (Good, January 2023)

They learn about religions, beliefs and cultures that may be different to their own.

Huish Primary School (Outstanding, January 2023)

Pupils have a very strong awareness of faiths and cultures different to their own.

Kilmersdon Church of England Primary School (Good, February 2023)

The school promotes pupils' spiritual development well and works with other partners to develop pupils' understanding of social, moral and cultural issues.

St Dubricius Church of England Voluntary Aided School (Good, February 2023)

Pupils talk confidently about the Christian values of the school. Links with the neighbouring church are strong. For example, many pupils attend a 'Jesus and Me' afterschool club. Children in Nursery visit residents in a local care home. These activities help pupils to learn more about their place in the world and how to be kind, respectful citizens.

Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. They learn about different beliefs and cultures.

North Town Academy (Good, March 2023)

They respect people from other backgrounds and know to treat everyone equally.

Nether Stowey Church of England Primary School (Good, March 2023)

Pupils have clear views on equality and tolerance. They speak passionately about gender inequality. For example, the differences between men and women's pay in society. However, they say that at Nether Stowey, everyone is treated equally regardless of gender, race, or background.

Nerrols Primary School and Nursery (Good, March 2023)

Children's understanding of the world is developed through the study of different faiths and cultures. For example, children in Nursery learn about Ramadan.

St Lawrence's CofE Primary School (Good, March 2023)

Pupils enjoy the opportunity to focus on the school's core values, such as during assemblies. They are well informed about other faiths and cultures. For example, pupils recently participated in celebrations to mark Chinese New Year.

Eastover Primary School (Good, May 2023)

Pupils learn the importance of respecting diverse cultures, faiths, and backgrounds through their work in geography and religious education.

Hambridge Community Primary School (Good, April 2023)

In specialised workshops, pupils learn about diversity. This helps pupils to become active citizens in modern Britain.

Blackbrook Primary School (Good, May 2023)

Pupils learn to respect different faiths, cultures, and lifestyles.

Hamp Nursery and Infants' School (Good, April 2023)

Pupils learn to understand and celebrate people's lives different from their own.

Puriton Primary School (Good, May 2023)

This is an inclusive school. Pupils celebrate diversity and actively condemn discrimination, saying that you should 'always treat others as you would want to be treated.'

For example, in Year 6 religious education, pupils used their prior knowledge of Islam to debate whether completing Hajj makes a person a better Muslim.

hat pupils develop personally. As a result, pupils become deep, reflective thinkers. They are keen to learn about the similarities and differences of children across the world through the school's partnership with a school in Kenya. Pupils understand the importance of everyone in society having an equal say, following the law, and respecting others.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel Primary School (Good, May 2023)

Pupils celebrate diversity and they learn to respect differences.

Stoke St Michael Primary School (RI, May 2023)

Pupils learn about people from different backgrounds. They know the importance of tolerance and mutual respect.

St Cuthbert's Church of England Academy Infants and Pre-School (Good, June 2023)

Pupils get lots of opportunities to learn about the world around them, both locally and further afield. Pupils enjoy visits to the local church and the Bishop's Palace.

Timberscombe Church of England First School (Good, June 2023)

Pupils are confident and self-assured because they know that they are valued members of the community. Pupils have a very strong knowledge of other faiths and know the similarities and differences to Christianity. They understand that people of all faiths and backgrounds deserve respect.

Curry Rivel Church of England VC Primary School (Good, June 2023)

Pupils are taught a well-considered curriculum to support their broader development. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about a wide variety of cultures. Pupils have a mature understanding of equality and diversity.

Butleigh Church of England Primary School (Good, June 2023)

Pupils learn about different cultures, faiths and identities.

Old Cleeve CofE School, Washford (Good, July 2023)

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is stimulated very effectively through regular school and church calendar events. Teachers help pupils reflect on big ideas and more complex concepts, either through 'thunks' or during lively collective worship. Pupils learn about different cultures, diversity and fundamental British values. Trips and visits are utilised, whenever possible, to enrich and enhance pupils' learning. For example, pupils talk positively about visiting varying places of worship, including Hindu temples and churches.

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (Good, September 2023)

Pupils learn about different religions and about the importance of tolerance and respect. Pupils learn to appreciate difference and to celebrate the things they have in common.

Secondary

35 Secondary schools (all categories) were inspected in the period from last Annual report.

3 schools were rated outstanding – Dovecote Independent school, Fiveways Special School, and The Castle School. There is mention of excellent personal development provision in all reports, but nothing on RE.

20 schools were rated good -

3 Dimensions

Avalon School

Bishop Fox's School

Chilton Bridge School

Court Fields School

Crispin School Academy

Fairmead School

Frome Community College

Holyrood Academy
Hugh Sexey Church of England Middle School
Newbury Manor School
Park House School
Preston School Academy
Sedgemoor Manor School
Sexey's School
The Blue School
The Mendip School
The Orchard School
Wessex Lodge School
Westfield Academy

Beliefs and cultures education was mentioned positively in:

Crispin school
Fairmead School

No lack of RE, or poor quality RE is mentioned.

7 schools were rated requires improvement.

Ansford Academy
Bridgwater College Academy
Danesfield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Community Middle School
North Hill House
Petherton Park School
Robert Blake School
West Somerset College
No mention of RE positively or negatively.

1 school is rated inadequate.

Minehead Middle School

This is mentioned as what they do and do not do well within PSHE: *'While pupils learn about cultures and beliefs that are different to their own, their knowledge and understanding vary considerably.'*

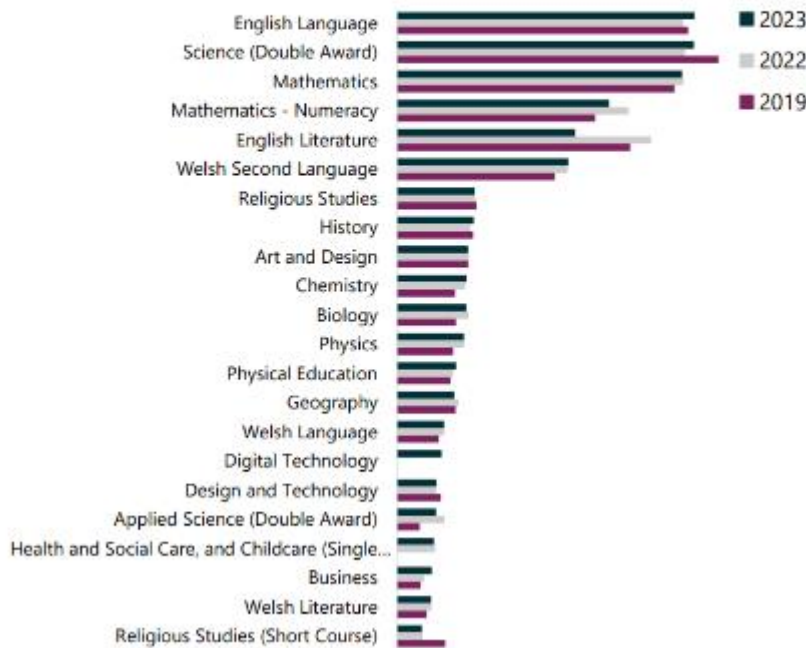
GCSE Religious Studies

RE GCSE entries in England have increased but have decreased in Somerset from last year. A level entries have decreased nationally and locally.

Approved GCSE entries by subject

Figure 5 compares total summer approved GCSE entries for 2023, 2022 and 2019 by subject.

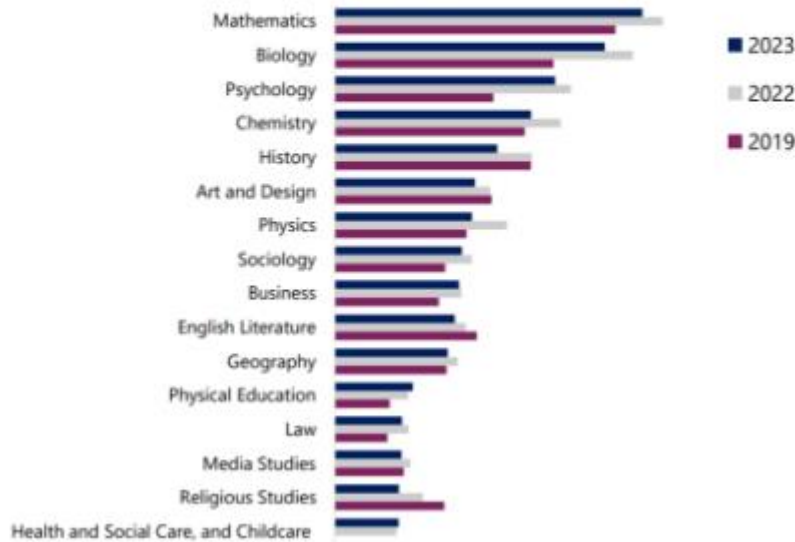
Figure 5: Summer 2023 GCSE total entries broken down by subject



Total approved A level summer entries by subject

Figure 14 compares total summer approved A level entries for 2023, 2022 and 2019 by subject.

Figure 14: Total approved A level entries by subject



How does GCSE uptake vary between the counties in England?

Counties ranked by % students entered for GCSE RS (Bold indicates average uptake above the national average for England) TABLE 5

County	uptake county % Students (Nat 25.7%)	County % grade 9-4 (Nat 72.2%)
Surrey	34.6	77.6
Dorset	34.1	73.2
Lancashire	33.8	67.6
Greater London	32.5	77.3
Merseyside	29.1	58.8
Durham	27.7	73
Greater Manchester	27.5	68.6
West Midlands	27.2	69.9
Bedfordshire	26.7	68.6
Staffordshire	25.9	67
Hertfordshire	24.9	79.4
Berkshire	24.5	77.4
Cheshire	24.1	65.6
North Yorkshire	23.6	70.4
Wiltshire	23.2	75.8
Buckinghamshire	22.8	77.3
Tyne and Wear	22.1	77
Leicestershire	21.6	73.1
Northumberland	21.6	65.9
Devon	21.1	63.8
Worcestershire	20.8	71.9
County of Bristol	20.4	78.9
Warwickshire	19.8	68.6
Cumbria	19.7	69.7
Lincolnshire	19.4	67.5
Herefordshire	18.8	63
Rutland	18.5	82.1
Kent	18.5	74.6
Oxfordshire	18.2	78.4
Shropshire	18	65.8
West Sussex	17.7	77.8
Norfolk	17.1	62.1
West Yorkshire	17	73.5
Essex	16.8	74.6
Nottinghamshire	16	69.9
Suffolk	16	69.1
Hampshire	15.9	72.9
Derbyshire	15.8	68.4
Gloucestershire	15.4	73.9
East Riding of Yorkshire	15.2	59.7
South Yorkshire	15.1	63.5
Somerset	13.8	73.4
Cambridgeshire	13.6	79.6
East Sussex	13.6	76.8
Northamptonshire	13.4	69.9
Cornwall	12.4	66.7
Isle of Wight	10.7	56.8

